



International Journal of English:
Literature, Language & Skills
A Peer-Reviewed Journal
Volume 12 Issue 4 / January 2024
ISSN 2278-0742 / www.ijells.com

~Editor's Note~

Dear Readers & Contributors,

Welcome to the January 2024 issue of IJELLS. We have officially completed 12 years of publishing academic research and creative writing in the field of English.

The writers range from novices to experts, topics range from the controversial to the safe. Wherever each article stands it offers a new angle of research which makes reading the issue an interesting experience. Allow the articles speak with you.

If you have a suggestion for us, kindly mail it to dr.mrudulalakkaraju@gmail.com.

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Happy Reading and Happy Sharing!

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~ Creative Writing in English ~

Ode to Mountain

G Venkata Ramana



I admire your towering presence,
Amidst the stark beauty that surrounds.
Your contrasts add value,
Inspiring me towards a greater goal.

I aspire to reach new horizons,
Yet my inconsistency hinders progress.
It's not my opponents I fear,
But the tumultuous stream of thoughts within.

You nurture life in a boastful landscape,
Bestowing bounties upon the world.
As a mere spectator of change,
Unfazed by cynical ideas.

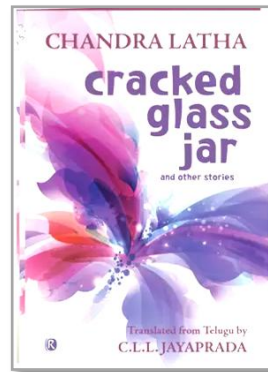
Guide me, my guru,
Endow me with the fortitude to rise steadfast.
For I seek mastery over myself,
Bless me with resilience against external sway.

Your empathy is profound,
I've learned you're an abode of departed souls.
A fountainhead of life's elixir,
A source of abundance and positivity.

I pledge to mirror your generosity,
To be as abundant as you,
In wisdom and compassion alike.

Chandra Latha's *Cracked Glass Jar and Other stories* – A Review

S Mohanraj



Collection of short stories is picking up as a special genre in literature. Indian literary scene is flooded with collections of stories from days of yore. *Kathasaritsagara* (ocean of a stream of stories) is said to have the largest collection of stories by a single author and has stayed in the history of Indian literature as a legend. Competing with it is another famous collection of fables by Vishnu Sharman – Panchatantra or the Five Cardinal Principles. The cardinal principles of governance are taught to a set of four princes inductively using a series of fables. This is followed by a large number of similar collections in different languages spoken and written in India. However, it is only in the early 20th century that the short story began to be recognized as a respectable form of literature and found an indelible place in the literary annals.

The book under review is a translation of a collection of stories from Telugu, a language spoken in the southern part of India, and occupies the fourth place among the largest spoken languages in the country (Hindi, Bengali and Marathi occupying the first three places). The book has 15 stories in all. Each story has a message and in some stories the message is made obvious while in some others it is left to the reader to infer. However, all the stories reflect on common life experiences and cover areas such as education and its status, family and married life, evils of dowry, infidelity, parent child relationships, red-tapism in administration and what have you. Each story picks up on a social problem and presents it in the form of an intense drama. However, the pessimism that sets in is warded off by providing a hope for the future. In a short review, it may not be able to comment on each story, hence a few stories are picked up (not necessarily in the order they appear in the book) to offer my comments.

The very first story 'Once upon a Time' presents intense drama and captures the present day ambition that the parents carry with them in bringing up their children. The setting of the story is in an affluent family with young couple and a child. The child is brought up with care and even before the child begins to go to the school, the parents become anxious and tries to push the child into learning music, dance, crafts, and martial arts. The child is fascinated by the stories narrated by the nurse and other fantasies, and one fine evening when the child is alone imagines being a fairy, and with wings tied on her frock jumps off the roof hoping to fly around. The results of such experiment need not be elaborated. The message is clear – how much pressure can we put on our children? What is the true meaning of love and affection? How do they get misplaced without our knowledge? Is it possible for us to take care of these? Another story that reflects the pressures of education system on children is 'Children's Day'. In celebrating this day dedicated to the welfare of Children, the chief guest walks in hours after he was scheduled to. The children keep waiting

for him on hungry stomachs standing in the scorching sun, in a disciplined manner. They are not allowed to sit, or even have a sip of water while the supervising teachers are busy chatting and exchanging gossip. In the meanwhile, a child with juvenile diabetes, who has left home without her breakfast (for she was under pressure to reach the venue early), succumbs. Who is responsible for this? The teachers, the chief guest, the system or who?

Another story on similar lines is 'White Paper'. This story once again captures the life of a bright young girl, Aparna who has an enviable academic record. Her interests lie in developing herself in the field of fine arts. However, her parents who are doctors would want her to become a doctor by scoring high marks in both the qualifying and the competitive examination. So they send her away from home to stay in a hostel attached to a coaching center. The teachers at the coaching center manipulate the invigilator to help her in case of need. Aparna rebels and walks out of the examination hall handing over a blank answer sheet. The director of the coaching center and the parents are shocked. Who is to be faulted for this? That question remains with the readers.

There are two stories related to medical sciences – 'The Cracked Glass Jar' and 'The Measles'. The two stories have two diverse plots and talk about how red-tape plays an important part in the life of doctors. Honesty has no place. A young doctor in a district hospital discovers that certain villages are infected with Measles and the children are dying because of lack of treatment and the villagers resorting to traditional beliefs in preference to seeking medical help. (Measles is perceived as an expression of anger by the goddess and can be cured by appeasing her.) The doctor collects sufficient data, solicits the help of other doctors (pediatricians) and requests the district collector to contain the epidemic. But he meets with cold response from all quarters. Does he give up? Can he fight alone? On a similar note, a young girl in a school is asked to place the specimen jar containing a human heart on the shelf by her teacher. She stumbles and the jar falls on the floor. The jar is broken into pieces and the strong smell of formalin spreads across the room. The glass splinters pierce the heart (specimen) and this disturbs the girl for life. Much later in life she grows up to be a doctor. In the process she has seen life from close quarters with her brother running away to Saudi leaving his pregnant wife behind and other incidents that leave an indelible mark on her. Her own life as the wife of an army officer gets shattered when the media camera catches her with protesting naked women of Manipur. She slips into a depression losing faith in all so-called rebel ideologies. Can hallucination, delusion that sets in life after severe setbacks be cured? Women are still trapped in cracked glass jars, but have not broken them. Even after opening of many spaces women's freedom remains illusionary and like specimens in a glass jar, they look at freedom through a crack. Visible but not fully attained freedom.

@Granny is another story in the collection that brings to the reader the harsh realities of dwindling family ties. Migration from villages to cities started happening long ago. Now this has taken an additional dimension and people have started moving to different parts of the country and the world. Under these circumstances, what happens to the social structure called family – nay joint family? There may be filial feelings, but distances weaken this feeling and often visiting relatives or 'old' friends becomes a formality. However, there could be certain incidents that touch us to the core – the Indian tradition of giving a small child an oil bath, family getting together in grandparents' house during the summer (holiday), enjoying the home cooked delicacies and playing with children in the family and other neighbours. These are brought to the fore when a couple who have migrated to a different country, visit their home and witness the traditions were being kept alive. Can we leave our children behind in search of prosperity and expect them to have the same love for us as the foster parents? Can they identify themselves with this soil, the people living here? Is this 'empty-nest syndrome' spreading its wings far too quickly?

Modernity has brought with it several advantages and also wrought on us many sorrows. Agriculture is one such illustration elaborated in the story Residue. The farmers in the village are lured by business houses selling fertilizers and pesticides. Pesticides are expected to kill the insects and help crops grow well. Do they do it? Do they have a secondary impact? Do they affect human lives? These are some of the questions which are neither asked nor answered? How many people have died consuming pesticide infected foods or what prompts some farmers to consume pesticides. This is summarized best in the author's words.

Look my son! Who asked them to go round the villages and lure us into spraying fertilizers and pesticides? Once we sprayed these, the pests resisted and continued to damage crops. When the pests did not die, we didn't get the price for even the meager produce; your Uncle killed himself by consuming the very pesticide, leaving me helpless.

Does anything need to be added to complete the story?

Without summarizing it, I will just mention a story 'Those Six' which is in the form of a riddle, a mystery. What values do we attach to our lives? Is matrimony a holy union or a matter of convenience? To understand this, we need to read this story. The few stories summarized here are just illustrations. Each story leaves the reader with a question, a question that can neither be answered nor has a perceivable answer. That makes the collection worth reading again and again.

In conclusion, a word about the translator is essential. Prof Jayaprada is a recognized translator (by the Sahitya Akademi) and has been in this job for over three decades. She taught English at the prestigious Andhra University. Being a native speaker of Telugu, she understands its nuances and is able to succinctly capture them in English, and this is no mean task. In short, she has enriched the Indian writing in English by contributing this volume to its repertoire.

Chandra Latha. (2023). *Cracked Glass Jar and Other stories*. Translated by Jayaprada. CLL. New Delhi: Ratna Books. ISBN 9789355724625. (Pages 231: Price Rs. 559/-)

~English Literature~

The Complex Psychological Landscape of World War I Poetry

Bhanuteja Suroju

Abstract

This study examines the literary works of World War I poets, such as Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon, Rupert Brooke, Jessie Pope, and Laurence Binyon, using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic framework. This study uncovers the unconscious motives, coping techniques, and defensive tactics these poets used in reaction to the tragedy of war using a Freudian analysis. This study unveils the psychological complexity of each poet, highlighting the evolutionary psychic conflict in Sassoon's works, the cathartic release found in Owen's "Dulce et Decorum Est," the propagandist defense mechanisms of Pope, the idealized patriotism of Brooke, and the collective coping mechanism found in Binyon's "For the Fallen." This examination shows how literature has the persistent ability to shed light on the psychological complexities of war that are buried, offering a sophisticated grasp of the psychological effects of this important historical occurrence.

Keywords: World War I poetry, Psychoanalysis, Freudian analysis of poetry, War literature, wartime poetry, Psychological impact of war, Emotional impact of war

Introduction

Many muses emerged from World War I, incorporating their emotions, thoughts, and gestures into their creations. Many muses emerged during this time, each with a distinct viewpoint on the conflict and its effects on the human psyche. In this piece, we delve into the complex psyche of World War I muses such as Jessie Pope, the propaganda minstrel, Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon, Rupert Brooke, and Isaac Rosenberg. We investigate the mental intricacies of their reactions to the conflict by looking at their poems. The Effects of World War I on the human psyche was catastrophic that resulted in not only physical deaths but also caused severe brain damage to many who witnessed its atrocities. The war, which was characterized by chemical assaults, fosse warfare, and a high death toll, had a significant effect on people internal wellbeing.

War Poets

Wilfred Owen - The Anguished Witness

Wilfred Owen, frequently regarded as the preeminent war minstrel of World War I, endured the trauma of the conflict firsthand. His poetry reflects the torment of witnessing the horrors of the battleground. "Dulce et Decorum Est", Owen's lyric forcefully conveys the trauma and disillusionment of war. The graphic description of a gas attack and the ironic assertion that it's "sweet and proper to die for one's country" reveal the cerebral anguish of Owen and his comrades. Owen's work becomes a medium through which he attempts to attune to the jarring difference between the famed sundries of war and the horrible reality.

Siegfried Sassoon - From Patriot to Protester

Siegfried Sassoon, originally a nationalistic dogface, evolved into a prominent anti-war minstrel during World War I. His runs, informed by his own cerebral trip, reflect his internal

struggles. "The Death Bed," Sassoon's lyric, depicts the cerebral and emotional suffering of a wounded dogface on his deathbed. The lyric serves as a reflection of the inner fermentation and internal agony endured by dogfaces that faced severe injuries and death on the frontal lines. Sassoon's metamorphosis from a war sucker to a vehement critic of the war is an incarnation of his internal moral conflict and torture. His poetry serves as a vehicle for him to defy and communicate these struggles.

Rupert Brooke - Idealism and patriotism

Rupert Brooke's poetry presents a differing perspective, emphasizing idealism and nationalism. His workshop conveys the mindset of those who were originally willing to immolate themselves for their country. "The Soldier's lyric" reflects a nationalistic sentiment, asserting that there's honor and glory in dying for one's country. His work encapsulates the geography of early-war enthusiasm, revealing the prevailing stations and mindsets that led to the original swell of investments. Brooke's poetry, while glorifying the conception of death in service to the nation, also reflects the mindset taught by the societal and political environment of the time.

Laurence Binyon - Adaptive Strategies and Irrational Wants

Through an analysis of Laurence Binyon's poetry, which captures the emotional and psychological terrain of World War I, one may apply Freud's theory of coping strategies and unconscious desires: "For the Fallen": Binyon's famous poem may be examined through the lens of Freudian theory to see how it functions as a group coping strategy. The poem may serve as a coping technique to lessen the psychological effects of loss and sadness because of its emphasis on remembering the dead and its evocation of patriotism. Through idealizing the sacrifice and offering a cultural and communal outlet for processing the anguish of war, Binyon's poetry enables society to lament its losses as a whole.

Jessie Pope - A Propagandist Perspective

While most World War I muses depicted the harsh realities of war, propagandist muses like Jessie Pope had a different perspective. She drafted verses that encouraged investment and bolstered morale. "The Call to Arms," employed a super patriotic and upbeat tone to rally youthful men to the cause. Her work reflected the duty to the nation and the spirit of nationalism were explosively emphasized. Pope's poetry represents a response to the war, one that sought to maintain morale and justify the conflict in the face of its grim realities.

Themes of War Poetry

Poetry from World War I covers a wide range of topics, illustrating the complex character of the fight and its lasting effects on those who were involved. The following are a few themes:

Horror and Realism:

A lot of poets wrote during World War I in an effort to dispel the idealized view of combat. They depicted the actual horrors of the war with vivid and unvarnished images. Wilfred Owen vividly depicts a gas assault in "Dulce et Decorum Est," forcing the reader to confront the horrific actuality of conflict.

Sorrow and Suffering:

These poems frequently convey a deep sense of sorrow and sadness for friends and family who have passed away. They portray the human cost of war and the psychological damage it

causes. Siegfried Sassoon evokes empathy for the anguish and loss endured on the front lines by capturing the agony and imminent death of a wounded soldier in "The Death Bed."

Usefulness and Criticism:

Poets like as Wilfred Owen took issue with the glorifying of war and the meaningless recruiting slogans. Their writings cast doubt on the need of giving one's life in defense of nationalistic beliefs. In "Dulce et Decorum Est," Owen questions the widely held belief that giving one's life in defense of one's nation is honorable.

Heroism and Sacrifice:

Although many people have negative feelings toward war, poetry, some of which honor the valor and altruism of warriors who sacrificed their lives for their nations. Rupert Brooke's "The Soldier" perfectly captures this idea by highlighting the valiant sacrifice made by troops.

Hopes and Aspirations:

Highlighting the humanity and uniqueness of individuals who fought, Isaac Rosenberg's "Dreamers" digs into the hopes and aspirations of the troops. It examines their desire for a brighter future and a return to normalcy, offering a moving counterpoint to the brutal reality of combat.

Psychoanalyzing the muses Psychoanalysis of the World War I muses, including Jessie Pope, reveals the intricate ways in which their cerebral gestures and managing mechanisms are embedded in their work. Wilfred Owen's poetry can be seen as a form of catharsis, a means to personalize the horrors he witnessed. It served as a system for coordinating his own cerebral trauma with his duty to expose the grim realities of the war. Siegfried Sassoon's work reflects a process of moral reckoning. His transition from an exponent of the war to a critic of its senselessness was a result of his internal struggle to align his morality with the horrors he witnessed. Rupert Brooke's work is a reflection of the prevailing geography of early-war enthusiasm. His poetry encapsulates the mindset told by societal and political environment, as well as his particular gestures. Jessie Pope's poetry represents a response to the war, driven by a sense of duty and nationalism. Her verses aimed to boost morale and maintain public support for the war.

The enduring legacy of the psychological war poetry of World War I, with its intricate cerebral underpinnings, remains a testament to the enduring power of literature in the substance of mortal experience during times of extreme adversity. These runes continue to be studied, anatomized, and celebrated for their impact on the collaborative memory of war and their part in shaping the discourse on conflict and its cerebral consequences.

In conclusion, the poetry of World War I is a sophisticated and varied corpus of work that captures the many and subtle mental reactions of its authors to the fighting. The poetry works of eminent authors like Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred Owen, Rupert Brooke, Isaac Rosenberg, and Jessie Pope, among others, provide insight into the complex interactions between psychological, traumatic, and artistic elements that influence how people see war. A greater knowledge of the mortal psyche in the face of difficult moral decisions, social constraints, and the horror of war is made possible by the distinct perspectives of each poet, which are influenced by their distinctive histories and cognitive landscapes. These poets' works demonstrate the lasting influence of poetry from World War I and its capacity to shed light on the complicated cognitive aspects of conflict.

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Games in Bama's *Karakku* and its Influence on Children

M Bheemesh

Abstract

There is intrinsic connection between children and games the separation of children from gaming is not only impossible but also unwise nevertheless, one must be aware of the psychological effects these games have on Children and the way they shape their personalities over time. A major goal of this article is to discuss how the discrimination of caste and gender roles is normalized in the game of children within the 'Paraiyar' community in *Karakku* by the acclaimed writer Bama published in 2012. As well as how difficult it is for them to move away from the stigma as they become adults this study involves interdisciplinary research. The critical theory used to examine the idea mention is 'Attitude Formation' from Psychology. Attitude development is crucial to shaping towards society this article discuss the importance of games in this process.

Keywords; Child-Psychology, *Karakku*, Nayakars, Paraiyars, Discrimination, Attitude Formation

Introduction

Bama is the pen name of Fatima Faustina Rani a Tamil, Dalit, Feminist, devoted teacher, and novelist. Sister of well-known Raj Gautaman, she wrote her autobiographical novel *Karakku* in 1992. This novel won the 'Crossword Book Award' for the most outstanding fiction in Indian languages (2001). It was later translated into English by Lakshmi Holmstrom in 2000. Bama also wrote two more novels *Sangati* in 1994, *Vanman* in 2002 along with *Erumaiyum* in 2003. In Her book *Karakku* she explains her own stories of games in childhood, emphasized her community children's behavior towards 'Nayakars' (High class), and how the discrimination normalized in the communities. The scientific study of mind and behavior includes conditioned and unconditioned, in psychology we study cognitive actions while in behavioral psychology we study conscious and unconscious phenomena including feelings and thoughts the main purpose is to understand individuals and groups through the use of established general and focused methodologies and utilizing case studies to formulate fundamental principles.

Children psychology

Children psychology is branch of psychology that examines the behavior and development of children from conception to adolescence. Children's interactions with their parents, themselves, and the world, are the explored in the study. Nowadays, children's psychology gains a great deal of attention , since it is understood that it cannot be treated on par with adult psychology , which their outcome of their life experience whereas children's psychology only focuses much more on how children develop a prospective on the world around them. Basically children psychology influenced by three major components 'Affective component' an attitude is the way of a children feels towards the object person or situation here affect used as emotion 'Behavior component' an attitude is the action that a person, takes regard to the emotion object or situation 'Cognitive component' is an attitude is the way thinks about himself /herself an object or situation includes believes and ideas about the focus of the attitude; Based on these components 'Attitude Formation' takes place.

