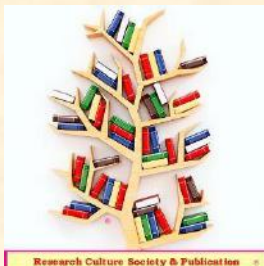# International Conference on Literature, Languages and Religions

Date: 16 - 17 December, 2023

Conference Special Issue - 32   December - 2023

Organized by :
International Languages Council
Research Culture Society
English Literature Club

International Conference on Literature, Languages and Religions

(ICLLR – 2023)

Date: 16 - 17 December, 2023

Conference Special Issue - 32

The Managing Editor:

Dr. C. M. Patel

(Research Culture Society & Publication)

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

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

About the organizing 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.

'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 155+ 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 :

Objectives of the International conference: To observe the overviews and concept of languages, literature and Religions in the 21st century, To Identify the various knowledge forms of literature and religions, To Analyse the trends of teaching languages and To find our conceptual life lessons from the religions.

About the Conference:

'International Conference on Language Literature and Religion' aims to bring together leading academicians, research scholars and interested individuals to exchange and share their experiences and research results on all aspects of English Language, Literature and Religions Conference. It also 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.

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Dear Colleagues !

I am delighted that our organization is jointly conducting the "**International Conference on Literature, Languages and Religions"** with the theme of literature and languages, in association with 'Research Culture Society' on 16 - 17 December, 2023.

This conference series forum aims to observe the overviews and concept of languages, literature and Religions in the 21st century. To Identify the various knowledge forms of literature and religions, To Analyze the trends of teaching languages and To find our conceptual life lessons from the religions.

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!

Prof. J. Adrina
ICLLR-2023 Conference Chair
Founder Member
International Languages Council, Europe.

Dr.C. M. Patel

Director, RESEARCH CULTURE SOCIETY

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<u>Message</u>

Dear Professional Colleagues,

It is gratifying to note that 'International Languages Council; in collaboration with 'Research Culture Society' (Government Registered Scientific Research organization) are organizing - 'International Conference on Literature, Languages and Religions' during 16 - 17 December, 2023.

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 witch 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 Literature and Religion field of academia, researchers and students.

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

Dr.C. M. Patel

Director, Research Culture Society.

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Islamic Ethics in Context of Peace and Violence

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Abstract: This article examines the emergence and development of violence and jihad in the Qur'anic text, their meanings, and how they are intertwined with religious motives. The objective is to explore the relationship between violence and jihad, emphasizing the differences and variations within this context. Violence has evolved from being seen as illegitimate and brutal to being perceived as a means of legitimate power and authority. It is essential to analyze the different components, instruments, and manifestations of violence to understand this transformation. By examining how violence can support religious claims, we can see how it has the potential to establish itself as a form of authority and eventually become institutionalized within societies. Islamic law permits the use of force in self-defense and defense of the oppressed. The offensive theory of jihad, which advocates for aggressive military action, is deemed invalid. Muslim states primarily adhere to the defensive theory of jihad. Islamic law also allows for anticipation of potential threats under specific circumstances. Overall, Islamic law emphasizes self-defense and protection of the oppressed, while discouraging offensive actions. The study focuses on the justification for resorting to the use of force, known as jus ad bellum, in Islamic ethics. Jihad is a central concept in Islam that encompasses both the external struggle against oppression and injustice, as well as the internal spiritual struggle to overcome personal weaknesses and temptations. It is not solely associated with violence or warfare, but rather a comprehensive effort to seek justice and righteousness. Jihad serves as a means of liberation from the various forms of evil that hinder individuals, communities, and society as a whole, emphasizing the pursuit of freedom and righteousness in all aspects of life.

Keywords: Spirituality, justice, fraternity, social emancipation.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Building a culture of peace requires promoting understanding, tolerance, and peaceful coexistence among individuals of different religious backgrounds. This can be achieved through religious education that teaches the true interpretations of religious teachings, encouraging cultural and religious pluralism, and rejecting exclusivism and conflicts. Additionally, the media has a crucial role in promoting peaceful communications and educating the public about the principles of a culture of peace.

2. Islamic Juristic Tradition: Classical Muslim jurists had the challenging task of balancing their legal obligations with their ethical responsibilities. While they could enforce compliance through the legal system, ultimate accountability relied on personal commitment and

conscience. Matters such as martyrdom and participation in unjust wars were ultimately determined by God and not within the absolute power of human institutions. Shariah law does have determinate aspects, and denying its role based on personal commitment and conscience lacks integrity. However, Islamic law also incorporates principles of justice and morality, engaging in a dynamic process that considers context and contingency. Proper appreciation of these factors is essential in understanding Islamic law. Jihad in Islamic theology and law encompasses a range of ethically upright struggles, including personal and societal forms of exertion and striving for justice. It is often misconstrued and sensationalized, but its true definition emphasizes the pursuit of peace and discourages aggression. Classical Muslim jurists recognized the complexity of moral imperatives, with some obligations being absolute and others subject to modification based on historical circumstances. They emphasized ethical obligations and cautioned against treachery. The decision to engage in jihad rests with the individual Muslim's conscience, with a just cause and proper means being essential considerations. Conduct in war must adhere to certain moral parameters, rooted in the teachings of the Prophet, including the inviolability of certain individuals and the prohibition of treachery, torture, and mutilation.

Jihad: Jihad has been an important concept in Islam throughout history, encompassing the struggle to follow God's will and expand the Islamic community through non-violent means such as education and preaching, as well as the right to defend Islam and the community from aggression. However, in recent times, the term has been used and misused by various groups to justify resistance, liberation, extremism, and terrorism, leading to different interpretations and understandings of jihad. The concept of jihad in Islam has multiple meanings, including both non-violent and violent interpretations. The greater jihad refers to the internal struggle against one's ego and negative traits, while the lesser jihad refers to physical combat. The interpretation of jihad has been debated among Muslims throughout history, with some using it to justify extremism and terrorism. It is important to understand the social and political contexts in which Islamic texts, such as the Quran, were revealed in order to properly interpret their meaning. The Quranic command to fight was not a call for holy war based solely on religious differences, but rather a response to the political realities of the time. The early Muslims had to protect their community and preserve its physical integrity, which often required fighting. Later, jurists divided the world into the Abode of Islam and the Abode of Warfare based on this dichotomous view of a world of us and them, danger, warfare, and conquest.

The Quranic verses regarding jihad emphasize its defensive nature and provide guidelines for conduct during times of war, such as proportional response and treating prisoners humanely. The Quran also emphasizes peace as the norm and encourages seeking peace with enemies. Critics often isolate and misinterpret verses, such as the "sword verses," to paint Islam as inherently violent. Extremist groups have used selective interpretation to justify violence and terrorism, but they represent a minority and do not reflect the majority of Muslims. The struggle for the soul of Islam today is a complex one, with extremists like Osama bin Laden using past interpretations of jihad to legitimize their agenda and tactics. They exploit conditions in Muslim countries, such as authoritarian governments and Western influence, to call for a jihad against rulers and elites. Islamic law and Muslim jurists continue to be used to both legitimize and challenge the legitimacy of jihad. While some religious leaders condemn acts of terrorism, there is a wide diversity of opinions on issues such as suicide bombing. Traditionally, Muslims are unconditionally forbidden to commit suicide, because only God has the right to take the life he has granted. There is only one phrase in the Quran that appears relevant to suicide: "O you

who believe! Do not consume your wealth in the wrong way—rather only through trade mutually agreed to, and do not kill yourselves. Surely God is Merciful toward you" (4:29). However, many Muslim exegetes have believed that "do not kill yourselves" can mean "do not kill each other" since it fits the context of the verse. The issue of suicide bombings has caused significant debate within the Muslim world, with differing opinions among prominent religious leaders. Some argue that suicide bombing is necessary and justified, particularly in the context of resistance and retaliation against oppression, while others condemn it as terrorism. There is disagreement on whether targeting civilians is permissible, with some justifying it as self-defense and others considering it to be against the teachings of Islam. The issue remains complex and does not have a unanimous consensus within the Muslim community.

Defensive and offensive theory of Jihad: The Qur'an allows the use of force in self-defense when Muslims have been wronged or attacked. Permission is granted when Muslims are expelled from their homes without just reason and when they are being fought against. However, it emphasizes that Muslims cannot be aggressors and must not transgress the limits set by Allah. Verse 22:39 is the primary verse that addresses self-defense in the Qur'an. The Qur'an provides evidence for the use of force in self-defense and for defending oppressed Muslims who are unable to defend themselves. Additionally, there is potential for extending this rule to protect any oppressed people who are unable to protect themselves, based on humanitarian grounds. The Qur'an also allows the use of force against aggressors and in certain circumstances, such as resolving disputes between believers. The defensive theory of jihad, grounded in the Qur'an, includes using force to prevent humanitarian catastrophes and for a ruler to use force against rebellion.

The offensive theory of jihad argues that the Quran initially favored patience and non-violence during the Meccan period of Islam. However, after Muhammad migrated to Medina, jihad in self-defense was permitted. This argument suggests that verses 9:5 and 9:29 repealed all previous verses related to self-defense, making jihad a continual obligation for all Muslims. There is scholarly consensus that jihad was not allowed during the Meccan period. In the Medina period, a new command allowed for self-defense through force (22:39 and 2:190), with scholarly consensus supporting this interpretation. This rule of jihad in self-defense remained in force for eight years until two separate commands were revealed regarding polytheists and People of the Book. Verse 9:5 is cited to argue that polytheists were to be fought and killed unless they embraced Islam, and if they repented and established prayer and paid the poor due, they were to be spared. The study suggests that the progression argument, which claims that verses 9:5 and 9:29 abrogated verses 22:39 and 2:190 and mandated the use of force and subjugation against non-Muslims, is not valid. By examining the historical and Qur'anic contexts of these verses and considering the practices of Prophet Muhammad and his successors, it is argued that verses 9:5 and 9:29 do not repeal earlier verses and do not advocate for genocide or subjugation of non-Muslims. The verses in the Qur'an, including 9:5 and 9:29, which discuss the subject of war, have specific historical and contextual backgrounds, addressing relations with specific groups during the time of Prophet Muhammad. They do not create new rules for the use of force or justify violence in modern times. The Qur'an actually emphasizes the importance of clemency, peaceful resolution, and self-defense. The offensive theory of jihad, advocated by some scholars, does not align with the Qur'an's principles of armed conflict and the concept of neutrality. The decision to declare defensive jihad lies with the Prophet Muhammad or a Caliph, and non-state actors cannot declare jihad on behalf of a Muslim state.

Restriction of exercise of power: The Islamic law of qital emphasizes the principle of military necessity, stating that only the amount of force required to achieve military objectives should be used. Once these objectives are secured, Muslim forces must cease their attack. The Quran also advises that fighting should only occur in self-defense and that if the attackers choose peace, then peace should be given. The verses provided highlight these principles and the importance of showing mercy and forgiveness when the enemy ceases aggression. These verses from the Qur'an provide different restrictions on the use of force, with the objective of ending rebellion and mischief. The limitations imposed are based on military necessity, such as ending aggression if the other party desists, or preventing impending attacks. The practice of Prophet Muhammad further emphasizes the principle of humanity, showing mercy and stopping pursuit once the enemy is subdued. The Qur'an (2:190) says, 'fight in the way of Allah against those who fight you, and do not transgress'. The Islamic law of qital, or armed conflict, has three important rules: permission to fight is given against those who are fighting Muslims, distinction between combatants and non-combatants must be made, and proportionality should be observed in retaliatory actions. The principle of humanity is also emphasized, prohibiting excessive harm and promoting fairness and care for prisoners of war and the wounded. The Islamic principles of qital highlight the importance of upholding humanitarian values even in times of conflict. According to the Qur'an, Muslims are encouraged to accept offers of peace even if there are suspicions of deception. The emphasis is on basing judgement on outward evidence rather than mere suspicion. Muslims are obligated to be ready for peace even in the midst of conflict, as long as there is any inclination towards peace from the other side. It is believed that Allah is forgiving and merciful, and if the enemy ceases, Muslims should also cease hostilities. This understanding can be applied to interpreting issues of truce and armistice, such as collecting the wounded and burying the dead.

3. Quranic Narrative and Concept of Wars: The Qur'an provides guidance for engaging in warfare, emphasizing self-defence, protecting the vulnerable and preventing discord. War is seen as a means to reach God and propagate His word, rather than for material gain. Although peace and reconciliation are encouraged, the Qur'an allows for the use of force in certain circumstances to maintain unity within the Muslim community and defend against aggression. Through the concept of jihad, war is seen as a legitimate means when diplomacy and non-violence fail, with the objective of establishing a unified religious community for Allah.
In The Quranic Concept of War, Malik presents the Quranic approach to warfare, which he argues is supremely effective and aims towards universal peace and justice. He explores the causes, objects, and nature of war, as well as the ethics and strategy of warfare. Malik's work is both historical and scholarly, making it a valuable resource for Islamic scholars and others interested in understanding jihad doctrine and Quranic warfare. However, some may find his arguments to be parochial and his tone to be confident and occasionally supremacist. Nevertheless, due to its potential resonance with extremists and radicals, his book is worth studying. Additionally, Ambassador Brohi's preface provides further insights into Quranic wisdom regarding war and peace, emphasizing that jihad is not limited to military force and is a collective responsibility of the Muslim ummah. It discusses the concept of jihad in Islam, noting that it is intended to fulfill God's will and establish the supremacy of God. It mentions the distinction between Dar al-Islam and Dar al-Harb, with war being a last resort when peaceful means fail. The paragraph also touches upon the idea of the ummah, a transcendent religious and cultural society in Islam. The author concludes by stating that Allah is the only sovereign authority in Islam, implying that no nation has sovereignty. The war can only be waged for the sake of justice, truth, law, and the preservation of human society, with the central

theme being the cause of Allah. The author also highlights the concept that "tumult and oppression is worse than slaughter" and that war should be fought only against the forces of tyranny and oppression. Additionally, they mention that peace can be pursued and reciprocated during the course of war, but only as prescribed by the Quran's philosophy and methodology for preserving peace. The author concludes by stating that the ultimate objective of Islam is not war, but the establishment of peace. Malik argues that the Quranic concept of war is characterized by the nature and dimension of war, which sets it apart from other doctrines. He emphasizes the importance of moral and spiritual forces in war, and the need for total submission to God's will. Malik believes that divine assistance is given to warriors who fight in the way of Allah, and that they must have a strong faith and be fearless in battle. He also discusses the role of terror in warfare, stating that striking terror into the hearts of enemies is an objective principle of war in Islam. Ultimately, Malik concludes that the highest emphasis in Islam is on preparing for war and being able to instill terror in the hearts of enemies. Malik argues that the Quran provides guidance and examples for the conduct of Islamic warfare, emphasizing the importance of jihad and the spread of Islam as the ultimate objective. This differs from Western just war theory and places the emphasis on dislocating and destroying the enemy's faith. While Malik's metaphysical content and ahistorical examples may be criticized, his work sheds light on the mindset and tactics of jihadists and the asymmetric approach to war that they may adopt. The events of 9/11 serve as a validation of the thesis regarding spiritual preparation and the use of terror.

4. Quranic points of Peace: The meaning of peace in Islam encompasses safety, security, absence of fear, trust, honesty, and justice. Islam emphasizes the importance of amn (peace) and encourages believers to be honest and trustworthy. It is believed that peace can be achieved when individuals possess strong faith (īmān) and submit to the Supreme Will of Allah. Islam promotes a just social order where everyone can live a peaceful life without fear of exploitation or injustice. The concepts of peace and justice are deeply rooted in Islamic teachings, as shown by the use of terms like amn to describe important places and concepts in Islam. Ultimately, Islam envisions a state of peace and security where believers can worship Allah without any fear or hindrance. The concept of peace in Islam is found in the roots of the Arabic words "silm" and "salam." Silm means complete surrender and submission to the rules and regulations of Islam, while salam stands for peace. True peace is achieved through having faith and belief in Allah and obeying the true divine religion, while also establishing good relationships with all of His creation through righteous deeds. Islam provides guidance for peace at every level of life, from the individual to the international level, and the concepts of sulh (peace-making) and adl (justice) are central to the Islamic mission of peace. Ultimately, peace is achieved through a faithful relationship with Allah and striving for His cause.

The Qur'an promotes a view of peaceful coexistence and tolerance towards others, emphasizing the universal moral values shared by all human beings. It recognizes the innate disposition towards knowledge and belief in God, suggesting a common human origin and the need to live with and respect diversity. The Qur'an also emphasizes that only God can judge the spiritual destiny of individuals, creating space for peaceful coexistence. The verse "There is no compulsion in religion" underscores the importance of individual conscience and free volition in matters of faith. Overall, the Qur'an advocates building bridges of understanding and cooperation, promoting a social order based on justice and equality. The Qur'an has a long-standing history of addressing issues related to religious plurality, freedom of conscience, and rights of minorities, reflecting the inclusive nature of Islam. While there are verses that are interpreted differently regarding salvation and the acceptance of other religions, it is important

to consider the overall message of the Qur'an, which emphasizes peaceful coexistence and respect for the beliefs of others. The Qur'an promotes tolerance and protection, even for idolaters and strangers, advocating for a diverse and harmonious community united under common moral values. Ultimately, God is the ultimate judge of faith. The Qur'an envisions jihad as a means to establish a righteous order based on justice and equality. While there are verses that encourage Muslims to wage war, this is not an open license for aggression or unlimited warfare. The Qur'an sets moral conditions of restraint and urges Muslims to seek avenues for peace. The Qur'an also outlines rules of engagement and emphasizes that there is no compulsion in religion. However, the subsequent interactions between Muslims and the people of the book did not always adhere to these principles, resulting in discriminatory measures and policies that deviated from the Qur'an's vision of peaceful coexistence. Muslim jurists have discussed the concept of peace in the context of peaceful coexistence with non-Muslims. They established the idea of dar al-sulh, the abode of truce, where peace could exist through treaties, alliances, and cooperation. The duration of the peace treaty was debated among jurists, with some advocating for an indefinite treaty while others placed restrictions on its length. Historically, Muslims have coexisted peacefully with non-Muslims, such as in Spain, where they not only protected Jews and Christians but also shared scientific achievements. The Qur'an's protection of the people of the book prevented violence and genocide against them and fostered a tradition of tolerance and coexistence.

5. Conclusion:

There is no doubt that Islam holds concept of peace as well as war at same time in its explanation or revelation whatever it may be the holy Quran or Hadith. The concept of Jihad might be misinterpreted or intentionally it has been spread to the innocent common adherents by evil minded or disguised prophets. The random genocide by name of jihad is the initial hindrance of perpetual peace.

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Analyzing the portrayal of the Indian diaspora in the fictional literature of Anita Rau Badami

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Abstract: *The primary objective of this study is to conduct a thorough examination of diasporic sensibility, specifically focusing on the Indian diaspora as portrayed in the literary works of Anita Rau Badami. The book "The Hero's Walk" by Anita Rau Badami has been chosen for this review. Anita Rau Badami's book serves as compelling proof of the diaspora. This story adeptly examines the intercultural and traditional clashes, effectively portraying the women characters' awareness of their diasporic identity. This story adeptly explores the problem of emigration by effectively portraying the migrants' sense of uncertainty on both sides. The author has depicted the diaspora in this work by using a conventional narrative style to portray the life of the character Sripathi. This study conducts a comprehensive analysis of the viewpoints expressed by different writers about Anita Rau Badami's approach to addressing the subject in the novel "The Hero's Walk."*

Key words: *diasporic sensibility, fictional works, Diasporaand emigration, The Hero's Walk, AnitaRau Badami*

1. INTRODUCTION:

The novel "The Hero"s Walk" written by Anita Rau Badami is about Sripathi"s typical and traditional life with his mother, wife and his children. This is an Indian drama. In this novel the writer expresses the emotional tensions that present in the South Asian diaspora. Badami explained many things in this novel.and it is about heroism of the protagonist of the play. This novel is with the unexpected things, difficulties and disasters in the life of the protagonist. [2]The story is about a Canadian –raised orphan Nandhana return to her grandparents who lives in a village called Torturpuram. The young girl Nandhana faced many problems in a very new place of her grandparents. Her grandparents disowned her mother, when she got married with a white man. At the young age of seven Nandhana has lost her parents. Maya refused the arranged marriage and she ran away from her home. And she settled in Vancouver, Canada. Then she and her husband met with an automobile accident. After their death Sripathi has to take care of his granddaughter. Nandhana is troubled by adjusting to the Indian culture and customs[3].
[4]With this Sripathi has to undergo with some family problems. He is trying to make his forty year old sister to be married with someone. His son also gives him a very tough time. And his wife is still angry at him for her daughter"s death. Now Nandhana began to open up with all

the things and accept her mother‟s parents as her grandparents. But Maya‟s parents are very much worried about their daughter‟s death. She is no more. She is not going to come back again. The main thing is that they have think about their granddaughter‟s future. Her future isin their hands now. This is the story set up and the author tried to put the diaspora of Southern Asia. She included her own life experiences in this novel.

1.1. Aim and Objectives of the Research:

Aim of the research is to investigate in detail about women sensibility-representation of Indian diaspora in fictional works of Anita Rau Badami

1.2. Objectives of the research are as follows:

i.   To explore the significance of fiction in Indian literature

ii.   To investigate the contribution of diasporic writers and how they feel about issues related to mother land

iii.   To determine how Anita Rau Badami brought out the themes of guilt of consciousness related to parent-child conflict

iv.   To investigate the women sensibility the ultimate success of the (protagonist of theplay) women at the end of the fiction "THE HEROS WALK"

1.3 Limitations of the Research:

          Limitations of the research are as follows:

i.   This research is restricted to fiction in Indian literature

ii.   This research focuses on the fictional works of Anita Rau Badami

iii.   Findings of the research exclusively considers about women sensibility-representationof Indian diaspora in fictional works of Anita Rau Badami

2. Literature Review:

Significance of fiction in Indian literature:

          A fiction is any descriptive or narrative content which is obtained from imagination and in addition to the history or fact. It is a form of art and with the knowledge of the individual can imagine any events and pen it into a novel or fiction. A very good story teller must keep somepoints in mind he/she is going to narrate a fiction. They are the characters, both main and secondary ones and character traits, setting, conflict and the plot or story form. Fiction has form and every single word in the fiction that is written would be the part of the pattern. The author is responsible for what happens in the fiction to assign. Women fiction writers play a vital role in Indian literature today. They tend to have an insightful and thoughtful voice. The authors used to reflect their own experiences in the fiction. The fiction written by the women writers tackles the issues of the family, money, love, motherhood and all other issues. The characters in the fiction must be the female protagonists And those characters have the complex relationships with the other characters in the novel.

          The setting of the novel can be of anywhere- rural or urban. And there is a love interest in all the women's fictions. They will have a happy ending at the end of the fiction. The family relationships are more important than love and romance. The woman in India is always

protected. The status of women in India has not improved much. It remains same as it was in the past. The woman is still considered to be subordinate to man. So many women fiction writers try to bring out the status of women in their motherland. And the woman is not entitled to live her own life. She is not expected to have any individuality of her own. In her childhood, she is protected by her father. After marriage, she is protected by her husband. In her old age, she lives under the protection of her son. She has no right to guide her own life.[7] This is the status of women in India. And many women writers use the female characters as the main protagonists in their novels. Many fiction writers are there in India to fight against the illtreatment of women. And with their writings they expose their thoughts and views in the novels.

Contribution of Diasporic writers towards motherland:

Diasporic writing lifts the questions regarding the meanings of „home‟ and „nation‟. These are the preoccupations of the diasporic writers as they seek to make themselves in the new traditions and cultures. It is important for the writers relate the nature of the relationship to the literatures of their country of their origin. They have to examine the different strategies they go into and to negotiate the cultural gap of the countries of the adoption. The creative writers such as Uma Parameswaran and Ashis Gupta used to write from their own life experiences of their migration. The maximum number of their writings will be fictions, poetry and drama. Most of the writers used to write about their feelings towards their motherland. The contribution of the diasporic writers towards their motherland is many and their writings will speak about their traditions and cultures and how they feel about their motherland.

Jhumpa Lahiri was born to Indian parents in London in 1967 and her parents moved to U.S.A. she won the prestigious Pulitzer Prize for her collection of the short stories Interpreter of Maladies. It is a nine stories' collection set in India and U.S.A. An interpreter of the emotions has assumed by the author. She has undergone the living of two lives-one in the United States and other in India as an experience, as a child of the immigrants. She has written many storiesof different themes in her novels. And Lahiri suggests that assimilation is the solution for the survival in a foreign land.

Another diasporic writer named Anita Rau Badami was born in 1964 in Orissa. In 1991, she moved herself to Canada. Tamarind Mem is her first novel and it is based on her own life experience. It portrays the individual desire and cultural affiliation. The Hero‟s Walk is her second novel and it became the popular winning literacy prizes. In this novel, the author shows the emotional tensions that lie in the South Asian diaspora. For her, Canada is her home and is muted presence in her works which shows both the possibility and freedom.
Kamila Sammie was born in Karachi, Pakistan in 1973. All her works are of prose fiction. Her novels deal only with political unrest and violence in Pakistan. She used to address the issues of South Asian Diasporas reality.