Attitude Formation

Attitude formation is a person's perception of the thing and individual or a situation. Basically attitudes formations or four types, direct contact is a way which attitudes are formed by direct contact with a person, Idea, a situation. 'Direct interaction' is formed through the directions with others sometimes attitudes are formed because of others the person is around with other people with that attitude in various conditions observations learning many attitudes to the observations of the other peoples actions and reactions object people are situation. In Bama's *Karukku* there are references to two major communities 'Nayakars' and 'Paraiyar'. The Nayakars community was believed to be the high cast which provides them with the luxury of living in the centre of the village because of which they have access to all the necessities of life and Nayakars are believed that they were superior to Paraiyar which is believed to be a low-caste which means they lack of education, basic facilities and just wages, which prevent them from developing. Children play games in the streets of Paraiyar community that mimic the rudeness of higher caste towards lower caste, practices that normalize caste discrimination from the young age.

Socioeconomic Context & Games

Relationships with peers and adults have an effect on how children think, learn, and develop. Families, schools, and peer groups all make up an important part of the social context. Social class can also play a major role in child development. Socioeconomic status (often abbreviated as SES), is based upon a number of different factors including how much education people have, how much money they earn, the job they hold, and where they live. Games are primarily about stimulation, hard work, challenge, relaxation, satisfaction, and teamwork. Additionally, the game will teach executive skills, problem solving ability, attention and concentration, physical balance and Team work. It is found that the essence of the game makes the players hold discipline both in games and in their personal life.

Bama added that two or three boys would play at being 'Naikers' the rest of us would call them 'Ayya' 'Ayya' and act as if they had a lot of power over us they called us 'yeppa' 'yeppa' humiliated as, and made us do a lot of work. We have to pretend to work in the fields all day, and then collect wages and go home. (56, *Karukku*) then we played at being married and sitting of an a bus journey the husband coming home drunk and hitting his wife; the police arriving and beating him up. (57, *Karukku*)

Games like this are played without any game spirit. Mimicking their daily lives and portraying discrimination as trivial as through no changes were necessary. Experiences are influenced by internal and external conditions. They are games that were played by children, one can observe clearly there is no such as a game spirit or rules. These are the games where the children do not know the rules. Their experience is the only reference. The children do not have the capability to define what is the right and wrong. At that stage they are influenced by the surroundings which influence the games they end up playing. By applying Pavlov's 'classical conditioning theory' the children mimic and pretend as their parents did and it will in the future too.

Conclusion

The games the children play in Bama's *Karukku* are socio economic statements in themselves. The games are a reflection of the major influences on children's psyche. This childhood influence shape personalities and a whole generation. If one can observe children playing games, one can understand the context in which they are being brought up and by

introducing newer games embedding possible solutions to their everyday challenges, the children are then equipped with tools to harbingers change.

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Relevance of Gandhian Thought in Raja Rao's *Kanthapura*

Manoj Kumar Singh

Abstract

Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* is a novel replete with Gandhian thoughts and notions. It deals with the social and political scenario of India during the period 1919 to 1930 when Gandhian movement was at the highest peak. Kanthapura is a South Indian village that seems to be the representative of all the villages of India. The villagers of Kanthapura were the follower of Gandhi and Gandhian thoughts. The village is delineated with poverty in general and rich historical culture in particular. As a matter of fact, Kanthapura seems to be the workshop of the Gandhian thought and theory. The novel enriches the traditions, myths, legends, Vedas and Puranas of Kanthapura thoroughly. These things create an essence and nationalistic feeling among the people of the village. Such thought of Gandhi is accepted and appreciated by them heart and soul. Thus, the novel records the Gandhian impact on a typical Indian village, Kanthapura.

Key Words: Gandhian Movement, Legends, Nationalistic Feeling, Industrialization, Colonization

Introduction

Raja Rao is considered to be the most renowned novelist of the 20th century in Indian English literature. He has got an international repute in the fields of novel and short stories. Besides a novelist and a short story writer, he is also a child of the Gandhian Age and depicts in his work his sensitive awareness of past tradition obviously. In fact, the novel *Kanthapura* stands for three strands of experience – the political, the religious and the social. Rao has splendidly displayed the land, the houses, the quarters, the huts, the temples, the rivers, the hill, the inhabitants and their life-style, their culture and tradition of the village, Kanthapura. He is very fond of finding the facts of the land of the village. He delineates temple that stands right in the centre of the village in which there is an image of Kenchamma, Great Goddess, Benign One. There is a folk-song that is sung there, as:

Kenchamma, Kenchamma,
Goddess benign and bounteous,
Mother of Earth, blood of Life,
Harvest queen, rain crowned,
Kenchamma, Kenchamma,
Goddess benign and bounteous.

The people of Kanthapura pray Goddess to protect them from difficulty and distress, death and despair. They offer her the first harvest and first fruit with great zeal.

Kanthapura is Raja Rao's debut novel as Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable* and R. K. Narayan's *Waiting for the Mahatma*. The hero of the novel is, of course, Gandhi himself but he does not personally appear anywhere in it. But it was Gandhi's greatness that he produced hundreds of little Gandhis throughout the country. Moorthy was one of them. He is said to have had not an actual first-hand experience of Gandhi by personal contact, but a vision of Gandhi as well. The following statements denote Moorthy's characters, "Moorthy had gone

through life like a noble cow, quiet, generous, serene, deferent, Brahmanic, a very prince; and later, 'He is our Gandhi'; 'He is the saint of our village'."

The article articulates Gandhian thoughts thoroughly and continuously as well. The entire novel is centred round Moorthy. He attempts for the service and support to the needy in the village, Kanthapura. He throws out a hint to the people that 'somebody offer a dinner for each day of the month' and gets a spontaneous response from everyone. It encourages Moorthy to move in motion. In the chain of volunteers, it is Bhutta who says that he is the first, Agent Nanjundiah is the second and Pandit Venkateshiah, the third and so on. It denotes the willing co-operation in teamwork, not spadework. This selfless spirit of Moorthy and his co-workers keeps a high profile and the issues of social prestige in the entire community of the village, Kanthapura. In a spirit as such, Raja Rao says: Gandhi is the invisible God, Moorthy is the visible *avatar*.

The incident of 1930 is also a *historical* one when Gandhi marches with his select band of followers to the salt pans at Dandi to break the salt-law and succeeds in it. The Satyagrah Movement (1917) was the previous great historical event of Gandhi. Moorthy is Gandhi's man, the Satyagrahi, the leader of the non-violent movement in Kanthapura.

The scenery of Kanthapura is beyond description. It is a typical Indian village on account of multi-dimensional objects and observations. There is a Brahmin street, a potters' quarter, a weavers' quarter, a sudra quarter and a pariah quarter. These things of Kanthapura compel the readers to read the descriptions even today. Other burning example of that time is the Skeeffington Coffee Estate, the symbol of the impact of industrialization on the traditional community life at Kanthapura.

The most interesting thing is that Gandhian principles reach the villagers through Harikathas recited by Jayramachar. He says, Gandhi's three-fold program was compared to the three eyes of Siva. As Krishna killed the big serpent named Kaliya, Gandhi is going to kill the serpent of foreign rule, the meaning to say thereby is Rama was going to kill Ravana, that is, foreign rule and liberate Sita, that is, Bharata. This Harikatha was the inauguration of the freedom movement in Kanthapura. Jayramachar jumbles with splendid unconcern traditional mythology and contemporaneousness politics: "Siva is the three-eyed, and Swaraj too is three-eyed. Self-purification, Hindu-Muslim unity, Khaddar."

Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* is overclouded with Gandhian thoughts where Moorthy manipulates Gandhi's ideas enthusiastically. To propagate Gandhi's ideas, he starts teaching the Pariahs. He teaches the art of weaving to the coolies of Sheffington Coffee Estate besides the lessons of alphabets, grammar, arithmetic and Hindi. The coolies become hopeful about their future salvation due to the lessons of Moorthy. Moorthy emphasizes on Hindi, a national language. Inspired and influenced by the ideology of Gandhi, he starts preaching Gandhian thoughts to the dwellers of Kanthapura.

Besides Moorthy, there are several other Gandhian characters in the novel *Kanthapura*, Sankar is one of them. He is modelled on Gandhi himself. He is mature as compared to Moorthy. Like Gandhi, he is an honest advocate. He handles only the fair cases of the court and never takes up a false one. He is also in favor of khadi because he understands the significance of Khadi Movement. He finds Moorthy popularizing the Charkha in Kanthapura. Another significant character in the novel *Kanthapura* is Rangamma, Moorthy's right hand. Being an ideal woman, Rangamma morally supports Moorthy. She organizes and trains the women of Kanthapura without fear and favour because at that time, the settlers were afraid of the atrocities of the police. But Ragamma prepares women to tolerate the atrocities of the police like Bade Khan calmly. By doing it, she heaves a sigh of relief along with her team in this stream-line to great extent. But before doing it, they were in the eye of the storm. The pariah women, girls and kids were beating their mouths and shouting:

He will never come again, He will never come again,
 He will never come again, Moorthappa.
 The God of death has sent for him,
 Buffalo and rope and all,
 They stole him from us, they lassoed him at night,
 He's gone, He's gone, He's gone, moorthappa⁶
 And Rachanna's wife, indignant disheveled, cried out:
 He, leave us our men, He leave us our soul,
 He leave us our king of the veranda seat,
 But say, sisters, He's gone, He's gone, Moorthappa,
 He's gone, He's gone, He's gone, Moorthappa.
 But the situation starts to move from bad to worse. When they were closed in a
 room, they became nervous. It was Ratna who suggests to light the sacred
 flame and make bhajan for their freedom, they sang:
 Siva, Siva of the Meru Mount,
 Siva, Siva of the Ganges-head,
 Siva, Siva of the Crescent- moon,
 Siva, Siva of the Crematorium-dance,
 Siva, Siva of the unillusioned heart,
 Siva, Siva, Siva...

One thing is remarkable and notable in the novel, *Kanthapura* that the novelist has used several nicknames that are similar at the end like 'amma' and 'ayya'. They are Akamma, Nangamma, Madamma, Venkamma, Rajamma, Rangamma on the one hand, and Ramayya, Beedle Timayya, Lingayya, Siddayya etc on the other. These names have been highlighted to their identity and community in rural India. To know these names clearly, some words of prefixes help the reader to some extent. For instance, Comer-House Moorthy, Front-House Akamma, Nose-scratching Nangamma, Left-handed Madamma, Pork-mark Sidda, Shop-keeper Chetti, Post-Master Surya Narayan, Water-fall Venkamma, Coffe-plant Ramayya, Street-comer Biddle Timayya, Kicc-pounding Rajamma, Trumpet-Lingayya, Jack-TreeTippa, One-Veil Lingayya, Snuff Shastri, Gap-Toothed Siddayya, Corn-distributing Barber Venkatamd etc. they are the relevant characters of the novel *Kanthapura* following the Gandhian thought.

As far as the religious discourse and social customs are concerned, the novel covers some pages nostalgically. The people of Kanthapura are deeply religious. There appear religious rituals like arti, puja, conches, bells, bhajan etc. in the novel. As has been mentioned in the introductory part of the article, there stands a temple of Goddess Kenchamma in the centre of the village. A linga was also discovered by Moorthy in a backyard. In these sacred places, Moorthy along with his friends organized religious festivals, Harikathas and hymns as well. The entire environment of Kanthapura is religious now.

The Gandhian thought aims at political ideology, that is, to win freedom. His political thought, Rao says, is an intricate process of colonization. In his words, the colonizer, like the colonized, is a position in which both are trapped. So, the attempts to decolonize the territory, includes efforts to liberate the colonizer too. In the words of Ashish Nandi, the colonizer turns out to be "not the conspiratorial dedicated oppressor that he is made out to be, but a self-destructive co-victim with a parochial culture, caught in the hinges of history he swears by."⁹ such an act can be handled only by a saint and not by a politician. Meaning to say thereby is the hatred of the colonized against their colonizer should be placed by planting the seed of love. It is Moorthy who is in the guise of Mahatma, expresses something to Rangamma –

“The great enemy is in us Rangamma ... hatred is in us.” In this connection, William Walsh observes:

The Gandhian revolution, while it has political aims and consequences - Independence from Britain and equally among Indians – is above all a religious conversion requiring a fundamental realignment of values and a reforming human nature. This is not only in keeping with the Indian tradition where religious and social reforms were always intimately connected, but is also exactly fitted to the assumptions and expectations of spontaneously religious community.

Kanthapura was Rao’s only novel before Independence. The long silence that followed made many believe that the novelist was now an ‘extinct volcano’¹¹. And then came *The Serpent and the Rope* which has a strong autobiographic coloring. It is the story of Ramaswamy, a young Hindu boy. It is truly philosophical novel. The themes of true love and marriage lead to the larger theme of the quest for self-knowledge suggested in the title.

Thus, Raja Rao’s novel *Kanthapura* presents the story of the Gandhian thoughts and ideologies as well. It is the story of Gandhi’s struggle for independence from the British came to this typical village, Kanthapura. Describing all these facts, the novel reaches its theme that is purely Indian. In fact, one can simply feel that the novel *Kanthapura* is a workshop of Gandhian thought and theory as well.

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Exploration of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* and Nature in the Separation of Characters in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*

Mohan Kumar Pokhrel

Abstract

This article aims to explore Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* and Nature in the Separation of Characters in Kṛṣṇa –Dvaipāyana Vyāsa's the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. This research delves into the intricate interplay between Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* and Nature, specifically focusing on moments of separation among characters within the scripture. This study primarily analyzes the discourses of the text which relates to Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* and Nature in the Separation of Characters in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. To explore Nature in Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* and the separation of characters, Nature study of Aristotle has been used. The theorist claims that Nature and humans are inseparable for existence. This study is significant to highlight how Kṛṣṇa – Dvaipāyana Vyāsa manifests Nature awareness in the ancient text. Interpretative method has been applied in the research. The findings of this investigation provide the evidences that the epic has used nature awareness to impress humans for creating a balance between creatures and plants. Therefore, the conclusion of this analysis is that the sacred landscapes within Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* contribute to the narrative's emotional depth, infusing sanctity into the moments of separation.

Keywords: Backdrop, Consciousness, *Līlā*, Mahāpurāṇa, Sanctity

Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* and Nature in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*: An Introduction

This study embarks on a journey to unravel the layers of significance woven into the fabric of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* and Nature, with a specific focus on moments of separation among characters. Nature plays a role to separate characters according to time and situation. The natural forces create obstruction in the life of characters and they have an obligation for separation. The characters remain inferior and they become puppets against the force of Nature. During the time of separation, the characters feel loneliness but it helps them to achieve the aims of their lives. When the characters are separated from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, they realize the value of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā*. The text instructs audience not to expect union with others all time because separation is a way of life. Union is not possible without separation and these kinds of incidents give lesson to writers and audience to accept separation in different moments of their lives. The birth of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* is possible from the separation of king Parīkṣit from his palace. The king goes to the bank of the Ganges at the end of his life thinking that he will die within seven days as the curse of the young sage Sringī, the son of Samika. In this connection, Sage Śaunaka elaborates the idea:

He was a great emperor and possessed all the opulences of his acquired kingdom. He was so exalted that he was increasing the prestige of the Pāṇdu dynasty. Why did he give up everything to sit down on the bank of the Ganges and fast until death? ¹ (1. 4: 10).

This discussion shows that king Parīkṣit is a good administrator although he is separated from his kingdom for the sake of mental peace. Basing the interpretation on such idea, C. L. Goswamī claims that King Parīkṣit goes to the Ganges and takes fast until his death (12). On

this ground, one can argue that human beings take the shelter of Nature during the time of crisis.

This explanation in favor of Nature supports that in the *Vedic* and the *Paurānic* periods, there was a trend of sages to go to forest for the creation of knowledge. The remarkable images of Nature became the parts and parcels in their lives. The creation of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* is possible from the separation of Vedavyāsa from others. The scenario of the area of the Sarasvatī River inspires him for the composition of the text. Vedavyāsa writes the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* sitting on the bank of the Sarasvatī River being separated from his kith and kins. In Sūta's words: "Once upon a time he as the sun rose, took his morning ablution in the waters of the Sarasvatī and sat alone to concentrate"² (1. 4: 15). This statement shows that the shelter of Nature is necessary for the creation of knowledge. As Vedavyāsa goes to the bank of the Sarasvatī River, he gets motivation from Nārada Munī to compile the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* for highlighting Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā*. When the author has separation from others, he is able to create the glory of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the form of text. In this connection, Prabhupāda explains that the premises of the Sarasvatī River motivate Nārada Munī to suggest Vedavyāsa for the composition of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* (216). Nature is a base for the creation of the literary texts. Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* encourages writers to create new ideas sitting in the beautiful scenario of Nature.

Central to the narrative is the recurring theme of separation among characters- a poignant and emotive exploration that forms the crux of numerous episodes within Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā*. As characters undergo the trials of longing, separation, and reunion, its entire splendor serves as participant in the cosmic world. The theological examination highlights the scriptural emphasis on devotion as a means to navigate the complex terrain of separation. The intense emotions experienced by the characters become a crucible for the purification and intensification of their love and devotion, exemplifying the *Bhakti* tradition's intimate and emotional approach to spirituality. This indicates that the separation of narratives are not only about individual spiritual journeys but also convey a broader natural ethics, suggesting a harmonious relationship between humans and Nature.

Problems, Objectives, and Methodology

While the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* is a revered text, the exploration of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* in the separation of characters presents potential problems and critical considerations. The major problem of this study is to apply the perspective of Nature in the very ancient texts in different environmental contexts, social structures, and awareness in Nature. To find it out, this article answers the following questions:

- In what ways does the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* present harmonious relationship between human characters, divine play, and the natural world during the time of separation?
- How does the separation of characters in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* , particularly in the context of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* , contribute to the theological understanding of devotion and divine play?
- Why does the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* use Nature as a backdrop for Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* during moments of separation?

The major objectives of this study are to analyze harmonious relationship between human characters, divine play and the natural world during the time of separation; to explicate separation of characters in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*, particularly in the context of

Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā*; and to evaluate Nature as a backdrop for Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* during the time of separation. For this, the research questions are answered with the use of interpretative methodology. The theoretical tool used to support the methodology is Aristotle's concept of Nature. Nature, in the definition of Aristotle is "as the essence of things, what they are made of and entail their destiny: the nature of a bed or of a tree is wood" (3). The destiny of human beings is related to their activities on Nature. Nature theory, from the traditional discussion, deals with experiences acquired by local people over hundreds of years through direct contact with Nature (Inglis 6). In this connection, Dhruva Laudari argues that traditional Nature is considered tradition-based, because it is created in a manner that reflects the traditions of the communities (79). This argument supports the idea how the traditional concept of Nature uses land and the other natural things. On the basis of the traditional discourse on Nature, those humans equate Nature with God.

Aristotle had made human beings conscious about the devastation of Nature at first in the ancient Greece: "Here the sea encroaches upon the land, there the land reaches out timidly into the sea; new continents and new oceans rise, old oceans and old continents disappear, and all the face of the world is changed and rechanged in a great systole and diastole of growth and dissolution" (1). The philosopher appraises human beings to love Nature due to the ground of existence of all creatures and plants. This idea shows that intervention in Nature invites the destruction of the world. It is a warning of Aristotle to remain aware of Nature. In this light, Gregor Scheiman argue that human beings should realize the reflection of Nature in different shapes (67). In support of this idea, one can corroborate that the five elements of Nature such as the earth, water, light, air, and space are the shapes of Nature.

Bhakti in the Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa: A Review of Literature

The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* is a literary and spiritual treasure that has left an indelible mark on *Hindu* thought and culture. Researchers can find different reviews on this text from multiple perspectives. In this connection, Govindācārya Svāmīn argues the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* from the perspective of *Bhakti* literature. In his statement: "In the Dvāpara Yuga, *Bhakti* descended on earth in the person of Śrī Kṛṣṇa on the shores of the Yamunā in North India" (83). He claims that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the base of *Bhakti* literature. But no one can deny the fact that Rāma *Bhakti* was popular in the *Dvāparayuga* before the existence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. There is also Śiva *Bhakti* literature for the promotion of *Bhakti* literature. The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* is an illustration of *Bhakti* literature in which there is a manifestation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti*. In a sense, Rāma *Bhakti*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti*, and Śiva *Bhakti* have enriched *Bhakti* literature. So, the analysis of *Bhakti* in this dissertation is related to the analysis of *Bhakti* literature in the highest level.

Tulsidās remarks the Rāma *Bhakti*: "Rāma is born in countless ways, and there are ten millions of *Rāmāyanas*" [*nānā bhanti rāma avatār: rāmāyana satakoti apārā*] (qtd. in Wadley 7). This discussion asserts the development of Rāma *Bhakti* in *Bhakti* literature. Analysis of Rāma *Bhakti* from Tulsidās is in the highest level because he transforms Rāma from a mythical hero to religious and spiritual Lord from the manifestation of his countless forms. The same notion has been extended by Sheldon Pollock on this subject. He captures the attention of readers that Rāma is sacred object of worship (261). Responding to such claim, it is interesting to incorporate that Rāma *Bhakti* has been prevailing in the *Hinduism* since the period of the sage Vālmikī.

Contrary to the previous notion, Dheeraj Kaushik and B. K. Goswāmī argue about Rāma *Bhakti* and the interpreters have their standpoints for its enhancement referring *Rāma Charitmānas*. Under such condition, they argue that *Rāma Charitmānas* is useful and helpful for us to make our social and ethical life great (65). The unyielding interpretation of *Rāma*

Charitmānas [description of the character of Rāma] is to flourish the cult of Rāma *Bhakti*. When there is the development of modern society, the theological principles and the similar beliefs are guidelines for the maintenance of social order.

Confirming the Rāma *sampradāyasa* [cult], Vasudha Paramasivan discusses on some noticeable points. The interpreter argues that *Rāmācaritmānas* is for Rāma *Bhakti*. Elaborating the argument, she states that "the *Rāmācaritmānas* is generally considered to be the quaint essential work of Sagun Ram *Bhakti*" (32). Her position is different in respect, commonly suggests the importance of Rāma *Bhakti* in the *Hinduism*. Paramasivan's famous formulation stresses that the path of devotion is easy as well as pleasant and it is the independent source of happiness (34). This, however, is accepted by the ritual practices by the *Hinduism*. In conclusion, the cult which is related to Rāma *Bhakti*, highlights the position and status of Rāma as a founder of democracy in modern context. This is why, modern human beings discuss on the *Rāmarājya* [State of Rāma] regarding the rule of Rāma as the best ruler of the world.

The issues of *Bhakti* literature are in focus in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. The text popularizes the notion of *Bhakti* literature in extended form. The text motivates devotees to follow the path of *Bhakti* for salvation. The major concern of *Bhakti* literature in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* is to motivate towards the activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Rāmānujācārya discusses on the importance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti* flourished in Vṛndāvana where Śrī Kṛṣṇa had performed his *Bāla Lilā*. The philosopher further points to his *Bhakti* to Kṛṣṇa: "Since I came to Vṛndāvana, I have recovered and now young and beautiful" (qtd. in Svāmin 482). The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* discusses to the scenario of Vṛndāvana as the sportive activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in detail. The landscape draws attention due to *Bhakti* in Śrī Kṛṣṇa. From this stand point, one can argue that the devotees show their *Bhakti* when they reach to the birthplace and workplace of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Rāmānujācārya shows a link between Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti* and the landscape of Vṛndāvana. In his review, Rāmānujācārya refers Vṛndāvana for evoking *Bhakti* to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He extends the scope of *Bhakti* literature in relation to Vṛndāvana. Thus, Vraja Bhūmī is the fertile place for the origin of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*.

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swāmī Prabhupāda follows the same line of argument on Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti*. According to him: *Kṛṣṇa s tu bhagavān svayam* [Śrī Kṛṣṇa is God Himself] (174). The commentator regards Śrī Kṛṣṇa not as a common person but God himself. This quotation connotes to the devotees that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is not only a hero but as real divine being. This concept promotes *Bhakti Yoga* of devotees and they dedicate themselves to Śrī Kṛṣṇa from their minds, works, and words. But to regard Śrī Kṛṣṇa as a *bhagavān* (God) is not easy to justify. The concept of the analyst is to promote *Bhakti* literature showing Śrī Kṛṣṇa as a divine being. This concept promotes *Bhakti* to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It may contradict with the logic of the present scholars. Scholars and readers regard Śrī Kṛṣṇa not as a Supreme Personality of Godhead but as a mythical hero.

Bhakti literature in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* stresses on the qualities of devotees for the performance of *Bhakti Yoga* properly. These qualities are love, devotion, tenderness, mercy, obedience, and readiness to serve. Every devotee has intention to surrender himself/herself on the feet of *Bhagavān*. True devotees "give everything, claim nothing" (Thakkar 55). His subject matter of conversation is Śrī Kṛṣṇa and keeps on thinking only about him. The devotee believes that his words and works should be related to the glory of Lord. This analysis is based on the idea from the instructions of Śrī Kṛṣṇa about *Bhakti Yoga* for *moksha* to his devotee Uddab. In this connection, Prabhupāda discusses *Bhakti Yoga* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* in this way: "If somehow or other by good fortune one develops faith in hearing and chanting My Glories, such as a person, being neither very distinguished with nor attached to material life, should achieve perfection through the path of

loving devotion to Me"³ (*Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* 11. 8: 24). In this discussion, Śrī Kṛṣṇa instructs Uddab how to dedicate to himself without being attached to material life. Chanting promotes the devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Detachment from the material life qualifies oneself for the sake of *Bhakti Yoga*. Pure devotee must follow strict disciplines to flourish *Bhakti* literature.

Tamal Śrī Kṛṣṇa Goswami and Graham M. Schweig have similar opinions on Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. The researchers mention the role of ISKCON (International Society of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness) in flourishing Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti* in the West. Prabhupāda is the founder of Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement (351). He introduces Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti* in America. Tamal Kṛṣṇa Goswami's *A Living Theology of Kṛṣṇa Bhakti* is an analytic text on Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti*. He exposes: "Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti* makes an outstanding contribution in this regard, representing a sophisticated example of how rigorous historical and contextual work can be conducted by practitioner scholars" (354). The writer claims that Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti* flourishes from the contribution of scholars on the foundation of *Bhakti* literature of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*.

T.S. Rukmani presents different line of argument in the *Bhakti* of *Gopī* to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. He argues that the *gopīs* are true devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa due to their complete sacrifice of their lives for his sake.

While describing the plight of the *gopīs* the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Purāṇa* mentions that they had to steal away from their homes unobserved by their husbands, parents and other relatives. The *gopīs* are still working within the family and its norms, within the norms of the *grhasthāśrama* and are seen observing all the taboos associated with it. (276-77)

The *gopīs* are the special devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and leave their homes for the sake of him. They are superior to other Śrī Kṛṣṇa devotees because unlike *gopīs*, today's devotees are unable to leave their houses. But the *gopīs* leave their houses for union with Śrī Kṛṣṇa neglecting their activities. To make a union with Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate aim of the devotees and the *gopīs* achieve their aim categorically. Thus, the activities of the *gopīs* promote *Bhakti* literature with the light of the suggestive meanings.

Manager Pandey and Alka Tyagi present their points about Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti* and relate it to Rāma *Bhakti* referring to the poetry of Surdās and Tulsidās. The classical poets use Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti* and Rāma *Bhakti* as the subject matter of their poetry. In their words: "The stories of Kṛṣṇa and Rāma which Surdās and Tulsidās have used as a basis of their poetic creation are born out of the idealised tradition of Sanskrit poetics and are popular tales in public life" (131). It traces that the *Bhakti* tradition flourished from the poetry of Tulsidās and Surdās. The poets inspire readers to recite their *Bhakti* poetry for mental peace and the purification of soul. Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Rāma establish a benevolent socio-political order by defeating the contemporary tyrannical rulers. There is no restriction of *Bhakti* literature in any society of the world. During their time, *Bhakti* literature flourishes in the then contemporary society.

Vijay Kumar Thakur extends the scope of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti* literature with the view of Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti* for devotees for journey towards Lord. The reviewer reveals that *Bhakti* is a good path to please Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is correct when he posits the freedom of *māyā* of devotees to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He declares that he is under the control of his devotees who have "enthralled him by their devotion even as good wives do by their devotion to virtuous husbands" (99). This standpoint helps *Bhakti* literature to move ahead. He exposes analogy in relation to the devotion of devotees to Śrī Kṛṣṇa as same as devotion of wives to their faithful and virtuous husbands. In this connection, the feminists allege about the miserable condition of women in

the *Paurāṇic* period. There are no special female devotees apart from the *gopīs* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (qtd. in Rukmani 276). The *gopīs* go away from their houses for devotion. Nicholas Shutan presents different line of argument in connection to Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*: “*Śrīmad Bhāgavata Purāṇa* refers the sign of emotional *Bhakti* horripilation, weeping, flowers dropping from loosening hair, the knot of the *sari* becoming loose, sweating and swooning” (155). This discussion concentrates that devotees should share their feelings with the feelings of Śrī Kṛṣṇa by crying, sweating, and getting their hair cut. The discussion is related to the activities of the devotees during the time of *Bhakti*. They deal with the problems of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as their own problems having sympathy and empathy to the condition of their Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It is difficult for them to be separated from their Lord. It is the characteristics of the real devotees of Kṛṣṇa. It makes Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti* a typical example of *Bhakti* literature.

Christian Lee Novetzke goes a step ahead when he associates his ideas of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti* to *pūjā*, *darśan*, and *kirtan*. He writes in confirmation with his logic stating that *Bhakti* practices *pūjā* [worshipping], *darśan* [bowing head], *kirtan* [chanting], and pilgrimage or keeping vows are associated with the idea that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is watching them (256). He bases his discussion on Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti* from the ritual activities of devotees. But the devotees perform different activities such as *pūjā*, *darśan*, *kirtan*, *dān*, *bhajan*, and other *sewās* for the sake of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. There is the realization of *Bhakti rasa* from *pūjā*, *darśan*, *kirtan*, *dān*, and *bhajan* for pleasing Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. The critic emphasizes on the role of *Bhakti* with the evocation of *bhāva* for worshipping Śrī Kṛṣṇa. On the basis of this relation, one can argue that Novetzke publishes *Bhakti* literature referring to the ritual of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti*. For devotees, *bhāva* is also the expression of their *Bhakti* to their personal Lord. The *bhāva* is related to the personal feelings and thoughts to the particular Lord.

It remains a fact that the expression of B.G. Tiwari that the original flavor of *Bhakti* literature gets from the scenario of *Vraja Bhūmi*. In Tiwari's words: "The traditional association of *Braja Bhūmi* with Kṛṣṇa's childhood, the concept of the Lord and his energy or *Śakti*, in the form of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā, became more popular, in this region, than other forms of *Vaiṣṇavaism*" (414) Explaining this statement, we can corroborate that *Vraja Bhūmī* is a fertile place for the origin of *Bhakti* literature. The manifestation of the playful activities of Kṛṣṇa become the subject matter of discussion of *Bhakti* literature. Tiwari refers to the tradition of *Vaiṣṇavaism* for the promotion of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti*. He rightly presents Śrī Kṛṣṇa and his *līlās* of *Vraja Bhūmī* as the roots of *Bhakti* literature in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*.

Mutaben Dasharathbhai Thakkar has different line of argument about *Bhakti* literature: “The *Bhakti* cult of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* is catholic and universal. It is the religion for all. It is a perfectly democratic religion; for the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. God is the God of love who has no caste or sex or nationality”. Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* affects the life of human beings and animals and they have keen interest for company of Kṛṣṇa. After the completion of his *līlās*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa departs from this world and his departure affects human beings and animals. Yudhishtira refers the effects from the departure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa: "The calves do not suck the teats of the cows, nor do the cows give milk. They are standing, crying, tears in their eyes, and the bulls take no pleasure in the pasturing grounds"⁴ (1. 14: 19). The separation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa from this world affects humans, calves, cows, other animals and vegetation. The same idea is ascertained by Tagare from his argument that everyone is unhappy during the time of departure of Kṛṣṇa from this world (111). Separation is a part in the life of creatures even though the creatures feel difficulties to accept it.

The literature review concludes with an acknowledgment of the living relevance of *Bhakti* in the contemporary world. Devotees, practitioners, and scholars alike continue to

draw inspiration from the Bhagavata Purana's teachings on devotion, fostering a dynamic and enduring tradition. In essence, the literature review illuminates *Bhakti* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* as a profound and multifaceted theme, showcasing its theological, literary, social, and historical dimensions. The scripture stands as a timeless testament to the transformative power of devotion, inviting seekers across generations to embark on the path of love and surrender to the divine.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa Līlā and Nature Unveiled in Separation: A Textual Analysis

This analysis delves into the intricate tapestry of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* within the sacred pages of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*, focusing on the poignant theme of separation and the profound interplay with the natural world. The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* encourages human beings to leave their houses: "One should leave home and practice self-control. In a sacred place he should bathe regularly and sit down in a lonely place duly sanctified"⁵ (2. 1: 16). This verse instructs human beings how to realize self-consciousness in Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The text suggests humans to follow strict rules to have knowledge of Kṛṣṇa *līlā* and Nature. C. L. Goswamī confirms that one "should quit the house" (86) for self-awareness and for the generation of new ideas remaining in the beautiful scenario of Nature. But Nature should be fresh, clean, and sacred. Loneliness causes self-awareness for human beings.

Like King Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Prince Dhruva is separated to fulfil the goal of his life from severe austerities. King Dhṛtarāṣṭra goes to forest for severe penance in his old age whereas Prince Dhruva goes to forest for penance in his childhood. The separation from biting words of his stepmother Surīci has compelled him to go to forest.

Being insulted by sharp words spoken by the co-wife of the king, even in his presence, Prince Dhruva, though only a boy took a severe penance in the forest. And the Lord, being satisfied by his prayer, awarded him the Dhruva planet, which is worshipped by great sages, both upward and downward.⁶ (2. 7: 8)

Sometimes biting words of family members, friends, and relatives become the means of success in the life of people. Enmity in the behavior of the stepmother leads Dhruva to the climax of success. In this context, it is reliable to quote: "One can debunk that everybody has Sunīti (good will) and Surīci (bad will) in his mind" (Prabhupāda 372) and it is necessary to beware of bad wills which generates jealousy for others like Surīci. The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* instructs audience to accept the enmity of others for success. Sometimes biting words become more powerful and effective for the improvement of a person rather than suggestions. The precepts of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are to accept negative thoughts of others for success.

A great achievement for Dhruva is the separation from palace in his childhood. He becomes a popular king from perfection of penance. His austerity is the base of his power. In this context, it is interesting to refer the bounty of Nārāyaṇa (Śrī Kṛṣṇa is in the appearance of Nārāyaṇa) to Dhruva: "After your father goes to the forest and awards you the rule of his kingdom, you will rule continuously the entire world for thirty-six thousand years, and all your senses will continue to be as strong as they are now. You will never become old"⁷ (4. 9: 22). Elucidating this idea, one can argue that Dhruva becomes the ruler of the planet named polestar and is able to be one of the renowned rulers of the world. In this relation, Swāmi Ranganathananda presents the background how child Dhruva becomes perfection in penance: "After six months of meditation and hard life, the indwelling God of all, Hari, appeared in front of Dhruva" (22-23) and provided him bounty. This discussion remarks that child Dhruva becomes perfection in penance in a short duration.

This action of child Dhruva inscribes that dedication, imagination; critical thinking, and hard works are the basis of success. There is an incredible consequence in the life of Dhruva after his severe austerities in Madhuvana forest. The way of perfection was different in the *paurānic* era and an austerity is the base for ascetics to succeed. In this regard, both Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Dhruva have similar dedication in their works for the sake of success. Unlike Dhruva, other characters go to forest in their retired life for the sake of severe austerities. Thus, the separation of Dhruva from the family members during the time of his childhood establishes himself as a different character in the *Śrimad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*.

The *Śrimad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* refers that even gods have their tendency to go to forest for the sake of penance. In the similar vein, Nature is favourable for Rudra and goes to forest for the sake of severe austerities: "Thus, Rudra, having been ordered by Brahmā, circumambulated his father, the master of the *Vedas*. Addressing him with words of assent, he entered the forest to perform austere penances"⁸ (3. 12: 20). Nature is the base for the austerities of Rudra and he follows instructions of Brahmā and goes to richness of Nature. Meditation is one of the methods of the *Vedic* philosophy and it makes the health of people good. In this context, Pushpendra Kumar ventures to debunk that Rudra "went to forest to carry on austerities" (164) for knowledge. With this conditioning, one can argue that both Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Rudra like to remain in forest for the achievements of their aims. In the *Vedic* and the *Paurānic* periods, forest was the base for the creation of knowledge from the severe austerities.

Sage Kaśyapa takes shelter of Nature for penance as Rudra and his separation brings perfection in his austerities. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the goal of austerities and Kaśyapa meditates about Kṛṣṇa: "Thereafter the brāhmaṇa took his bath in the water and controlled his speech by practicing trance, meditating on the eternal effulgence and chanting the holy *Gāyatṛī* hymn within the mouth"⁹ (3. 14: 32). The sage realizes peace and bliss within himself from the effect of his penance. In this connection, Prabhupāda is correct when he stresses on the meditation of Kaśyapa: "Kaśyapa Munī meditated on the impersonal *brahmajyoti* by chanting the *Gāyatṛī mantra* within his mouth" (620). The separation of Kaśyapa is meaningful in the *Śrimad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*.

Sage Maitreya tells Vidura about the separation of Kardama Muni for the sake of penance on the bank of the Sarasvati River. This separation of the sage is for perfection and he meditates of Kṛṣṇa who is in the form of Nārāyaṇa: "Commanded by Lord Brahmā to beget children in the worlds, the worshipful Kardama Muni practiced penance on the bank of the River Sarasvati for a period of ten thousand years"¹⁰ (3. 21: 6). Like Dhruva, Rudra and Kasyapa Muni, sage Kardama goes to the bank of the Sarasvati River for completion of his mission. During that time, severe austerity was necessary for the background of giving birth to sons and Kardama Muni follows the same trend. To explain this idea further, C. L. Goswāmī contemplates that sage Kardama is able to beget children after his penance as the precepts of Brahmā for him (228). The severe austerity of the sage is completed from the grace of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the form of Nārāyaṇa.