Reviews on Anita Rau Badami's parent-child conflict in THE HERO'S WALK:

Anita‟s dazzling literary follow-up after the novel Tamarind Mem is The Hero's Walk. It isa novel teeming with wreckage and folly of normal lives. The Hero‟s Walk uncover theterrain of family and the excuse through the lives. In this novel Anita Rau Badami explainedso many things like disappointment, loss, circumstances of the life by not losing the dignityset in all of us. It is simply about heroism that is needed to have all the unexpected things,disasters and difficulties of life.

Dr.Chenna reddy potrayed Sripathi‟s typical life with age old traditions in India. He gives respect to his Indian tradition. Sripathi worried about his daughter and his son-in law's death in a car accident. He feels very guilt about behaviour towards his daughter‟s marriage because she got married with a white man. After that he refused to have contact with Maya. But she is no more. Sripathi has to take care of the seven year old granddaughter now. Nandhana was brought up in Canada and now she has to lead a life in India with a traditional family background. Nandhana thinking that her parents will come back one day. This novel projects the compromises and the understanding of healthy relations in a family. In this novel, Badami shows the parent-child conflicts. The family lost Maya and she is not going to come back again. The child‟s future is very important now and Sripathi has to take the whole responsibility of her.

According to Andrew Elliot Apong, in the novel The Hero‟s Walk, Badami focused the affective attachment of Sripathi, Maya‟s father and his daughter who got married with awhite man. The conflict between the parent and the child portrayed here in this novel with Sripathi and Maya. Her father refused to communicate with her after the marriage with a white. Badami positions his life with the women and children in his family with different character follies. Badami positions towards his journey he takes in his life and how the sense of beauty worked in the world.

Reviews on guilt of consciousness in The Hero's Walk:

The second novel of Anita raubadami, the hero‟s walk, is an intimate, big book of the typical life of Sripathirao, a middle-aged family man. He was an advertising copywriter. His life is already in a position of disrepair, as it opens. Dr.ChetanTrivedi explained in detail about the characters in the novel the hero‟s walk. Sripathi‟smother, is a tyrant, domineering woman. She wants her only daughter to be with her till the end of her life. And sripathi‟s children, however, who always create the biggest problems: his son, Arun, is connected in political activism, dangerously, and his daughter Maya, in order to marry a white man, she broke off the engagement to a local man arranged by her father. She got married to a white and she settled in Canada for a long period of time. Sripathi refused to talk to her after her marriage. When he heard that his daughter and her husband are killed in a car accident, he is very much troubled. They left a seven year-old daughter in Canada. Sripathi is now in a position to bring his granddaughter, Nandhana to India from Canada. Sripathi travels from India to Canada to bring his granddaughter home. Sripathi was guilt-ridden for being refused to contact with his daughter Maya because she insulted him by marrying a white Canadian. This guilt of consciousness kills him often. Sripathi is mute now. He is not able to express his grief and he is longing for the love of his dead daughter.

Reviews on the diasporic sensibility in the hero's walk:

Canadian literature is now being considered as a multi-cultural one. The diasporic writers have been increased in number by giving the cultural forms and traditions in their diasporic writings. Through their writings, we could see the choice of aspirations, hopes and the frustrations with authenticity and empathy in people. This kind of women writers tries to bring the rich baggage of racial, cultural, traditional, linguistic and religious diversity. Through their writings these writers try to bring out the culture of women in particular. According to Dr.Karthik Kumar, Anita Rau Badami is the very good example for this type of writings. She used to characterize the cross cultural conflicts. She admits to explore the nuances of the consciousness of the diaspora of portrayal of all the women characters in her

novels. All her writings suggest the diasporic identity which is not needed to bind the transnational crossings. A radical change has been put over the women''s fiction, as it does reflect cultural, social and political theme.the main thing which has to be considered in their writings is to define and redefine the woman''s personality.

3. Conclusion:

The diasporic writers are increased by giving the customs and cultural forms in their diasporic writings. The readers can see choice of aspirations and hopes through their writings. This shows the frustrations and empathy of people. The writers try to show the culture of women in their motherland. In this novel The Hero''s Walk Badami categorized the cross cultural and traditional conflicts. She expresses the consciousness of diaspora of the women characters in all her novels. The diasporic identity is showed in all her novels. Badami is a diasporic writer and her famous novels are The Hero''s Walk and Tamarind woman. Emigration is the only theme in her novels. This novel shows the insecurity of the migrants in both the sides. Here in this novel, Nandhana feels West as her abode and she like it or not she is in a position to accept the lifestyle in the East. In this novel Maya''s opinion is not took into consideration. Sripathi forces her to get married with the local man. But she refused. She would frown on, if she didn''t get married. She would have lived if her father didn''t force her marriage. She could be alive if Sripathi didn''t cut all the connections and contacts with her. This kind of gender inequality is still here in India with the age old traditions. Leading a peaceful life is really hard for women. The female children are lucky if they are likely to be allowed to go and get the education in schools. This novel is a perfect evidence for the diaspora written by Anita Rau Badami. She is famous diasporic writer and her novels got popular among the readers all over the world. This novel won the literacy prizes. The author showed the diaspora in this novel and the typical life of Sripathi.

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Indian Writing in English Literature

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Abstract: Indian writing has emerged as a powerful entity and as a true representative of Indian culture and Indian voice which has made huge impact worldwide. Mulk Raj Anand is known as the father of Indian English Literature with his groundbreaking piece of work "Untouchable". Indian Literature is known for its varied themes of spirituality, mythology, and social issues like caste, gender and politics. The new breed of Indian writers like Arundhati Roy (cost of living) is writing on global topics like global warming, deforestation, environment protection etc.

Keywords: Spirituality, Mythology, Breed, Romanticism, Cultural Diaspora.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Indian writing in English is the body of work by writers in India who write in English language but whose native language could be one of the numerous languages of India. English has proved itself to be one of the most used languages in various official bodies now in India and its demand is increasing in view of its contribution to Global citizenship. Indian writing in English started during the British rule in India. The first English newspaper named Hickey's Bengal Gazette was published in India in 1779. While the major breakthrough in Indian literature came in 1793 A.D when a person by the name of Sake Dean Mahomet published a book in London titled 'Travels of Dean Mahomet' which was a travel narrative. Earlier Indian writers and their writings were inspired by freedom struggle. The writers at that time were able to transmit their point of view, which in turn helped the masses to be inspired and motivated. Slowly the Indian English novels began to prove its mark towards the global dignified storyline. Earlier Indian writers struggled to meet preconditions like to Indianize the English language to be able to express the reality of the Indian condition and Indians had to be sufficiently efficient to use the English language to express themselves.

2. OBJECTIVE:

My research is aimed towards discussing the rise, growth and prosperity of Indian Literature on world map. Indian literature has evolved and shaped in unimaginable ways with passing time. Remarkable contributions are being made by Indian writers, poets, novelists, essayists and dramatists to world literature. With due course of time Indian writing have observed an immense progress worldwide and has achieved an independent status as a powerful means of expression through literature writings.

3. CONTENT:

The second generation of poets were romantic in spirit. Romanticism of Indian poets like Sarojini Naidu, Tagore, Aurobindo Ghosh and Haridtranath Chatopadhyaya was distressed

with nationalism, spirituality and mysticism. The beginning of 20th century saw a gradual growth of the novel form in English in India. Romesh Chandra Dutta and Rabindranath Tagore were the leading writers of that time. Tagore was famous not only as a writer but equally as a writer but equally as accomplished poet, playwright and painter. The late seventies observed a fresh clan of convent educated elite class of novelists and writers in English Literature. The fiery team of Indian writers like Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Amitav Ghosh set the world literature on fire. Rushdie's "Midnight Children" won Booker in 1981 and sent the message loud and clear that Indian writers are here to stay and celebrate their win. Arundhati Roy and Kiran Desai repeated the fleet by winning 'Man Booker' in 1997 and 2006. Simultaneously a new crop of authors such as Jhumpa Lahiri, Pankaj Mishra, Chetan Bhagat started making an impact on the Internationalfront and their writings gathered appreciation round the globe. Jhumpa Lahiri in her works presented the theme of emotional crisis generated from cultural diaspora and identity crisis that Indians suffer while living in abroad.Indian writer's are vividly writing on historical, political, nationalist and social themes as well as Indian Diaspora, immigration, individual experiences, feminism and women empowerment.

4. ANALYSIS
English language and writings have never been accepted by Indian people within a night but it was a step by step process through which Indian language and writing eventually evolved and adapted by people in course of time. English has provided the opportunity to all the educated women writers of Indian origin to express their feelings in words that can reach to a wider range of National and International reader's.

5. RESULT:
Indians first learned to read, speak and comprehend English and later began to appreciate and admire the beauty of this language. And hence English has evolved from prose to ambitious poetic epics. The proficiency and expertise with which Indian writers are writing in English and bringing laurels to the Nation on International front despite English being foreign language is commendable.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS:
It is crucial to master English to understand English as a whole. Polishing of reading, writing and speaking skills are very important for children and future English writers. Extensive knowledge of vocabulary, understanding semantics of the word and its implications, improving spellings, pronunciation and comprehension is a must for better insight into English as a language.

7. CONCLUSION:
Over the years the world of feminist ideologies n writers began to flourish and influence the English Literature of India. Indian writing has opened a new track, a new vision full of faith, hope, myths, traditions, customs and rights etc. with a special credit to our women' writers. Indian writers have shed light on pressing ecological issues, championed conservation efforts and sparked a new consciousness about environmental sustainability. Mahasweta Devi, Anita Desai, Ruskin Bond, Arundhati Roy are hailed as some of the most impactful writers towards eco-literature. Our Indian English literature has gifted numerous enthusiastic women novelists such as Anita Desai, Kamala Markandeya, Kamala Das, Ruth Praver Jhabwala, Shashi Deshpande, Shobha De, Nayantara Sehgal, Bharti Mukherjee, Anita Nair, Manju

Kapoor etc. So we can say that Indian writers and Indian writing has evolved over decade and has emerged as a powerful too of expression to the contemporary world.

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Eco-Critical & Religious Perspectives in the novels of Bharati Mukherjee

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Abstract: A relatively recent branch of literary criticism called ecocriticism looks at how literature interacts and depicts the natural world in order to analyse the relationship between literature and the environment. This paper explores the presence and significance of ecocriticism in the works of Bharati Mukherjee, an acclaimed Indian-American novelist known for her exploration of themes related to immigration, identity, and globalization. While Mukherjee's work is primarily associated with social and cultural issues, a closer examination reveals a subtle yet important environmental consciousness that runs throughout her narratives. This research delves into some of her major novels, including *Jasmine, The Holder of the World, Tree Bride* and *Desirable Daughters,* to demonstrate the ways in which Mukherjee incorporates ecological concerns and implications within her writing. The protagonist's journey of self-discovery and identity creation in Jasmine may be seen, coinciding with her encounters in many natural settings. The story's portrayal of Jasmine's metamorphosis is complemented by the transformational force of nature, emphasizing the relationship between environmental surroundings and personal development. The novel's recurrent garden themes highlight the coexistence of cultural and natural aspects as well as the resilience of nature in the face of social change. The garden highlights the ecocritical undertones of the novel by representing both real and abstract areas of renewal and expansion. In *Holder of the World,* she skilfully blends the past and present to create a compelling story that examines the effects of colonialism on the environment and culture. Hannah Easton, the main character, witnesses the ecological destruction brought about by colonial exploitation, highlighting the significant influence of human activity on the ecosystem.
Keywords: Eco-criticism, Societal Norms, Homeland, Diaspora, Postcolonial, Religion vs Eco-Spirituality.

1. INTRODUCTION :

On a wider spectrum, this research paper makes an effort to draw attention to the anthropocentric attitude toward nature by highlighting a few different issues, including how scientific and technological advancements—such as the development of bombs—lead to self-destruction, colonialism, and climate change as a result of attacks on nature that cause ecological degradation. These provide the theoretical framework for analyzing the novels. The novel, *Holder of the World*, offers a critical analysis of European colonization, demonstrating how the Americas' resource extraction resulted in the deterioration and annihilation of native ecosystems. Mukherjee's nuanced depiction of these environmental effects highlights how critical it is to identify and treat ecological problems with a strong colonial heritage. Mukherjee creates an intimate bond between the protagonist and her surroundings by using vivid

descriptions of natural scenery. The author encourages readers to acknowledge how nature sculpts individual identity and collective legacy through Hannah's admiration of America's natural beauty. Mukherjee's incorporation of ecocriticism in these novels allows readers to reflect on their own relationship with nature and the environmental challenges we face today. By portraying the connections between humans and the natural world, she encourages us to reevaluate our attitudes and behaviours towards the environment and to consider our individual and collective responsibility in preserving it. In Desirable Daughters, Bharati Mukherjee combines issues of identity, migration, and ecological disruption to create a complex and nuanced exploration of the interconnections between humans and the natural world.

2. OBJECTIVE :

Ecocriticism explores how literary texts represent and engage with issues of environmental destruction, sustainability, and human interactions with nature. In this research paper, we will explore the presence of ecocriticism in novels of Bharati Mukherjee. Bharati Mukherjee demonstrates her engagement with ecocriticism through her nuanced portrayal of environmental themes and their impact on the lives of her characters. The novels discussed in this paper reveal the complexities of human-environment relationships, underscoring the need for a more sustainable and harmonious interaction with the natural world. As a renowned novelist, Mukherjee successfully highlights the importance of recognizing and addressing ecological issues within larger sociocultural conversations. Her narratives serve as a powerful reminder of the interconnectedness between humans, society, and the environment, urging readers to consider sustainable practices and environmental preservation. Through the narratives of her female characters, Mukherjee explores the environmental challenges faced by individuals and communities. Her novels emphasize the importance of reconnecting with nature, preserving indigenous cultural traditions, and engaging in sustainable practices to create a more harmonious relationship between humans and the natural world. Mukherjee's incorporation of ecocriticism raises awareness about environmental issues and inspires readers to contemplate their own actions in relation to the environment

3. METHODOLOGY :

This research study, which was conducted through an organized assessment of numerous studies on eco-critical issues that were accessible in archives and multiple libraries, served as the foundation for this work. Additionally, the article is a compilation of my most current research conducted for the Refresher course. Environmental problems have become increasingly prevalent in recent decades, and the post-COVID-19 age has opened everyone's eyes.

Globally, women's empowerment and environment has been a hotly debated and thought-provoking issues. Information on this was obtained from primary sources and libraries. Furthermore, this agenda item has consistently been near the top of lists including the vast majority of government programs and initiatives. Every nation has made consistent attempts to deal with this issue and resolve the global environmental crises.

There was also usage of grey literature. A methodical framework was implemented to locate and seek for precise facts that needed to be monitored and assessed. Through computerized databases and manuals, the necessary literature for the research was accessed. The Google Scholar journals, recommended books, and periodicals were searched using the following search engines.

The first search was conducted using the following keywords: Nature Relativity, Women, and Ecocriticism

Exclusion/Inclusion Criteria developed for gathering primary sources:

➢ Literature and data that weren't relevant were excluded; ➢ Research data that wasn't prioritized

➢ Basic novels were utilized because the study's focus was on examining the pertinent ecocritical issues in relation to Bharati Mukherjee's empowered women.

➢   The study employed comparative literature to determine the degree of inequality across various states and the extent of worldwide counterfeiting.

➢ A questionnaire was created with pertinent questions on eco-critical issues and it was discussed with coworkers.

A.   The Impact of Urbanization:

Image: https://www.eurekalert.org/
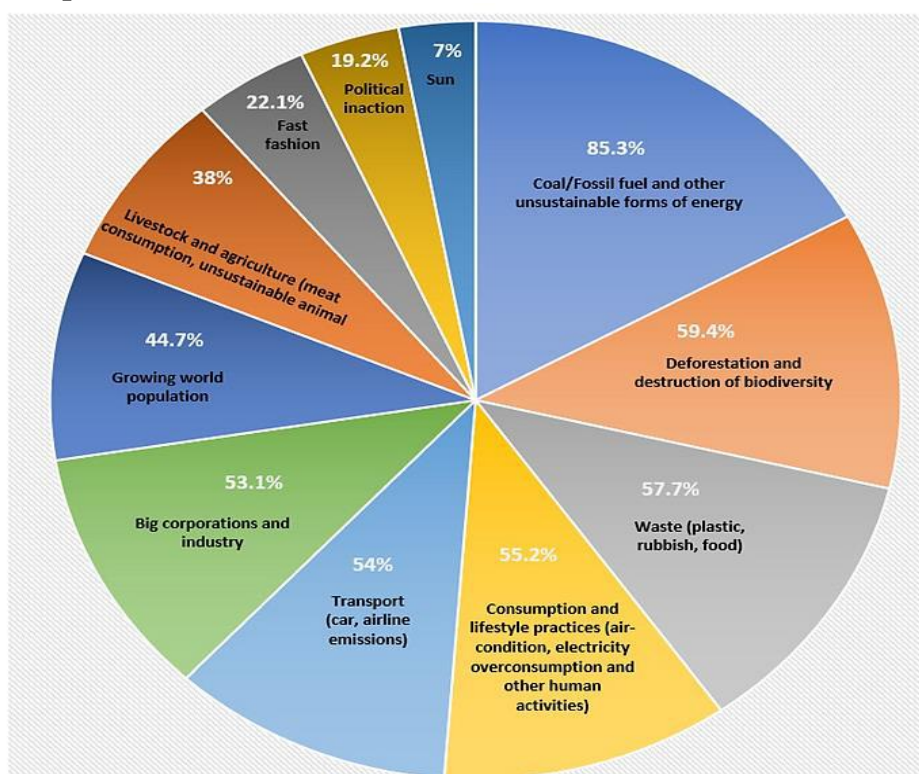
Bharati Mukherjee portrays the rapid urbanization of cities like Delhi and Silicon Valley, U.S as a backdrop in Desirable Daughters, highlighting society's increasing detachment from and disregard for natural environments. She offers a critique of the unsustainable lifestyle choices made by the affluent, demonstrating the devastating consequences of this disconnection on both individuals and the environment. The story is mostly set in Silicon Valley, California, a centre of rapid urbanization and technological innovation. Author addresses problems like deforestation, pollution, and the eradication of native plants and animals in order to draw attention to the negative effects that excessive urban growth and resource extraction have on the environment.

B.   Symbols of Decline:

Symbols such as the Yamuna River in Delhi represent the decline of natural resources due to pollution and indifference. Bharati Mukherjee intertwines these symbols with the narratives of her characters, illustrating the wide-ranging impact of ecological degradation on human lives and well-being.
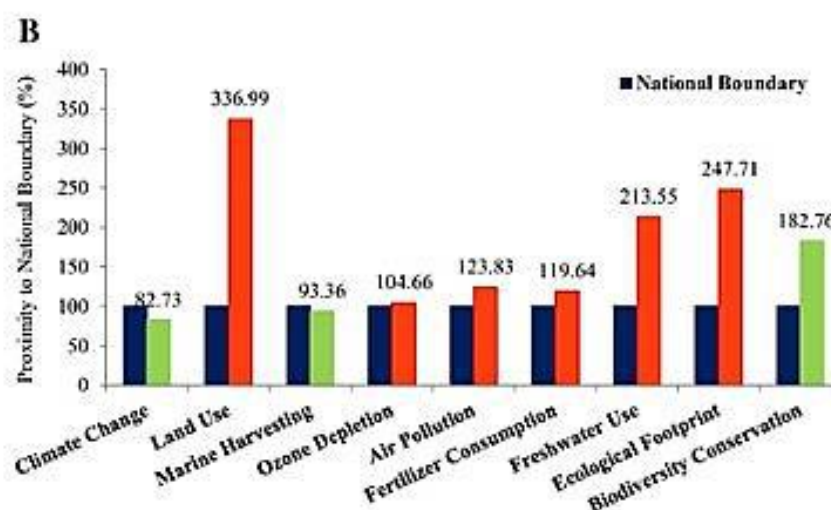
Image: Google.co.in

In *Tree Bride*, Mukherjee introduces the concept of tree brides. Women are married to trees in Indian folklore. This concept serves as a metaphor for the connection between nature and humans, highlighting the importance of preserving the environment. Through the character of Tara Chatterjee, Mukherjee explores the idea of environmental destruction and the loss of the symbiotic relationship between humans and nature. Tara, an Indian-American woman, moves from the United States to India to reconnect with her roots and becomes deeply immersed in her family's history. She discovers the story of her great aunt, Tara Lata, who was once married to a tree. Tara Chatterjee becomes obsessed with finding her great aunt's tree and ultimately discovers it dying due to deforestation and urban development.

"A dense, tiger-and-timber-rich jungle that separates the sea from the fragile interior. The treasure and the terror of East Bengal is its limitless fresh water for rice and fish and the 'blue devil' indigo and the forests of Sundari trees, straight and tall with a purplish density more resistant than iron" (Tree Bride. Pg. 52)

Mukherjee uses this narrative to convey the consequences of human actions on the natural environment. The dying tree symbolizes the deterioration of the relationship between humans and nature, as well as the loss of cultural traditions and beliefs. The novel emphasizes the importance of preserving the environment and reconnecting with nature to restore this relationship. Similarly, in *Desirable Daughters*, Mukherjee highlights the theme of connection to nature through the character of Tara Banerjee, an Indian-American woman who returns to Kolkata after living in the United States. Tara's journey back to her homeland exposes her to the cultural and environmental complexities of Kolkata.

C.   Diaspora and Identity in the Environment:

In The Holder of the World Bharati Mukherjee links the colonialist story with environmental consequences through the character of Hannah Easton, a young British woman in 17th-century India. The novel examines how colonization damaged indigenous people's relationships to their natural surroundings in addition to tearing groups apart. As Hannah navigates cultural strife in search of her identity, she learns about the environmental effects of British colonial control.

  The protagonist's voyage from rural India to the US in *Jasmine* illustrates the shock immigrants feel to their new country and culture. The book sheds light on the mental and emotional traumas and upheavals that foreigners encounter when attempting to adapt to a very different culture. The deleterious effects of cultural and habitat displacement are highlighted by the contrast between Jasmine's fast-paced, technologically-driven lifestyle in America and her upbringing in the country, where she was closely linked to nature.

D.   Environmental Responsibilities and Gender:

Desirable Daughters: As the protagonist Aditi grows more ecologically conscious, the narrative examines how gender roles shift within an Indian-American household. Aditi challenges gender stereotypes and positions herself as a conscientious steward of the environment as a result of her increased awareness of environmental destruction. Her path is consistent with ecofeminist viewpoints, which support gender parity and maintain that women are essential to the protection of the environment.

Mukherjee depicts gender interactions in the context of environmental challenges in a nuanced manner in *Jasmine*. She portrays Jasmine's development from a helpless, exploited woman to a strong, self-reliant person who turns into an activist for environmental justice. This development shows how women may become important change agents when it comes to solving ecological issues. The novel depicts the struggles and conflicts between tradition and modernity, both in terms of cultural values and environmental issues. Tara's interactions with her family and friends in Kolkata reveal the tension between preserving traditional values and embracing modernization, often at the expense of the natural environment. Mukherjee uses vivid descriptions of Kolkata's landscapes, such as the polluted rivers and overcrowded streets, to illustrate the environmental degradation caused by urbanization and industrialization. These descriptions serve as a critique of the human impact on the natural world and the need for sustainable development.

Furthermore, Mukherjee introduces the character of Rabi Sharma, an environmentalist who is committed to fighting against the destructive forces that threaten Kolkata's environment. Rabi's character represents the ecocritical perspective within the narrative, advocating for a harmonious relationship between humans and nature. Through Rabi, Mukherjee emphasizes the importance of collective action in addressing environmental issues. Rabi's activism and commitment to environmental preservation inspire Tara to become more aware of her role in protecting the environment and to question her own complacency.
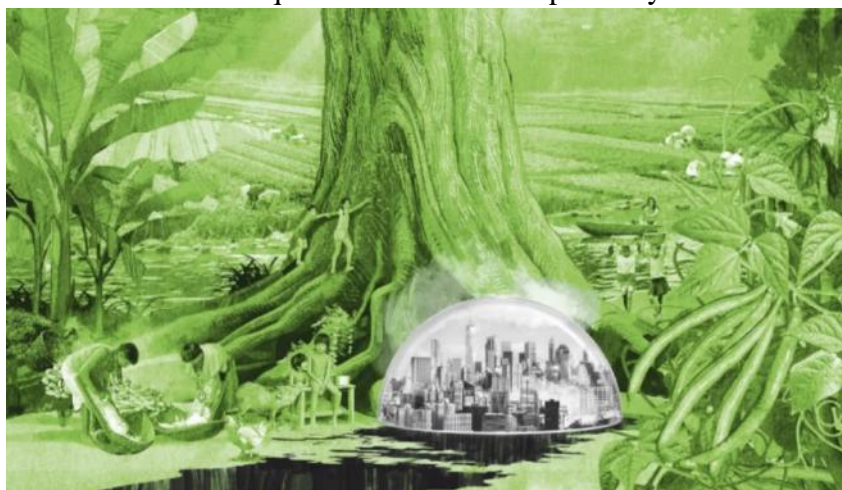
Eco-Balance: google.co.in

In both *Tree Bride* and *Desirable Daughters*, Mukherjee intertwines the experiences of her female characters with the larger environmental concerns of the settings they inhabit. Through their narratives, she raises awareness about the importance of ecological balance, the consequences of environmental degradation, and the need for sustainable practices The Tree Bride combines historical representation—which emphasizes the West—with colonial storytelling to represent the East. This paper tries to investigate this aspect from the standpoint of ecological narrative, departing from the larger theme in favour of a per contra account. The image that it presents is of nature being exploited for human avarice. The novels explore the

experiences of Indian women in different cultural contexts. Through the narratives of these women, Mukherjee provides insights into their complexities and challenges in relation to traditional beliefs, family expectations, and social roles.