There was a trend for *yogis* to go to Nature regarding as a secluded place. During the time of retirement, king Pṛthu is separated from family members, friends, neighbours, and relatives and goes to Tapovana forest for the sake of penance. The text mentions the ways of his penance: "In the tapo-vana, King Pṛthu sometimes ate the trunks and roots of trees, and sometimes he ate fruits and dried leaves, and for some weeks he drank only water. Finally, he lived simply by breathing air"¹¹ (4.23:5). King Pṛthu realizes to be separated from his kingdom for the perfection in penance and goes to nearby forest. In this connection, Tagare incorporates his view: "He lived upon bulbous and ordinary roots and fruits, and occasionally on dry lives" (563). He reaches to the level of thinking everything from the level of severe austerities during the time of separation. The objects of Nature such as fruits and roots are the

sources of energy. Like king Pṛthu, Śrī Kṛṣṇa makes impossible works possible using his *yogic* power for the completion of his *līlās*. Pracetās, ten sons of King Prācīnabarhi, are separated from palace and enter into the ocean for the performance of austerities:

When all the Pracetās were ordered by their father to marry and beget children, they all entered the ocean and practice austerities and penances for ten thousand years. Thus they worshipped the master of all austerity, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.¹² (4. 24: 14)

The Pracetās realize that penance is better than the family life. In the *paurāṇic* period, there was the trend to leave home for the sake of knowledge from the system of austerities. Supporting this point, Prabhupāda writes in favor of the devotional service: "If one does not attain the perfect stage of devotional service, all austerities and penances actually have no meanings" (313). Pracetās do not like to waste their austerities so that they go to the bottom of the ocean for penance. Their intimacy to Nature during the time of boyhood inspires readers to perform their works remaining in Nature.

Similarities are drawn in the separation of king Bharata from his palace to forest. The king concludes that Nature is an appropriate place for pleasure and for penance. Śūkadēva explores the richness of Nature in the garden of King Bharata:

In the garden of Pulaha-āśrama, King Bharata lived alone and collected a variety of flowers, twigs, and *tulasī* leaves. He also collected the water of the Gaṇḍakī River, as well as various roots, fruits and bulbs. With these he offered food to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva, and, worshipping Him, he remained satisfied. In this way his heart was completely uncontaminated, and he did not have the least desire for material enjoyment. All material desires vanished. In this steady position, he felt full satisfaction and was situated in devotional service.¹³ (5. 7: 11)

Love for Nature purifies the soul of King Bharata and he remains peaceful in the beauty of Nature. Moving ahead in this line of argument, Ramesh Menon states: "In time, he sat unmoving, absorbed in the *Brahman*" (268). This analysis deals with the way of penance of King Bharata on the bank of Gandaki River. This expression gives further insight that humans can spend the time of their retirement on the bank of rivers or forest.

Sage Agastya is like King Bharata for separation from others for penance. The sage has faith on the power of Śrī Kṛṣṇa so that he believes in separation from others and goes to Malaya Hills. In the perspective of Yama, the sage sees divine power in Nature: "When the great sage Agastya, the son of Kumbha, was residing in the Malaya Hills and worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead, I approached him, and he explained to me this confidential history"¹⁴ (6. 3: 35). Yamarāja explains about separation of the sage for natural awareness. From this standpoint, Ramesh Menon expresses that sage Agastya worships god Viṣṇu on the top of Malaya Mountain (495). Like Śrī Kṛṣṇa, sage Agastya is a nature lover and gets perfection from his penance on the mountain. In this context, Yamarāja appreciates Agastya due to his respect to Nature.

Unlike Sage Agastya, the separation of Hiranyakaśipu from his society is a notable example in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatā Mahāpurāṇa* and his achievement denotes how a person reaches in the apex of success remaining in the world of Nature. In Śūkadēva's words: "In the valley of Mandarā Hill, Hiranyakaśipu began performing his austerities by standing with his toes on the ground, keeping his arms upward and looking toward the sky. This position was extremely difficult, but he accepted it as a means to attain perfection"¹⁵ (7. 3: 2). Remaining close to Nature, the ascetic does hard works to achieve his aim. According to Leibniz's

discussion, "Such a perfect God is power which is the source of all." (qtd. in Masih 187) If someone has belief that there is the existence of God in Nature, he can perform austerities for the perfection of *yoga* as Hiraṇyakaśipu.

The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* instructs human beings to follow four *āśram*s strictly and *vānaprasthāśram* is compulsory. This *āśram*s motivates human beings to be separated from family members and one should go to Nature to spend the life of hermitage. In Nārada's words: "A *vānaprastha* should prepare a thatched cottage or take shelter of a cave in a mountain only to keep the sacred fire, but he should personally practice enduring snowfall, wind, fire, rain, and the shining of the sun"¹⁶ (7. 12: 20). The separation from others makes a person to have special interrelation to Nature. Prabhupāda has similar ideas about *vānaprasthāśram* with Nature. He argues that senior citizens should take the shelter of Nature for inner peace (698). Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* insists in the *vānaprasthāśram* to maintain the relation between human beings and Nature.

The separation of Prahlāda from palace is a remarkable example in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* and it makes him one of the memorable characters. He is intentionally separated from his father and other family members and goes to Sahya Mountain. In this connection, Nārada further formulates his ideas:

Prahlada King, the dearest servitor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, once went out touring the universe with some of his confidential associates just to study the nature of saintly persons. Thus he arrived at the bank of the Kāvārī, where there was a mountain known as Sahya. There he found a great saintly person who was lying on the ground, covered with dirt and dust, but who was deeply spiritually advanced.¹⁶ (7. 13: 13)

Prahlada realizes the significance of Nature in the life of human beings so that he goes to mountainous area. From this standpoint, Swāmī Ranganathanda further explores: "The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇam* provides us with a standard measure our experiences of love" (31). This discussion inspires human beings to love both plants and animals like Śrī Kṛṣṇa did. One can observe the activities of Prahlāda like the activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in relation to Nature.

As Prahlada, Svāyambhuva Manu makes up his mind to go to Nature with his wife for austerities. He comes to know that Nature is a part for the completion of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* and gets self-realization there. In King Parīkṣit's words: "Svāyambhuva Manu, the husband of Satarūpā, was by nature not at all attached to enjoyment of the senses. Thus, he gave up his kingdom of sense enjoyment and entered the forest with his wife to practice austerities"¹⁸ (8. 1: 7). From this evidence, Svāyambhuva Manu is a perfect king who does not have any desires for the gratification of senses and goes to Nature with the queen. C. L. Goswamī stresses on the same idea that Svāyambhuva Manu is "Fed up with the enjoyment of sense-objects" (736). This discussion stresses that human beings should not be the slave of senses in old age like Svāyambhuva Manu.

King Indradyumna too follows the trend of other kings and sages and goes to Malaya Hill for austerities:

Indradyumna King retired from family life and went to the Malaya Hills, where he had a small cottage for his *āśrama*. He wore matted locks on his head and always engaged in austerities. Once, while observing a vow of silence, he was fully engaged in the worship of the Lord and absorbed in the ecstasy of love of Godhead.¹⁹ (8. 4: 8).

It gives a lesson to human beings to neglect body in old age for self-realization and salvation. When a king turns for the detachment of life in his old age, his citizens may follow the same path. In this relation, Ramesh Menon is apt to state: "He is awake when the world sleeps" (470). It hints that King Indradyumna has consciousness of Nature and soul so that he is linked to Nature as Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Thus, the separation from the royal family is meaningful in the life of king Indradyumna.

Sometimes, separation of a person from a group is necessary for the betterment of others. When there is the time of churning in the Kṣīrasāgara, snake Vāsuki is to be used as a rope for churning but the Nāga is frightened to come there because of the presence of Garuḍa. The bird is requested to be separated from that place for the feasibility of Vāsuki Nāga: "Thereafter, Garuda, the chief of birds, unloaded Mandara Mountain from his shoulder and brought it near the water. Then, he was asked by the Lord to leave that place, and he left"²⁰ (8. 6: 39). The separation of Garuda is necessary for the performance of churning in the ocean without any hint of fear for Vāsuki Nāga. In this connection, Prabhupāda argues that snake Vāsuki is the natural food for Garuda (239). In the similar vein, human beings should understand the problems of others and if any problems may occur for others, it is better to depart from there.

Sudyumna, the son of Vaivasvata Manu, is apt to follow *vānaprastha āsrama* and goes to forest on the bank of the Yamunā River. His separation from his family to forest pleases him during the time of retirement. In this context, Śukadeva Gośvāmī argues: "Thereafter, when his son Sudyumna had thus gone to the forest to accept the order of *vānaprastha*, Vaivasvata Manu, being desirous of getting more sons, performed severe austerities on the bank of the Yamunā for one hundred years"²¹ (9. 2: 1). Sudyumna goes to forest near the Yamunā River for penance as the order of his father. Supporting this opinion, Tagare formulates his view that Sudyumna goes to nearby forest for severe austerities despite his sensual lifestyle (1130). Vaivasvata Manu stresses the importance of Nature and motivates his son to go there for penance.

The trend of Sudyumna is followed by King Ambarīṣa for going to forest for the sake of penance. The separation of King Ambarīṣa from his throne is a notable example of love and dedication to Nature in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. The king gives up his facilitated lifestyle and goes to forest to follow the *vānaprastha āsrama*. In this regard, Śukadeva stresses on the point:

Thereafter, because of his advanced position in devotional life, King Ambarīṣa, who no longer desired to live with material things, retired from active family life. He divided his property among his sons, who were equally as qualified and he himself took the order of *vānaprastha* and went to the forest to concentrate his mind fully upon Lord Vāsudeva.²² (9. 5: 26)

This action of King Ambarīṣa instructs human beings to divide their property equally to sons. It is the responsibility of a father to divide property without discrimination among his sons before the time of retirement. Urmila Devi Dasi confirms that King Ambarish "bathed in the Yamunā River" (5). This incident proves that the king purifies himself bathing in the river. The aging father gets retirement from family life and he purifies himself by bathing. It inspires humans to love both Nature and Śrī Kṛṣṇa at least in old days for the precepts of young generation.

Sage Saubhari follows the same trend as other sages and kings for penance in old age. The sage has attached to the material life but decides to follow the rules of *vānaprastha āsrama* as King Ambarīṣa. His separation from the family life is meaningful: "When Saubhari Muni, who was quite conversant with the self, went to the forest, he performed severe

penances. In this way, in the fire at the time of death, he ultimately engaged himself in the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead"²³ (9. 6: 54). When one wants to remain free from the gross material body, he should go to forest for penance as sage Saubhari. The sage goes to forest for knowledge which makes him self-satisfaction. It is more informative to corroborate that "The self-controlled sage performed there a severely austere penance which reduced his body" (qtd. in Tagare 1159). This incident encourages human beings to attach to Nature.

Unlike other sages and kings, Rohita, son of Hariścandra, has his obligation to go to forest to save his life in childhood. It shows that some human beings take the shelter of Nature for safety: "Rohita could understand that his father intended to offer him as the animal for sacrifice. Therefore, just to save himself from death, he equipped himself with bow and arrows and went to the forest"²⁴ (9. 7: 16). The case of Rohita for separation from family members is different from others in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. The child knows that he will be sacrificed so that Nature is the means to save his life. In this connection, C. L. Goswāmī formulates that "Rohita was anxious to save his life" (30). To go to forest is an obligation for Rohita and the role of Nature plays the role of parents for him. It shows that Nature is the solution of problems. In the *paurāṇic* period, human beings had used Nature for the betterment of positive works.

Unlike others, the departure of Rāmachandra is the matter of discussion in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. He has obligation to go to forest for the fulfillment of his father's promise. His mission to go to forest is to kill time for fourteen years as the order of his father. The same idea is ascertained by Śukadeva: "Carrying out the order of His father, who was bound by a promise to his wife, Lord Rāmachandra left behind His kingdom, opulence, friends, well-wishers, residence and everything else, just as a liberated soul gives up his life, and went to the forest with Sītā"²⁵ (9. 10: 8). During the time of Rāmachandra, to go to forest was not for reward as the previous sages and kings but as a sign of punishment. From this standpoint, Devdutt Pattanaik explores that in the stories of the Rāmāyana and Mahābhārata, going to forest was a punishment (16). Like Rāmachandra, the Pāṇḍava Brothers had been sent to forest for punishment.

The mission of Rāmachandra going to forest is not for penance as others, but he goes there for the obedience of his father Dasaratha. Basing his argument on such idea, Prabhupāda postulates: "He left everything without hesitation, just as a liberated soul or great *yogi* gives up his life without material attraction" (318). In this connection both Rāmachandra and Śrī Kṛṣṇa are similar for the love of Nature. But Śrī Kṛṣṇa remains in forest willingly with cows and cowherd community but Rāmachandra does not tend cows. Rāmachandra is an ideal son and the ruler of the world who regards Nature as his parents and remains happy. Both Rāma *līlā* and Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* motivate the minds of human beings to love Nature and to act according to its condition.

Unlike Rāmachandra, Pṛṣṇi and Sutapā separate themselves from society and go to Nature for performance of severe austerities. The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* supports this argument from the view of the Lord to Devaki and Vasudeva about austerities of their previous birth: "Thus you spent twelve thousand celestial years performing difficult activities of *tapasyā* in consciousness"²⁶ (10. 3: 36). It expresses that Vasudeva and Devakī were Pṛṣṇi and Sutapā in their previous birth (Prabhupāda 253) and they achieved their aim from their penance. The role of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the omniscient and tells present, past, and future of other human beings. Śrī Kṛṣṇa has perfection in power and knowledge and his role is retrospection in this context.

In the different line of argument, the separation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and *Gopī* is a notable episode in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* and this separation makes *gopīs* unhappy. Their madness in love to Śrī Kṛṣṇa is elucidated by Śukadeva to king Parikṣit:

"Singing loudly of Kṛṣṇa, they searched for Him throughout the Vṛndāvana forest like a band of mad women. They even asked the trees about Him, who as the Supersoul is present inside and outside of all created things, just like the sky"²⁷ (10. 30: 4). The grief-stricken *gopīs* inquire trees about Śrī Kṛṣṇa showing *unmāda* state. In this regard, Viśvanātha Cakravartī has different opinion about the separation of Kṛṣṇa with *gopīs*. He is correct when he posits: "Kṛṣṇa *svarūpa* is not delimited, because He pervades everything" (qtd. in Filion 252). The separation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa from *gopīs* is different from other characters in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. He remains in the hearts of the *gopīs* despite his separation because distance is not the boundary for lovers. The *gopīs* express their loneliness in words and actions when they have separation with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They ask plants and trees about the whereabouts of Kṛṣṇa. Similarly, they imitate the activities of their hero for pleasure during the time of his absence.

The prime reason to ask trees by *gopīs* is the trees are taller than humans and might notice Śrī Kṛṣṇa. According to *gopīs*: "O *aśvattha* tree, O *plakṣa*, O *nyagrodha*, have you seen Kṛṣṇa? That son of Nanda King has gone away after stealing our minds with His loving smiles and glances"²⁸ (10. 30: 5). The *gopīs* question the trees about the location of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and it is the sign of their madness. Moving ahead in this line of argument, Sanātana Gośvāmī explores the psychology of *gopīs* to Śrī Kṛṣṇa: "He stole their minds. This suggests that their minds are jewels" (qtd. in Filion 254). In this context, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has the characteristics of Cupid for the attraction to *gopīs* of Vraja.

The *gopīs* turn to the earth (land) during the time of loneliness in the forest of Vṛndāvana and focus their attention to the earth. For them, the earth is the witness about the disappearance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They address the earth:

O mother earth, what austerity did you perform to attain the touch of Lord Keśava's lotus feet, which has brought you such great joy that your bodily hairs are standing on end? You appear very beautiful in this condition. Was it during the Lord's current appearance that you acquired this ecstatic symptom, or was it perhaps much easier, when He stepped upon you in His form of the dwarf Vāmanadeva, or even earlier, when He embraced you in His form of the boar Varāhadeva?"²⁹ (10. 30: 10)

The *gopīs* do not get the answer about Śrī Kṛṣṇa from trees thinking that they are in trance. But the earth is the real witness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa because they know that Kṛṣṇa always walks on the earth. They personify the earth as human being to find out whereabouts of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Sārātha Darśinī highlights that "Since Kṛṣṇa always walks on the earth; she is never separated from Him" (780). The *gopīs* are worried for reunion with Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Gopīs express selfishness of creatures after the fulfillment of their needs. For the proof of their logic, they assert that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is disappeared having betrayed them. On the basis of this idea, Śūkadeva expresses: "Birds abandon a tree when its fruits are gone, guests a house after they have eaten, animals a forest that has burnt down, and a lover the woman he has enjoyed, even though she remains attached to him"³⁰ (10. 47: 8). This expression of *gopīs* shows selfishness of human being. They use objects and people according to their needs and after use; it is their habit to abandon them. In this line of thought, Tagare surmises that it is the disposition of humans to show their selfish activities after use (1540). The activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa reflect humans who do not think about others after use.

The separation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa from *gopīs* has made a considerable impact in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. When he is in Mathurā, *gopīs* realize emptiness in Vṛndāvana due to their hearts and minds with him. Later, the *gopīs* inform Uddhava (friend of Śrī Kṛṣṇa) about the richness of Nature in the presence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa but the same things of Nature are futile for

them during the time of his absence. Their nostalgia is noted as follows: "When Kṛṣṇa was here in the company of Saṅkarṣaṇa, He enjoyed all these rivers, hills, forests, cows, and flute sounds"³¹ (10.47: 49). It is the reminiscences of *gopīs* about their love with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa is in Vṛndāvana, he remains close to Nature and spends his life happily there. The natural beauty resembles to the beauty of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and his memory becomes joy for *gopīs*. Kamala Subramaniam is apt to state: "The flowers had all blossomed and the air was laden with their perfume" (477). On the base of this idea, one can show that flowers become different for *gopīs* during the time of presence and absence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

We can get continuation about the feelings of separation of Uddhava with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He sees the presence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Natural things and gets information about him: "That servant of Lord Hari, seeing the rivers, forests, mountains, valleys and flowering trees of Vraja, enjoyed inspiring the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana by reminding them of Kṛṣṇa"³² (10.47: 56). Explaining this statement, Uddhava shares his feelings to the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana and enjoys himself. He gets information about Nature and Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* as inseparable things and there is the projection of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* from allusion of Nature. In relation to this idea, Devdutt Pattanaik argues: "flowers secreted nectar to wash the earth" (95). This discussion corroborates that in the presence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa makes different in feelings of both plants and animals. Human beings should see Śrī Kṛṣṇa in natural things for conservation of Nature.

After the curse of Durvāsā, Uddhava is separated from Śrī Kṛṣṇa for the achievements of his goal. In King Parīkṣhit's words: "After the great devotee Uddhava left for the forest, what did the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the protector of all living beings, do in the city of Dvārakā?"³³ (11.30: 1). Like Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Uddhava is a nature lover and he returns to forest. The fact is that forest was supposed to be the base of spiritual life during the *paurāṇic* era. His intention is to link with Nature regarding that it is his ultimate objective of life. Uddhava goes to forest because of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's "internal potency and personal will" (Prabhupāda 746). From this standpoint, one can remark that Śrī Kṛṣṇa makes someone go to forest.

The separation of Pradyumna, the son of Śrī Kṛṣṇa from his family members is a noticeable episode. Sambara, a demon, kidnaps Pradyumna when he is ten days old regarding him as an enemy and throws the baby into the ocean. Rukminī bemoans the absence of the baby. Later, a fisherman gets the infant and provides it to the maidservant Māyāvātī. The maidservant knows the agony of baby's mother during the time of separation and she exposes Pradyumna: "Your poor mother, having lost her son, cries for you like a *kurarī* bird. She is overwhelmed with love for her child, just like a cow that lost its calf"³⁴ (10.55: 15). Mother Rukminī bewails in separation of her beloved baby Pradyumna from her. Sārātha Darśinī has similar opinions about this incident that the condition of Rukminī is as the condition of a *kurarī* bird during the time of separation (398). In the above discussion, there is analogy of human feelings to a *kurarī* bird. This argument shows that there is equality between human beings and birds in feelings.

Like *gopīs*, the queens of Śrī Kṛṣṇa realize the presence of their husband in Nature. To support this opinion, they complain with Malayan breeze: "O Malayan breeze, what have we done to displease you, so that you stir up lust in our hearts, which have already been shattered by Govinda's sidelong glances?"³⁵ (10.90:19). This condition of the queens shows that the presence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa affects to the gust of air and they regard Malayan breeze as their beloved husband. The consorts of Śrī Kṛṣṇa regard the breeze as obstacle in their happiness with the husband. The gust of wind arouses emotions of those consorts which have already been shattered by glances of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The queens remember every moment with Śrī Kṛṣṇa and cannot see their existence in absence of him. They realize Nature and Śrī Kṛṣṇa because of the origin of same emotions in heart. Love-lorn queens complain breeze for consolation during the time of absence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In the words of Lyengar, every consort thought that

"Krishna was by her side" (114). In this line of discussion, the readers come to know that the better-halves of Śrī Kṛṣṇa have keen interest for his company.

The queens of Śrī Kṛṣṇa complain mountains and rivers during the time of separation. The queens further refer their complaints as follows:

O magnanimous mountain, you neither move nor speak. You must be pondering some matter of great importance. Or do you, like us; desire to hold on your breasts the feet of Vasudeva's darling son? O rivers, wives of the ocean, your pools have now dried up. Alas, you have shriveled to nothing, and your wealth of lotuses has vanished. Are you, then, like us, who are withering away because of not receiving the affectionate glance of our husband, the Lord of Madhu, who has cheated our hearts? ³⁶ (10. 90: 22-23)

Mountains and rivers might have desires for union with Śrī Kṛṣṇa as his consorts. In this connection, Nita Mathur shows similarity between the earth and women: "Both women and earth are ploughed, pierced and dug into; both possess tremendous capacity to bear pain" (25). In this context, the complaints of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's consorts' are justifiable. They see their condition in relation to the earth and other natural things. With the similar beliefs, one can appraise that Śrī Kṛṣṇa uses his efforts for protection of both women and Nature.

After the performance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā*, truth, *dharma*, and faithfulness leave the world and Nature starts facing the problems. In this connection, the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* rests on the argument: "As soon as Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa left the earth, Truth, Religion, Faithfulness, Glory, and Beauty immediately followed Him. Kettledrums resounded in the heavens and flowers showered from the sky"³⁷ (11. 31: 7). The separation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa from this world affected in the life of plants and animals and the crisis in Nature began on the earth. Moving ahead in this line of argument, Tagare incorporates that truth; righteousness and respect to Nature have disappeared from this globe after the departure of Kṛṣṇa (2120). It shows that the death of a great personality affects in society, country, and the world. To support the idea of Nature, one can point out that a good person is able to control the exploitation in Nature.

Many characters are separated from society to go to forest and mountain for penance, to save life from difficulties, to take entertainment from the scenario of Nature, to express loneliness with natural things and for the fulfillment of their goals. Gods, kings, sages, and human beings with their remarkable identity go to forest for the completion of mission. There is the majority of the major characters who go to forest for austerities. The characters see the possibilities to succeed in their aim in forest either from penance or by making good relationship with Nature.

Conclusion

The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* intricately weaves together the divine drama of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* and the natural world, presenting a harmonious integration of the transcendent and the immanent. Nature becomes not just a backdrop but an active participant, mirroring the emotions and states of separation among characters. The narratives illuminate the transformative power inherent in moments of separation. Characters undergo profound spiritual evolution through the crucible of longing and separation, ultimately leading to a deeper connection with the divine. The separation serves as a catalyst for spiritual growth and a heightened sense of devotion. The text imparts a sense of spiritual responsibility toward the natural world, emphasizing the interconnectedness between humanity and the environment. It inspires a reverence for nature as an integral aspect of the divine creation. The enduring

relevance of Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* and Nature in separation resonates beyond temporal and cultural boundaries. The themes explored in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* offer timeless wisdom, providing spiritual seekers with guidance and insights that transcend the specific contexts of the ancient scripture.

The cyclical rhythm of seasons and the eternal recurrence of separation themes emphasize the timeless nature of love and the cyclical nature of time itself. The scriptural narratives invite contemplation on the eternal dance of love within the cosmic order, transcending temporal constraints. The study of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* and Nature in the separation of characters in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* reveals a tapestry where the divine, the human, and the natural world converge in a sublime dance. It beckons us to reflect on the interconnectedness of all existence, the transformative power of love, and the eternal journey toward spiritual realization. The scripture stands as a beacon, inviting seekers to delve into its depths and find within its verses the perennial truths that guide the soul on its quest for union with the divine.

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Appendix

1. स सम्राट् कस्य वा हेतोः पाण्डूनां मानवर्धनः ।
प्रायोपविष्टो गङ्गायामनाहत्याधिराट् श्रियम् ॥ १०॥
(1.4:10)
sa samrāṭ kasya vā hetoḥ
pāṇḍūnāṃ māna-varadhanau
prāyopaviṣṭo gaṅgāyām
anādātyādhirāṭ-śriyam

2. स कदाचित्सरस्वत्या उपस्पृश्य जलं शुचिः ।
विविक्तदेश आसीन उदिते रविमण्डले ॥ १५॥ (1.4:15)
sa kadācit sarasvatyā
upaspṛśya jalāḥ śuciḥ
vivikta eka āsēna
udite ravi-maṇḍale

3. मार्ग आगच्छतो वीक्ष्य पुरुषान् पुरुषर्षभ ।
तान् शुल्कदान् वित्तवतः कान्तान् मेनेऽर्थकामुका ॥ २४॥
(11. 8:24)
mārga āgacchha vīkṣya puruṣān puruṣarṣabha
tān śulka-dān vitta-vataḥ kāntān meṇe-arthakāmuka
dhārayanti
sānodhutasya bhayasyapatiurūmalokam pṛthvi
nahakṛnotu

4. न पिबन्ति स्तनं वत्सा न दुहन्ति च मातरः ।
रुदन्यश्रुमुखा गावो न हृष्यन्त्यृषभा व्रजे ॥ १९॥ (1.14:19)
na pibanti stanaṃ vatsā na duhyanti ca mātaraḥ
rudanty aśru-mukhā gāvo na hṛṣyanty ṛṣabhā vraje

5. गृहात्प्रव्रजितो धीरः पुण्यतीर्थजलाप्लुतः ।
शुचौ विविक्त आसीनो विधिवत्कल्पितासने ॥ १६॥
(2.1:16)
grhāt pravrajito dhīraḥ puṇyā-tīrthajalāplutaḥ
śucāu vivikta āsēno vidhivat kalpitāsane

6. विद्धः सपत्युदितपत्रिभिरन्ति राज्ञो
बालोऽपि सन्नुपगतस्तपसे वनानि ।
तस्मा अदाद्ध्रुवगतिं गृणते प्रसन्नो
दिव्याः स्तुवन्ति मुनयो यदुपर्यधस्तात् ॥ ८॥ (2.7:8)
viddhaḥ sapatny-udita-patirbhir anti rājño
bālo 'pi sann upagatas tapase vanāni
tasmā adād dhruva-gatiṃ grṇate prasanno
divyāḥ stuvanti munayo yad upary-ad

7. प्रस्थिते तु वनं पित्रा दत्त्वा गां धर्मसंश्रयः ।
षट्त्रिंशद्वर्षसाहस्रं रक्षिताव्याहतेन्द्रियः ॥ २२॥ (4.9:22)
prasthite tu vanaṃ pitrā dattvā gāḥ dharmasāṅśrayaḥ
ṣaṭ-triṅśad-varṣa-sāhasraṃ rakṣitāvyaahateन्द्रियः
rakṣitāvyaahateन्द्रियः

8. एवमात्मभुवाऽऽदिष्टः परिक्रम्य गिरां पतिम् ।
बाढमित्यमुमामन्त्र्य विवेश तपसे वनम् ॥ २०॥ (3.12:20)
evam ātmabhuvāḥ ādiṣṭaḥ parikramya girāṃ patim
bāḍham ity amum āmantrya viveṣa tapase vanam

9. अथोपस्पृश्य सलिलं प्राणानायम्य वाग्यतः ।
ध्यायञ्जजाप विरजं ब्रह्मज्योतिः सनातनम् ॥ ३२॥
(3.14:32)
athopaspṛśya salilāḥ prāṇānāyamya vāgyataḥ
dhyāyāṅjajāpa virajāḥ brahma jyotiḥ sanātanam

10. प्रजाः सृजेति भगवान् कर्दमो ब्रह्मणोदितः ।
सरस्वत्यां तपस्तेपे सहस्राणां समा दश ॥ ६॥ (3.21:6)
prajāḥ sṛjēti bhagavān kardamo brahmaṇōditaḥ
sarasvatyāḥ tapastepe sahasrāṅgāṃ samā daśa

11. कन्दमूलफलाहारः शुष्कपर्णाशनः क्वचित् ।
अभक्षः कतिचित्पक्षान् वायुभक्षस्ततः परम् ॥ ५॥
(4.23:5)
kanda-mūla-phalāhāraḥ śuṣkparṇāśanaḥ kvacit
ab-bhakṣaḥ katicit pakṣān vāyubhakṣastataḥ param

12. पित्राऽऽदिष्टः प्रजासर्गे तपसेऽर्णवमाविशन् ।
दशवर्षसहस्राणि तपसार्चस्तपस्पतिम् ॥ १४॥ (4.24:14)
pitṛāḥ ādiṣṭaḥ prajāsarṅe tapase-ṛṇavama viśan
daśavarṣasahasrāṇi tapasārcaḥ tapaspatim

13. तस्मिन् वाव किल स एकलः पुलहाश्रमो-पवने
विविधकुसुमकिसलय तुलसिकाम्बुभिः
कन्दमूलफलोपहारैश्च समीहमानो भगवतआराधनं
विविक्त उपरतविषयाभिलाषउपभृतोपशमः परां
निर्वृतिमवाप ॥ ११॥ (5.7:11)
tasmin vāva kila sa ekalaḥ pulhāśrama-pavane
vividhakuṣumakisalaya tulasikāmbubhiḥ
kandamūlaphalopaharaiśch samīhamaṇo bhagavata āraḍhanaḥ
vivikta uparata-viṣayābhilāṣaupabhṛtōpśamaḥ paraṃ
nirvṛtim avāpa

14. इतिहासमिमं गुह्यं भगवान् कुम्भसम्भवः ।
कथयामास मलये आसीनो हरिमर्चयन् ॥ ३५॥ (6.3:35)
itihāsam imaṃ guhyaṃ bhagavān kumbha-sambhavaḥ
kathayāmaśa malaya āsīno harimarcayan

15. स तेपे मन्दरद्रोण्यां तपः परमदारुणम् ।
ऊर्ध्वबाहुर्नभोदृष्टिः पादाङ्गुष्ठाश्रितावनिः ॥ २॥ (7.3:2)
*sa tepe mandara-droṅyāṅ
tapau parama-dāruṅam
ūrdhva-bāhur nabho-dāṅṅi
pādāṅguṅṅhāçritāvaniṅ*

16. अग्न्यर्थमेव शरणमुत्तं वाद्रिकन्दराम् ।
श्रयेत हिमवाय्वग्निवर्षार्कातपषाट् स्वयम् ॥ २०॥
(7.12:20)
*agny-artham eva çaraṅam
uōajaṅ vādri-kandaram
çrayeta hima-vāyv-agnivar
ṅārkatapa- ṅāō svayam*

17. तं शयानं धरोपस्थे कावेर्यां सह्यसानुनि ।
रजस्वलैस्तनूदेशैर्निगूढामलतेजसम् ॥ १२॥ (7.13:13)
*taṅ çayānaṅ dharopasthe
kāveryāṅ sahya-sānuni
rajas-valais tanū-deçair
niṅūōṅhāmala-tejasam*

18. विरक्तः कामभोगेषु शतरूपापतिः प्रभुः ।
विसृज्य राज्यं तपसे सभार्यो वनमाविशत् ॥ ७॥ (8.1:7)
*viraktaḥ kāma-bhogeṅ
šatarūpā-patiḥ prabhuh
visrjyam tapase
sabhāryo vanam āvišat*

19. स एकदाऽऽराधनकाल आत्मवान्
गृहीतमौनव्रत ईश्वरं हरिम् ।
जटाधरस्तापस आप्लुतोऽच्युतं
समर्चयामास कुलाचलाश्रमः ॥ ८॥ (8.4:४)
*sa ekadāṅādhana-kāla ātmavān
gūhēta-mauna-vrata ēçvaraṅ harim
jaōō-dharas tāpasa āpluto 'cyutaṅ
samarçayām āsa kulāçalāçramaiṅ*

20. अवरोप्य गिरिं स्कन्धात्सुपर्णः पततां वरः ।
ययौ जलान्त उत्सृज्य हरिणा स विसर्जितः ॥ ३९॥
(8.6:39)
*avaropya giriaṅ skandhāt
suparēāu patatāṅ varauṅ
yayau jalānta utsrjya
hariṅ sa visarjitaṅ*

21. एवं गतेऽथ सुद्युम्ने मनुर्वैवस्वतः सुते ।
पुत्रकामस्तपस्तेपे यमुनायां शतं समाः ॥ १॥ (9.2:1)
*çré-çuka uvāca
evaṅ gate 'tha sudyumne
manur vaivasvataṅ sute
putra-kāmas tapas tepe*

22. अथाम्बरीषस्तनयेषु राज्यं
समानशीलेषु विसृज्य धीरः ।
वनं विवेशात्मनि वासुदेवे

मनो दधद्द्वस्तगुणप्रवाहः ॥ २६॥ (9.5:26)
*athāambarēṅas tanayeṅu rājyaṅ
samāna-çēleṅu višājya dhēraiṅ
vanaṅ viveçātmani vāsudeve
mano dadhad dhvasta-guṅa-pravāhaiṅ*

23. तत्र तप्त्वा तपस्तीक्ष्णमात्मदर्शनमात्मवान् ।
सहैवाग्निभिरात्मानं युयोज परमात्मनि ॥ ५४॥ (9.6:54)
*tatra taptvā tapas tékṅṅam
ātma-darçanam ātmavān
sahaivāgnibhir ātmānaṅ
yuyoja paramātmani*

24. रोहितस्तदभिज्ञाय पितुः कर्म चिकीर्षितम् ।
प्राणप्रेत्सुर्धनुष्पाणिररण्यं प्रत्यपद्यत ॥ १६॥ (9.7:16)
*rohitas tad abhiṅṅāya
pituṅ karma cikērṅitam
prāṅa-prepsur dhanuṅ-pāēr
araṅyāṅ pratyapadyata*

25. यः सत्यपाशपरिवीतपितुर्निदेशं
स्त्रैणस्य चापि शिरसा जगृहे सभार्यः ।
राज्यं श्रियं प्रणयिनः सुहृदो निवासं
त्यक्त्वा ययौ वनमसूनिव मुक्तसङ्गः ॥ ८॥ (9.10:४)
*yauṅ satya-pāçā-parivēta-pitur nideçāṅ
straiṅsya çāpi çirasā jagāhe sabhāryāṅ
rājyaṅ çriyāṅ praṅyinauṅ suhādo nivāsāṅ
tyaktvā yayau vanam asiṅ iva mukta-saṅgaṅ*

26. एवं वां तप्यतोस्तीव्रं तपः परमदुष्करम् ।
दिव्यवर्षसहस्राणि द्वादशेयुर्मदात्मनोः ॥ ३६॥ (10.3:36)
*evaṅ vāṅ tapyatos tévraṅ
tapauṅ parama-duṅkaram
divya-varṅa-sahasrāēi
dvādaçeyur mad-ātmanoṅ*

27. गायन्त्य उच्चैरमुमेव संहता
विचिक्युरुन्मत्तकवद्वनाद्वनम् ।
पप्रच्छुराकाशवदन्तरं बहिर्भूतेषु
सन्तं पुरुषं वनस्पतीन् ॥ ४॥ (10.30:4)
*gāyantya uccair amum eva samhatā
vicikyur unmattaka-vad vanād vanam
papracçhur ākāša-vad antaram bahir
bhūteṅu santam puruṅam vanaspatin*

28. दृष्टो वः कच्चिदश्वत्थ प्लक्ष न्यग्रोध नो मनः ।
नन्दसूनुर्गतो हत्वा प्रेमहासावलोकनैः ॥ ५॥ (10.30:5)
*drṅṅto vaḥ kacçid ašvattha
plakṅa nyagrodha no manah
nanda-sūnur gato hrṅtvā
prema-hāsāvalokanaiḥ*

29. किं ते कृतं क्षिति तपो बत केशवाङ्घ्रि -
स्पर्शात्सवोत्पुलकिताङ्गरुहैर्विभासि ।
अप्यङ्घ्रिसम्भव उरुक्रमविक्रमाद्वा
आहो वराहवपुषः परिरम्भणेन ॥ १०॥ (10.30:10)
*kiṅ te kṅtam kṅiti tapo bata keṅvāṅghri -
sparmāṅtsavotpulakitāṅgaruhaiṅrviṅbhāsi ।
apyaṅghrisamभव उरुक्रमविक्रमाद्वा
āho varāhavadpuruṅḥ parirambṅeṅeṅ ॥ १०॥ (10.30:10)*

*sparsotsavotpulakitāṅga-nahair vibhāsi
apy aṅghri-sambhava urukrama-uikramād vā
āho varāha-vapuṣaḥ parirambhaṇena*

30. खगा वीतफलं वृक्षं भुक्त्वा चातिथयो गृहम् ।
दग्धं मृगास्तथारण्यं जारो भुक्त्वा रतां स्त्रियम् ॥ ८ ॥
(10.47:8)

*khagā vīta-phalaṁ vṛkṣaṁ
bhuktvā cātiithayo gr̥ham
dagdham mṛgās tathāraṇyaṁ
jārā bhuktvā ratām striyam*

31. सरिच्छैलवनोद्देशा गावो वेणुरवा इमे ।
सङ्कर्षणसहायेन कृष्णेनाचरिताः प्रभो ॥ ४९ ॥ (10.47:49)

*saric-chaila-vanoddeśā
gāvo veṇu-ravā ime
saṅkarṣaṇa-sahāyena*

32. सरिद्वनगिरिद्रोणीर्वीक्षन् कुसुमितान् द्रुमान् ।
कृष्णं संस्मारयन् रेमे हरिदासो व्रजौकसाम् ॥ ५६ ॥
(10.47:56)

*sarid-vana-giri-droṇī
vīkṣan kusumitān drumān
kṛṣṇaṁ saṁsmārayan reme
hari-dāso vrajaukasām*

33. ततोमहाभागवते उद्धवे निर्गते वनम् ।
द्वारवत्यां किमकरोद्भगवान् भूतभावनः ॥ १ ॥ (11.30:1)

*tato mahā-Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa
uddhave nirgate vanam
dvāravatyāṁ kim akarod
bhagavān bhūta-bhāvanah*

34. परिशोचति ते माता कुररीव गतप्रजा ।
पुत्रस्नेहाकुला दीना विवत्सा गौरिवातुरा ॥ १५ ॥
(10.55:15)

*pariśocati te mātā
kurarīva gata-prajā
putra-snehākula dīna
vivatsā gaur ivātura*

35. किन्त्वाचरितमस्माभिर्मलयानिल तेऽप्रियम् ।
गोविन्दापाङ्गनिभिन्ने हृदीरयसि नः स्मरम् ॥ १९ ॥
(10.90:19)

*kiṁ nv ācaritam asmābhir
malayānila te 'priyam
govindāpāṅga-nirbhinne
hṛdīrayasi naḥ smaram*

36. न चलसि न वदस्युदारबुद्धे
क्षितिधर चिन्तयसे महान्तमर्थम् ।
अपि बत वसुदेवनन्दनाङ्घ्रिं
वयमिव कामयसे स्तनैर्विधर्तुम् ॥ २२ ॥ (10.90:22-23)

*na calasi na vadasy udāra-buddhe
kṣiti-dhara-cintayase mahāntam artham
api bata vasudeva-nandanāṅghrīm
vayam iva kāmayase stanair vidhartum*

37. दिवि दुन्दुभयो नेदुः पेतुः सुमनसश्च खात् ।
सत्यं धर्मो धृतिर्भूमिः कीर्तिः श्रीश्चानु तं ययुः ॥ ७ ॥
(11.31:7)

*divi dundubhayo neduḥ
petuḥ sumanasāś ca khāt
satyaṁ dharmo dhṛtir bhūmeḥ
kīrtiḥ śrīś cānu taṁ yayuḥ*

The Expression of Human Emotions in the Film Vanga's *Animal*: A Social Analysis

Praveen K Jadhav

Abstract

The movie *Animal* has narrated the extreme emotions of father-son relation. A father remains busy in his work and abusive towards his child's love. On the other hand, the child or son had a love and admiration towards his father. The conflict between father-son relations, results into an extreme level of expression of emotions. The son, who has been continuously abused by his father, shapes himself with animal kind of behaviours. The narration of human expression film *Animal* seems to be more realistic and acceptable. This paper has analyzed the relevance of human expression of emotions showed in this film.