ECO-SPIRITUALITY vs RELIGION

Religion and eco-spirituality are two separate but interconnected ideas that are important in Bharati Mukherjee's writings. Mukherjee delves into the intricacies of human existence, society, and the environment in her writing, frequently addressing topics of spirituality, social justice, and ecology. The protagonists' strong bond with nature and their awareness of its enormous influence on their lives serve as a metaphor for eco-spirituality.

Eco-Spirituality: Google.co.in

For instance, Mukherjee depicts the protagonist's path of self-discovery and development in *Jasmine*, which is entwined with her relationship with nature. Jasmine, the main character, encounters diverse settings, such the California desert and the Iowa cornfields, and gains spiritual insights, advice, and comfort from them. These encounters are a reflection of the eco-spiritual belief in the healing and transformational power of nature.

First and foremost, it's critical to comprehend the notion of eco-spirituality. A philosophical and spiritual perspective known as eco-spirituality places a strong emphasis on the interdependence of all living things and their interaction with the environment. It acknowledges the intrinsic worth and holiness of the natural environment and works to promote peaceful coexistence of people and it. Eco-spirituality, which incorporates aspects of reverence, gratitude, and stewardship towards the land, is frequently inspired by indigenous traditions and practices. The way that Mukherjee depicts culture, tradition, and identity heavily relies on religion. As a writer, born in India but who spent a significant portion of her life in the US, she examines issues related to religious rituals, beliefs, and disputes in the narratives. She explores the intricacies and diversity of religion via her characters, emphasizing its capacity to offer consolation, direction, and a feeling of belonging. Mukherjee, however, also criticizes religious dogma's restricting elements and how they can impede one's ability to grow and be free. Religion and eco-spirituality converge through the examination of concepts like moral obligation, environmental stewardship, and the holiness of the natural world. Scriptures and teachings from a wide range of religious traditions place a strong emphasis on taking care of the planet and its inhabitants. Tara, a young Hindu girl in Bharati Mukherjee's The *Tree Bride*, is drawn to trees because of their holiness and their connection to a number of tales and legends. As she acknowledges the divine presence in environment and has a moral need to conserve it,

she emphasizes the connection of her religious views and eco-spiritual principles, in the framework of eco-spirituality and religion,

Image: google.co.in
Goddess Gaia is the personification of Earth in Greek mythology. All life has Gaia as its ancestral mother, occasionally parthenogenic.

Bharati Mukherjee's literature frequently addresses the conflict between modernity and tradition. The relationship between people and nature frequently deteriorates as cultures get more technologically advanced and urbanized. Through her protagonists she examines the difficulties people encounter when attempting to balance their moral principles and spiritual convictions with the expectations of modern society. Characters who battle to reconcile their cultural and religious background with the reality of the modern world are used to illustrate this contradiction. Mukherjee's literary research of eco-spirituality and religion is a reflection of her identity and personal experiences. Her view on these subjects was shaped by her dual existence in two distinct cultural and spiritual realms as an Indian American writer. Incorporating aspects of Western religious traditions, Buddhism, Hinduism, and modern world realities, Mukherjee's works frequently traverse the intricacies of cultural integration, hybridity, and the quest for identity.

Her literary works offer a sophisticated examination of religion and eco-spirituality, illuminating their connections and the conflicts that result from their cohabitation in a world that is changing quickly. She examines the difficulty of balancing tradition and modernity, the transforming force of nature, and the influence of religion on identity and culture via her characters. Through eco-spirituality, readers can experience spiritual growth and liberation and reflect on their own relationship with the natural world and their ethical obligations towards it. Mukherjee's work encourages readers to do just that. By doing this, she adds to the conversation

about sustainability and spirituality and provides a distinct viewpoint based on her personal experiences and multicultural upbringing.
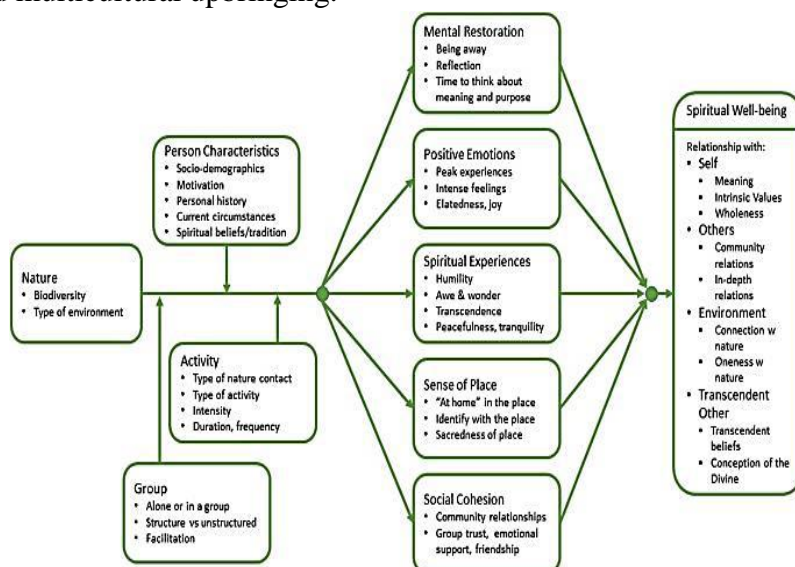
Interconnectedness between Eco-systems and Spirituality.
Image: Google.co.in

A complicated and multidimensional idea, the relationship between ecosystems and spirituality acknowledges the innate connection and connectivity of all living things and the natural environment. Spiritual traditions have long highlighted the unity and interdependence of environment and humans, understanding that ecosystem health and well-being are critical to human flourishing. Embracing eco-spirituality and growing in ecological consciousness can encourage responsible and sustainable management of the Earth and strengthen one's sense of connectedness to it. Furthermore, one's spiritual journey can be informed and enhanced by the profound spiritual lessons and insights found in nature itself. A more harmonious and long-lasting interaction between humans and the natural environment can be achieved by acknowledging and respecting the connections between spirituality and ecosystems.

When Bharati Mukherjee narrativizes the inner journey of self-realisation in most of her novels she proclaims that achieving spirituality does not mean giving up on worldly life. When it comes to releasing human emotions and providing the desired spiritual redemption, nature is essential. The heroes of Bharati Mukherjee are strong, independent women who control a significant portion of their own destiny. With a lively vitality, they traverse vast, wide landscapes, and they can transform the social milieu they find themselves in into a setting fit for the curious mind. Similar to how natural resources are exploited, women are similarly exploited by the patriarchal society that regards women as part of nature. The Holder of the World by Mukherjee explores transnational movement across geographic boundaries while simultaneously spanning the twentieth to seventeenth centuries, so creating a novel that juxtaposes the past with the present. Reaching out to nature in times of hardship and despair is indicative of Mukherjee's heroine Hannah Easton's journey across continents. As she embarks on her last voyage, nature renews her soul's longing and changes her into a peace-promoting force. Beigh Masters is mesmerized by the exquisiteness of the Mughal paintings, which feature a light-haired woman with golden hair set against a vivid backdrop of sensual colours from wild New England. The vibrant greenery of the monsoon is also captured in the paintings, along with the characteristic colour shift of the oak trees and the brightness of the maples. The amazing picture of Indians frying fish over an open fire, wolf-dog howling, jellyfish swirling, and kids hurling stones from the beach are all captured in the painting of nature's splendour. The

magnificent Mughal picture, which reveals the abundance and flow of natural resources during their time, fascinates the narrator.

4. CONCLUSION:

Beyond just examining identity and migration, Bharati Mukherjee's novels deftly include ecocritical issues into their stories. Through an exploration of the ecological consequences of urbanization, a study of the relationship between diaspora and environmental identity, and an emphasis on the role gender plays in environmental responsibility, Mukherjee clarifies the intricate interplay between people, their surroundings, and themselves. Through her work, Mukherjee raises awareness of the significance of appreciating our cultural diversity, fostering sustainable ways, and comprehending our environmental obligations in order to establish a peaceful coexistence between humans and nature. The Tree Bride (2004) by Bharati Mukherjee blends historical narrative—particularly that of the British Raj—with betrayal and mythical interpretation. When she describes how Vertie Treadwell killed Tigers for pleasure the questions, she raises to her readers are translucent and plausible: Is it a satire of humankind's pointless dominance over Nature? "Where are we going?" Are we asserting our dominance over nature? Or is Nature prepared to exact retribution for every deed? In light of this, it is appropriate to consider, if future humans would undoubtedly comprehend, given what they presumably know about the history of their ancestors on Earth, that the belief that planets and asteroids are inactive was held by a sizable portion of their kind for a relatively little period of time—less than three centuries. These pertinent questions are addressed indubitably in the post-COVID-19 world of today.

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Feminism and Marital Discord in the Selected Fictional Works of Kamala Das and Alice Walker

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Abstract: *This paper highpoints how women were oppressed in the patriarchal society overwhelmed with dogmatic beliefs and parochial outlook. From the outset of existence, female is represented as the weaker sex who is invariably belittled in the patriarchal society. Woman's identity was based on identity of her father or husband. Feminist literature brings to light the suppression, unjust dominance and discrimination prevalent in the society against women. In the texts we also find the existential predicament of the individuals who are projected through incompatible couples – very sensitive wives and ill matched husbands. Kamala Das and Alice Walker shows how women who are married need some time and understanding from their husbands at least, to regulate to their new environment, but they do not get these which leads to marital discord. Kamala Das in My Story and Alice Walker in The Color Purple have established the protagonists as such luminaries who had an arduous but successful journey from subjugation towards liberation.*

Keywords*: Feminism, Patriarchy, Discrimination, Marital Discord, Liberation.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Literature arises out of life and registers our hopes and thoughts, dreams and ambitions, failures and dissatisfactions, motives and desires, along with experiences and interpretations. Over the time as years passed by, literature has replicated the prevailing societal, economic, political and domestic issues. Good literature is not once outdated and is never bound by the limiting bonds or power of place and time. Literature is permanent and worldwide, it charms readers through national or language boundaries. Language spoken by the people or the culture followed may be different but sentiments of humans remain basically the same in all writings of the world. In the fictitious world of the female writer's women comes to occupy a significant position. The sensitive world of female's feminine thoughtfulness enlightens an unusual imaginative cognizance of various unfathomable forces at work along with an intense understanding of psychology. The female novelists who have magnificently carved a place for themselves on the literary horizon.

The roles assigned to females in literature are frequently quite widespread in spectrum. Females were frequently portrayed as subordinate characters to men who established the story

line end to end, while the women simply presented a secondary role in the middle of the action. Female writers from corner to corner of the world embrace their own position in the female writer's world of preliminary denunciation, unhappiness, domestic bonds, married life and what not. It is noteworthy that many female authors have scaled the ladder of achievement in a slow and agonizing way and received worldwide fame. Women have been subjugated and maltreated by patriarchal societies all over the world. The manipulation of women by male incites her to revolt in contrast to the social system and claim for its re-formation. The womenfolk have been treated as a thing of desire and deprived of social, political and economic righteousness. They were basically ignored as the weaker sex. Due to the spread of schooling and the inspiration of a small number of institutions, the females were unbound from the oppression in male-controlled society. The selected novels in this article not only describes the feminist pains and distresses but also the central character's voice to justice. These texts also emphases on how women arise as a phoenix in quest of liberty from carnal tortures and move progressively towards the self-consciousness. In these works of fiction women folk are seen as worst victims, highly repressed by a social tantalization or marital discord.

The female characters, while illuminating their psychological responses, generally point out to the altering environment in the given social order. These texts are also exploration into the psyche of women where we can trace their search for life, the quest for her place in the multifarious reality of life. In both the novels women break the shackles of patriarchy. These texts reveals the estrangement of middleclass women. Both the authors have explored the complicated facts of human understanding bearing upon the emotional tensions of the female characters. Male chauvinist society is bound by conventions and conservative in their thoughts and actions which makes women as sufferers and vulnerable. Women particularly young, innocent and immature become easy target to these settlements, as they are stranded, likely to grieve, defaulters and are consequently more exposed than their mature counterparts. Kamala Das in *My Story* and Alice Walker in *The Color Purple* have established the protagonists as such personalities who break the chains of patriarchy and set themselves free.

OBJECTIVES
1. To study the literature of selected novels in the perspective of feminism.
2. Tracing history of Feminism and evidences of marital discord.
3. To explore the inner turmoil and battles of female characters in male dominated society.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:
The Review of literature will comprise of a detailed study undertaken by various agents in the set fields
- Books
- Thesis
- Journals
- Articles
- Reviews

3. METHODOLOGY:
1. Critical and analytical study of the selected feminist literary pieces.
2. Study of secondary sources like journals, research articles and papers etc.
3. It will be based on Feminism theory.

CONTENT

Feminism is a methodology which ranges socio-political movements and ideologies thus aim to define and establish the political, economic, personal and social equality of the sexes. Feminism hold the position that societies prioritize the male point of view and that women are treated unjustly in these societies. The term feminism entails questions of self-actualization, gender discrimination and imposed silences. The selected novels will be analyzed through the spectacle of feminism. Protagonists in the selected novels have been fighting against gender stereotypes and made efforts to improve professional, educations and interpersonal opportunities of women. Through the efforts of feminists women got aware of her rights and broke the shackles of patriarchy to make her own identity. Feminism is considered as an ideology and movement which worked to change the status of women in the patriarchal society.

The word Feminism provides positive and holistic approach which aims to understand the social and cultural transformation of men and women. It also refers towards change in the human relationship in terms of their identity, family life as well as public and private spheres. This article illuminates the challenging conditions and difficult circumstances faced by the women folk in different domains. The selected feminist literary pieces the authors have shown and highlighted the internal struggle of female characters. They take center stage, depicting their unwavering determination and decision to live an independent and stable life within the social and family structure.

The patriarchy is the name for the system that privileges men. In this system, men holds most or all of the power, and it is difficult or impossible for women to reach the same status as men. The patriarchy does not mean a small group of men actively making decisions to oppress women. Rather, it is a name for a system that historically has given men more rights than women. Throughout the history of human civilization the voice of women has been suppressed by this patriarchal society. Patriarchy has a long history and it has become a social system in which men dominates, exploit, oppress and subordinate women.

The liberation of women did not confine to socio-political spheres but extended to creative arts, especially in literature. The ever-changing status of women in the society is best seen in the literary works. Female writers have begun to come out on the contemporary literary scene with their talent of writing. Among them women writers are in forefront. The confidence, sincerity and courage of women with the superiority of language hold the fiction as a mirror of reality. Their writing reflects the position of women prevailing in the society and their struggle for the achievement of equality, dignity and freedom of choice within and outside the home. This mindset of the sexist society has forced women to play the preconceived gender roles. The basic characteristic of feminist movement is the realization that men and women are unequally placed in society. Through resilience and unflinching determination many women writers overcame their predicament and established their individual identity.

Kamala Das is eulogized as a new kind of writer and in *My Story* she wrote her autobiography from the age of four. She discussed her personal life in her memoir *My Story* which is bold, daring and self-assertive. Reader can easily find how the text encompasses the multifarious emotional world experienced by woman.

> "My Story is my autobiography which I began writing during my first serious bout with heart disease. The doctor thought that writing would distract my mind from the fear of a sudden death and, besides, there were all the hospital bills to be taken care of....Between short hours of sleep induced by the drugs given to me the nurses, I wrote continually, not merely to honour my commitment but because I wanted to empty myself of all the secrets so that I

could depart when the time came, with a scrubbed out conscience... The serial had begun to appear in the issues of the journal which flooded the bookstalls in Kerala. My relatives were embarrassed. I had disgraced my well-known family by telling my readers that I had fallen love with a man other than my lawfully wedded husband...This book has cost many things that I held dear but I do not for a moment regret having written it." (Das, Preface in *My Story*).

She grappled against all odds to challenge the inhuman system of male patriarchy and projected the real aspects of woman to be a human being at par with man. Kamala Das, through her autobiography *My Story*, confronts the societal constraints imposed by a male-dominated culture, reflecting on her struggles for identity and self-expression. She challenges patriarchal norms, exposing the disparities in power between genders and advocating for women's autonomy. The narrative intertwines personal experiences with broader themes of feminism, colonialism, and societal expectations. Das uses her writing as a medium for self-discovery and identity formation, highlighting the therapeutic and liberating aspects of her literary expression. Her candid and unapologetic approach to addressing taboo subjects such as love, sex, and societal norms contributes to the controversial nature of her work. The autobiography sheds light on Das' early life in a traditional South Indian household, emphasizing the oppressive nature of patriarchal values and societal expectations. From her childhood awareness of colonial tyranny to her rebellion against imposed cultural norms, Das emerges as a voice challenging the status quo. Marriage becomes a focal point in Das' narrative, portraying the societal pressure and limitations placed on women.

"I had expected him to take me in his arms and stroke my face, my hair, my hands and whisper loving words. I had expected him to be all that I wanted my father to be and my mother. I wanted conversation, companionship and warmth. Sex was far from my thoughts. I had hoped that he would remove with one sweep of his benign arms, the loneliness of my life." (Das, *My Story.*)

Her exploration of the disappointments and struggles within her own marriage becomes a metaphor for the broader challenges faced by women in a patriarchal society. The text also touches upon Das' complex relationship with her parents, the clash of traditional and modern values, and the impact of colonialism on her perception of self and society. The autobiography becomes a platform for her to critique and question established norms, advocating for a redefinition of womanhood. Throughout *My Story*, Kamala Das grapples with issues of victimization, cultural identity, and the quest for personal freedom. Her writing serves not only as a reflection of her own experiences but also as a call to action for women to assert their individuality and challenge societal expectations. The narrative invites readers to reconsider their views on femininity, patriarchy, and the struggles faced by women in a changing world.

Another feminist writer is Alice Walker's whose works, especially *The Color Purple*, provides a comprehensive understanding of the oppression faced by women. The exploration of Celie's character, her development and the feminist perspectives within the novel adds depth to the discussion. It's evident that Walker's narrative not only addresses racial and gender issues but also emphasizes the importance of individual growth and empowerment. The incorporation of these themes along with subjugation of female characters in the novel adds color to the novel. Celie's transformation from a victim of patriarchal oppression to a strong, independent woman highlights the spirit of feminism to the core.

The text touches upon the broader context of black feminism and womanism, shedding light on the struggles faced by African-American women authors in addressing societal challenges. It provide a comprehensive exploration of feminism in Alice Walker's *The Color*

Purple, delving into themes of patriarchy, rape as a tool of oppression, womanhood, and motherhood. The text spans the protagonist Celie's journey, highlighting her evolution from victimization to self-realization, with a focus on the impact of art, particularly quilting, in fostering female connection and empowerment. The examination of Walker's portrayal of characters and societal structures, such as apartheid and dehumanization, adds depth to the discussion.

The Color Purple by Alice Walker delves into Celie's profound journey through marital discord to personal empowerment. The narrative is structured as Celie's letters to God, and through these, readers witness her struggles and transformation. Initially subjected to abuse, oppression, and a stifling lack of autonomy in her marriages, Celie's resilience becomes a central theme. Celie's stepfather has given a very bad picture of Celie to Mr. Albert. When Mr._ comes to ask for Nettie, their father flatly has refused to give her. Instead, he offers Celie for Nettie. He tells Mr.____ "Fact is, he say, I got to git rid of her. She is too old to be living here at home. And she has a bad influence on my other girls. And another thing —She tell lies" (9).Celie's relationship with her husband "Mr.__" is emblematic of the societal and gender dynamics of the time, with women facing subjugation and mistreatment. Celie narrates the moments of her marital sexual involvement with her husband Albert. It is an act of similar dehumanizing in which the conjugal act appears to look like rape.

> "Mr. __come git me to take care of his rotten children. He never
> ast   me nothing bout myself. He clam on top of me
> and…………., even when my head bandaged. Nobody ever
> love me. I say" (Walker109).

The introduction of Shug Avery into Celie's life marks a turning point. Shug becomes a source of support and encouragement, fostering Celie's self-discovery. Sofia's struggle for a meaningful existence displays her strong will power and ability to transcend the racist and sexist society Sofia is of the belief that women would survive only by possessing strong faith on themselves and great determination added with ability to fight when needed.

> "All my life I had to fight. I had to fight my daddy. I had to fight my
> brothers; I had to fight my cousins and my uncles. A girl child ain't
> safe in a family of men" (Walker 38).

As Celie builds connections with other women and asserts her independence, the novel challenges traditional gender roles and explores the strength found in female solidarity. Celie's evolution from a voiceless victim to a self-empowered woman highlights the transformative power of resilience and the importance of forging one's identity.

5. CONCLUSION:

In these two novels we saw the resilience of the protagonists who notwithstanding the poignant traumatic events in their lives battled against all odds, emerged triumphant and surpassed subjugation to attain liberation. Patriarchal society confined women in houses and deprived them of social roles and their overlooked desires. In *My Story* and *The Color Purple* feminist writers Kamala Das and Alice Walker have provided an opportunity to the female characters not only to defend themselves but gain individuality and social roles. Reader of these texts can easily comprehend that not only the protagonist but other female characters are transformed from shy, timid, on-fighter to a courageous fighter. They revolted against marital discord, patriarchal ideology and attained financial progress.

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ICT- Enabled Language Teaching and Learning: A Study

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Abstract :   The evolution of Information and Communication Technology has marked significant changes and advancements in language teaching and learning. This massive leap in technology has transformed traditional methods of teaching and learning by adopting more interactive learning platforms, online resources, digital tools and other technological devices to embrace the new journey. Integration of these technologies has gigantically transformed the language facilitation process. The use of technology helps in creating a long- lasting impact on the learners and the role of a facilitator can be replaced by self -paced, independent learning. The advent of ICT in education has provided unlimited access to resources and information and is defined as a great support for teachers and improves the quality of student learning. The drive towards digitalization has transformed teaching resources, giving greater emphasis to dynamism and student interaction with the subject matter. The research paper will address the innovative technologies embedded in teaching and learning and its impact on English language.

Key words: Technology, Communication, Digitalization, language.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Technology plays a significant role in every field and education sector is undoubtedly one such field where its impact is paramount. With the advancement in technology, education becomes easier, congenial and accessible. In the past two decades, digital technology has become pervasive, impacting virtually every aspect of our daily lives. Digital revolution has changed the face of the world today. There is a drastic spurt in technological advancement in the past two decades and it has an enormous impact on education at large. Technology in education has aided tremendous advancements in the teaching learning process. With the emerging trends in technology, teachers are embracing and integrating technology in the classroom to enable students to become more efficient in adapting innovative methods of teaching learning. The conventional classroom teaching has been replaced by various electronic gadgets and technology which provides teachers and students with lot of innovative and practical ideas to create a learner-friendly environment.

The adoption of technology in schools and Colleges has completely changed the teaching learning process. With the emerging trends in technology, teachers are embracing and integrating technology in the classroom to enable students to become more efficient in language acquisition. The utilization of mobile apps in education has recently started to appeal the potential and significant progress in language learning. The traditional classroom teaching can

be replaced by various electronic gadgets and technology. Learning English language through apps is more interesting and fun for the current generation learners. There are numerous apps for English grammar, phonetics, language -based games, storytelling, improving listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, vocabulary, dictionaries, etc. Since these apps are developed to enhance the language skills of the learners, emphasis should be primarily made on the acquisition of language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing skills through mobile technology.

2. ICT enabled language learning :

ICT has transformed traditional teaching methods by offering interactive learning platforms, online resources, and digital tools that enhance the learning experience. In today's rapidly evolving world, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) plays a pivotal role in shaping every aspect of modern life. It enhances connectivity, enables instant communication and information sharing across the globe. It also empowers individuals by providing access to a wealth of knowledge and educational resources, bridging gaps in learning and information dissemination. In a nutshell, ICT' drives innovation, fosters connectivity, improves efficiency, and empowers individuals thus making it an indispensable cornerstone of the modern world.

The evolution of Information and Communication Technology has been a transformative journey marked by significant advancements across various technological fronts. The integration of networking technologies and the birth of the internet in the late 20th century created a global interconnected system, allowing for the seamless exchange of information worldwide.