Keywords: human emotions, expression, psychology, culture, animal, conflict

Introduction

The human emotions are most complex reaction, since they are not organized. According to American Psychological Association (APA), "the human emotions are complex reaction pattern. The emotions are connected with experiential, behavioural and physiological elements". Thus emotions are nothing but human expression towards certain fact. The method of expression of emotions depends on individual's response. The emotions may be influenced by memories, beliefs and other social, psychological and physiological factors. According to APA, "the human emotions are expressed by all individuals depending on subjective experiences and behavioural responses. The expression of emotions also depends on societal norms and individual upbringings". The emotion is nothing but the mental state of an individual. The behavioural response of an individual towards certain differs depending on several factors as discussed above. However, the extreme condition of expression of emotions is a result of psychological conflict existed in the mind of an individual.

Extreme Frustration due to family conflicts leads to extreme level of aggression. The aggression replicates though the behaviour of an adult. The habits of adults may influence with the aggression. The adult expresses his/her aggression by unacceptable behaviour. The frustrated voice tone, quarrelling and aggressive communication with family members and others, disrespect to elders, destroying the reputation of another person are some of the minor emotional expression of an adult. In this case, the defeat of the opponent or enemy is the ultimate goal of an adult. The movie *Animal* has narrated the extreme emotions of father-son relation. A father remains busy in his work and abusive towards his child's love. On the other hand, the child or son had a love and admiration towards his father. The conflict between father-son relations, results into an extreme level of expression of emotions. The son, who has been continuously abused by his father, shapes himself with animal kind of behaviours. The narration of human expression film *Animal* seems to be more realistic and acceptable.

Objective the Study:

- To explore the various methods of expression of human emotions
- To analyze the expression of emotions showed in the film *Animal*
- To explore the relevance of the content of *Animal* film scenes

The background of Movie and Their Creators

The movie *Animal* was released in the month of December 2023, which has been considered as big hit in India. According to www.zeebiz.com (2023) “the film titled *Animal* was continued to be a big hit in India and also in worldwide. The movie had big opening and on its 16 days, the total collection was around Rs. 800 crores”. This particular movie was directed by Sandeep Reddy Vanga with a star caste of Ranbir Kapoor, Rashmika Mandana, Anil Kapoor, Bobby Deol, Tripti Dimri and others. The story is centred on the father-son relationship, which goes through several family conflicts. The lead character played by Ranbir Kapoor, who is protective and obsessive towards his father’s love, but the father had no time to attend his child. The father was abusive towards his child, whereas, the child was over possessive towards his father. This love and hate conflict continued till the adult hood, which made the child as *Animal* in terms of behavior. The film *Animal* was long film with duration of 3 hours and 21 minutes and was released in five languages namely Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam.

The narration and presentation of father-son relation conflict was extra ordinary. The human expression showed in this film was extreme and was not acceptable to common and general public. In order to understand the social psychology behind the expression showed in this film, one should explore the background of director. The narration of story is nothing but the mindset and belief of the director. Therefore, there is need to give a brief background of the director Mr. Sandeep Reddy Vanga. According to www.imdb.com (2023), Sandeep Reddy Vanga has a background of different geographical location. Basically he is from Warangal and then moved Hyderabad (Now in Telangana State). Later he completed his higher degree from Dharwad (Karnataka State). Then he moved to Vishakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh) and later to Sydney (Australia). He started working in film industry as an Assistant Director and then Associate Director. In the year 2017, he proposed a film titled *Arjun Reddy* as a director. This film became big hit and collected around Rs. 50 crores. Later the film *Arjun Reddy* was made in Hindi as *Kabir Singh* (2019), which was again a big hit. In the year 2021, he announced a film *Animal*, which also became biggest hit in terms of collection of revenue.

Review of Literature

Azim Shariff and Tracy Jessica (2011) have studied the emotions expressions in socio-psychological aspects. According to the researchers, “the emotional expressions are universal and useful for communication. The psychology and culture has a role in human expression. The non-verbal human expression of emotions is equally significant”. Chaplin Tara (2015) has studied the relation between gender and emotion expression. According to the researcher “there is a strong linkage between the gender and emotion expression in childhood and adolescence. There emotion expression depends on bio-psycho-social model. The girls are comparatively more at risk by suppressing anger and internalizing distress than boys. Smith Joel and Abell Catharine (2016) have explained the emotional expression among the individuals. According to the authors, “the emotional expression is intentional and depends on self-culture. The emotions are based on positive and negative values of an individual. The expression of emotions differs from person to persons”. Szekely, Andrightetto et.al (2020) has studied the aggression and conflict among the adults. According to the authors, “the adults with extreme family conflicts have aggressive expression”. Almeida, Lous, Paula et. al. (2021) has studied emotional identification in movies through facial recognition. According to the authors, “there are different various forms of emotions based on different

dimensions. There are different models of human emotions. The human emotions are natural in all the theories". Deshpande, Mendhapurkar and Kalkute (2021) have investigated the correlation between the aggression, conflict and expressiveness. According to the authors "the extreme frustration leads to anger and aggression. The conflict among the family members leads to aggressive behaviour. The anger and aggressions are openly expressive among the adults in these cases".

Analysis and Interpretation

Ranvijay (played by Ranbir Kapoor) always wanted his father's love and attention from the childhood, but the father was not available for him. The extreme love and affection of son towards his father one side and on other side, the unavailability of his father along of emotional disrespecting the son on several occasions, have created the emotional conflict between father and son. Despite of the continuous emotional abuse by his father, the son (Ranvijay) continued to love his father throughout his childhood. The emotional conflict between son and father gradually changes the behaviour of son. The life of the son is influenced by the aggression, conflict and over expression. The son gradually becomes an animal, which means that, his behaviour and emotional expressions are beyond control and socially unacceptable. Since his (Ranvijay) father was very rich, the mindset of 'Ranvijay' was more materialistic without thinking of legal consequences. He does several criminal activities during his teenage and adult without considering any consequences. The writer and director of the film have given relevant and justifiable title to the film as *Animal*. The act, scenes and behaviours of the protagonist (Ranvijay) is not socially acceptable, which matches the acts of animals where there is state of nature and not state of law. In order to justify the aggression and conflict mind of the son, the director has showed the extreme level of violence, love and sex. The extreme level of 'masculinity' also has been showed several scenes. There is least importance is given to the 'feminism'. The director has showed that, the world is strong men's world and there is no place for 'women' in the men's world except family matters. The director has used several scenes of extreme level of violence to show that, the adult has connection with the childhood emotional conflict. The director also has showed the extreme level of love towards father, sister and wife. In one scene, the protagonist (Ranvijay) has expressed love more than wife and brother in law. The director also wants to show the extreme level of sex scenes of protagonist (Ranvijay) with his wife and his girl friend. The plot of the film is excellent and seems many times far away from the social reality. Many people have criticized the scenes showed in this field by saying this could lead to misunderstanding in society. However, this paper has analyzed the extreme level of emotional expression of an adult with the help of selected available literature.

According to Azim Shariff and Tracy Jessica (2011) the emotional expression of an human being is natural and universal. The emotional expressions (both verbal and non-verbal expression) are helpful for the communication with family members and friends. The human psychology and family culture are the important factors in the process of emotional expression. The director of the film (Mr Sandeep Reddy Vanga) has showed that, psychology and family culture of the protagonist (Ranjvijay) during his childhood and teenage was influenced the conflict and emotional abuse. As a result of this, the personalities of the protagonist became more like as animal. Chaplin Tara (2015) has explained that, the bio-psycho and social model could influence the human emotions. The emotional expression is the result of these factors. Further the researcher have explained that, the females have a tendency of suppressing and accepting the family conflict, where as the 'males' are not familiar with such tendency. This indicates that, the emotional expression of males is more aggressive that females. The director (Mr. Sandeep Reddy Vanga) has showed the similar type of relation and expression in the film. The

protagonist (Ranvijay) is more dominant than his wife and any other females of his family. Even the father of protagonist, was also showed as dominant as his wife. This is nothing but, male dominant family and their understanding showed through several scenes. Szekely, Andrightetto et.al (2020) and Deshpande, Mendhapurkar et al. (2021) have explained that, aggressive emotional expressions are the result of extreme family conflicts. The aggressive human expression could be seen more during adulthood than childhood and teenage. The director of the film *Animal* also has showed similar kind of relation. When a protagonist becomes adult, the emotional expression of behaviour of him becomes more open and deliberate. The thoughts and behaviour of him is more violent, cruel and abnormal.

Considering selected literature, the film *Animal* scenes have been analysed and interpreted in this article. On the basis of this the discussion points could be given as below.

- i) The title of the film is more justifiable to the scenes of the film. This shows that, the writer and the director of the film have valid social understanding and social responsibility.
- ii) The extreme level of emotional conflict during the childhood result into extreme level of personally, which is not socially acceptable. The director has showed this with certain scenes, which seems to be more realistic.
- iii) The male dominant society, especially in the rich family, is a truth, which has been shown by the director.
- iv) The conflict based personality of 'males' is more aggressive than females. The film also has shown this social reality with certain scenes.
- v) The extreme level of love towards his father but the unavailability of father creates emotional conflict. The emotional abuse of father against the love of son is nothing but unending conflict between father and son. The director of the film has shown social reality of this social reality.
- vi) As a whole, all the scenes of violence and sex are nothing but the emotional expression of an adult, who had an extreme level of conflict with his loving members of family.
- vii) There was a lack of space for emotional expression of the son during his childhood, especially before the father. This gradually created all his behaviour at extreme level. This is the social reality and has shown in the film with more effective plots.

Conclusion:

The film *Animal* has been presented with different plots, which is nothing but replication of the society. Many experts and authors have criticized the content of the film. But considering the available literature related to the conflict based emotional expression, the content of the film seems to be true. The director of the film Mr. Sandeep Reddy Vanga has shown the social reality of the extreme and abnormal personality, which need to be discussed by the social thinkers.

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Indian Cinema's *Comedy of Errors*

G Sharon Komala

Abstract

With an emphasis on the Gulzar-directed movie *Angoor*, the essay examines how William Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors* has been adapted for Indian cinema. The essay explores the dynamics of adaptation, misadaptation, and the interaction between literature and film by drawing on Francesco Casetti's theoretical framework for "Adaptation and Misadaptations." It draws attention to Indian cinema's cultural fusion and localization, the text's worldwide appeal, and the importance of comedy as a genre in Indian filmmaking. The Gulzar-directed Bollywood movie *Angoor* is a notable rendition of William Shakespeare's play. This research investigates the film's adaptation in terms of plot, character, class tensions, embodiment/disembodiment, music, and characterization, as well as taking into account the possibility that it was a misadaptation. Shakespeare's play, which is skillfully adapted in the movie *Angoor*, revolves around mistaken identities and humorous misunderstandings. However, because the movie strayed from Shakespeare's original meaning, some viewers would see it as a poor adaptation. One could argue that the cultural translation and Bollywood features obscure the play's core message. The film may be criticized for failing to capture the literary nuance of Shakespeare's writing and for failing to successfully meld the Indian and Shakespearean aspects.

Key words: Adaptation, Misadaptation, Literature and Film, Farce, Shakespeare, The Comedy of Errors, Gulzar, Angoor,

The article explores the adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors* in Indian cinema, focusing on Gulzar's film *Angoor* (1982). It highlights the significance of this adaptation in contributing to the evolution of comedy in Indian cinema and analyzes it through the lens of Francesco Casetti's concept of adaptation and misadaptation. Gulzar's *Angoor* is seen as a transcultural adaptation, indigenizing Shakespeare's play to cater to Indian audiences while retaining its essence. The film incorporates Indian settings, language, and cultural elements, showcasing the dynamic nature of Indian cinema in reinterpreting global narratives. The project also discusses how adaptation serves as a form of re-contextualization, creating new communicative situations and engaging audiences in fresh ways. Francesco Casetti's theoretical framework provides insights into the complexities of adaptation and misadaptation, emphasizing the interplay of discourses and the reprogramming of reception in the adaptation process. The project aims to understand how adaptations like "Angoor" navigate the balance between fidelity to the source material and creative reinterpretation, shaping the cultural and artistic landscape of Indian cinema. Overall, the article sheds light on the cultural fusion and exchange between Western literature and Indian storytelling traditions, showcasing the transformative power of adaptation in enriching cinematic storytelling and engaging audiences across cultures.

Compare and Contrast (Text and Film)

Comedy of Errors and *Angoor* are two comedic plays/films that share several similarities in the aspects of plot where, Both *Comedy of Errors* and *Angoor* revolve around cases of mistaken identity. In both stories, there are sets of identical twins that get separated at a

young age and end up in different locations. The confusion and chaos arise when characters mistake one twin for the other, leading to hilarious situations.

Another aspect is the source material, *Comedy of Errors* is a play written by William Shakespeare, while *Angoor* is a Hindi film adaptation of Shakespeare's play. Both works draw inspiration from the ancient Roman playwright Plautus, specifically his play *Menaechmi*, which also features a similar plot of mistaken identity involving twins. They rely heavily on farce and slapstick comedy. The humor often stems from the confusion and misunderstandings caused by the twin characters and their interactions with other characters. Both works employ double entendre and wordplay to enhance the comedic effect. *Comedy of Errors* uses puns, witty remarks, and clever wordplay, while *Angoor* utilizes linguistic humour in the form of Hindi wordplay and linguistic confusion. Lastly, both stories explore themes of love, reconciliation, and reunion. The resolution often involves a sense of forgiveness and understanding, emphasizing the importance of familial bonds and relationships. While *Comedy of Errors* is a play set in ancient Greece, and *Angoor* is a modern-day Hindi film, the core comedic elements and the central theme of mistaken identity make them comparable in terms of their comedic style and structure.

Plot of both the text and film

Gulzar's adaptation is truly a trans-cultural conformity of Shakespeare's play. Gulzar modified the plot of the play to make it fit and worth-seeing for the alien and familiar readers of Shakespeare alike. In our opinion, the central defining element of all the characters involved in the film, is their ability to be true to their immediate culture that is Indian in nature.

There are some noticeable similarities and differences between the *Comedy of Errors* and *Angoor* (grapes). Both works have been introduced in a comedy genre. The most prominent and foremost element of comic plot structure is 'confusion'. In both the original play and movie confusion takes place and is made repeatedly as much as logical because of two sets of identical protagonists. The additional major characteristic of the plot is a hectic or tense relationship between men and women in marriage, which is supplementarily enjoyable as a comic plot structure for an Indian audience. The central confusion turns on when the wife (Adriana and Sudha) demand a gold necklace from her husband. However, turmoil increases when a gold piece of jewelry ordered by one of twins (from a master set of twins) is given to another twin and the first one refuses to pay for the jewelry he never had received and is given to another twin and then refused to pay for the debt. Although in both *Comedy of Errors* and *Angoor* (grapes) the sequence of gold jewelry is thematically significant as all confusion occurs because the demand for gold jewelry gives rise to several cracking scenes, as confusion plays a major role in the saga of two pairs of an identical twin. In addition to the plot of confusion and the hectic relationship of the married couple, both artistic works also depict the similar romantic plot as a sister-in-law of a married twin (from master pair) and another Twin fallen in love with each other.

However, when it comes to the difference between the plot original text and Indian adaptation of mistaken identities, there are few to mention. The original text begins with the Egeon, a merchant of Syracuse who was condemned to death by the solinus, the duke of Ephesus for violating the prohibition against travel between the two rival cities (Ephesus and Syracuse). Then he informed the duke that he has come to Syracuse in search of his wife and one of his twin sons along with one of his twin slaves whom were separated from his, decades ago in a shipwreck and Antipholus of Ephesus and his slave Dorino of Ephesus were already in Syracuse for the search of their twin and mother. On the other hand, a similar unfortunate shipwreck has been portrayed in adaptation work which distributes the family,

leaving both parents (Raj Tilak and his wife) with one child out of each pair of twins. Raj Tilak (the father) died just a few days after the accident. Ashok and Bahadur of Dinkapur (one of each pair of doubles) arrive in the town for some agriculture business transaction and were unaware of them, their respective twins leading their married life. And one of the major changes in this film adaptation is where they are shown to be playing cards with his observing wife (Sudha) and sister-in-law. Additionally, Where the mistaken pair of master and slave (Ashok and Bahadur) formulate the plan to drug Sudha, Tanu and Prema to escape unnoticed. However, there is no equivalent of this scene in the play itself. The original play ends happily when the situation is untangled. When Egeon is pardoned by the duke and reunited with his spouse (Abbess) and both sets of twins embracing. On the other hand, Gulzar's adapted work moreover ends with a happy note but the only difference is that mother of Ashok represented as a widow (as her husband already has declared dead in rest 20 mins of the film). Also, Gulzar has used one of the most valuable elements of Bollywood in his framework.

Class conflicts in the play and film

In William Shakespeare's play *The Comedy of Errors*, there are several class conflicts depicted throughout the story. These conflicts arise due to the mistaken identities and confusion caused by the presence of two sets of identical twins. The play explores the contrast between the upper-class characters and their servants. Antipholus of Syracuse and his servant Dromio of Syracuse, who are both from a higher social class, find themselves in the city of Ephesus, where their twin counterparts, Antipholus of Ephesus and Dromio of Ephesus, reside as respected citizens. This leads to comedic situations where the servants mistakenly serve the wrong masters, highlighting the differences in social status and treatment between them.

The mistaken identities of the twins create misunderstandings and clashes with other characters, particularly those of higher social status. Antipholus of Syracuse, a stranger in Ephesus, is mistaken for his twin brother and is treated with respect and deference by the citizens. This confuses him and raises questions about the role of social status in determining one's worth and treatment.