This led to the emergence of the World Wide Web, enabling easy access to vast amounts of information and fostering digital communication. Some of the benefits are enhanced engagement, accessibility to material and flexibility in study schedules, personalized learning, improved collaboration, rich content and authentic resources; access to diverse online content such as videos, podcasts, articles, and authentic materials in the target language enriches learning and provides real-world context.

English language has become the tool for learning, business and most importantly communication. In order to improve the whole experience of English language acquisition, facilitators have to integrate ICT (Information and Communication Technology) with current learning methodology as English is considered to be a global language and henceforth learning and comprehending it, has been acknowledged worldwide today. ICT has been discovered to be a very powerful tool for educational change and reform.

ICT enabled English Language teaching and learning proved to be an excellent method of enhancing the teaching and learning process. ICT enabled language learning can help one to restructure the efficiency and effectiveness of their learning process as it is a very flexible, interactive and rich platform that would provide the users a whole new different experience.

We are in the Digital era today, and these technological learners know well how to use technological tools without any formal instruction as such. Even if they require instruction, they would be able to grasp and implement it very quickly. These learners interact and communicate with others mostly with the help of electronic mediums like mails, internet etc. They obtain most of the information from electronic devices, which has made such tools, a very essential component of their daily life.

Using ICT in a classroom as a tool for language learning has a lot more benefit. It gives stimulus to undertake the tasks that the students may otherwise avoid. In an ICT enabled language learning class, the students would conduct the activities on the computer software platform and they will not have any sorts of hesitations or inhibitions. It would make repetitive

tasks more interesting and would have content which could be in multimedia formats. The use of multi -media while learning English could help in creating a long- lasting impact on the learners. The role of a facilitator will change to that of a Coordinator. Self -paced independent learning methodology is what is being propagated with the help ICT enabled English Language Teaching.

Information and communication technologies are impacting many areas of society, especially in educational institutions. To get the most out of them, it is useful to know the advantages and disadvantages of ICT in education. The characteristics of new technologies offer the possibility of developing new ways of teaching and learning, transforming the traditional educational model. Currently, traditional teaching transmitted from teacher to student is losing relevance as a consequence of the digital transformation of education.

In this context, digital tools have become a fundamental support for education professionals, as they allow them to store, process and share all teaching material through multiple electronic devices, and even create new content in a much more attractive way. The arrival of ICT in education has provided unlimited access to resources and information and is defined as a great support for teachers and improves the quality of student learning. The drive towards digitalization has transformed teaching resources, giving greater emphasis to dynamism and student interaction with the subject matter. The use of simultaneous presentations, videos, applications and didactic images facilitates teaching, as it increases the involvement of students in the teaching process, as they are the protagonists and not the teacher, as stipulated by the traditional expository methodology. New technological tools not only bring innovation to academic centers, but also speed up the transfer of information, increase student interest, and allow processes to be automated.

3. Advantages of ICT enabled Language teaching/Learning

- Improves concentration and comprehension. Any activity carried out through digital and interactive tools increase student concentration and, therefore, they assimilate concepts more quickly, enhancing learning.
- Promotes student flexibility and autonomy and promotes autonomous learning for students. With the incorporation of digital alternatives such as online courses, each student can learn at their own pace, optimizing time and resources thanks to the flexibility provided by digitalization and connectivity.
- Enhances critical thinking. The diverse sources of information that technologies provide bring new points of view to students. In this way, information and communication technologies encourage debate and the acceptance of other people's opinions. In addition, the exchange of thoughts allows students to learn about different cultures.
- Facilitates communication between teachers and students. The whole educational community has quick access to the same resources. In this way, digital tools allow direct and immediate interaction, without the need to be physically present. This was especially important during the confinement experienced during the 2020 health crisis.
- Increased classroom productivity and collaborative work, specifically that allows access to online content, improve learning productivity by optimizing instruction time.
- It stimulates motivation. The incorporation of technologies in the classroom improves the motivation of students; it is a quick and practical technique to stimulate the study of new concepts. Digital tools are the daily communicative support of the new generations; therefore, they are easily handled in this environment.

4. Disadvantages of ICT enabled Language teaching/Learning

- Digitalization means opening up unlimited access to multiple resources and sources of information, such as web pages, social networks or chats, and therefore, they take attention away from the subject matter.
- Excessive and inappropriate use can lead students to a compulsive relationship with technology, which can lead to an inability to control consumption and, consequently, have adverse effects on the student's health, social, family and academic life.
- It reduces the development of other skills, such as writing, public speaking and reasoning may be nullified by the widespread adoption of digitization in academic institutions.
- Much of the information available on the internet is false or incomplete. This fact has a direct influence on the media literacy of students, especially in the ESO educational stage, since half of them do not know how to detect false news.
- A lack of knowledge about the dangers of cybercrime can unintentionally expose learners data, especially if they are minors, for example, by sharing photos with strangers.
- With the incorporation of new technologies, the learning process becomes more distant and the human contact with teachers and classmates decreases. As a consequence, by reducing human contact, isolation can appear and become an obstacle to students' personal development.
- The lack of physical contact can lead to a loss of assertiveness and misuse of online tools and platforms, which can lead to digital bullying situations.

5. Conclusion:

Digital technology has expanded its access to education and has enabled new forms of communication between students and facilitators. The widespread adoption of this new developed technology has significantly benefited education in classrooms as it encourages students' learning and growth, facilitates peer collaboration as well as communication, and enables access to new content easily. The internet has become such a common place and the way we use these resources effectively has transformed the way individuals live today. Therefore, technology has now become an integral part of life. Despite the rapid advancement in technology, we must be aware that the teacher is indispensable in education, and the ICT is only a way to improve the performance of education and guide students.

It is important to note that technology is a tool used in education and not an end in itself. The promise of educational technology lies in what educators do with it and how it is used to best support their students' needs.

"The goal of education is the advancement of knowledge and the dissemination of truth"- John F. Kennedy.

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The Trivial is Real: Deconstructing 'Truth' in Raja Rao's The Cat and Shakespeare and S. Radhakrishnan's The Hindu View of Life

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Abstract : *Truth is intriguing due to its mystery. It is commonly misconstrued as relative and misunderstood as intimate. The enigmatic nature of truth has captivated human minds throughout history, sparking debates and discussions that often lead to diverse interpretations. This paper aims to challenge prevalent prejudices surrounding truth, delving into its perceived relativity and misunderstood intimacy. By examining the extent to which truth is considered absolute and unbiased, we seek to emphasize the necessity of catalysts for its timeless significance and its profound impact on human transformation.*

Key words: *Truth, Real, Perception, Introspection, Hinduism, Absolute.*

1. INTRODUCTION :

सत्येन   धार्यते   पृथ्वी   सत्येन   तपते   रविः।
सत्येन वायवो वान्ति सर्वं सत्ये प्रतिष्ठितम्।। Chanakya Neeti 5.19

The earth is supported by the power of truth; it is the power of truth that makes the sun 'shine and the winds blow; indeed, all things rest upon truth.

Hinduism is profound. Why? It is because the shloka doesn't reveal the nature but the neat syntax and clear semantics of Truth. The power of one Truth is substantiated by the other because the absolute is everywhere. The confluence of the one and the other is a magnificent display of complement but not convergence. The stand-alone is as complete as the universe. Each is merely a mirror reflecting the light of the other. Thus, the sun shines, is a truth manifested via sunlight and sunshine is the extension of Truth itself. Thus, according to the verse, truth is both the foundation and manifestation. The reliance on truth is implied by its absolute presence in the macrocosmic universe and its abode in microcosmic human life. The realm of truth does not have a circumference, but would it be imprudent to say that truth is often towed to convenience? Possibly. The paper aims to deconstruct the assertions surrounding the relativity of Truth, examining the extent to which it can be useful and free from conditioning, perception, and convergence.

 Truth is one of the significant points of interest in philosophy and extends to metaphysics, theology, and beyond. It is neither a halo nor a relative pastiche of experiences alone. What makes Truth true may depend on 'coherence, utility if believing, correspondence with a fact or its agreement with experience.' (**Ayer, 1953**) Much of the research is centered around discovering Truth, but Raja Rao's The Cat and Shakespeare is an attempt to free Truth from the shackles of relative perceptions. The

paper's objective is not to find Truth but to understand the purpose of truth and explore the basic polarities of truth and falsehood believed through perceptions. The focus is not to present reality's true nature but the truth's semantics. An absolute truth is a fact devoid of logic. Corollary, all facts are not bound by logic, nor can the force of rationalism refute them. It is because we 'ought to seek to find out what is true and believe it' **(Christensen, 2013)** Rationalism aims to build the foundation of reasons to support the veracity of fact upheld as absolute truth.

Though rationality is inquisitive by default, therefore, on a continuous quest to find answers to self-designed questions, it can't investigate alone; rationality is by default born with the memory of and the presence of legacy of beliefs because 'belief is the criterion of relative truth rather than what relative truth consists in.' **(Meiland, 1977)** At this point, questions that lead to answers about perennial facts can be collectively called absolute Truth. Truth is inevitable, imperishable but not impenetrable because truth is very easy to understand. Absolute truth can be likened to existence because both do not need any rational explanation; ergo, truth-like existence exists. The absolute is not imposed on the subjective; relative subjectivity helps understand truth. The thinking subject may be said to be "in the truth" to the extent that his thought is in relation to "unity" or "identity with the content of knowledge. **(Schacht, 1973)** Yet the entire exercise is in vain because all facts don't fall into the realm of rationalism alone. Facts, which defy logic are called beliefs. An absolute truth is more universal and less personal as a lasting belief. Further, Truth is like a living tradition, (which) influences our inner faculties, humanizes sour nature, and lifts us to a higher level'. (Radhakrishnan, p.18) The cat becomes Truth for the protagonist in its oxymoronic moving silence, propelling the catalyst called rumination aimed at comprehending silence through introspective communication while maintaining outward silence. Thus, truth becomes useful in edifying the mind.

Moreover, an absolute truth is enmeshed in life like wind in the clouds or sun in the sky. It is visible to the discerning eye and agile mind because it is an unshakeable acknowledgment of macrocosmic facts not beyond human comprehension. The existence of truths larger than life is also a reminder to accept the puny existence of man humbly. It is because truth establishes our contact with the world and is transcendent as it is a relation between ourselves and that which lies outside of and beyond us. **(Malpas, 1992)** Thus, while the cat is a trivial everyday domestic animal, it is the real and absolute truth because its 'silence' is beyond the protagonist Ramakrishna Pai and his friend Govindan Nair. The 'Hindu has acknowledged that truth wears vestures of many colours and speaks in strange tongues' (Radhakrishnan, p.36), similar to the Cat, which is micro symbolizing macro, making the understanding of Truth more magnanimous than fanatic, more flexible than fortified in its beliefs. However, flexibility should not be misconstrued as the tweaking of truth but rather of perception towards absolute Truth and its equally potent manifestation in the microcosmic world.

2. Objectives

- o Challenge Prejudices Surrounding Truth
- o Emphasize the Necessity of Catalysts for Truth
- o Liberate Truth from the Necessity of Convergence

3. Literature Review :

The exploration of truth, its perceived relativity, and the intricate relationship between perception and objectivity has been a recurrent theme in literature and philosophical discourse. This literature review surveys key works that delve into the complexities surrounding truth, challenging prejudices, and inviting contemplation.

Plato's Allegory of the Cave (Cohen, 2006) Plato's allegory in "The Republic" offers a foundational exploration of truth and perception. The prisoners in the cave symbolize individuals confined by limited perspectives, mistaking shadows for reality. The journey towards truth involves breaking free from these illusions, emphasizing the transformative power of understanding objective reality.

Friedrich Nietzsche's Perspectivism, (SEP, 2022) Nietzsche's concept of perspectivism, challenges the idea of absolute truth. In works like "Thus Spoke Zarathustra," Nietzsche argues that truth is subjective and shaped by individual perspectives. This perspective resonates with the notion that truth is often perceived as relative, subject to the lenses through which individuals interpret their experiences.

Jean-Paul Sartre's Existentialism (Bhandari, 1998) Sartre's existentialist philosophy, articulated in "Being and Nothingness," explores the subjectivity of truth suggesting that individuals define their truths through choices and actions. This existentialist perspective contributes to the discourse on the personal construction of truth, highlighting the intimate connection between individual existence and perceived reality.

S. Radhakrishnan's 'The Hindu View of Life (The Hindu View of life, S Radhakrishnan,1931) Radhakrishnan's work provides insights into Indian philosophy, emphasizing the interconnectedness of truth and self-realization. Radhakrishnan's exploration of truth within the Indian philosophical context contributes to the argument that truth transcends cultural and individual boundaries.

Raja Rao's The Cat and Shakespeare, (Mambrol,2020) Rao's novel weaves a narrative that challenges conventional perceptions of truth. Through the characters of protagonists Ramakrishna Pai and Govindan Nair, the novel explores the diverse layers of truth, suggesting that it can be not so elusive and multifaceted. The novel contributes to the argument that truth is liberated from the necessity of convergence, allowing for a more nuanced and expansive understanding.

Michel Foucault's Archaeology of Knowledge (Felluga,2015) Foucault's work delves into the relationship between power, knowledge, and truth. In "The Archaeology of Knowledge," he challenges the idea of objective truth, proposing that truth is a product of historical and cultural contexts. Thus expanding the conversation beyond individual perspectives and acknowledging the influence of societal structures on the construction of truth.

Haruki Murakami's 'Kafka on the Shore (Wan, 2020) Murakami's novel explores the surreal nature of reality and the subjective nature of truth. Through intertwining narratives and dreamlike sequences, the novel contributes to the literature on truth by blending the mystical and the ordinary, challenging readers to reassess their understanding of the world. In conclusion, the literature surrounding the concept of truth is diverse and rich, drawing offering a spectrum of perspectives to contemplate and integrate the understanding of this intriguing and elusive concept.

4. Research Methodology :
The research will adopt a qualitative design within the introspective paradigm, delving into a spectrum of subjective experiences, notions, and perceptions. This qualitative approach proves

fitting as it facilitates a comprehensive understanding and analysis of the intricate correlation between context and subject. Moreover, it aids in the exploration of novel ideas, utilizing primary resources such as S. Radhakrishnan's 'The Hindu View of Life' and Raja Rao's 'The Cat and Shakespeare' to enrich the qualitative inquiry. The secondary resources include various relevant reference books.

The intriguing and expansive cosmos verifies the dwarf but by no means insignificant human existence. Truth is invariably perceived and endlessly inferred yet it is independent of perception since it doesn't seek validation. The ability to perceive makes comprehension possible. Cognitive abilities intercept the silence of Truth and supply it with ideas that make interpretation possible. Inferences drawn based on sensory and cognitive faculties result in myriad possibilities of one absolute truth. Raja Rao's craft is designing an Absolute Truth's varied inferences. However, what he didn't perhaps intend is that the perception of Truth may vary but Truth remains intact and free from discursive analytics. Such moments of disbelief may constitute denial based on a perceiver's ability to apprehend and comprehend a fact without interfering with the existence of a fact. The existence is independent of the attention of the existing. Just as wind exists irrespective of one's acumen to perceive it, similarly, disapproval can neither deny temporal presence nor timeless existence.

The everlasting trait of Truth can be attributed to its infinite nature. An absolute Truth is not an instant phenomenon. It has been pre-existing before the generation that received it. It has been encapsulated as a phenomenal phenomenon traversing through the trials of time, embedded in the memory, and passed to future generations as a gift from an infinite and enriching past. Infinite can't be limited, thus reaching the periphery of awareness waiting for the seeker to seek, experience, and decipher absolute Truth -everlasting wisdom. The act of merely describing what is, what was, and what will be the indispensable Truth perceived in full alacrity.

'Strange how we transform all things to ours.' TCAS, p5.)

The strangeness, however, is the capacity of perception to subvert Truth to convenience. Interestingly, Truth can't be tweaked by perception because it is never genuinely fathomed by ordinary, passing perception. 'None of them gives the whole truth, though each is partially true.' (Radhakrishnan, p.29) It is so because the moment of perception is clouded by the instinct to judge and infer immediately. The rational faculties intervene at an accelerated pace unless paused by the instinctive intervention to ponder the absorbed phenomenon. Therefore, without proper comprehension tools, perception is merely a relative attempt to perceive absolute Truth. 'The metamorphosis is within. What the seeker perceives as distant is actually in the vicinity.' (TCAS, p6.)

The judgemental bias by default accompanies an everyday perceiver, clouding the discerning faculties, but the tools of Truth should be free of imprudent judgments. The urge to infer often obstructs the cognition of Truth. In such a careless act of perception, truth becomes convenient for the particular situation. It substantiates the intense perception bias towards not the object of affection but affection thus diverting focus from absolute Truth. 'For it's not the way you worship that is important but what you adore TCAS , p.6 The methods may vary but the object of one's affection is absolute. Adoration is an affinity, a kinship of affection pleasing the being with its resplendence minus the swaying perception capable of altering focus. The inverted conclusions drawn from perceived truth become the most viable and suitable for self-sustainability.

On the other hand, intense perception aids clarity and has the capacity to lift ignorance. 'If we open the eyes, the truth will be seen.' (Radhakrishnan, p43.) It can make one mindful of the surroundings. Radhakrishnan notes that 'all revelations refer to reality, they are not equally true to it.' Radhakrishnan, p.49) suggesting the absoluteness viewed through perception, which is the magnifying glass to enlarge what appears minute or illegible to the naked eye but is conspicuous irrespective. A magnifier can magnify what already exists. The perceiver is free to use tools for better cognition but it by no means undermines the pre-existence of Truth. Ergo, absolute truth is free of perception. A portion is perceived and believed to be a wholesome piece. However, the portion is not the piece. The piece is intact yet seamless. It stands in silence but speaks as a manifestation. It doesn't need any foundation because the absolute is the foundation, the basis of every inference, the premise of every conclusion. 'Hinduism…insists on the development of one's intellectual conscience and sensibility to the truth.' (Radhakrishnan, p.49)

It is the premier premise, the beginning, the point from where lines are drawn in all directions. Again, what is perceived may not coincide with Truth. The veracity of truth can't be measured by perception because perception is relative. The one who sees relative is the observer observing the mindful instead of participating in the experience of being mindful. 'For him, the whole world was one living organism. He knew everything for he was so concerned with everything.' (TCAS, Pg.18)

The misinterpretation or fabrication of truth is the misgiving of perception. You are bad because I am You are good because I am. The sun is because I see.' (TCAS, p.32) On the contrary, the existence of the sun irrespective of the sun gazer proves its absoluteness and exposes the unintelligibility of the perception as much as the need to evolve it instead of sectoring it as Radhakrishnan puts it 'Hinduism is a way of life more than a form of thought (and) Hinduism is not a sect but a fellowship of all who accept the law of right and earnestly seek for the truth.' (Radhakrishnan, p.77) That which you can't see doesn't deprive it of its absoluteness, neither does it rob you of its light reflecting on you, constantly illuminating you, if only you will introspect the newfound light. 'One cannot be and yet be, and where one is, one cannot be seen, for light cannot see light and much less can light see the sun. (TCAS, p. 20)

  Therefore, absolute truth does not depend on perception however, the latter can be used as Radhakrishnan outlines a 'pathway to the former.' 'The eternal is manifested in the temporal…Truth in the finite aspects leads us to infinite Truth' (Radhakrishnan, p.79) Interestingly, perception is preceded by intention. A perceiver perceives the information most suitably aligned with the self. Thus, absolute truth remains free of inverted intelligence. Therefore, perception must be tweaked to avoid misgivings by deliberately developing astute perception through introspective churnings.

A modification so desired or a transformation sought is the consequence of intention. The intention to perceive distinguishes a perceptive individual from the ignorant. Mindfulness precedes clarity while alacrity precedes intention. Alacrity can be cultivated via intense attention. An uninhibited focus to listen to inquisitive awakenings, often the precursor of Truth. Thus, the utility of truth begin to dawn; the meaning makes the absolute indispensable because meaning evades, stays unfathomed, and is unknown unless there is an earnest behest by the seeker. The unknown alone resolves the unknown. (TCAS p.48) Introspection leads to inference and the latter to edification.

The quest for absolute truth is a journey, and, like every meaningful journey, you succeed mostly by defeating your misinformed, unripe perceptions. For example, a traveller never walks alone. A co-traveller joins either by chance or by choice as an active inwardness or a person to nudge, evolve, and uplift him from ignorance to illumination, from skepticism to knowledge, from half knowledge to absolute truth, from innumerable questions to one answer, from without to within, and from a plurality of perception to singularity of truth. The role of catalysts of truth thus gains significance in the journey.

In Hinduism, Guru has also been respected as one such catalyst. A known passage towards the unknown. The sagacity of the Guru is the bridge between relative and absolute. Thus, Guru is a revered figure in Hinduism. He is the mind that guides, the voice that speaks, and the seer who acknowledges and beholds the patterns of truth and its syntax and semantics. Guru does not unravel any mystery but explains the facts about the existence and all that is pertinent, such as the meaning of Truth.

 Interestingly, in Hinduism, the objective of the Guru Shishya tradition is not to unveil the Truths about the unknown but rather to be aware of them. There is nothing to unveil because nothing is unknown and the consequent acknowledgement of the real enmeshed with the trivial is Truth. Therefore, the purpose of a catalyst is not to unfold what is not but to acquaint the Shishya with what is. The Guru teaches respect for the colossal manifestation of Truth presented to us in the form of physical phenomenon. Thus, the guru as catalyst neither causes the chemical reaction between Shishya and Truth nor accelerates it. The role of the Guru is to be the catalyst of possibility. A guru makes a gaze possible by clearing the mental fog. A significant aspect of the synergist is apprehending the Shishya's pace. The discerning abilities of the Guru act as a stimulant to gauge the mental preparedness of the Shishya.

I ate every day at home, friends. The food was bad, but the freedom was so good…Life is always this choice (TACS, p.2)

To conclude, freedom to choose is an equally potent catalyst, undeniable, ever pleasant, actively pursued and thoroughly enjoyed. The free will to choose adds weight to the trivial eating routine. The trivial is real. The question is what makes such reflections possible? Thus, introspection becomes a crucial catalyst propelling the underlying desire to explore the marvels ever unfolding yet ever-present real in everyday frivolities. A reflecting mind can comprehend the beauty of everyday life. The absence of introspection may blur several necessary distinctions between survival and feeling alive. 'You weigh only which that which you seem to way, but that which knows neither balance nor weight stands outside of time. Life is so precious. I ask you why does not one play?' (TCAS, p.162)

The text further highlights the necessity of a playful disposition as a helpful catalyst negating abstinence or being sombre as the necessary precondition for an elevating cognitive experience. The fleeting nature of life adds to the significance of comprehending and using Truth with the help of catalysts for a wholesome living experience because while perception continues to fuse and merge, the absolute just remains at liberty to be pervasive. It just remains.

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Religion and Ethics: A study in Indian Religious Philosophy

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Abstract*:* This paper is an attempt to analyze the relation between the ethical viewpoints of various religious philosophy in India especially the Hindu, Buddhist, and Jaina moral philosophy. These are the dominant ancient religions in India. This study tries to depict the inseparable relation of ethics and religion.

Key Words*: philosophy, religion, ethical life. India, Jainism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Ideal of life. etc*

1. INTRODUCTION :

The Religion and Ethics is one of the main topics in the field of moral philosophy in general and Philosophy of Religion in particular because ethics and religion is closely connected to each other. Without ethics, religion cease to exist but we must admit the fact that ethics and religion are independent in the sense that atheist can also lead an ethical life but religion is depended upon ethics as the focal point of every religious teaching is directed towards how to lead a good life. But to be ethical it is not necessary to be religious as well. Secular\ rational ethics is independent of religion. Though modern/secular ethics is taken a clear departure from traditional/religious ethics, we need to admit the fact that secular ethics has taken a radical transition from religious ethics. Therefore, we have to say these to are inter related, interdependent, and supplementary, as I C Sharma, in his work, *Ethical Philosophies of India*, says "The relation of ethics to religion is reciprocal. We cannot say that religion is based on ethics or ethics is based on religion. The reason is that ethics has a theoretical outlook, whereas religion has a practical aim." (p-51, 1965) The highly modern societies are witnessing the absence of religion and been highly ethical in their relation with the other as they embraced the secular ethics. This paper is an attempt to give a comparative study between the ethical viewpoints of various religious philosophies in India.

In India, ethics is called as Nitisastra. *Niti* is equals to the law that are observed in human life, which bring about the well-being in this life as well as in the life to come. *Sastra* means an in-depth study. The observance of this kind of law contributes the stability and peace in human society and thereby the welfare of the individual and the society will be protected. So Niti means that which takes the individual and the society ahead in life.

The chief sources of ethical thoughts can be found in the religious text such as Vedas, Samhitas, Brahmanas, Upanishads, Dharma sutras, Bhagavad Gita and Astika Darshana Sutras, Jaina scriptures, and Buddhist religious texts etc. Therefore, in India, religion and ethics are the two sides of the same coin. This article is focusing on Hindu, Buddhist, and Jaina Ethics.

First and foremost, the paper is focusing on Hindu Ethics as it is the dominant social order of antient India. Hindu religious Ethics is intertwined with the concept of Dharma. Dharma means one's moral stand or duty. Dharma depends on one's stage in life and one's placement in the society. The social Ethics of Hindus are represented in the scheme of Varna-ashrama dharma, that is, duties related to one's Varna and Ashrama. The duties of Varna and Ashrama together constitutes the code of relative duties in life. Hence, varna-ashrama dharma is the social order of Hindu society.

According to Hindu Ethics, the final aim of life is liberation or moksha. The various school of thought refers to different path to achieve moksha or liberation namely karma marga, bhakti marga and jnana marga. The Ashrama system is one facet of the 'Dharma' concept in Hinduism. So, Indian Ethical theory combine four objective or goal of human life which is called as purusharthas for the fulfilment and spiritual liberation. They are Dharma, Artha, kama and Moksha. Moksha considered to be the highest of all these. We will not be able to proceed to the level of Moksha if we follow Artha and kama without following dharma. If one follow Artha and kama without following the dharma is meaningless. Hence dharma has a very important role in determining one's moral standing.

Theory of karma has an important role in regulating the human action. All the schools of Indian Philosophy except the Charvaka School believe in the law of Karma, which can be expressed as 'As we sow, so we reap.' The word karma comes from the Sanskrit root word *kri* which means to do, to act. Karma includes actions which are physical, mental (thoughts) and verbal (speech). The law- karma means that all actions good and bad produce their proper consequences/results in the life of the dividual who acts. A right action inevitably produces a good consequence or result and a wrong action produces bad consequence. Performance of a duty or a prescribed action produces a merit (punya) or virtue (dharma) in the soul. Violation of a duty or commission of a forbidden action produces a demerit (papa) or adharma in the soul.

The Hindu social order is based on the varna-vyavastha, subjected to fundamental reproaches as it has created a social hierarchy in the society. Buddhist rejects the fundamental notions of Hindu philosophy. Let us investigate the ethics of Buddhist philosophy.

 The core ethical code of Buddhism can be elaborated through the four Noble truth. Our attachment to the world and our never-ending desires are leading us constantly to sufferings. Birth. old age, disease, death, sorrow, worries, grief, wish, despair etc. are synonyms of suffering. The four Noble truths are; 1) World is full of suffering (Sarvam dukkham or Dukkha Satya). 2)There is a cause of this suffering (Dukkha Karana) 3) It is possible to stop suffering (Dukkha-Nirodha). 4)There is a path which leads to the cessation of suffering (Dukkha Nirodha Marga). The path recommended by Buddha consists of eight steps or rules and is called the Eightfold Noble Path or Ashtanga Marga which consists the moral philosophy of Buddhism. Buddhist ethics is concerned with the principles and practices that helps one to act in ways that help rather than indulging in violence. Buddhist philosophy gave importance to the dignity of

man. Nirvana is possible for all who is leading a simple life and high thinking and hence they rejected the notion of God. According to Jadunath Sinha, "Nirvana is a state of enlightenment which removes all ignorance. It is a state of perfect equanimity which removes attachment, aversion, and delusion. It is a state of stainless purity and good-will." P. 100, 1985.

Jainism and Buddhism rejected the Hindu religious philosophy. Jaina ethics is fundamentally based on Non-violence or Ahimsa like Buddhism. Therefore, Ahimsa is the human ideal for them and it is based on strict and hard moral values. Jaina ethics lays down the five great vows (Mahavratas) or the five principles as the basic rules of conduct of ascetic. They are: Non-violence (Ahimsa), Truth (Satya), Non-stealing (Asteya), Celibacy (Brahmacharya) and Non-possession (Aparigruha). Violence does not mean causing only physical injury, but it also includes mental and verbal injury. Thus, the principle of Ahimsa implies three Guptis (implied rules): Mental non-violence, Verbal non-violence and Physical non-violence. The foundation of all the great vows is the great vow of non-violence.

 The householders are also expected to lead a life of discipline and penance. All the schools and sects of Jainism agree that it is necessary for the householders (Sravakas) to follow the Antivratas or atomic vows, to practice the life of renunciation. It is important to note that the adoption of the Anuvratas is in fact the training for ascetic life, Anuvratas means the minutest part of the great vows (Mahavrutas). In other words, Anuvrata is a simple principle based on the great vows.

2. Conclusion :

Buddhism and Jainism are similar in their concept of God, but are quite different in their concept of soul. Although they were atheists, they had a strong moral philosophy, thus proving that the concept of God was not necessary to have a strong moral theory. Both adheres to complete non-violence. According to Buddhism, anyone can become a Bodhisattva regardless of caste, creed, and gender. Therefore, Buddhist moral philosophy is close to the honor-based ethics of modern philosophy.

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Traumas Put into the Past: Creative Practices and Narrativization in Kalki Subramaniam's Self-narrations.

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Abstract: The aim of this research paper is to decipher Kalki Subramaniam's self-narrative compilation of poetry, art and prose; *We are Not the Others: Reflections of a Transgender Artivist* (2021) as a hybrid textual genre that rectifies the narrative gap within the consciousness of an individual caused by one's traumatic past. Kalki Subramaniam is a versatile transgender activist, artist, writer, actress and an entrepreneur from Tamil Nadu, who is best known for her exclusive style of artivism to empower and unite transgender lives in India. Unlike other life narrations, Kalki's style of literary narration is in the form of textual montages that encompass narrative expressions in multiple forms like visual and verbal. The text comprises of drawings, paintings, poems, posters, letters and illustrations that are used to illuminate the verbal narrations of her distressed life. As per Freud's findings, a life story cannot readily contain one's traumatic experiences, not because they are inexpressible, but because there exists an unsolicited void in the consciousness and memory of people who underwent trauma. Human mind triggered with these massive traumatic life experiences can develop a fault that it can no longer register and record events at least for a specific period of time. The emotional reactions resulted from one's traumatic past thus remain unexpressed owing to the feeling of a missed encounter with the real. These missed encounters lead individuals to relive their pain at different junctures of their life when stimulated by memories of their haunted past. In short, this paper aims to find out how missed encounters with trauma is articulated by Kalki Subramaniam in *We are Not the Others: Reflections of a Transgender Artivist* by putting her traumatic events into the past and thus facilitating "narrativization", by embedding multiple forms of creative visual and verbal practices like paintings, writing and illustrating.

Key Words: Trauma, Memory, Narrativization, Women, Missed Encounters.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Kalki Subramaniam is an eminent transgender activist, artist, writer, actress and an entrepreneur who hails from Tamil Nadu, India. She is best known for her integrative contributions to educate and empower transgender community through her boundless artivism. She is the founder of Sahodari Foundation, an organisation that actively participates in establishing social, political and economic securities for people belonging to the community. Kalki weaves her art and literature together to cultivate knowledge about transgender people in a society that is ignorant about their freedom and rights. She insists on the importance of interdisciplinary or hybrid narrative style that fuses both visual and verbal creative practices to embark on the art of storytelling. *We Are Not the Others: Reflections of a Transgender Artivist* (2021), is Kalki's self-narrative where she uses such creative practices that evokes unique

storytelling experiences. Throughout the narrative, Kalki deals with stories of her traumatic encounters with a heteronormative society as an insider of the transgender community. Most part of the book contains poetry, quotes, drawings, paintings, posters, hand written notes and anecdotes from her life that are weaved together in a form of literary montage. The paper attempts to study the strategies and creative practices used by Kalki to vent out her overwhelming emotions in an attempt to confine her traumas into the past so that it would not ever return to her. The interplay of art and literature helps her to feed on the narrativization that is hitherto absent in verbal narrations due to her past encounters to massive traumatic events.

"Poetry and art give a richness to my life. They give beauty, strength and hope. They heal. I couldn't have survived my tormented teenage years without them" (7). Kalki begins her narrative by mentioning about the role that art plays in her life. She has dedicated a lion's share of her life to art and activism. Apart from writing and creating art she has also played a lead role in a movie named *Narthaki* (2011) and became the first Indian transgender actor to step into the silver screen. It is even more powerful that she now is an entrepreneur who designs apparels with her art and conducts ramp shows to publicize the ideology that she had been carrying with herself for years. Her Instagram handle @queenkalki is also one of her creative spaces that is utilised for imparting knowledge about the LGBTQIA+ community by bursting myths about them. As a multi-talented individual, she tries hard to liberate the transgender community from many years old torment by using multiple genres and multiple mediums that are available to her. *We are Not the Others* by Kalki is therefore nothing less than her dive into the vast arena of verbal and visual practices that facilitate narrativization of the missed encounters.

If You Don't Mind, the first poem in the collection is regarding one of the many incidents in Kalki's life where she had been badly humiliated by the society in terms of "authenticity" of her body parts. The poem is written as conversational exchanges between Kalki and her stranger friend in which she gets inspected about her breasts, vagina and "femininity" as the stranger seems to be in an inspection-spree to seek out the "realness" of Kalki as a woman. In the third poem *Don't Tell That to Me* Kalki addresses how tired she is to answer to the innumerable questions that she gets asked about her identity. She and her sisters have answered enough in the history and now they are in a position that is not anymore obliged to respond to the curious accounts of strangers that come in their ways. In fact in *Arise, My Precious,* she insists herself and her sisters to come out of the haunting memories of their traumatic past by beating off the demonic stereotypes that prevail in the society. She even reminds us about her metamorphosis into *shakthi*, an incarnation that makes her tremendously powerful to destroy the ruling patriarchy. By mentioning of the occasions she got mistreated by men, she brings in evidences of traumatic episodes she had to undergo not just because she is a transgender person but because she is a transgender woman.

At every instance she tries to verbally narrate her trauma, and the stories of never ending accounts of ruthlessness that humanity does to her sisters, she juxtaposes her art along with the words she writes. From the very beginning of her narration, poems and drawings are interwoven together to do the communication that is intended. As per Freud's findings, a life story cannot readily contain one's traumatic experiences, not because they are inexpressible, but because there exists an unsolicited void in the consciousness and memory of people who underwent trauma. Human mind triggered with these massive traumatic life experiences can develop a fault that it can no longer register and record events at least for a specific period of time. The emotional reactions resulted from one's traumatic past thus remain unexpressed

owing to the feeling of a missed encounter with the real. These missed encounters lead individuals to relive their pain at different junctures of their life when stimulated by memories of their haunted past. *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis and History* (1991), a book by Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub states that "Massive trauma precludes its registration; the observing and recording mechanisms of the human mind are temporarily knocked out, malfunction" (57). When an individual who once underwent trauma attempts to write their life story, they cannot fully narrate the incidents as their temporarily damaged psyche cannot record events properly. In such occasions people consider their traumatic experiences as too overwhelming to be registered fully in consciousness as it occurs and is thus unavailable to conscious recall (Robson 11). Those people who are incapable of expressing their personal or collective traumas can vent it out by putting down their emotions in words. In *Writing Wounds: The Inscription of Trauma in post-1968 French Women's Life Writing* (2004) Kathryn Robson states that "it is only when the seemingly unspeakable traumatic experience can be transformed into a narrative that the traumatic event can be put in the past and the survivor can begin to recreate an identity shattered by trauma" (11). Having said this Robson also points out the limitations of written language as a medium to communicate traumatic incidents.

The limitation of language in communicating trauma lies in its inability to fully capture the depth and nuances of emotional experiences. Trauma often involves intense feelings, sensory perceptions, and complex states of mind that may not be adequately conveyed through words alone. Additionally, words might fail to encapsulate the visceral nature of traumatic events, leading to a gap between the firsthand experience and its verbal representation. This limitation underscores the significance of alternative forms of expression, such as art and creative practices, in providing a more comprehensive means of conveying the intricacies of trauma. Kalki delves into her experiences in the realms of art, literature, and activism, providing insights into her journey as a transgender individual. The book reflects on the intersectionality of her identity and the ways in which creativity becomes a powerful tool for self-expression and advocacy. Through her narrative, she highlights how engaging in artistic expression can serve as a cathartic and empowering outlet. The book underscores the importance of art in fostering resilience and recovery, offering a unique perspective on the role of creativity in overcoming personal challenges and societal prejudices. Through artistic expression, she intricately shapes her narrative, transforming painful experiences into a confined space within the realms of her art. This allows her to confront and process the trauma in a controlled manner, offering a therapeutic outlet while enabling readers to witness her journey of healing through the lens of her creative endeavors.

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A Study Of The Migratory Defeat In Kim Stanley Robinson's *New York 2140*

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Abstract: *Kim Stanley Robinson's novel New York 2140 visualizes the hydro catastrophe that struck the New York City of the twenty second century. His novel highlights the purposeful human error mainly the real estate business people in destroying the water bodies and vegetation for the sake of constructing concrete buildings. Excessive rainfall converts one of the world's richest cities into a floating city. It not only changes the normal life of the people but also affects the animal species and their wildlife habitat in a wider range. People adapt new technologies to survive in such a new situation is the major characteristic feature of Robinson's novel. Amelia, an internet celebrity with her airship Assisted Migration is involved in migrating animals which are in the verge of extinction to safer zones. Though her risky trip of migrating six polar bears to Antarctica gained appreciation worldwide, humans wearing the mask of environmental activists pose a major threat to the migratory project.*

Keywords: *Migratory, Extinction, Antarctica, Airship, Floating, Habitat.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Kim Stanley Robinson, an American writer of science fiction taking the role of a time traveler narrates climate change related flooding disasters in New York, one of the world's richest cities. The bad days of the New Yorkers living in a submerged city is vividly picturized in the novel *New York 2140* with a warning about a horrible disaster to the entire population. Affected by a sea level rise of fifty feet, Robinson describes New York as a "hell of a bay" (32). Gerry Canavan in his review *Utopia in the Time of Trump* describes New York as a city flooded with squatters, climate refugees, and other persons rendered undocumented by the midcentury loss of huge swaths of paper and digital records, the city may have lost its crown as the capital of global finance to Denver, but it's still one hell of a town. He also addresses the flooded city as Super Venice. Technological remedies adopted by the New Yorkers to overcome the challenges of the flood are sky bridges, Jesus bugs, airships, water taxis and personal boats. The aerial view of New York with "all its watery magnificence" (41) is realistically picturesque by Robinson. He describes the air traffic as, "people had taken to the skies like dandelion seeds and recongregated in the clouds" (99). The land ways traffic is replaced by overcrowded airways and water ways of the New York City.

2. Destruction of Wildlife Habitat:

Robinson gives a vivid note of how constructing sky scrapers near the water bodies demolish the habitat of the wild animals. He says, "Initially it was known for its hills and ponds, but they chopped down the hills and filled in the ponds with the dirt from the chopped hills to make the flattest real estate" (33). The greed of the humans in accumulating wealth disrupts the living of the wild animals. The mass extinction of animals is a serious threat to the human civilization. The essay *Endangered Species Act's Effects on Real Estate* gives information regarding Endangered Species Act thus, U.S. Endangered Species Act and Marine Mammals Protection Act prohibits modification of an endangered species habitat by real estate developers because the development activities negatively affect the Habitat.

3. Assisted Migration:

Robinson portrays an assisted migratory journey of six polar bears in his novel *New York 2140* in an effort to save the polar bears of Churchill, a town in Canada. These bears of Churchill are in the verge of extinction. Animals usually migrate from one habitat to another in search of food, to escape from harsh seasons or for reproduction. But, the migration of the polar bears narrated by Robinson is not a natural process. It is an experimental trip of shifting them to safe ecozones. This intended migratory journey of the bears due to the climate change never involves a return journey to their original habitat. This paper analyses the polar bears habitat, the impact of the climate change on them and the challenges in shifting these animals to Antarctica. The opening lines of Ayesha Tandon and Roz Pidcock's article *Polar bears and climate change: What does the science say?* rightly says that the image of a polar bear stranded on melting sea ice is often used as a symbol of the world's rapidly changing climate. It urges the humans to look into the horrible environmental disaster named global warming.

Amelia Black, an internet celebrity is portrayed as a superstar in her mission of saving the endangered species to safe zones. Her personal airship Assisted Migration is involved in the mission of "assisting the migration of endangered species to ecozones where they were more likely to survive the changed climate" (38). With the excitement of an internet celebrity, she narrates the sights and incidents which she has encountered during the trip. She has a separate fan base for her gymnastic fall from the airship. Early days of the Assisted Migration project telecasts wild life habitat of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, detailing each and every image of animals like elks, wolves, brown bears, buffaloes and wild horses. Yellowstone National Park is abundance not only with wild animals but also a place enrich in vegetation with trees like oaks, walnuts and elms.

4. Polar bears of Churchill:

One of the biggest projects which Amelia undertakes in her career is migrating six polar bears from the town of Churchill to Antarctica. Polar bears in the brink of extinction are a big threat to the people of Churchill between the months of August to September. The hungry bears came to the town in search of food when the sea ice breaks in the spring season until it refroze in the winter season. This prevents the bears from getting their food mainly sea seals. Polar Bear Alert Program, a twenty four hour help line is created by Manitoba Conservation, by which people can report the movement of the bears in the town. Manitoba Conservation is a Manitoba government's department functioning to protect the wild life species. The trespassing bears are tranquilized and netted. Then they are carried to the Polar Bear Holding

Facility, a kind of jail where the bears are placed in an artificial polar environment. Finally, when the ice forms on the Hudson Bay, the bears are released back on to the bay.

An average of twenty polar bears are shot dead annually before the implementation of the Polar Bear Alert Program. The town's people built a giant snow man of a polar bear to celebrate the victory of saving the endangered species. Amelia's emotional concerns about the extinction of the bears are clearly revealed through her words. She says, "Some people seem to not understand what a problem extinction is! Hard to imagine that, but it's clearly true, polar bears back into a truly polar environment is their last chance for survival in the wild" (101). Amelia is heartily welcomed by the people of Churchill and she is invited to visit the Polar Bear Holding Facility. She telecasts the polar bears jail. The team is ready to pick up the bears from the jail to the airship of Amelia with the help of specialized trucks and they are planning to place the bears in the animal rooms of the airship. The freezers of the animal rooms are loaded with seal steaks to feed the bears during the two weeks journey and their rooms are set up at an artificial polar climate.

5. Difficulties in the Assisted Migration:

Headed by Amelia, the migratory journey begins with the goal of relocating six polar bears to world's purest place, Antarctica. After a week of their journey, they suffered the impact of a storm which blows from north of Trinidad and Tobago; and slowly the bears started to lose their energy. Confused by the leonine roars of the bears, she herself asks the question "Are they looking out the windows at the storm? Are they hungry? They seem so upset!" (102). Ready to face the challenges of the storm and the endangered species, she with the assistance of a hairclip camera investigates the situation of the animal room through the window of the hallway door. She finds the bears inside their room but the door is opened.

Even though occupied by a deadly fear, Amelia proceeds to enter the animal room. Robinson makes his readers realize the fact that even small things may serve as a life saver in some emergency situations through the adventurous step taken by her. She fills four large plastic trash bags with helium and tied one end of them together and the other end to her. All the bears watched the flying Amelia with surprise and are curious to catch the flying prey. Robinson describes her as a wizard flying with a tranquilizer dart gun. Even though trembling with deadly fear, she entertains her audience by singing a song "We're off to see the wizard!" (168). Niall Alexander in his review *Storms of the Century: New York 2140 by Kim Stanley Robinson* says that Robinson struggles to make Amelia especially relevant.

Amelia shoots a female bear which is sitting outside the enclosure room. Asking her auto pilot Frans to tilt the airship, she uses a broom as a tool to push the drugged bear into the hole leading the animal room. She locked the door of the hallway successfully. With the thirst to save the surviving polar bears, she is ready to risk her own life. Eventually all her efforts turn fruitful.

6. Post-traumatic Amelia:

Robinson spills some post-traumatic behavior in Amelia, after her risky adventures with the bears. The subsequent two days are used up by her in relaxing and consuming enough food. Telecasting is done with a single camera on those two days and more or less the migratory journey seems to be a cooking show. This recovery session is telecasted with a lit bit of

commentary about the trip from her side. The audience of the cloud show is excited to watch the recovered, relaxed and secured Amelia.

7. Argument regarding Polar bears settlement:

The cloud show audience is anxiously waiting to watch the final settlement of the polar bears. Difference of opinion between the geographers and marine biologists has awakened the curiosity of the viewers. The eastern curve of the Antarctic Peninsula is one place of suggestion from a group because of the Weddell Sea's possession of a good number of Weddell seals. Amelia finds this opinion to be a reasonable one. Another place of suggestion is Princess Astrid Land, a coast on the Antarctic continent. The thick ice sheets of the coast provide an intense polar environment for the bears. The coast also possessed "the world's largest colony of Weddell seals" (252) and a richer population of penguins which offers a healthy, safe and serene environment. The final place of suggestion for the polar bears is South Georgia, a suggestion which is not welcomed by the audience and wild life protectors. Georgia with its tropical temperature is a hard to imagine place for the survival of the polar bears.

8. Ecosystems of Antarctic Peninsula:

The final destination decided by marine biologists and geographers to launch the polar bears is the eastern side of the Antarctic Peninsula. Fully dense with the sea ice and icebergs, the Weddell Sea is the perfect environment for the bears to make their living. Robinson describes the thickly populated Weddell seals as "streaks of blood on the ice, placental blood for the most part; many of the female Weddell seals looking like slugs laid out on a sheet of white paper had recently given birth, and smaller offspring (but not that much smaller) were attached to them, nursing away" (253). This description gives the readers a hint that mammals like polar bears can easily thrive in the Antarctic Peninsula.

Weddell Sea stocked with Weddell seals is a sumptuous feast for the polar bears. Orcas, the usual predator encounters by the Weddell seals is rich in number. Amelia narrated the physical appearance of the killer whales as, "just a bit blacker than the water itself, with white flashings on their sides, only visible when they arched slightly up and out of the water" (253). The usual perception of the viewers regarding the colour of the sea water is completely opposite to the colour of the Antarctic Ocean. Lack of minerals and the depth of the water make the water appear black. Amelia exclaimed "Black ocean under blue skies!" (254).

The cloud show audience of Amelia is visualizing an imaginary land in Earth. In comparison with the ocean, the mountains and the peaks also appear black among the creamy white layer of ice. According to her, the black peaks lay as, "degraded pyramids" (254). She repeated the commentary from the studio to the audience whenever she points out some nature's painting. Alfred Wegener, German climatologist and geologist is honored by naming after the black peaks of Antarctica. The five thousand feet black peaks, the red dolerite rocks, the blue glaciers and the white snow serve as a visual treat to the cloud show audience.

The dolerite caves may provide a resting place for the polar bears and the similar temperature of Churchill in Antarctica gives a ray of hope for the cloud show audience about the polar bears survival. Various nations conduct experiments to improve the vegetation of Antarctica. Nations like Argentina and Chile engage in launching several plant species and animal species such as mosses, lichens, trees and insects in the world's purest place. Robinson describes Antarctica as, "a very rich biome" (255) for a polar mammal to survive. All the

environmental circumstances seem positive for the survival of the polar bears. But, in the eyes of humans, Antarctica seems to be "the iciest circle of hell" (256).

9. Launching Polar bears in Antarctica:

Amelia with the happy tears is in the final preparation to launch the polar bears of Churchill in Antarctica. Before leaving them in a new continent, x-rays have been taken to assure that there is no injury to the animals during the migration trip. She unlocks the outside door of the enclosure room and releases the bears. Polar bears walking majestically in the purest place on Earth celebrates the efforts of many eco-workers. From Amelia's own description of the polar bears, one could find the struggles and the sacrifice behind this relocation thus, "There they rare, how exciting! Welcome to Antarctica!" (257). Polar bears nearly vanish from the sight of her when they become part and parcel of the polar environment. The food balance cycle is not disturbed by the introduction of a big predator in the polar region. On the other hand, the polar bears "join the other top predators down here in a happy harmony, a circle of life" (257).

Necessary technological steps have been taken to study the living of the bears in the new environment. Each bear is attached with a radio transmitter and minicameras which would give a closer watch for the cloud show audience. Emergency news from Nicole, the producer of the cloud show destroys the hope that one can place in humans. Amelia is informed about the murdering of the polar bears using a small neutron bomb by Antarctic Defense League, one of the green purity groups. A small nuclear attack vanish the polar bears from the sight of every one forever. Amelia's unbearable cry reveals the struggles and sacrifice behind the migration trip.

10. Amelia's Hatred for Capitalists:

Having decided to create awareness among the masses, Amelia wants to educate her audience regarding the mass extinction of the animals. She lost herself completely after the nuclear attack. Forgetting to eat and sleep, she is in the urge in to take revenge on the people who is wearing the masks of eco-workers. She disconnects her live telecasting with the studio and talks alone to her audience with the hope of getting a positive response. She says "We're in the sixth mass extinction event in Earth's history. We caused it. Fifty thousand species have gone extinct, and we're in danger of losing most of the amphibians and the mammals, and all kinds of birds and fish and reptiles" (259).