The play also touches upon conflicts involving authority and power. Adriana, the wife of Antipholus of Ephesus, becomes frustrated and outraged when her husband seems to be neglecting her. In an attempt to exert her authority as a wife, she seeks the help of an abbess to discipline him. This conflict highlights the power dynamics within a marital relationship and raises questions about the role of gender and societal expectations.

The mistaken identities of the twins also lead to conflicts involving the legal and judicial system in Ephesus. Antipholus of Ephesus is wrongfully accused of debts he knows nothing about, and later, both sets of twins are caught up in a courtroom scene, where the confusion reaches its peak. The play satirizes the legal system and highlights the potential for injustice when identities are mistaken and the law is not applied with clarity.

Overall, the class conflicts in *The Comedy of Errors* arise from mistaken identities and the disparities in social status, authority, and power. These conflicts serve as a source of humor and commentary on the social hierarchy and societal norms of Shakespeare's time. The movie also reflects the division in the Indian society in the name of caste and creed. For example, the people were hesitant to adopt the new-born babies who were left by an unknown lady near the temple only and only because they do not know their caste and creed. The dialogue between the carriage-man and Raj Tilak, a representative of Shakespeare's Egeon in the film goes as follows:

Huzoor mander ke darwaza per aik abhagan maan apne bachon ko chor gai ha, Log jama Hain ... lekin uthane k liay koi tayar nhe ha, sub zaatpaat ke chakkar mein hain (An unfortunate lady has left her twins at temple footsteps, a crowd has gathered there... but nobody is ready to accept them, because, they are worried about children's caste).

In the extract, the words "temple" and "children's caste" are local cultural offshoots which have nothing to do with the original text. 'Christian church' is replaced with a 'Hindu temple'. The words; "unfortunate lady" reflects the socio-economic conditions of Indian society. Gulzar has performed the process of historicizing the real text by de-historicizing it from its immediate setting, the seventeenth century-England.

Embodiment/Disembodiment of the play

The opening of the film is different from that of the play. There is a shift from Solinus, the duke's court, to the scenery of the Indian countryside. We watch the parents of the identical twins sitting in a carriage, drawn by horse and traveling to their home. This is enough to foreground the changes that would take place in Gulzar's filmed version of the play. While Shakespeare's play approximately consists of 29-pages, the screenplay had to be made appropriate to fit 141-minutes film-duration. In his selection, Gulzar has therefore excluded certain events such as the love-affair between Antipholus of Syracuse and Adriana has not been given much space in the film, as it is reduced to a very short and insignificant dialogue between Ashok and Deepti on the screen. To make it a worth-visual for the audience, the addition of the policeman's character is yet another indication of its being a transcultural adaptation.

The whereabouts of the lost father of the twin are not communicated in the film. Instead, at the end of the film we just have a glimpse of the mother, meeting her sons. In order to retain the adaptation very near to the original, some scenes and roles have also been appropriated. Like the slave is changed to an attendant because 'slavery' has been outlawed and to the audience of the 80s, it could have been a farfetched idea

Through Gulzar's adaptation the readers have an opportunity to view the story from a new but indigenous perspective of the play. Instead of merely focusing on the minor details that go into the making of the play, Gulzar includes some cultural specific shots in the film so that he can make it an aesthetic extension of the original.

The overall story –line is the same, however, the content of the movie differs a great deal from the original. The new context in which Gulzar adapted is not a static one. His audience can probably better relate it to the setting and can assign it entirely new meanings. On this subject, we can say that Gulzar's audiences are not Shakespeare's audience thus he has to cater and alter the story according to the needs of the cinema-going viewers in the late twentieth century

There is another wonderful scene in the film where Ashok and Bahadur decide to make their wives unconscious by feeding them with doped fries (bhong ke pakore) and this is a wonderful addition on the part of Gulzar who added a very cultural specific food item to make it a worth-watching funny movie. This can also be cited as an instance of embodiment to the original text.

Music

The music is the most effective source of emotions in films. The songs; roz, roz daali, daali kia likh jae in the melodious voice of Asha Bhosle, pictured on Deepti Navel, a representative

of Shakespeare's Adriana in the film and preetam aan milo, pictured on Bahadur (Devan Verma) who is playing double-role of Shakespeare's Dromio of Antipholus and Ephesus as case in point. The songs of the movie might be categorized as an instance of entertaining embodiment to the original work. It does the job of uniting the otherwise segregated Indian community and the audiences on emotional levels. R.S. Burman is a composer who is considered a legend in the music history of Indian cinema.

As a whole, the lyrics and songs supplement each other. The slow-paced music of the songs has successfully recreated an idyllic romance in the film, a remarkable addition and embodiment to the actual work for there is not even a single instance of song or music in the Shakespearean play of which it is adapted from. However, to experience it as an adaptation in a true sense, one should be acquainted with the original text and this allows the readers/viewers to oscillate their memory with what they experience side by side filling the gaps and receiving information from the adapted text.

Characterisation

To this end, the beauty of Gulzar's version is that it is equally understandable for both the audiences. One can make the meaning of mise en scene without even knowing the real text. Shakespeare's characters are transferred from their immediate setting to a new situation of the late twentieth century. Without even a single exception all the characters in the film are Indians, overwhelmingly belonging to Hindu religion and a very few to the Muslim community. In the frame of characterization both original play and adaptation work share more similarities and limited differences. Both frameworks are comedy as a primary genre. Then all characters have been created for bringing comic-confusion with their unique qualities. The characters are the essential ingredients in narrative form, whether film or novel. The usual method for categorization of the character as distinct from one another lies in paired terms such as dynamic/static. A static agent does not experience any change or up-gradation in the status during the course of narration.

On the other hand, a character can be classified as dynamic if he/she has the ability to transform himself/herself as compared to their appearance in the beginning of the story. Flat characters are mostly one-dimensional and are undeveloped throughout the story and most often they are associated with one personal quality such as good or bad. Whereas, the round character is life-like and has detailed traits which we often find in the people around us in our daily life

We see the wives of Ashok (Sanjeev Kumar) and Bahadur (Devan Verma), Sudha and Prema respectively as the flat character or rather static ones. Both have been depicted as pure eastern women who just stay at home and are not out there in the society to actively take part in their everyday affairs. Very few camera-shots have been given in the film. In this way, the characters have been racialised by de-racialising them from the English race and appropriating them to the new racial dimension.

Gulzar definitely seized the opportunity and with some necessary changes he masterfully created a new version of *The Comedy of Errors*. Ashoke and Bahadur are the round characters in the film. The double-role played by Devan Verma/Bahadur representing Dromio of Syracuse and Ephesus in the film is different from the one that is in the play. In terms of adaptation of this character we can say that Gulzar has transposed Shakespeare's character in an entirely new fashion. The director has not portrayed him merely as a slave but as an attendant and almost a friend to Ashok. He is shown as a singer and entertainer in the movie. On the other hand, Ashoke seems to be a feudal lord yet another indication of indigenization of Shakespeare's play. These changes make the film a transcultural adaptation.

Antipholus of Ephesus and Ashok 1 (twin who resides in the city) share ample similarities as he has been portrayed as a mature spirit, lovable partner and a protagonist with a short-tempered behavior who lives with his wife, sister-in-law and his servant. He is well respected in his city. The additional similarities they share is that he does not have any knowledge about the existence of his identical twin brother after the tragedy of shipwreck until he finally comes face-to-face with him. Also he has been showing as a husband, who is fed up with his wife's demanding nature.

Same as the master, the servant Dromio of Ephesus and Bahadur servant of Ashok (who resides in the city) share a lot of similarities. He is represented as a comical, innocent who's master always criticized him for his stupidity but he has obeyed servant to his master and his family, and who seems always been worried about his master's health throughout the film he remains confused and grappling with his anxiety. Additionally, just like a play, he is bumbling, young and married who loves his wife and also gives attention to her suggestion.

On the other hand, opposite of his twin brother Antipholus from Syracuse and Ashok 2 (who came to the city from the town) does share the supplementary differences rather than similarities. As adaptation work's character-Ashok 2 is bitter and highly suspicious all the time about what is happening in the surrounding and represented as a passionate reader of Hindi crime thriller fictions. His introduction scene illustrated in the train where he is reading a thriller novel named as-Agyaat Apradhi (unknown criminal), and questionable to everything and every person (because his head has been filled with gangs and so on) and addicted to his smoking obsession. Additionally, in the original play Antipholus from Syracuse entered a revival city to search for his twin brother. However, in the movie *Angoor* (grapes), Ashok 2 remains unaware of his twin brother's existence too until they see each other at the end of the movie. Nevertheless, one of the limited similarities they share is that both are characterized as a young bachelor who falls for his twin brother's sister-in-law.

Dromio from Syracuse and Bahadur 2 are next to be compared. Both are intelligent, present-minded, responsible, devoted to his master. Along with the familiar relationship with his master, he also calls Maa (mother) to his master's mother. As per original play, he is also young and bachelor. However, the only difference is that Bahadur 2 is suspected and fond of bhang. Next, the supporting characters are Adriana and Sudha, the wife of Antipholus of Ephesus and Ashok 1. In the film, Gulzar represented this character exactly as it has been depicted in the original play. She is a hideous and green-eyed woman, who has always been in doubt about her spouse. The prominent similarity they share is the nature of a demanding wife, who can create havoc anytime over her demand for jewelry, which is also a central part of the storyline.

Next, Egeon and Raj Tilak, the father of two Antipholus / Ashok. In Shakespeare's play, this character is a merchant of Syracuse, who enters the revival city in search of the missing half of his family (son and wife) and has been sentenced to death as the play begins. However, at the beginning of the film, Raj Tilak is declared dead in an accident. Other supporting characters are Luciana and Tanu. Both are similar in almost every manner. She is the bachelor sister of Adriana/Sudha, modern, sensible, acute and an object of the affection for Antipholus of Syracuse/Ashok 2. The other minor character is a courtesan/Alka who is a friend of Antipholus of Ephesus/ Ashok 1. At the same time, this character remains unexplained, other than that being a source of jealousy for Adriana/ Sudha.

In the movie, we come to know the religious affiliation of the character from their names like the Goldsmith's worker's name is Mansoor usually understood as a Muslim name. Bahadur is a common name in both the cultures Hindu and Muslims. Equally significant are the facial expressions and dressing-code of the characters. For instance, Gneshilal, a diamond merchant to whom Chedilal, a goldsmith owes debt, is playing the role of the Second Merchant of Shakespeare's play. He wears the cap that might resemble the style of Nehru; the

first prime minister of India. The way he demands money is worth-watching. Through this character, although a minor one, Gulzar has given a very funny touch to his filmic version of the play.

***Angoor* as an Adaptation**

Adaptation not only transforms a previous work into a new context but it also transplants the local particularities to something new in a hybridized style. In such a process, the change of language may involve just like the change of place and time-period because adaptation is not done in a vacuum rather, the adapted work is invariably re-framed and re-shaped in a context, society, culture, time and place. For example, we do not see any reference to Christianity, the Duke's court, Egeon's death-sentence, or English language as a medium of communication although these are the making-ingredients of the play.

Contrarily, in the movie, the source of communication is Hindi language instead of English language as is the case in the play. One does not come across in the film with any character's name in English language. Rather, all names referring to Hindu or Muslim origin are derived from Hindi or Urdu language. The context is India not England, the technological advancement is also shown in the film like in the field of automobiles, cars, rickshaws and buses have been displayed as the modern means of transportation unlike the old ones used in the seventeenth century-England. The temples or mosques instead of churches have been manifested to indigenize the adaptation the dressing-code for Ashok, the protagonist and Bahadur, his attendant is not the same and this indicates the rich divide of Indian society into 'haves' and 'have-nots'. So, it could be noted that the facial expressions along with dress-codes and gestures that take place in any film may transfer cultural information.

The film is not just a matter of transcribing the play but it is a naturalized alteration in a true sense. It is abundant with local cultural traits and details. While the play is in English and the movie is in Hindi language. Gulzar's dialogues are based on code switching between Hindi and English languages. This also conveys the idea of India as being a multicultural and multilingual society. Also, all the characters have been drawn mostly from the working class background and Gulzar exploits such characters to show the Indian society of the 80s as divided into rich and poor.

Francesco Casetti's concepts of adaptation and mis-adaptation can certainly be applied to Bollywood films like *Angoor* (1978). It is a classic Hindi comedy film directed by Gulzar, which itself is an adaptation of William Shakespeare's play *The Comedy of Errors*.

In the case of *Angoor* it can be considered an adaptation because it takes the basic premise and plot structure from Shakespeare's play and reinterprets it within the cultural and social context of Bollywood. The film revolves around two pairs of identical twins who are separated at birth and reunite many years later, leading to hilarious misunderstandings and mistaken identities. The core elements of mistaken identity and comedic situations are retained in the adaptation, albeit with changes to suit the Bollywood format.

However, when considering misadaptation, it's essential to analyze how faithfully the adaptation captures the essence of the source material. While *Angoor* successfully adapts the basic premise of *The Comedy of Errors*, it also incorporates elements of Indian humor, language, and cultural references. Some purists or Shakespeare enthusiasts might argue that certain nuances or complexities of the original play might have been lost or simplified in the process of adapting it into a comedy film. It's important to note that the concept of misadaptation is subjective and open to interpretation. Some viewers might appreciate the way *Angoor* transforms Shakespeare's play into a light-hearted Bollywood comedy, while others might consider it a misadaptation for not fully capturing the depth or complexity of the

source material. These discussions and debates around the success or failure of adaptations are central to Casetti's theories on adaptation and misadaptation.

As an adaptation, *Angoor* is generally regarded as a successful and well-received film. Directed by Gulzar, the film stays true to the core elements of Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors* while infusing it with the vibrant energy and humour of Bollywood. *Angoor* maintains the basic premise and plot of Shakespeare's play, which revolves around mistaken identities and comedic misunderstandings. The film retains the central concept of twin brothers separated at birth and the confusion that ensues when they cross paths as adults.

While *Angoor* adapts the story to an Indian context, it effectively translates the play's themes and humor into a Bollywood setting. The film incorporates Indian cultural elements, such as music, dance, and language, to create a distinct flavor that resonates with the audience. The cast of *Angoor* delivers lively and memorable performances, bringing the characters to life and capturing the essence of the original play. The comedic timing and chemistry between the actors contribute to the film's success as an adaptation.

Angoor has gained a significant following and is considered a classic comedy in Indian cinema. It has been praised for its witty dialogue, humorous situations, and the skillful blending of Shakespearean comedy with Bollywood entertainment. Overall, *Angoor* is widely regarded as a successful adaptation that successfully combines the spirit of Shakespearean comedy with the vibrant and colorful world of Bollywood. Its enduring popularity and positive reception testify to its effectiveness as an adaptation of *The Comedy of Errors*.

Sometimes *Angoor* can also be considered as a misadaptation, it's important to note that opinions on film adaptations can vary, and different perspectives can shape how a film is perceived. Here are some possible reasons why someone might consider *Angoor* a misadaptation. Some viewers might argue that *Angoor* deviates too much from the original intent of Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors*. They may feel that the cultural translation and Bollywood elements overshadow the core themes and essence of the play, leading to a loss of the original work's intended impact.

Shakespeare's plays are known for their poetic language and wordplay. If viewers feel that *Angoor* fails to capture the linguistic intricacies and depth of Shakespeare's writing, they may perceive it as a misadaptation that doesn't do justice to the original text. Adapting a story from one cultural context to another can be challenging. If viewers believe that *Angoor* fails to strike a balance between the Indian and Shakespearean elements, they may see it as a misadaptation that struggles to integrate the two cultural contexts effectively. Despite the best intentions, some cultural nuances may be lost in translation. Certain jokes, references, or social contexts that were central to the original film's humor might not resonate in the new Italian adaptation. This could result in a dilution of the intended comedic impact or the loss of some deeper cultural meanings.

Adapting characters from one culture to another can be challenging. Misunderstanding the cultural context or misinterpreting character traits can lead to characters losing their authenticity or becoming caricatures. It's important to strike a balance between staying true to the original characters while making them relatable in the new cultural context. A misadaptation can also be attributed to issues with the film's overall cohesion or execution. If viewers feel that *Angoor* lacks a coherent narrative structure, suffers from pacing problems, or fails to deliver on the comedic aspects, they may consider it a misadaptation due to these shortcomings. It's important to remember that the perception of a misadaptation is subjective, and different individuals may have varying opinions on the matter. The success of an adaptation ultimately depends on how well it resonates with its intended audience and how effectively it captures the essence of the source material while still allowing for creative reinterpretation.

In summary, Francesco's adaptations and misadaptations of *Angoor* can be justified as attempts to make the film relatable and enjoyable for an Indian audience. However, the success of the adaptation depends on how well the cultural nuances, humor, and characters are preserved or reinvented to maintain the essence of the original story while catering to the new cultural context. To conclude, we can say that Gulzar has utilized many cultural and literary references as a means of making a local version of the foreign story. By certain omissions and additions, the adaptation made a wonderful contribution to Indian cinema. By historicizing, socializing, and embodying the original text, Gulzar has produced a good piece of comic-film and his adaptation might be viewed as repurposing the old story in which he salvages the character and makes them more appropriate for the contemporary audiences. By retying the classical story to contemporary historical, religious and cultural references he has successfully created an indigenized and transcultural adaptation of the play. By placing Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors* in a larger context, the adapter has rendered an entirely new perspective and culture in the film.

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Uncaging the Self: Navigating Emancipation in Shashi Despande's *That Long Silence*

Subhalaxmi Mohanty

Abstract

Within the ever-burning fires of feminist activism, the paper explores the crucible of patriarchy's shadow. Here, alienation gnaws at the soul, twisting identities and obscuring self-discovery. Yet, amidst the smouldering embers, a defiant spark ignites. Through collective action and unwavering voices, Jaya the central protagonist of the novel forges a path of liberation, reclaiming her authentic self by shattering the rigid walls of oppression. The paper focuses on Jaya's inconsistent journey that witnesses a labyrinthine dance between introspection and outward defiance. It is through the raw vulnerability of self-discovery that the tools for dismantling patriarchy are forged – tools honed on the anvil of shared experiences and empowered by the collective roar of liberation. This paper delves into the heart of this transformative odyssey, where vulnerability and strength intertwine, paving the way for a future where gendered cages crumble and authentic identities soar free.

Key Words: Feminist Activism, Patriarchy, Alienation, Self-Discovery, Liberation

Feminist movements work to dismantle various forms of oppression faced by women, including sexism, patriarchy, and discrimination based on race, class, sexual orientation, and other factors. Feminist activism has led to significant progress in areas like women's suffrage, reproductive rights, workplace equality, and access to education. Feminist thought has enriched various fields of study and contributed to a broader understanding of social justice and human rights. Throughout history, women have faced various forms of oppression within patriarchal societies. This systematic subjugation has manifested in numerous ways, from restricted access to education and political participation to discriminatory social norms and economic inequalities. Several prominent philosophers have perpetuated certain negative views of women. For instance, Aristotle considered women to be deficient due to a "lack of qualities", St. Thomas Aquinas referred to women as "imperfect men", and Rousseau, Hegel, Nietzsche, and Sartre held views that positioned women as morally inferior to men. These oppressive ideologies fuelled the rise of feminism, a collective movement advocating for women's rights, interests, and equality in male-dominated societies. This movement seeks to dismantle patriarchal structures and establish political, economic, and social justice for all genders.