Though being the host of a silly cloud show, Amelia is ready to go to any extent for the safeguard of the endangered species. She even assents to hang naked upside down above a bay of hungry sharks to get justice for the ruthless murder of the polar bears. She addresses the world as a mongrel world and explains some instances like growing hybrid crops to make people understand about the adoption of new methods for survival. She opines that nothing is wrong in today's modern world to leave a particular species for the future generation. For centuries now people survive by protecting one group and destroying another group. But, in the case of poor creatures like polar bears, every rules and regulations goes upside down.

When it comes in the act of protecting the polar bears from climate change, humans wearing the masks of eco-workers philosophically give counter arguments about destroying the purity of the place. Antarctic Defense League is one such group showcasing fake arguments in terms of topics such as self-righteousness and purity. The sole aim of the group is conserving

the purity of Antarctica. They label Antarctica as, "the last pure place and the world's national park" (260). Amelia protests their claim that Antarctica was once a habitat of dense forests and wild animals. But the climate change has converted the land into a place of ice sheets. She is in an extreme anger to take revenge on the murderers of six polar bears.

11. Conclusion:

Mass extinction of animals is increasing day by day. Climate change is the major cause of this extinction. Humans exploiting Mother Earth are the sole reason for these changing climatic conditions. Lack o f unity, socio-cultural and political diversities splits them into anti social groups in destroying the green planet. Such internal conflicts among the humans end up in uncountable environmental disasters. Grabbing the land of the animals for their selfish needs and wearing the veil of ecological workers, humans engage in demolishing the habitat of the animals. This article urges the readers to prevent cruelties inflicted up on animals and to leave a safer planet for the future generations.

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Narratives of Transformation: A Study of Transmasculinity in Hindu Texts and Folklore

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Abstract: *Hinduism is considered one of the oldest religions in the world, encompassing a vast array of scriptures, deities, Vedas, Puranas, and Upanishads. It is profusely enriched with rituals, practices, and traditions. Its rich cultural heritage is inclusive and ever-evolving. It is also an ecstatic fact that Hinduism was the torchbearer of LGBTQ+ theories. However, even though religion by itself is stigmatized as anachronistic (owing to its seemingly endless legacy), the historical and mythological evidence amplifies its inclusivity. The paper explores how transgender people were celebrated and worshipped in the past.   The paper further explores and presents an insurmountable fact about the seemingly double standard meted out in the portrayal of transmen and trans-masculinity. By analysing mythological stories, cultural narratives, and religious texts, this research intends to portray how trans-masculinity is depicted in Hinduism. The interaction between societal norms and gender identity is expressed within the framework of religion in the paper.   "Trans masculine identities from mythology and oral folklore transitions, over time, have been mostly not given due importance and therefore, forgotten over time, and not as known in contemporary times as many of the trans feminine mythological figures are. This primarily reflects the deep-seated patriarchy of Indian society" (Patranabish). It is a qualitative research paper following the MLA Eighth Edition referencing style.*

Key Words: *Trans masculinity, Hinduism, mythology, transgender, trans men, gender identity.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

According to Hinduism, every being is divine and the embodiment of divine attributes, no matter how they are perceived by their outer or physical demeanour. This fundamental notion not only implies equality but also inclusivity. LGBT people, unlike the contemporary situation, were celebrated, worshipped, and accepted in ancient India. Plenty of narratives from the Vedas, Upanishads, and epics stand testimony to the acceptance and worship of the non-binary community. According to H. H. Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, homosexuality is never a crime in Hindu culture. He adds that Lord Ayyappa was born of Shiva and Vishnu (Hari-Hara). Even Smriti does not consider homosexuality a crime. Additionally, he emphasises that, in Hindu culture, each person possesses both male and feminine elements. Tendencies manifest and can alter based on the preponderance of these elements. No one should be subjected to prejudice because of their sexual orientation. It is ludicrous to be called a criminal for this ("HAF Policy Brief: Hindu Teachings Inclusive of LGBT People"). Although the public perception of gender

fluidity in contemporary India is still complicated, its literary and historical manifestations provide a nuanced perspective for examining the various paths taken by those who break free from the confines of a binary gender system. Hindu stories often feature individuals who straddle the boundaries between masculinity and feminity, from the epic Mahabharata, where Shikhandi, a woman by birth, takes on male clothing and reigns as a king, to the folktales of Ardhanari, the holy creature who embodies both Shiva and Parvati. These tales encourage us to explore gender's fluidity and complexity within the rich field of Hindu mythology and folklore, challenging the reductionist notion of gender as a fixed category. This paper aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of trans masculinity and its representation in Hindu texts and folklore through a global lens.

However, within the profound tapestry of Hindu culture, woven with ancient mythologies and diverse folk traditions, lies a fascinating subnarrative often overlooked: the endurances of trans-masculinity. This essay explores the core of these stories to shed light on the nuanced ways that Hindu scriptures and folklore represent and negotiate the realities of transmasculinity. The term "transmasculinity" itself, a modern construct, requires careful historical consideration when applied to ancient and folkloric narratives. Nonetheless, it provides an essential framework for identifying and evaluating the regular occurrence of stories that show characters pursuing a masculine identity, frequently rejecting social norms, and embracing distinctive modes of self-expression.

2. Objectives:

- To analyze narratives featuring characters who transcend traditional gender roles
- To explore how contemporary transmasculine individuals from diverse backgrounds engage with and reinterpret these narratives.
- To evaluate the limitations and possibilities of utilizing mythology for representation in a global context.
- To Identify and address the common challenges faced by transmasculine individuals

3. Literature Reviews:

The trans-world has long been recognised in India as a third category known as the Tritiya Prakriti (TP). This can be found in classical literature, ranging from Kamasutra to Panini. All variations about gender (transgender, intersex) and sexuality (gay, lesbian, bisexual, asexual) are grouped under this area. For hundreds of years, this has been the case. In Patanjali's *Mahabhasya*, composed in Sanskrit 2,300 years ago, everything is seen in physical terms—the male is the one who has hair all over his body, the woman is the one with breasts and long hair, and the one who is neither is '*napumsaka*' (Pattanaik). Rathini Kandavel asked their grandmother the meaning of the image of Radha Krishna, where the length of Krishna's hair, which matches Radha's, ran past his ears and down his back. While Krishna is shirtless and Radha is dressed in a sari, they are both encrusted with elaborate jewels, golden halos, and tiered crowns. Their grandmother explains that together, the deities represent the energy of the divine, and God is neither solely masculine nor solely feminine, but both. However, references to trans masculine identities in Indian traditional and mythological stories, though not as recurrent compared with trans feminine identities, did exist. Ruth Vanita is of the view that in Hindu mythology, women were rarely reborn as men (Patranabish). Historically, transgender men have been invisible. The Indian Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment received a

letter signed by 74 trans men in January 2014, demanding that trans masculine policies and services be ignored in favour of hijra communities. In the letter, an appeal was made to the multiplicity of trans-masculine identities:

"We, as trans men, admire and respect the courage of our trans sisters, who have led the way for LGBTI rights in India... Just like there are hijras, kinnars, mangalamukhis, aravanis, kothis, jogappas, and shiv shaktis among trans women as identities, there is a wide range of trans masculine expressions. Some of us have had surgery, some of us haven't, some of us are more masculine,and, others are more fluid in their gender expression. We have many names to identify ourselves with, like bhaiya, thirunambi, gandabasaka, babu, ftm, trans man" (Islam). Judith Butler in *Gender Trouble* posts an intriguing question, What can be meant by 'identity', then, what grounds the presumption that identities are self-identical, persisting through time as the same, unified, and internally coherent?

4. Discussion:

Gender studies are neither Western nor modern. It was very much a part of ancient India. Words such as *kliba*, *napunsaka*, and *kinnara* occur in Sanskrit literature, as do *pedi* in Tamil and *pandaka* in Pali. There are mythological references to transgenders' identities across texts. There are Ardhanarishvara and Brihannala. Ardhanarishvara is a symbol of Shiva's omnipresence and is portrayed as half-male and half-female, equally split down the middle. Brihannala was the name Arjuna took on in the Mahabharata; he spent a year in King Virata's Matsya kingdom as Brihannala. To this day, grace and elegance are associated with her name. The concept of a third sex or gender, as it is known in Hindu philosophy (Sanskrit: तृतीय प्रकृति, tŕtīya-prakŅti, literally, "third nature"), encompasses a broad range of individuals with mixed natures, including effeminate males, masculine females, transgender individuals, transsexuals, intersex individuals, androgynes, and so forth. ("Hinduism and LGBT topics"). Stories from Hindu folklore and ancient history are more likely to feature transgender female characters. Numerous stories describe the rebirths or metamorphoses of deities who assumed the form of women. Lord Shiva assumes the half-woman form of Ardhanarishwara; Lord Vishnu assumes the form of Mohini to enchant Bhasmasura (a demon) and save the Devas (Gods); Lord Shiva assumes the form of an elderly woman to assist a devotee in giving birth to a child; and according to a legend, Lord Krishna dons a woman's clothing to appease Radha. Eastern Indian folklore suggests that the transformation of Goddess Kali into Krishna is the only known instance of a transgender divine transformation. Tamil Nadu's transgender women still refer to themselves as Aravanis, the spouses of Aravan, the son of Arjuna and the Mahabharata's serpent princess. In a story from the Mahabharata, Krishna, after taking on the form of Mohini, married Aravan to grant his final wish. Aravan was then sacrificed by the Pandavas in order for them to defeat the Kauravas in battle. During their "nirvana" of castration ritual, the Hijras, or trans women, invoke another mythological goddess, Bahuchara-mata. Such wide acceptance might have paved the way for inviting transgender women to auspicious functions and celebrations to render their blessings (Patranabish).

Stories of Transgressions: From Woman to Man

Although less well-known and infrequent than man-to-woman transgressions, mythological narratives about woman-to-man transitions do exist. Devdutt Patnaik, in his *Shikhandi and Other Tales They Don't Tell You,* illuminates how the soul has no gender, according to Hindu scriptures; gender is only that of the body, in which the soul is accommodated.

Princess Amba to Shikhandi

The Mahabharata, which narrates the great war between the Pandavas and Kauravas, contains the story of Princess Amba, who became Shikhandi in another birth. Shikhandi is a pivotal character in the epic who, through her rebirth, subsequent transvestism, and "sex change," influences the outcome of that epic battle. Amba, along with her sisters, was abducted by the warrior Bhishma from Hasthinapur. He planned to make them married to his brother, Vichitravarya. Amba requested that he let her go back to be reunited with her lover. But to her dismay, her lover, Shalva, rejected her. On her return, the king also spurned her, and Amba was left with no choice but to be with Bhishma. Since Bhishma had taken the vow of celibacy, Amba became furious and invoked Lord Karthikeya. Lord Karthikeya granted her a lotus garland, and anyone who accepts the garland can kill Bhishma. But Bhishma also had the boon of 'choosing his time of death' and was indomitable. Distraught, she retreated to the forest. Severe austerities made her receive the wish from Lord Shiva that she would be instrumental in Bhishma's death at her next birth. After self-immolation, she was reborn as a daughter of King Drupada and was named Shikandini. As the king wanted a son for himself, he raised her like a male. Problems erupted during the marriage to another princess; Shikandini's sexuality was questioned, which made her escape to the forest. A forest spirit, Sthuna, lent his manhood to Shikhandini for one night. She returned to the forest to hand over the manhood. Touched by his honesty, the forest spirit let him remain a man forever. Thus, Shikhandini became Shikhandi, who was a man. Krishna asked Shikhandi, who had grown into a man, to take the lead in battle during the Mahabharat war. With the legendary archer Arjuna concealed behind him, Shikhandi rode into the Pandava battle. As Bhisma believed that Shikhandi was a woman by birth and that only men were permitted to engage in combat, Bhisma declined to raise his bow in an attempt to attack Shikhandi. Arjuna seized the chance to use his arrows to arrow Bhisma until he was pinned. Thus, Shikhandi brought about Bhisma's demise, fulfilling the vow he made during his previous life as Amba.

Chudala to Kumbaka

Chudala, the astute spouse of King Shikidhvaja, was disregarded by her husband due to her gender. The king retired to the forest, leaving the realm in pursuit of wisdom. Capable of transforming into any form at will, Chudala trailed her husband and assumed the form of a man, Kumbaka. The two became really good friends, and Shikidvaja learned about all of Kumbhaka's accomplishments. Kumbhaka said that he was cursed by Sage Durvasa and that he would turn into a woman every night. In front of the king, Kumbhaka turned into a woman called Madanika. Owing to his intention of becoming a hermit, he did not make any sexual progress towards Madanika. Glad that the king was impervious to lust and rage, Madanika changed into Chudala and disclosed her true identity and mission. It dawned on him that his wife's gender had prevented him from appreciating her wisdom. Shikidvaja pleaded for forgiveness as he accepted the same wisdom from his wife when she disguised herself as a man. He returned to his kingdom with his wife, who was both his teacher, Kumbhaka, and his lover, Madanika, and ruled the land with the wise Chudala by his side (Natarajan).

Ila to Sudyumna

Vaivasvata, who was also known as Satyavrata, was married to Shraddha, and for years, they remained childless. Vaivasvata prayed to Mitra and Varuna for a child, resulting in a girl named Ila. To ensure his lineage continued, he asked Vashishtha to change her gender, and Vashishtha obliged, transforming Ila into Sudyumna. After many years, Sudyumna, a righteous king,

accidentally entered the Sukumara forest, a sacred grove of Shiva and Parvati. Furious, Shiva transformed Sudyumna, his men, and his horses into women. She took her birth name, Ila, and sought help from her father's guru Vashishtha. He, in turn, approached Lord Shiva. Though he could not reverse the effect, he amended it. Ila had been wandering through forests in quest of the wise Vashisththa when she came across Budha, the moon god Chandra's son. The two fell in love and got married. However, because of Shiva's conditions, Ila completely forgot this identity and her marriage when she reverted to being Sudyumna. But, because of his celestial origins, Budha was able to divine Ila's fate. Budha accepted Ila as his wife and Sudyumna as his disciple. Budha and Ila were blessed with a son, Pururava.

Later, Sudyumna returned to his kingdom with Pururava. He remarried and was blessed with three more sons, Utkal, Gaya, and Vimal. He retired to his chambers every other month, where he led a clandestine life as Ila. Eventually, his absence began to interfere with his duties, and he declared Pururava to be the legitimate heir and withdrew into the woods ("The Genderfluid Deity").

Goddess Kali's Transitions

According to an oral legend in Bengali folklore, Goddess Kali is represented by Krishna, the deity of love. Goddess Parvati, the wife of Lord Shiva, changed into the dark-skinned Kali. Kali descended on the earth to punish all who had become too corrupt. When her indignation became incorrigible, the gods sent Shiva to stop her. The very sight of Shiva made her forget her wrath and rage, and the world became tranquil. After some time, when enormity excelled again, Parvati was requested to go back to the earth in her previous form as Goddess Kali and fight against evil the same way. But she declined owing to the previous incidents and, instead, re-incarnated as the dark-skinned Krishna, the God, and descended on earth to change the world with love. The milkmaids of Gokul could not resist their love for the amorous Krishna and danced and frolicked around him. Shiva, who missed Kali, descended on earth as Radha and danced around Krishna. Many Kali temples worship Radha Krishna in the same complex, and some religious sects still worship the combined form of Krishnakali, especially in Bengal. Devotional songs and poems are sung in praise of this united form. Several mythological narratives portray Krishna as merely a reincarnation of Lord Vishnu, in contrast to the folklore that regards Krishna as a reincarnation of Kali. With this tale and its queer theme of divine deities transgressing gender roles, the conflict between devotees of Shiva, Shakti (Goddess Kali), and Vishnu in mediaeval Bengal was attempted to be lessened (Patranabish).

5. Results

There is a dearth of research on transmasculin narratives. The popular understanding of transgender people is 'thirunangai' or 'hijra', who are trans-feminine people. There seems to be an imbalance when we look at whose voices are being heard and acknowledged and others who are being left behind within the movement itself. Traditional mythological and folkloric tales have been largely transmitted orally and through translations and rewritings throughout generations. Over time, trans masculine identities from mythology and oral folklore transitions have largely gone unnoticed and forgotten and are not as well-known in modern times as many trans feminine mythological figures. This primarily reflects the deep-seated patriarchy of Indian society. Stories of Shikhandi and Chudala, who were trans masculine queer identities, have been misinterpreted and downplayed historically and culturally. Shikandini has generally been interpreted and retold as an eunuch (a male castrated), an intersex person, or even as

someone who is gender ambiguous. In contemporary times, many are still confused about the true transgression of Shikhandi from woman to man. According to Devdutt Pattnaik, "Shikhandini, who became Shikhandi, is what modern queer vocabulary would call a female to male transsexual, as her body goes through a very specific change. But retellers avoid details and tend to portray him/ her either as a eunuch (castrated male), a male-to-female transgender (a man who wears women's clothes as he felt like a woman), an intersexed hermaphrodite, or simply a man who was a woman (Amba) in his past life. It reveals a patriarchal bias even in the queer space" (Patranabish).

6. Future Implications and Recommendations

The intersection of transmasculine identities with other social identities (caste, class, and ethnicity) should be explored. Also, the role of the visual arts, performance, and oral tradition in representing trans masculinity should be analyzed and the possibility and potential of new media and technology to create inclusive and diverse narratives of trans masculinity can be investigated. Collaborative projects with transmasculine artists and storytellers should be encouraged. "Hindu society had a clear-cut idea of all these people in the past. Now that we have put them under one label, 'LGBT', there is lot more confusion, and other identities have got hidden," says Gopi Shankar Madurai in the National Queer Conference 2013 ("Hinduism and LGBT topics"). The root of this widespread discrimination and marginalization against LGBT individuals is not because of hatred in society but because of their utter ignorance towards it. There is thus a need to educate people about these gender issues through queer affirmative educational curricula and policies since it is only then that these challenges can be overcome and an understanding will develop in society. (Khandelwal)

7. Conclusion

There is evidence with historical and cultural roots to combat the heteronormative and patriarchal social systems that have ignored and suppressed trans men and people with trans masculine identities in India. The limited historical and mythological accounts and proof of transgender men that are accessible have been construed according to patriarchal conceptions, and certain tales have neglected to acknowledge their presence. Transgender men are frequently misinterpreted as lesbians, which may be a reflection of society's reluctance to accept someone who was born with a female gender identity. Because of all of this, most people in the public are unaware that transgender men even exist. Even today, most members of society associate transgender people exclusively with trans women. Trans men's claim to their place in Indian mythology is therefore essential in reminding society that trans masculine people did exist in the past and that stories about them were told.

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Self Empowerment with Supreme Soul Connections

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Abstract: *At times, we see for some higher power to connect with ourselves so that we get empowered to face any challenges we come across in our day to day life in the challenging Iron age (kalyug).*

Some people might see their religions whichever they belong to come over the disturbances and discomfort they feel inside the soul, whereas other people go to some natural places like rivers, seashores, mountains, hills etc. to pacify and feel serenity of outside and some other people even depend on other persons as well like friends, relatives etc.

But when all these short term and temporary way out did not work for long time then persons look for someone who empower them by himself connecting with them all the time, who is supreme in innate nature of power, peace, purity, happiness, knowledge and love and who is ocean of every quality which man is looking for inside him and when one such source he is able to connect with, then he no longer remains void inside and feel empowered throughout and that such soul is Supreme soul with whom we all can get connected unconditionally every time and anywhere and feel empowered.

Key Words: Iron age, Peace, Power, Purity, Supreme Soul, Empowerment.

1. INTRODUCTION:

We all are souls (beings) with seven innate values of love, purity, power, peace, knowledge, bliss and happiness. But due to acquired indulgence in vices like lust, anger, greed, ego, hatred, jealousy, laziness, attachment, hurriedness etc. over the years on soul, soul has got corrupted as we all souls have come along very long journey of past many births and soul has forgotten his innate nature all the time as it got depleted and feel soon tired of doing things and also when come in interaction with other human beings and looking for some higher power to empower himself.

Fortunately, there is also one soul who is all the time Supreme in these seven innate qualities of love, peace, power, purity, knowledge, bliss and happiness and ready to give his power to all depleted souls and we all depleted souls are able to connect **directly** with that supreme soul in Diamond age i.e. in last hundred years of Iron Age.

So now question is, whom should we look for?

When we look for someone i.e. friends, family members, near and dear ones then they come for some distance; up to their potential or limit, but again we find ourselves in the same situation. Hence, we all are looking for someone who can hold our hand continuously for long

and not leave us especially, during our tough times and become our companion for every moment.

If we are asked for such a person in our life who do everything unconditionally for us then inner voice of most of us will say our parents who took care of our body, guided us in difficulties, holding hands and they are first one who were always there beginning from our birth, then second face might be of any one among many we are familiar with, but at times all can leave our hand if we don't obey them or if, we don't follow their instructions then even bodily parents might scold us when they don't understand us as they are also conditioned and sometimes we are also not able to understand them and agree with their belief systems which they imposed upon us as it seem contradictory to us and they also get tired of the issues when their body gets aged so we cannot depend always on them. and what if someone parent's died at his early age, then to whom should one look up with trust as we know all relations are our bodily relations whether it's parents-child, sister- brother, friends, uncle-aunt, brother in law, sister in law etc. and all bodily relations has to leave someday.

Many of us also seek someone who is higher in values i.e. peace, power, love among them like some Gurus or Saints. Gurus or Saints may be high in virtues of peace, purity, power but still they have some limitations and restrictions. We might belong to some religions; go to temples, gurudwara, mosque, church and many sacred places; read many scriptures to get peace and love and certainly it helps to some level but what if, all rituals we do with some fears that on not doing prayers or reading mantra properly then some Supreme authority will be annoyed and would punish us in certain way. And what if, we go to some sacred places to fulfill our worldly wish on someone suggestion and there our wish is not fulfilled. For example; going to Haridwar, then come to Shrine Vaishnodevi for fulfilling our wish and if not able to fulfill that wish and if one more person come across and tell some other sacred place for example Bageshwar dham, suggesting about instant result, then person look up for the new one.

So why we all are doing this and what exactly we all have to look up to get exact answer.

As we all have strong belief system that all our problem will be solved by worshipping but again question is to be asked by ourselves that is this really helpful every moment in making me powerful or making me dependent and one more fact is that all bodily relations has bodily age limitation, so we should think beyond bodily relationship as we all are souls and look for soul which is full of love, capacity, energy and one who can filled me with love without getting depleted himself; one who never see my weakness, my fault and accepts me as myself and its happens only when soul can see compassionately and give his love, power, peace whatever needed, especially in those moments when we feel totally depleted .

So, is there any supreme soul among us which can fulfill us and is Supreme in everything?

So, before coming to such Supreme being, let's see why we all are looking for such a soul:

Objective:

Purpose of Self Empowerment with supreme soul

As we all souls has become weak and degrading daily due to indulgence in vices like greed, attachment, ego, anger, lust, hatred etc. while doing any activity or interacting with one another and it is happening every moment and we all are not able to stop it on our own and due to unawareness of supreme soul i.e. some higher energy so we largely see outside for

empowerment like our friends, relatives or activities, some religions which is temporary and short lived not contending the soul fully.

So this is high time, when everything around us in chaos, souls should get connect with Supreme soul who is full reservoir of innate powers and virtues all the time and uplift or empower themselves.

How was Soul Earlier?

As we all see in our childhood, we are usually healthy and able to do more work as we are more energetic but as we grow up, our body become weak. Similarly, in beginning of the era, when we soul came on Earth, we all were full of energy, purity and powerful with all its innate qualities in full hundred percent or we can say soul were in its highest stage (satvik) but as time cycles or Era went on changing from Satopradhan (Golden age and Silver age) to Rajopradhan (Copper Age) and then to Tamopradhan (Iron Age), then we soul also keep changing from satvik state of mind (pure) to rajsik state (mix) and then to tamsik state (impure) respectively as we soul keep on changing costume (body) from one birth after another, we all were being got toxified with lack of purity, peace and power and gradually we all got conditioned with outside surroundings; with acquired wrong belief systems and self assumptions, sensations and gradually forgot our true nature (pure level) and started seeing everything through body consciousness (soul's lower level) as soul had to pass through its three stages of Satvik, Rajsik and Tamsik.

2. Analyses & Discussion:-

If we see our Nature (trees, plants, earth, soil, water, river, sea, air) no need to mention how polluted and disorganized it is as Earthquakes, floods, Natural disasters, thunder storms, forests fire, clouds burst all are uncertain.

Now a day's we can also see uncertainty of seasons, how hot and cold weather are extreme and even they are not in order also as mountain ice is melting very fast, majorly due to man's inhumane behavior as man has forgotten his responsibility to enrich and nurture the Nature.

When we see human beings, no wonder to say how disorganized today's person is. His thoughts, feelings, words, actions all are disorganized or in disharmony as in his mind some thoughts is there and he speaks other than what goes inside and most of the time his words does not match his actions as he himself not aware of what chaos is going inside his mind than what actually reflects in his words and actions and moreover which is also most of the time not good i.e. the quality of thoughts, words and action are not good one as it reflects greed, anger, lust, ego, hatred, jealousy, laziness etc. as soul is more inclined to see outside world through vices; more attached towards bodily beauty (fair face, black long hair), beautiful clothes, attractive jewellery, appealing colors, songs, movies etc., started accumulating physical things by lying to get feeling of appreciation from others as he started looking for comfortable feeling from others as soul's power has got reduced and it started looking outside for excitement and sometimes physical power and misinterpret it as his happiness and inner power respectively. Looking largely outside rather than inside had made him totally dependent externally on outer things i.e. his friends, family, surroundings, Nature, physical facility and thus how person is running one after another things and becomes slave of his sensations, false assumptions, physical facilities and comfortable feeling from others.

So more or less all souls on this Earth have become weak. Now question is how to rectify it and who will rectify it?

Obviously we all are looking for someone, who can help us coming out of this mess but unfortunately we do not know which direction we should move as our religions, superstitions and some mystic powers, and when we look for each other faces it helps up to certain limit but not fully as all these cult also has got degraded and divided with time and we all has not that pure power to hold on things for better and get back in their normal form.

Supreme Soul

So is there any such power or energy which can uplift soul's power or Nature.

As universe has well organized facility so that Energy of Nature is conserved as it is neither created nor destroyed, so in time cycle also it is fixed when to uplift it.

Let's see through example of thermodynamics (Second law of Entropy), when in a burner heat gets exhausted, then to maintain its temperature we connect with big resource.

Similarly, when energy of Nature (Prakriti) and persons gets lowered, then according to Second law of Entropy, some higher source of energy must connect with the Nature or Person so that their energy gets uplifted or energy get conserved.

For example, when car battery gets discharged and if we connect our car battery with some other charged battery than it will charge our car battery but for some hours, and if we connect it with some big powerful battery which never runs out then car battery will get continuously electrical energy and it gets charged and that powerful battery (higher source of energy) will also not get depleted.

Let's take another example of Power Station where electrical energy is generated and it supplies electric energy to homes, offices, cities, villages, streets etc. continuously without getting discharged as power station is generator of electrical energy.

It is also said by our ancestors that "Ati ka ant hota hai".

So, In last stage of Kalyug (Iron Age) when everything is in chaos, time itself reveals **High Source of Energy** which is higher in values and that plays its participation in larger order of Society ;Nature by giving power to all souls for their upliftment so that depleted souls become able to recognize and regain their original nature, and once again get filled with power ,purity, happiness and bliss; It also helps Nature (Prakarti) to rejuvenate and harmonize by making it pure (Satopradhan) from impure (Tamopradhan).

One such **Higher Source of Energy** which can connect to all souls to uplift them by continuously supplying energy to all depleted souls without getting depleted its own energy is **Supreme Soul**.

Who exactly He is? (Almighty Authority)

This Higher Being or Higher Source of Energy is Supreme Soul who is Living Dynamic Entity like us in incorporeal form (bodyless); in metaphysical form; in the form of Candle light flame (jyotibindu) or Point of Diamond Light Star but who is:

Always full of Purity, Positivity and Elevated Energy;

Always mighty, lightful, wisdomful, truthful and Supreme (limitless) in Seven Innate Qualities (loveful, peaceful, powerful, blissful etc.) i.e. Satopradhan (always Divine and Beautiful);

Beyond any bodily religions; likes and dislikes.

As He does not come in birth and death cycle of life like us; never takes birth from mother's womb; never comes in cycle of karmic account with other souls.

Different Religions gives Him different names like Muslim brothers call him 'Noor-E-Illahi' Christian brothers calls him as 'Point of Light' God, Hindu call him as 'Parmatma' etc.

Where should we find one such supreme power or higher energy which uplift all.

Abode of Supreme Soul:

We all have experienced that when we are in pain, we all naturally look above the sky that is we all know intuitively or trust unconsciously on him that somewhere that higher being, who is supreme in all innate qualities of love, purity, power etc. is there to help us when we all call him for our help and also thanks him for whatever he has given to us, so this higher being or supreme soul is residing high above the limitless sky. We know his residence by many names as Soul world, Incorporeal world, Brahmand, Paramdham etc.

How should we connect with Him?

He is in its dynamic form and we all soul can connect to the supreme soul which is an entity with supreme qualities that is always bliss full, loving and knowledgeful through Rajyoga Meditation in Diamond age.

Unknowingly we all are looking for that higher source of energy to connect with but unfortunately we never able to realized, recognized or got opportunity to get connected with that supreme power source directly and forever.

We are looking for Him in mosques, temples, churches and many places where one can find his high vibration only as we remember Him with much intensity and we get connected with Him unknowingly and that's why when we go to temples, gurudwaras, churches, mosques and any such religious places we all feel get charged with some high power and feel ourselves uplifted but only for some moments.

All these signs indicates that we have incomplete knowledge about Him, about time cycle and being unaware about his abode, we all are seeking Him and thus not able to connect him directly any moment and that's how we are not able to build up dynamic relationship with Him till date.

But we can connect to supreme soul or supreme being (Higher Source of Energy) all the time, independent of where we are and what we are doing taking one minute shift from our work by considering ourself first as 'soul' and remember him lovingly as a 'Supreme soul' in his 'incorporeal form' in his abode as like as we get connected with our child or mother when we remember them when they are far from us. We also say it is as telepathic connection through Rajyoga Meditation.

And during connection with Him, His energy will flow towards us and empower us and we feel light, charged and energetic.

It is found by many spiritual organization and particularly by 'Brhamakumaris Spiritual World University' that souls can connect with supreme soul and uplift its power.

3. Findings:

1.   Now this is the time, we are going through is profound Dark age i.e. iron age, when soul is total in its tamsik stage (weak state) and sees everything through the lower activities of the soul and has started getting almost totally degraded and depleted, so this is the high time, when souls need transformation before depletion of soul's qualities completely which can bring Disaster.

So, what is that specific time when soul started getting transformation from impure state (tamsik) to pure state (satvik).

Diamond Age (Purshottam Sangam yug)

2.   As time is cyclic in nature, so in whole era, sometime segment comes when disorganized and randomly scattered things has to fall in place but that's a gradual process. Interestingly, falling of things does not take place on its own. There is one dynamic high energy which connect with Nature and everything whichever is in chaos and bring that in harmony and stable state, most importantly Nature (prakriti, animals) and human beings and that dynamic highest power is *Supreme soul*.

3.   Reaching down to Iron age, when all souls are passing through Tamsik stage of lust, anger etc., but as time is cyclic in nature so again all souls has to become pure and has to come in its original state so in last 100 years of iron age, supreme soul; father of all souls, connect with souls through Rajyoga, who has become weaker and weaker over the ages and empower them. *This specific time of iron age is known as diamond age*, where all souls having got connected with Supreme soul starts detoxifying themselves as because of them world is in chaotic state.

4. Conclusion:

According to law of conservation of energy, energy is neither created nor destroyed, hence when energy of nature (prakriti) and human being get lowered then according to law of thermodynamics (second law of entropy) some higher source of energy must connect with the Nature (prakriti) and Human being so that the energy of Nature and of all souls get uplifted and thus how energy remains conserved.

5. **Recommendations**:

•   During our challenging times, which comes in form of examination paper from people or situations in today's times, we can look for solution with some religious text e.g. Shrimad Bhagwad Geeta, Ramayan, Qoran, Holy Bible etc. or with some pure soul or saints.

•   In critical times, we look for Supreme soul; Dynamic Entity; father of all souls; every time ready to help his children, beyond any limited boundary of religion, caste, creed and bodily related things and available all the time in the Diamond age.

6. Essence (Future Implications):

Its high time as we already entered in that age to connect with that supreme being having recognized it and fulfill our all relationship with Him as we all are living in void of relationship with each other and fulfill our soul power once again to uplift Nature and Society and bring Golden Age once again.

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The Supernatural Beliefs Of Kaleria And Its Implications In Nnedi Okorafor's *Ikenga*

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Abstract: Nnedi Okorafor is a prominent Nigerian-American writer, her writings are known to be an innovative fusion of African culture, science fiction, and social criticism. Okorafor's novel, *Ikenga* (2020), holds the supernatural beliefs of the protagonist, Nnamdi, a twelve-year-old boy, and the significance of the people, groups, and civilizations. The present research investigates the supernatural views of existence, death, and life of the Kaleria people. Through the sculpture of Ikenga, the protagonist advocates for belief in an unseen force that may provide guidance and comfort in the face of adversity. In addition, it explores the supernatural aspect of Ikenga, which provides insight into human nature, motivation, behaviour, and relationships.

Key Words: Ikenga, culture, spirits, supernatural power, punishment.

1. INTRODUCTION:

A belief is a firm conviction or acknowledgment that something is real or true, typically in the absence of proof or evidence from science. It serves as the basis for how people think, act, and make decisions, and they are present in every ethnic group or individual's paradigm. Culture, religion, society, and individual experience are some of the aspects that mould one's beliefs. The most obvious source for belief systems is considered as religion. Religious believers who possess religious writings, such as the Holy Books hold a greater understanding of morality with the concepts of right and wrong and good and evil through the tales portrayed in the writings, which provide context for those beliefs.

The supernatural belief has always been an integral aspect of human culture and history, and the notion of supernatural beliefs is central to many religions across the world. It gives significance to the mysterious things and explains the inexplicable matters. The concepts such as stories, rituals, and practices are rooted from the dawn of civilization to the present day. A deeper relationship with God, stronger communal ties, and the transmission of values and ideals are the three main goals of religious rites and activities, and some examples of empirical proof include the existence of God, angels, devils, reincarnation, and mind-body dualism. And this article examines the supernatural beliefs of the fictional town of Kaleria from Nnedi Okorafor's *Ikenga* standpoint. As Walker suggests about the supernatural beliefs that,

> … acknowledgement that inexplicable things happen which we identify as being somehow beyond the natural or the ordinary, and that many of us hold beliefs which

connect us hold beliefs which connect us to spheres that exist beyond what we might typically see, hear, taste, touch, or smell (3).

Nigerian-American writer Nnedi Okorafor has generated a name for herself in modern speculative fiction by deftly incorporating themes of supernatural beliefs in her works. Her literary work adds authenticity to African culture, feminist viewpoints, and environmental issues through her examination of supernatural beliefs in African circumstances. Her investigation provides powerful insight into the way family values continue to shape the African people's identity and ability to persist during difficult times.

Okorafor introduces the term Africanfuturism, it is more narrowly focused on African culture, history, mythology, and perspective as the branches of the Black diaspora and it does not place Western values at the centre. And the term Africanjujuism recognises the harmonious coexistence of authentic African spiritualities and cosmologies with the imaginary vision. Her futuristic representation sheds light on literary and musical movements, creative endeavours, and cultural processes in Africa and the African diaspora. *Akata Witch* (2011), *Akata Warrior* (2017), *The Shadow Speaker* (2007), and *Akata Women* (2022) represent a few of her major contributions. She has received more awards including the Wole Soyinka Prize for African Literature.

2. The novel *Ikenga*

Okorafor's *Ikenga* (2020) is a fantasy novel that blends with African spiritualism and is influenced by Africanjujuism. It is firmly based on African tradition and draws extensively from Nigerian and Igbo mythology. The supernatural elements of the novel, *Ikenga* serve as a springboard for delving into issues of political brutality, corruption, and racial inequity. It serves as Amazon's Best Children's Book for 2020. Okorafor's *Ikenga* features a mythical statue that bestows superhuman skills on Nnamdi, the male protagonist and serves as a powerful symbol of strength and determination.

Ikenga set in the fictional village of Kaleria, is reminiscent of South-Eastern Nigeria. The novel begins with the assassination of Nnamdi's father Chief Egbuche Icheteka, who aspired to eradicate the criminals of Kaleria because Nnamdi believes Kaleria is a desirable place to reside if there are no criminals in the village. After Icheteka's death, Nnamdi has vowed to avenge his father's killer, but he is unsure of his capabilities. A year later, at the memorial celebration of his father, Nnamdi has a spiritual encounter with his father's spirit. The spirit gave Nnamdi the sculpture of Ikenga, telling him to draw power from it so he could defend his family and Kaleria against evildoers.

3. The Shrine Figure Ikenga

Deities, spirits, and magical artefacts like the Ikenga statue connect the fictitious universe to the cultural reality of the Igbo people. The ability to tap into the ikenga statue's power has a profound impact on Nnamdi's life. In *Ikenga*, the sculpture Ikenga denotes it as "*aka ikenga"* (Okorafor, 38), it means a man's strength, vowed to do good and given to Nnamdi with love, hope, and dreams. The weight of the Ikenga is comparable to that of a ten-pound barbell, and bigger than Icheteka's fist. The murky Ikenga perched on a stool seems to be a machete in its bulbous right hand and a planet on its smaller left side, with cracked and hissed with two long spiral horns. The face is aggressive with piercing eyes, expressionless lips, and minimal symbols on body, with forceful and fixed forward attitude. Nnamdi's father instists him to,

"You do not take the Ikenga with any other hand but the right" (38), and set the Ikenga on the palm of his upturned right hand. Ikenga is warm, like something alive, and felt oddly heavy, as it is full of water. As Onwuejeogwu believes that,

> The two ram horns means that the owner of the Ikenga must go ahead in his business with the subbornness of a ram. The knife in his right hand means that he must cut down any obstacle on the way . . . Every Ikenga must be carved straight and rigid, because straightness is the sign of exactitude and rigidity means preservance (92).

Nnamdi hesitantly lowers his left hand since he does not want to take any chances. The Ikenga shrank and got steadily lighter as he grasped it, eventually fitting beneath his hand. The foundational belief system around the concept of Ikenga is the mystical sanction of ancestors. It is also given with the hope that it will encourage positive actions that are beneficial for the environment and discourage bad ones that are harmful. In this conviction, Okorafor analyses the optimism and confidence of the Kaleria people through the sculpture Ikenga.

Fig. 4 The sculpture Ikenga

4. THE SUPERNATURAL BELIEFS

Ancient African and Igbo spiritual practices have a reputation for being gentler on the environment. The Igbo people are very religious, and they believe that the spirits of the earth and universe are always watching over them. Most significantly, the Igbo people believed that the sculpture of Ikenga depicts that an ancestor's spirits give many blessings, fertility, health, and life to the human community which is assigned to every young teenage boy as he advances into manhood. The representation of the spirits is able to create quite compassionate societies and empower the people to control their own fate. The Igbo believe that the inhabitants such as flora and fauna, air and water, land and sky, stars and moon are interwoven in a vast cosmic system like a tiny knot with ancestor spirits. This idea forms the central principle of the worldview. As Jude I Onebunne explains, "The spiritual assigning of the *Ikenga* which reminds a young mind of his values and obligations to the mother earth as he strives to succeed in life further enumerates the Igbo mans value for his environment" (60).

Traditional African belief systems also include the veneration of ancestor spirits and the use of sculptures as a means of communication with the spirit world after death. A profound admiration for past generations is seen as an important part of shaping the lives of their descendants and also offers a cultural anchor of stability and continuity in a rapid change of life symbolising cultural resistance in the face of industrialization and globalisation. Moreover it offers a framework for resolving questions of belonging and identity.

In *Ikenga*, the most prominent and well known criminals in the Kaleria are Mama Go-Slow, Never Die, Three Days' Journey, Bad Market and Chief of Chiefs. The crooks of Kaleria have made the locals afraid to remain or even go out for their daily lives alone. Father Raphael, a neighbour of Nnamdi's friend Chioma has lost the sacred bread and water to the masked assailant. He says, "Even the holy things not safe in Kaleria" (21). Okorafor describes the profound corruption in Kaleria and the way she eliminates social injustice, hubris, and poverty through the use of magical interventions, mystical advice, and supernatural aid.

The revolution that the deceased Icheteka and Nnamdi brought to Kaleria, in the way of supernatural belief of Ikenga is able to eradicate the corruption and injustice. The sculpture Ikenga helps Nnamdi to bring justice to his father's death to figure out the murderer Editor in Chief Ikenne Kenkwo, who chose to write about the violent Kaleria instead of a tranquil subject. The moment Nnamdi faces the offenders, he assumes the role of the Man, stretches his body out, and stands tall and fierce. He has "powerful mind's eye" (136), the mind works as a map and gives vision to fire out the kidnappers, thieves, and killers.

The supernatural beliefs often hold for a variety of reasons and include a broad spectrum of thoughts and notions. Many Africans believe that a syncretic approach to spirituality, such as traditional beliefs in beneficent deities and benign supernatural forces, sees the beliefs of the supernatural as harmful, manipulative, oppressive, exclusive, and discriminatory. Okorafor employs supernatural beliefs on a positive note to reassure the Kaleria people and direct Nnamdi in his own journey of self-discovery, strength, and triumph over adversity. As Christopher I. Ejizu mentions that, "At one level, Ikenga is said to refer to a man's physical strength, determination and will to succeed. These ideas are generally expressed in the artistic features of the standard carved forms" (242).

5. IMPLICATIONS OF SUPERNATURAL BELIEFS

The supernatural belief systems provide a basis for universally accepted standards of right and wrong conduct within a framework for moral conduct and direction in spiritual and religious practices. It has the power to mould people's views of right and wrong and impact their acts of kindness. In *Ikenga*, Nnamdi engages in combat with every important criminal in Kaleria however he protects the lives of every single criminal and spares the lives of all other locals. Nnamdi instead of taking advantage of the opportunity to murder his father's murderer Ikenne Kenkwo, Nnamdi convinces him to surrender to the police. Okorafor believes that breaking ethical rules can have significant societal consequences, while adhering to moral guidelines encourages altruistic behaviour like compassion, charity, and helping others, aiming to strengthen social bonds within religious or supernatural beliefs.

The supernatural beliefs have long been associated with altruism, which is defined as an act of genuine concern for the welfare of other people without expecting anything in return. Rather than relying on supernatural explanations, it highlights the importance of human empathy, secular principles, and evolutionary forces in motivating good deeds. This viewpoint calls into question the inherent limitations of supernatural beliefs in fostering a feeling of social responsibility and poses serious concerns about the applicability of altruistic motives.

In *Ikenga*, unlike the new chief of police, Ojini Okimbo, Nnamdi's father makes more effort to rid criminals of Kaleria. Before his death, he tries to compromise with the most prominent criminal the Chief of Chiefs and has it witnessed by the press. In response to this,

an innovative title is formed in the newsletter, "The Meeting of Two Chiefs" (6). Unfortunately he is murdered but his selfless actions, come to fruition as spirits accompany his son Nnamdi to fulfil his dreams.

The supernatural beliefs also constitute a complex web of human belief systems, which includes elements of control and terror. As John H. King says that, "As for the fear of the Evil-eye, it is affirmed that most of the foreign thieves dread more being brought before a particular magistrate who has the reputation of being endowed with that fatal gift than of being summarily sentenced by any other whose judicial glare is less severe" (2). A combination of fear and the desire to control or appease the opponent through supernatural powers leads many people to seek solace in religion, magic, and other supernatural practices. And also the sense of fear leads to control over the individual and it provides comfort, and helps to navigate the social and environmental stresses, and the unexpected acts of others. Icheteka intends to seize the sculpture of Ikenga from Nnamdi after he has punished all of the perpetrators. But Nnamdi rejects to return it saying, "I need it to do so much good for Kaleria. But carrying it makes me strong" (226). According to Nnamdi, the sculpture Ikenga is crucial for the cleansing of the neighbourhood and the restoration of social cohesion. Despite its scientific ignorance, it ascribes unexplained occurrences and natural phenomena to powers beyond human comprehension.

The supernatural beliefs emphasis the sense of the cosmos, the complexities of life, and potentially even discern a higher power's hand in creation. This understanding brings fortitude to face challenges openly and discover meaning in adversity. In *Ikenga*, Nnamdi intially struggles to identify his father's murderer and avenge criminals of Kaleria. But after receiving the sculpture Ikenga from his father, he becomes bold in punishing criminals, learning the importance of responsibility and choices. The experience teaches him about spiritual continuation beyond death and a sense of purpose beyond earthly existence for people.

6. CONCLUSION

The existence of supernatural beliefs is demonstrated in the acquaintance of cultural identity with the symbols and beliefs related to the supernatural elements such as gods, spirits, or exotic animals, and sculptures. The representation of cultural symbols embodies fundamental ideas about the importance of self-determination and wisdom, which in turn inspires people to recognise the regenerative force of life cycles such as life, death and rebirth. The cultural connection of supernatural elements provide emotional support and a sense of reassurance in the midst of uncertainty which helps the believers to draw on that challenges are temporary and the hope can be a driving force that sustains individuals through challenges, encouraging them to persevere with the belief that there is a higher purpose or a brighter future. Okorafor represents the cultural identity through sculptural belief system of Kaleria and the development of new and original ideas in supernatural beliefs that unite a society through literary works, religious rites, and artistic endeavours that symbolically show the African belief system and the richness that can be a fertile ground for creative expression in art and other forms of production.

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Hinduism and Science:
Bridging the Gap Between Faith and Reason

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Abstract: *This research paper embarks on an in-depth exploration of the relationship between Hinduism and science, aiming to bridge the perceived gap between faith and reason. Grounded in ancient texts and philosophical traditions, Hinduism has long grappled with questions about the nature of reality, the cosmos, and the human experience. The paper delves into the historical intersections of Hindu thought and scientific inquiry, examining key concepts, cosmological perspectives, and the philosophical underpinnings that have shaped the dynamic interplay between Hinduism and science. Through this exploration, the paper seeks to illuminate the ways in which Hinduism offers a nuanced perspective that embraces both the spiritual and the empirical realms.*

Key Words: Hinduism, Science, Faith, Reason, Cosmos, Philosophy, Spiritual.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Hinduism, a complex and ancient religious and philosophical tradition, has been characterized by a profound engagement with questions about existence, consciousness, and the nature of reality. In parallel, the scientific endeavour seeks to unravel the mysteries of the universe through empirical observation and rational inquiry. This research paper aims to explore the dynamic relationship between Hinduism and science, tracing the historical intersections, philosophical confluences, and potential points of dialogue that contribute to bridging the perceived gap between faith and reason.

2. Aims and Objectives

2.1 Historical Intersections:

The primary objective of this research is to trace the historical intersections between Hindu thought and scientific inquiry. By examining key periods, such as the Vedic and classical periods, and the contributions of ancient scholars, the paper aims to illuminate the foundations upon which the dialogue between Hinduism and science has evolved.

2.2 Philosophical Underpinnings:

Another crucial objective is to delve into the philosophical underpinnings of Hinduism that have implications for scientific thought. This involves an exploration of concepts such as

the nature of reality (*Brahman*), the cyclic nature of creation and dissolution (*Yugas*), and the interconnectedness of all existence (*Brahman-Atman*), offering insights into the potential points of convergence between Hindu philosophy and scientific understanding.

2.3 Modern Perspectives and Challenges:

The research also seeks to explore contemporary perspectives within Hinduism on scientific advancements and challenges that arise when navigating the intersection between faith and reason. This involves examining how modern Hindu thinkers engage with scientific discoveries and addressing potential areas of tension.

3. Historical Intersections: Tracing the Relationship Between Hinduism and Science

The relationship between Hinduism and science is a rich tapestry woven with threads of ancient wisdom, philosophical inquiry, and empirical observations. Exploring historical intersections reveals a nuanced narrative that challenges conventional notions of a dichotomy between faith and reason. This journey through time unveils the profound contributions of Hindu thought to various scientific domains and sets the foundation for contemporary dialogues aimed at bridging the gap between these two realms.

3.1 Ancient Indian Cosmology and Astronomy:

The roots of Hinduism extend deep into the ancient civilization of the Indian subcontinent, where intellectual pursuits were integral to religious and philosophical traditions. The *Vedas*, the oldest sacred scriptures of Hinduism, contain not only hymns and rituals but also sophisticated insights into cosmology and astronomy.

The *Rig Veda*, for instance, includes hymns that reflect a keen awareness of the celestial bodies and their movements. The *Yajur Veda* contains mathematical calculations related to eclipses. These early glimpses into cosmological understanding illustrate a marriage of spiritual contemplation and empirical observation, challenging the perception of an inherent conflict between religious faith and scientific inquiry.

3.2 Aryabhata and Early Scientific Inquiry:

In the 5th century CE, the Indian mathematician and astronomer Aryabhata made significant contributions to the understanding of the cosmos. His magnum opus, the "*Aryabhatiya,*" not only presented mathematical concepts but also proposed a heliocentric model of the solar system, with the Earth rotating on its axis.

Aryabhata's work showcased a departure from prevailing geocentric models and demonstrated a commitment to empirical observations and mathematical precision. While his heliocentric model was not immediately accepted, it laid the groundwork for future astronomical advancements. This historical intersection between Hindu thought and empirical astronomy challenges the narrative that ancient religious traditions were inherently opposed to scientific inquiry.

3.3 The Scientific Spirit in Hindu Texts:

Hindu sacred texts, often revered for their spiritual and philosophical content, reveal a scientific spirit embedded within their verses. The *Puranas*, for example, contain detailed

descriptions of cosmogony and cosmology. While these narratives are couched in mythological language, they convey a cosmic perspective that resonates with certain scientific theories.

The "*Surya Siddhanta*," an ancient Hindu astronomical text, provides precise measurements of planetary positions and eclipses. These measurements, rooted in mathematical calculations, reflect a meticulous approach to empirical observation. The coexistence of religious and scientific elements within these texts challenges the notion that Hinduism and science are inherently incompatible.

3.4 Metaphysics and Cosmogony:

Hindu metaphysics, as articulated in philosophical texts like the *Upanishads*, explores fundamental questions about the nature of reality and the self. While these inquiries delve into the metaphysical realm, they also present a cosmogonic framework that aligns with certain scientific theories.

The cyclical concept of time, where the universe undergoes periods of creation, preservation, and dissolution, bears resemblance to certain aspects of modern cosmological models. The metaphorical richness of these cosmogonic narratives invites interpretations that transcend a literal understanding, suggesting a compatibility with broader scientific paradigms.

3.5 Contributions to Mathematics:

Hindu mathematical achievements, particularly during the classical period, laid the foundation for advancements in numerical systems and algebra. The concept of zero as a numeral, critical to mathematical notation, finds its roots in Hindu mathematics. The decimal numeral system, including the use of place value and the concept of the digit zero, was a groundbreaking contribution.

Brahmagupta, an Indian mathematician-astronomer of the 7th century, made significant strides in algebra and provided rules for arithmetic calculations. The "*Brahmasphutasiddhanta*," his seminal work, introduced concepts such as the solution of quadratic equations and the treatment of zero. These mathematical contributions not only advanced the field but also reflected a sophisticated engagement with abstract reasoning.

3.6 Challenges in Historical Interpretation:

Interpreting historical intersections between Hinduism and science requires a nuanced approach. The challenges lie in avoiding anachronistic readings and acknowledging the cultural, linguistic, and symbolic nuances of ancient texts. The metaphorical and allegorical nature of many Hindu narratives necessitates careful consideration when drawing parallels with modern scientific concepts.

Furthermore, historical interpretations should resist the temptation to project a uniform worldview onto diverse traditions within Hinduism. The varied philosophical schools, sectarian differences, and regional adaptations demand a contextual understanding of historical contributions.

4. Philosophical Underpinnings: Harmonizing Hinduism and Science

In the exploration of the relationship between Hinduism and science, delving into the philosophical underpinnings reveals a rich tapestry of thought that challenges the perceived

gap between faith and reason. Hinduism, with its diverse schools of philosophy, provides a nuanced framework that can harmonize with scientific principles, offering a holistic perspective that transcends the apparent dichotomy.

4.1 *Vedanta*: Unity in Diversity

Vedanta, one of the six orthodox schools of Hindu philosophy, emphasizes the ultimate unity of all existence. At its core is the concept of *Brahman*, the ultimate reality or cosmic spirit, which is believed to be immanent in all things. This metaphysical perspective aligns with certain scientific principles, particularly in the field of quantum physics, where the interconnected nature of particles and the concept of a unified field echo *Vedantic* notions of an all-encompassing cosmic reality.

The *Advaita Vedanta* philosophy of Shankaracharya posits that the diversity observed in the world is an illusion (*maya*) and that, in essence, there is only one reality - *Brahman*. This profound monistic philosophy challenges the separateness often perceived between the observer and the observed, echoing the interconnected understanding emerging in scientific fields such as ecology and systems theory.

4.2 *Nyaya*: Logic and Scientific Inquiry

Nyaya, the school of logic, is another philosophical tradition within Hinduism that resonates with scientific inquiry. *Nyaya* philosophers developed a system of logic and epistemology that sought to establish valid means of acquiring knowledge. This emphasis on logical reasoning aligns with the scientific method, which relies on empirical evidence and logical inference.

The *Nyaya* system includes a classification of *pramanas* or valid sources of knowledge, which include perception (*pratyaksha*), inference (*anumana*), and testimony (*shabda*). These parallel the empirical methods employed in scientific investigation, where observation, inference, and reliance on credible testimony play crucial roles in the pursuit of knowledge.

4.3 *Samkhya*: The Enumeration of Reality

The *Samkhya* school of philosophy, attributed to the sage Kapila, provides a metaphysical framework that can coexist with scientific paradigms. *Samkhya* enumerates the components of reality, postulating the existence of *purusha* (consciousness) and *prakriti* (material nature). The interplay of these fundamental elements is said to give rise to the diversity observed in the cosmos.

While *Samkhya* introduces metaphysical elements, its enumeration of the building blocks of reality is not inherently incompatible with scientific reductionism. The acknowledgment of consciousness as a fundamental aspect of reality resonates with emerging discussions in neuroscience and the philosophy of mind.

4.4 *Dharma* and *Karma*: A Moral and Causal Universe

Central to Hindu philosophy are the concepts of *dharma* and *karma*, which, while deeply rooted in ethical and moral considerations, also offer insights that align with scientific principles. *Dharma*, often translated as duty or righteousness, implies a cosmic order that

governs the functioning of the universe. This cosmic order can be seen as a metaphorical expression of the natural laws that science seeks to uncover.

Karma, the law of cause and effect, suggests that every action has consequences. In a scientific context, this aligns with the principles of determinism and causality. The understanding that actions in the physical realm have repercussions resonates with the scientific worldview that seeks to establish causal relationships in the natural world.

4.5 Metaphor, Symbolism, and Allegory:

A crucial aspect of understanding the philosophical underpinnings of Hinduism in relation to science is the recognition of metaphor, symbolism, and allegory within its texts. Many Hindu scriptures employ these literary devices to convey profound truths that transcend literal interpretation. The allegorical nature of certain narratives allows for a multiplicity of interpretations, fostering a flexible framework that can accommodate evolving scientific insights.

For instance, the cosmogonic myths that describe the creation and dissolution of the universe can be viewed metaphorically, offering symbolic insights into the cyclical nature of cosmic phenomena. This metaphorical approach allows Hindu thought to be dynamic and adaptable, providing a philosophical foundation that can resonate with scientific advancements without requiring rigid adherence to literal interpretations.

4.6 Challenges and Controversies:

While there are philosophical commonalities between Hinduism and science, challenges and controversies persist. Literal interpretations of religious texts can clash with scientific discoveries, leading to tensions between religious and scientific communities. Striking a balance between acknowledging the symbolic richness of religious narratives and embracing the empirical findings of science remains a complex endeavour.

Furthermore, the pluralistic nature of Hinduism, with its multitude of philosophical schools and interpretations, can lead to divergent views on the relationship between faith and reason. Some may argue for a more literal interpretation of religious texts, while others embrace a metaphorical or allegorical understanding that aligns with scientific paradigms.

5. Modern Perspectives and Challenges: Navigating the Intersection of Hinduism and Science

In the contemporary era, the discourse on the relationship between Hinduism and science has evolved to encompass diverse perspectives and confront emerging challenges. As societies grapple with advancing scientific knowledge and evolving religious thought, the endeavour to bridge the gap between faith and reason becomes increasingly nuanced. This exploration into modern perspectives and challenges provides insights into the ongoing dialogue, recognizing the strides made and the hurdles yet to be overcome in harmonizing Hinduism and science.

5.1 The Dialogue in Academic Circles:

In academic circles, there has been a growing recognition of the need to engage with the intersection of Hinduism and science. Scholars from diverse fields, including religious

studies, philosophy, and the sciences, have contributed to a nuanced understanding of how these two realms can coexist. The dialogue goes beyond mere juxtaposition, aiming for a synthesis that respects the integrity of both religious and scientific insights.

Interdisciplinary studies have explored topics such as consciousness, cosmology, and the philosophy of mind, seeking common ground between Hindu thought and scientific paradigms. For example, the exploration of consciousness in both fields has led to fruitful discussions on the nature of subjective experience and the potential integration of contemplative practices from Hindu traditions into scientific research on the mind.

5.2 Scientific Contributions by Hindu Thinkers:

In the scientific community, individuals with roots in Hinduism have made noteworthy contributions, demonstrating that a deep religious and cultural heritage can coexist with a rigorous scientific mind-set. The physicist C.V. Raman, a Nobel laureate, and Satyendra Nath Bose, known for his work in theoretical physics and the Bose-Einstein statistics, are examples of scientists who integrated their cultural backgrounds with their scientific pursuits.

Contemporary scientists of Hindu descent often navigate the intersection of their cultural heritage and the scientific community. Their experiences contribute to the dialogue on how individuals can draw inspiration from both their religious traditions and scientific endeavours without perceiving a fundamental conflict.

5.3 Yoga and Meditation: A Meeting Point

The practices of yoga and meditation, integral to Hindu spirituality, have gained prominence in scientific research for their potential benefits on mental and physical well-being. Scientists and researchers are exploring the physiological and psychological effects of these practices, investigating how they may positively impact stress reduction, cognitive function, and emotional well-being.

The integration of yoga and meditation into mainstream scientific discourse represents a tangible meeting point between Hinduism and science. As scientific studies validate the positive effects of these practices, it opens avenues for a more harmonious relationship, acknowledging that certain aspects of Hindu wisdom hold valuable insights for human flourishing.

5.4 Challenges in Literal Interpretations:

While there are strides in finding common ground, challenges persist, particularly in navigating literal interpretations of religious texts. Some individuals within religious communities may adhere to literal readings of sacred texts, leading to tensions when scientific findings challenge these literal interpretations. Evolutionary biology, for instance, can clash with creation narratives, prompting debates within religious communities.

The challenge lies in fostering an understanding that religious texts may contain metaphorical, allegorical, or symbolic expressions that convey deeper truths beyond the literal. Encouraging a nuanced interpretation that appreciates the cultural and historical context of these texts is essential for harmonizing differing perspectives.

5.5 The Complexity of Cultural Context:

The complexity of cultural context adds another layer to the dialogue. Hinduism, with its diverse traditions, philosophies, and practices, resists easy categorization. While some aspects of Hindu thought may align seamlessly with scientific principles, others may present challenges. The diversity within Hinduism necessitates a nuanced approach, recognizing that interpretations and engagements with science can vary widely among different sects and communities.

Moreover, the impact of cultural context extends to the way science is taught and understood in different regions. In India, for example, the integration of traditional knowledge, including aspects of Hindu philosophy, into the science curriculum has been a subject of debate. Striking a balance between preserving cultural heritage and providing accurate scientific education remains a complex challenge.

6. Contemporary Dialogues and Syntheses: Nurturing a Harmony Between Hinduism and Science

In the 21st century, the ongoing dialogue between Hinduism and science has entered a phase of dynamic engagement, marked by a conscious effort to bridge the perceived gap between faith and reason. Contemporary dialogues and syntheses between these two realms reflect a nuanced understanding that transcends historical dichotomies, recognizing the potential for a harmonious coexistence. This exploration delves into the evolving conversations, emphasizing key themes, emerging syntheses, and the challenges that lie on the path to a more integrated understanding.

6.1 Interdisciplinary Dialogues:

One of the notable features of contemporary dialogues is the emergence of interdisciplinary conversations that bring together scholars, scientists, theologians, and philosophers. This approach acknowledges the multifaceted nature of the relationship between Hinduism and science, encouraging a more holistic exploration that extends beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries.

Interdisciplinary forums, conferences, and publications have become platforms where thinkers from diverse backgrounds engage in discussions that encompass cosmology, consciousness studies, ethics, and the philosophy of mind. By fostering collaboration among experts in both fields, these dialogues aim to unravel the intricacies of their interplay and highlight potential points of convergence.

6.2 Cosmology and Quantum Physics:

Cosmology, the study of the origin and evolution of the universe, has been a focal point in the dialogue between Hinduism and science. Ancient Hindu cosmological narratives, such as those found in the *Puranas*, offer symbolic insights into the nature of the cosmos. Contemporary physicists, particularly those engaged in quantum physics, have found parallels between certain aspects of Hindu cosmology and modern scientific theories.

The concept of interconnectedness, prevalent in Hindu metaphysics, resonates with the entanglement observed in quantum systems. The idea that the observer and the observed are intricately linked challenges the notion of a detached, objective observer in scientific inquiry.

While not a direct correspondence, these parallels invite contemplation on the nature of reality and the relationship between consciousness and the material world.

6.3 Consciousness Studies and Meditation:

Consciousness studies represent another domain where contemporary dialogues between Hinduism and science are flourishing. The practices of meditation and contemplation, integral to Hindu spiritual traditions, have become subjects of scientific investigation. Researchers explore the impact of these practices on brain function, mental well-being, and even the nature of consciousness itself.

Studies on meditation have shown physiological and psychological benefits, prompting scientists to explore the neural mechanisms underlying these effects. The integration of ancient contemplative practices into mainstream scientific discourse exemplifies a synthesis where the experiential insights of Hindu traditions inform and enrich empirical investigations.

6.4 Ethics and Environmental Responsibility:

The ethical dimensions of Hinduism find resonance with contemporary discussions on environmental responsibility and sustainable living. Hindu concepts such as dharma, emphasizing one's duty and responsibility, align with modern environmental ethics. The interconnectedness of all living beings, a central theme in Hindu thought, corresponds with ecological principles that emphasize the interdependence of species and ecosystems.

In the face of global environmental challenges, the dialogue between Hinduism and science extends beyond theoretical discussions to practical considerations. The synthesis involves exploring how ancient principles can inspire sustainable practices and contribute to a collective ethic of environmental stewardship.

6.5 Challenges in Literalism and Dogmatism:

Despite the strides in contemporary dialogues, challenges persist, primarily rooted in literal interpretations of religious texts and entrenched dogmatism. Some segments within religious communities may resist engaging with scientific insights that challenge literal readings of sacred scriptures. Evolutionary biology, for instance, may be perceived as incompatible with creation narratives, leading to tensions between literalist interpretations and scientific findings.

The challenge lies in navigating these tensions with sensitivity and fostering an understanding that religious texts often contain layers of meaning, including metaphorical and allegorical expressions. Encouraging an openness to reinterpretation that respects the cultural and historical context of these texts is vital for overcoming this challenge.

6.6 Cultural and Political Dynamics:

The intersection of Hinduism and science is also influenced by broader cultural and political dynamics. Debates over education policies, the inclusion of traditional knowledge in curricula, and the perception of science as a Western construct can shape the contours of the dialogue. The challenge is to navigate these dynamics without essentializing either Hinduism or science, recognizing the diversity within both and acknowledging their global and multicultural dimensions.

The cultural and political dynamics also intersect with issues of identity, particularly in regions where Hinduism is a dominant cultural force. Striking a balance between preserving cultural heritage and fostering a scientific mind-set remains a complex task, requiring careful consideration of local contexts and global realities.

7. Conclusion: Towards a Holistic Worldview:

The relationship between Hinduism and science is a dynamic interplay of ancient wisdom and contemporary inquiry. From the speculative inquiries of the *Vedic* period to the systematic explorations of classical philosophy, Hindu thought has engaged with questions that resonate with scientific curiosity. The philosophical underpinnings of Hinduism provide a rich tapestry for dialogue, embracing concepts that align with scientific principles and offering perspectives on reality, consciousness, and interconnectedness.

As Hinduism and science continue to engage in a nuanced dialogue, there is the potential for a more holistic worldview - one that integrates the spiritual and empirical dimensions of human experience. The perceived gap between faith and reason begins to dissolve as both traditions recognize the complementarity of their approaches. Bridging this gap involves fostering mutual understanding, acknowledging the evolving nature of interpretations, and contributing to a shared quest for wisdom and knowledge.

In the intersection of Hinduism and science, there lies a rich terrain for exploration, reflection, and the co-creation of a worldview that integrates the ancient and the contemporary, the spiritual and the scientific. By embracing the insights from both realms, individuals and societies can cultivate a holistic perspective that honours the richness of human experience and the mysteries of the cosmos. In this synthesis, Hinduism and science converge not as adversaries but as partners in the collective journey towards a deeper understanding of the universe and our place within it.

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The Advent & Christmas Celebrations in Roman Catholicism

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Abstract: The Advent season is a four week period before Christmas that celebrates the anticipation and coming of Jesus Christ, the Messiah. The origin of "advent" is from the Latin Word of adventures which simply translates as "coming" or "arrival". Not only is the Christian meaning for preparing and celebrating the coming of Jesus Christ, his birth at Christmas, but also to celebrate the new life when someone accepts Jesus Christ as their Savior and lastly, the anticipation of Jesus returning again Today Advent begins on the Sunday closest to November 30th (Sunday, December 3rd 2023) and lasts until December 24th. The Four weeks of Advent and their themes, First Sunday of Advent Week 1, Second Sunday of Advent Week 2, Third Sunday of Advent Week 3, Fourth Sunday of Advent Week 4. Advent has a two folds character, for it is a time of preparation for the solemnities of Christmas, in which the First coming of the Son of God to humanity is remembered, and likewise a time when, by remembrance of this, minds and hearts are led to look forward to Christ's Second Coming at the end of time.

Keywords: Hope (or Promise), Preparation (or Waiting or Prophecy), Joy (or Peace), Love (or Adoration), Advent wreath & candles, Christmas tree, Star, kudil, Santa Claus.

1. INTRODUCTION:

This study also extends our previous studies which have explored how preschool practitioners negotiate the meaning of cultural traditions celebrated in Swedish preschools (Puskás and Anderson Citation2017), implement and reflect on the curricular task of transmitting a cultural heritage between generations (2018), and achieve a balance between keeping education non-confessional and teaching about a tradition with religious roots (202In past decades, Sweden has moved from a linguistically (Swedish) and religiously (Christian Lutheran) homogeneous society to a multicultural, multilingual and multireligious society where roughly one quarter of preschool children have a migrant background .At the same time, Sweden, where the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Sweden was a state church until 2000, is secularized in terms of declining membership rates in religious communities, as well as in terms of its policy of non-confessional education. Nevertheless, in spite of growing secularization and increasing religious plurality, Christmas remains a public holiday that a large portion of the society participates in . Advent represents a period of preparation for the commemoration of Christ's incarnation; for others, it involves waiting for gifts or for the family gathering around a Christmas tree or a meal. Regardless of what one is waiting for, Advent in Swedish preschools is made into a collective experience and most children in Sweden get involved in Christmas preparations from an early age. Yet, very little is known about how and why Advent is staged in preschools which are, according to the Education Act and the Curriculum for the Preschool (Skolverket Citation2018), non-confessional in the sense that teaching should be neutral in relation to different religions. Advent can be seen both in terms of waiting for a Christian holiday and as an expression of anticipation prior to a national public holiday. Thus, it is of interest to explore how religion and nationalism intersect in those parts of cultural heritage that are staged in Swedish preschools throughout December.

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2. METHODOLOGY :

The data for this paper are drawn from fieldwork carried out in the form of video observations at two preschools. Information about the study was given to the preschool practitioners, children and parents, and written approval was obtained from the parents and the practitioners. The children were asked to give verbal consent. In the study, the preschool groups, teachers and children are given fictitious names. The preschool groups are called Panda and Raven. Preschool group Raven, which is part of a municipal preschool, comprised nineteen children (three to five years old) and four practitioners. Preschool group Panda had twenty-two children (two to five years old) and four practitioners.. The child group was diverse in terms of culture, religion and language but, given the preschool's religious profile, Lutheran Christianity was the most visible religion.

3. FINDINGS :

- **The materiality of Advent**

The period of Advent was materially present in the two preschools in several ways. It was marked by decorations that are specific to a special time period and to a national context. The children and their guardians met Advent already in the preschools' entrance halls. Both preschools were decorated with Christmas trees, Christmas lights, Advent stars, straw figures, angels, pixies and gnomes and bits of Christmas craft made by the children. Homemade Advent calendars decorated the walls, and an Advent wreath with four candles was placed on a sideboard. The children were surrounded by Advent decorations in each and every room, and were engaged in making Christmas decorations on several occasions. Thus, the decoration that builds excitement in the days leading up Christmas could not be noticed.

- **The Rituals of Advent**

The rituals of Advent were regularly recurring occasions. We have observed both weekly rituals (twice) and daily rituals (three times) in both preschools. In addition, during our visits, we discussed the content of these rituals with the practitioners. A weekly ritual in both preschools was the lighting of the Advent candles. In the two preschools we followed, Advent candles were lit at the beginning of each week starting four weeks before Christmas, without any reference to the Christian narrative. Instead, the preschool teachers recited a poem that ties the candles to the joys of Advent in Sweden: waiting for Lucia, preparing gingerbread and saffron buns and the positive emotions associated with the anticipation of Christmas Eve.

- **The Social Advent**

St. Lucia is an annual ritual that can be seen both as a ritual performance and as a social event. The ritual dimensions of Lucia were given special attention in both preschools in terms of how much time they invested in training for the Lucia performance. During the first two weeks in December, children in both preschools participated in singing activities, the purpose of which was to be able to perform the Lucia tradition for their parents.

- **The narratives of Advent**

The narrative dimension of Advent was represented in both preschools through the Christmas story. In the preschool with a religious profile, the story about Jesus's birth was dramatized by one of the preschool teachers with the help of a nativity scene including a reproduction of the stable in Bethlehem with animals and the principal characters of the Christmas story: Mary, Joseph and the infant Jesus in a manger. The story was told in a matter in fact way: a woman called Maria was pregnant when she arrived in the city of Bethlehem where she gave birth to a baby named Jesus in a stable. A few shepherds were told by an angel that Jesus had been born, and they went to visit the newborn. That Christmas is celebrated as a reminder of the birth of Jesus was not mentioned. Thus, the preschool teacher did not

make any direct connection between the religious doctrine of salvation, the story she told and the upcoming holiday.

- **The emotional Advent**

The emotional dimension was present in both preschools in a subtle form during the entire period of Advent. The sounds and smells of Christmas moved into the preschool in the beginning of December. In the morning, the children were met by Christmas music and Christmas lights. They got involved in baking gingerbread and saffron buns. They sang Christmas songs and did Christmas crafts. There was a joyful and spiritual expectation present in both preschool groups in the anticipation of and preparation for Christmas. The daily, weekly and yearly rituals contributed to an experience of magic by repetition. The cultural and social meaning of waiting for Christmas was emphasized by a 'conspicuous cluster of symbolic and practical acts' (Caplow Citation1982, 383) that were mirrored in the society at large. The preschools participated thereby in a national Advent in the sense of a waiting for Christmas framed in national terms.

- **The ethical Advent**

Advent was also utilized as an occasion for addressing ethical issues in both preschools. In Panda, the story about a girl call Kajsa Kavat was dramatized by the preschool practitioners. Kajsa Kavat is a character created by Astrid Lindgren, one of Sweden's most famous children's authors. The story nostalgically evokes a bygone age. Kajsa is a little girl who lives with her grandmother, who has a broken leg. It is Kajsa who sells the peppermint drops for her grandmother at the Christmas market, cooks a full Christmas dinner and makes Christmas 'happen'. The story evokes the morality of helpfulness as well as the magic of Christmas. In a similar vein, in Raven, the teachers made use of an Advent calendar consisting of a big tree with an ethical virtue as each leaf. Thus, every day during Advent, the children were asked to act out a virtue.

4. DISCUSSION :

Advent, as it is celebrated in preschools, is neither entirely religious nor entirely secular. It can instead be interpreted as an expression of banal religion in a secularized country, and of banal nationalism in a country with Lutheran Christian origins. As we have shown in the analysis, the different dimensions of preschool practices orchestrated during the four weeks of Advent mirror and resonate with the societal values and ideals located at the intersections between flagging the nation and flagging Lutheran Christian traditions. The familiar symbols and practices, such as the Lucia tradition or the lighting of the Advent candles, are expressions of banal religion.

5. CONCLUSION :

The socialization of young children into cultural membership involves a silent yet lived experience of Christian Lutheran traditions framed in national terms Based on the example of how Advent traditions are practiced in two Swedish preschools, we may conclude that unreflected Lutheran Christianity is ingrained in the ways of socializing young children into a national community. On the one hand, the national framing of a Christian holiday can be interpreted as an inclusionary practice that makes celebrating Advent possible for almost all children regardless cultural background. On the other hand, it can be interpreted as a troublesome practice because it does not take into account the fact that almost one fourth of the children in today's Swedish preschools have non-Christian backgrounds, and many of them do not celebrate Advent in their homes. Nevertheless, the socialization of young children into cultural membership involves a silent yet lived experience of Christian Lutheran traditions framed in national terms Based on the example of how Advent traditions are practiced in two Swedish preschools, we may conclude that unreflected Lutheran Christianity is ingrained in the ways of socializing young children into a national community.

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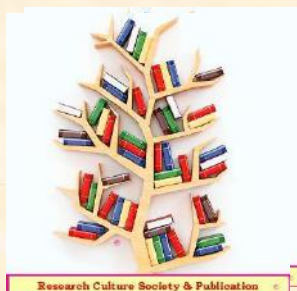
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