In her 1929 book *A Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf critiques the societal structures and limitations imposed by patriarchy, advocating for greater autonomy and creative expression for women. Woolf undeniably played a crucial role in shaping feminist thought and discourse. Woolf's significance lies in her profound and nuanced exploration of women's experiences and the societal structures that constrained them. Woolf's genius lay in her ability to capture the complexities of women's inner lives and the subtle ways in which patriarchy permeated everyday life. Her work continues to inspire and challenge readers, encouraging them to critically examine gender roles and advocate for a more just society. Likewise, Simone de Beauvoir's seminal work, *The Second Sex* (1949), laid the theoretical groundwork for feminist criticism. She highlighted the fundamental asymmetry between the concepts of "masculine" and "feminine," where men are positioned as the "One" and women as the marginalized "Other." Notably, Beauvoir famously stated, "One is not born, but rather

becomes, a woman." This powerful idea challenges the biological essentialism that often underpins women's oppression.

Rooted in the complex tapestry of India's past, where traditions and societal norms have shaped gender dynamics, the feminist movement has evolved as a response to the changing landscape of the nation. While patriarchy looms large as a primary oppressor, Indian women often find themselves locked in another, often overlooked, battle: competing with other female members within the family itself for recognition and identity. Indian feminism, with its rich history and ever-evolving landscape, offers a compelling lens through which to understand the multifaceted challenges and triumphs of women in this diverse nation. From the intricate power dynamics of joint families to the search for identity in nuclear settings, the voices of Indian women novelists in English provide invaluable insights into the ongoing quest for equality, autonomy, and self-definition.

Indian women writers have long been at the forefront of challenging societal norms and advocating for female empowerment. They are acutely aware of the marginalized position of women in Indian society, where patriarchal structures often concentrate decision-making power in the hands of men. Among these literary voices, Shashi Deshpande stands out as a prominent figure in Indian Writing in English. Deshpande's writing is deeply rooted in the middle-class Indian milieu. Her novels are not fantastical escapes, but rather clear-eyed reflections of the everyday realities faced by women in this specific social context. She centres her narratives on the marriages of her female protagonists, using the family as a microcosm of broader societal forces that shape women's lives. Through her nuanced portrayals, Deshpande delves into the struggles and frustrations experienced by Indian women. Her characters navigate a complex web of expectations, traditions, and limitations imposed by the patriarchal system. They grapple with issues like: finding their own identity, breaking free from societal constraints, to overcome alienation, Search for Self and other. Deshpande's literary contributions offer valuable insights into the nuanced and complex world of Indian women. By giving voice to their struggles, frustrations, and aspirations, she sheds light on the ongoing quest for equality and self-definition within Indian society. Her novels serve as a testament to the power of literature to raise awareness, challenge the status quo, and inspire change.

In *That Long Silence*, Shashi Deshpande masterfully paints two contrasting portraits of Indian women. We encounter both the daily struggles of those confined to domestic labour in the lower strata of society and the seemingly comfortable lives of educated middle-class women like Jaya, the novel's protagonist. Despite their vastly different backgrounds, a powerful unspoken belief unites them: for both groups, a woman's ultimate success hinges on marital bliss. Regardless of social standing, women in this novel prioritize marriage and its preservation, with failure viewed as a crushing personal defeat. Jaya, the protagonist, takes centre stage. There is a delicate shift in her mood, flitting between fleeting joy and crushing despair, a deeper, pervasive silence underscores her anguish. Despite being a housewife and failed writer she grapples with an identity crisis so profound that it threatens to engulf her entirely. The constant whisper of "who am I?" echoes within her, leading to a constant, desperate search for a self that seems forever just out of reach. She says, "Self-revelation is a cruel process. The real picture, the real "you" never emerges. Looking for it is as bewildering as trying to know how you really look. Ten different mirrors show you ten different faces" (Deshpande-1).

Deshpande's brilliance lies in exposing the insidious limitations placed upon women, regardless of their background. Their lives are defined by societal expectations, and happiness is inextricably linked to marital success. Yet, through Jaya's silent struggle, the author also offers a glimmer of hope. Her introspective journey, though fraught with pain and uncertainty, suggests the possibility of self-discovery and liberation. Ultimately, *That Long*

Silence compels to question the narratives that bind women, to listen to the silences beneath the surface and imagine new possibilities for female freedom and fulfilment. Jaya, embodies a deeply relatable feminine dilemma. Torn between societal expectations and personal aspirations, she oscillates between determination and despair. Despite building a seemingly conventional life – marriage to Mohan, motherhood to two – a profound loneliness gnaws at her. She experiences a disconnect she experiences with Mohan, and is unable to bridge the chasm between their emotional landscapes. It intensifies her internal conflict.

Trapped in a web of conflicting desires, Jaya's mind oscillates like a pendulum caught in a storm. Her determination to shatter the "Long Silence" clashes against the responsibilities of wife and mother. The weight of unspoken longings isolates her, and Mohan's obliviousness to her inner tempest becomes a chasm in their marriage. Shashi Deshpande, in this portrayal, holds a mirror not just to Jaya, but to countless Indian women. Their narratives dance around the central word – adjustment. Lives and careers contort and bend to fit the mould of societal expectations, a reality she lays bare. Deshpande's genius, however, lies in her nuanced touch. While highlighting the patriarchal shackles that bind Indian women, she avoids painting men as mere monsters. Their characters, distinct and complex, reveal the intricate tapestry of gender dynamics. Yes, her protagonists harbour a rebellious spirit, a yearning for agency and a voice. Yet, like Jaya, they grapple with the pull of their cultural roots. Rejection isn't the answer. Their struggle is to carve an identity within the very fabric of family and tradition. This is where Deshpande's female characters set themselves apart. Unlike their male counterparts, their journey is inward, a silent war between societal expectations and their own burgeoning selves.

Deshpande's portrayal of female silence in her novels delves beyond a simplistic blame game, shifting the lens from social structures to the intricacies of individual relationships. Instead of painting men as monolithic oppressors, she reveals the miscommunication and emotional disconnect that shrouds many couples. This nuanced approach acknowledges the evolving male psyche in the Indian context, recognizing the contrasting realities of the 1950-70s and post-1980s. Prior to 1970, men enjoyed relative career stability, often inheriting family businesses. Globalization was a distant echo, and feminist theory barely resonated within middle-class households. While women harboured discontent about their subordinate position, societal pressure muted their voices. They found solace in the "Sati-Savitri" ideal, dedicating themselves to domesticity and child-rearing. Post-1980, a seismic shift occurred. Social awareness regarding individual identity and rights permeated every corner of society. Women, exposed to feminist ideas, began questioning their own societal limitations. Yet, the burden of conformity remained heavier on their shoulders, pushing Jaya and others to retreat into silence despite their yearning for rebellion.

Deshpande paints a vivid picture of this internal conflict within middle-class Marathi Brahmin families. Men, like Mohan, grappled with their own challenges. Earning an education and carving an independent path was no easy feat, often relying on the goodwill of wealthier kin. Mohan embodies this struggle, trapped in a cycle of office work, family expectations, and material desires. His ambition clashes with Jaya's creative spirit and further exacerbating the communication gap. While Mohan seeks financial stability and social prestige, Jaya yearns for self-expression. His attempts to control her writing expose his fear of losing the comfortable illusion of their life together. Ironically, when his own moral failings surface, he turns to Jaya's pen for financial salvation. Yet, Jaya has seen through the "illusion of happiness" and withdrawn into an emotional distance.

Deshpande's genius lies in portraying the complexities of gender dynamics without resorting to simplistic binaries. Through Jaya and Mohan, she reveals the delicate dance between individual aspirations, societal expectations, and the fragile threads of communication that bind or break relationships. In the end, understanding the silence of her

female characters requires an empathetic lens, one that acknowledges not just the societal pressures but also the intricate tapestry of unspoken desires and unfulfilled dreams within each individual. Mohan's desire for an "educated, fluent-English wife" had initially fixated on Jaya, not for her beauty, but for her perceived sophistication. It was a hollow trophy he desired, not a living, breathing partner. Yet, after claiming this prize, he systematically clamped down on any expression of self that threatened his fragile sense of control. This suffocating reality is what fuels Jaya's anger, a righteous resentment against her stolen voice and suppressed individuality. Every facet of her being, once vibrant, dimmed under his domineering shadow. He expects unwavering support, a shoulder to cry on, from the very woman he has systematically silenced. But Jaya, her spirit honed by silent resistance, refuses to play the compliant wife. Her indifference cuts him deeper than any outburst could, a testament to the emotional distance nurtured by his years of neglect.

His inability to see her strength, her silent resilience, exposes the true chasm between them. Jaya's unspoken questions hang heavy in the air. The blind loyalty he demands, the details of his transgressions, the suffocating expectations – she never sought clarification, merely endured. Now, amidst the ruins of their marriage, she is finally forced to confront the truth, not just of Mohan, but of her own silenced potential. It is in this crucible of pain and disillusionment that the seeds of Jaya's true voice may finally begin to sprout. Mohan's relationship with Jaya and his own sense of self oscillate between confusion and complexity. His outbursts, fuelled by a potent mix of frustration and insecurity, wreak havoc on their lives. In crushing both the woman and the writer within Jaya, he betrays not only his wife but also the image of the protective husband expected of a 1980s patriarch. Lurking beneath his anger lies a deep-seated fear: that Jaya, with her intelligence and potential, might eclipse him. Unlike the idealized love Jaya yearns for, Mohan's affection is conditional, contingent on her remaining subdued and non-threatening. This explains Shashi Deshpande's poignant use of the "pair of bullocks" metaphor – two yoked creatures, pulling together yet forever constrained by the harness.

Mohan's materialistic pursuit of wealth, his belief that money can buy happiness, further highlights his shallow understanding of human connection. It almost seems as if the author is critiquing his inability to grasp the complexities of both the male psyche and the evolving social landscape. However, the narrative takes a surprising turn. Mohan's telegram promising a swift return and Rahul's safe return seem to suggest a resolution to the chaos. Yet, amidst the apparent calm, Mohan embarks on a journey of introspection. He confronts his own flaws, acknowledging the role he played in their turmoil. This self-realization manifests in a tangible shift: his willingness to adapt to the Dadar flat, once despised for its lack of comfort and status.

This change, however, remains tentative. The true test lies in whether Mohan can sustain this newfound awareness and translate it into genuine respect and support for Jaya's individuality. Jaya, throughout the ordeal, emerges as a figure of quiet strength. Although wounded by Mohan's actions, she refuses to be diminished. Her journey transcends the resolution of their immediate conflict; it holds the promise of reclaiming her voice and agency, perhaps even inspiring Mohan to shed the shackles of his own limitations. This change is a defining change and it is described by Jaya: "And for that moment he had his old air of authority and confidence. Then the old self vanished, leaving behind a sad, bewildered man" (Deshpande-8).

This is a well-written analysis of Jaya's relationship with Mr. Kamat in "That Long Silence," capturing its significance and complexity. Mr. Kamat plays in freeing Jaya, delve deeper into her internal struggle between societal expectations and the awakening she experiences through him. It highlights Jaya's ingrained inhibitions regarding Mohan's disapproval collide with the desire for self-expression nurtured by Mr. Kamat. But Jaya

decides to leave Mr. Kamat at his death. Explore potential interpretations: honouring her marriage, recognizing the temporary nature of their connection, and choosing her own path after self-discovery. This choice adds depth to Jaya's character, showcasing her agency and self-awareness beyond just pursuing a relationship outside marriage.

Jaya's world in *That Long Silence* crackles with the tension between society's expectations and her yearning for self-expression. While her marriage to Mohan chokes her creative spirit, Mr. Kamat, her unconventional neighbour, offers a breath of fresh air. He effortlessly dismantles gender stereotypes, cooking with nonchalant ease, a sight that initially throws Jaya, steeped in ingrained inhibitions. Yet, it's his perception of her as an equal that truly liberates her. Unlike Mohan's stifling control, Mr. Kamat nurtures her dormant passions, encouraging her to embrace her lost writer self. In his presence, she sheds societal shackles, finding comfort and guidance in his fatherly mentorship. He urges her to confront her own flaws and be true to the essence buried beneath years of conformity. Their connection becomes a catalyst for self-discovery, a space where Jaya can cast off expectations and reclaim her authentic identity.

However, this journey isn't linear. Her decision to leave Mr. Kamat during his final moments carries the weight of complex emotions. It could be seen as an act of loyalty to her marriage, recognition of the temporary nature of their connection, or perhaps a testament to her newfound strength to forge her own path. This departure, both poignant and powerful, underscores Jaya's agency and marks a turning point in her evolution beyond just the confines of an extramarital relationship.

Jaya's yearning for emotional intimacy, long starved in her marriage to Mohan, found a poignant echo in Mr. Kamat. Mohan's indifference, a constant hum in their relationship, was deafening against the warmth and understanding offered by their neighbor. When grief over her father's death ripped through Jaya, Kamat's companionship became a fragile raft in a storm of sorrow. Their bond resonated far beyond simple friendship. While physical boundaries remained, Jaya responded to Kamat's touch, his kisses, and his embraces. He, with a wisdom seasoned by life's lessons, encouraged her to shed her silence, to voice her needs without fear. Yet, within this blossoming intimacy, lurked a deeper struggle. Jaya's writing remained stalled, a mirror reflecting her difficulty in claiming her own identity. She leaned on Kamat's emotional support, yet the echo of Mohan's disapproval still whispered in her ears.

Kamat, in guiding her towards emotional and physical self-awareness, also held a mirror to her tendency to blame others for her failures. He urged her to confront her own faults, to reclaim responsibility for her choices. This stark contrast in male characters – Mohan's apathy versus Kamat's gentle, challenging wisdom – showcases Shashi Deshpande's nuanced portrayal of masculinity. Yet, societal expectations and lingering fears proved stronger than their cherished connection. When it came time to stand beside Kamat on his final journey, Jaya faltered. Guilt, a heavy cloak, settled upon her as she left him to face death alone. Deshpande, in wielding this contrasting choice, illuminates the internal battles of educated women like Jaya. Modern in outlook, yet chained by the whispers of tradition, they navigate a complex terrain.

The aftermath of scandal and upheaval reveals a changed Jaya. She acknowledges transformation is not an overnight magic trick, but expresses a quiet hope for the future. Deshpande's feminist lens in this narrative exposes the fascinating friction between modern women steeped in tradition and traditionalists caught in the web of their own customs. Jaya and Mohan stand on opposite ends of this spectrum, not wholly victims, but individuals wrestling with their own perceptions and self-imposed limitations.

Importantly, Deshpande eschews easy resolutions. Fractured relationships remain, their wounds acknowledged but not healed. Yet, beneath the pain, glimmers of hope and the

potential for change flicker. In this open-ended conclusion lies the true power of the narrative, a testament to the ongoing, messy, and ultimately hopeful journey of self-discovery for women like Jaya. Shashi Deshpande's "That Long Silence" transcends mere critique of marital discord. While the dysfunction within Jaya and Mohan's relationship is undeniable, the novel delves deeper, exploring the individual choices and internal conflicts that contribute to its complexities. Instead of simply blaming external factors or societal structures, Deshpande places the spotlight on the characters' own vulnerabilities and growth within the very institution of marriage. Jaya's journey is one of introspective self-discovery. She refuses to fall into the trap of externalizing blame, instead acknowledging her own flaws and limitations: "With whom shall I be angry? With myself, of course." (Deshpande 52) This introspection reflects a mature understanding that transformation begins within, not by pointing fingers. It's not about establishing superiority but about understanding the dynamic interplay between self and context, a universal human struggle to find our place within relationships, societies, and personal narratives.

Deshpande's portrayal of Jaya is nuanced. While Jaya challenges traditional feminine roles, she doesn't reject marriage altogether. Her reconciliation with Mohan is not surrender, but a conscious choice made after a journey of self-awareness. Importantly, this return isn't painted as submission but as a navigation of complexities. It acknowledges the importance of understanding and working within existing structures, not simply tearing them down in pursuit of an idealized, unrestrained freedom. Jaya's personal history plays a crucial role in shaping this path. Her privileged upbringing, particularly the unwavering support of her father, instils in her a sense of inner strength and resilience. Naming her "Jaya," meaning victory, is a symbolic gesture, reminding her of her inherent potential. Through this, Deshpande subtly critiques the absolutist tendencies of some feminist narratives, suggesting that finding balance and navigating within societal frameworks can also be a path to fulfilment.

Ultimately, *That Long Silence* offers no easy answers. The ending remains open-ended, reflecting the ongoing process of self-discovery and the challenges of building meaningful relationships. It's a testament to Deshpande's nuanced approach to human relationships, reminding us that growth and acceptance, even within imperfect structures, can pave the way for a more authentic and fulfilling life. In PD Nimsarkar's words, "Deshpande is concerned with people, the women and their relationship with others, like husbands, parents, children, and sons and daughters. She has faithfully tried to construct womanhood in the contemporary context, society and the world". (Nimsarkar 114). Deshpande whispers through Jaya's voice, is the flickering candle in the face of life's storms. Jaya recognizes it as the "very thing that makes life bearable," a necessity for confronting the darkness within and without. She champions the transformative power of holding onto hope, a testament to its transformative power.

Beyond Jaya, a colourful mosaic of masculinities takes form. Mohan, Rahul, Mr. Kamat, Jaya's father, and Mohan's father – each brushstroke adds depth and texture to Deshpande's canvas. She refuses to dehumanize her male characters, instead offering a realistic, multifaceted portrayal of the Indian middle-class family, where relationships and family ties hold sway over unfettered individualism. Deshpande delves further, exposing the hollowness lurking beneath the sheen of modern Indian life. Women's silence, she unveils, is not solely external but born from within. The relentless pursuit of material aspirations in this class shapes the inner landscapes of both men and women, contributing to a sense of emptiness.

Ultimately, *That Long Silence* becomes a nuanced portrait of Indian middle-class life, a tapestry woven with threads of societal pressures, individual conflicts, and the quiet strength of family bonds. Deshpande champions neither unrestrained freedom nor blind

loyalty, but the messy, hopeful journey of finding meaning and self-worth within the intricate dance of relationships and responsibility. Shashi Deshpande's "That Long Silence" transcends simplistic narratives of female emancipation. While acknowledging the potential for active participation in a consumer society to provide women with a measure of agency, she avoids presenting it as a singular path to freedom. Her gaze extends beyond, delving into the complex realities of Indian life where the struggles for self-identity are not solely female burdens.

Deshpande deftly dismantles the myth of unwavering patriarchal oppression. Men, like women, grapple with societal expectations and the limitations they impose on their lives. She portrays them not as monolithic oppressors but as individuals wrestling with their own vulnerabilities and anxieties within the same cultural constraints. This shared struggle underscores the universality of the human quest for identity, defying easy categorization by gender. However, this universality does not erase the enduring reality of gender inequality. The contrasting experiences of men and women remain evident in Deshpande's narrative. The dichotomy between nature and culture highlights this difference. Women, associated with the natural world, often face greater restrictions on their freedom than men, who occupy the culturally constructed space of public life. This discrepancy, though not due to inherent individual characteristics, persists due to deeply ingrained societal taboos. Gender discrimination, in its various forms, continues to be a stark reality within this framework.

By acknowledging the complex interplay of individual agency and societal constraints, Deshpande steers clear of simplistic binaries. She rejects the convenient labels of oppressor and oppressed, instead painting a nuanced portrait of lives shaped by both shared and differing struggles within the web of social norms. The enduring presence of gender discrimination emerges not solely from individual actions but from a deeply rooted system of taboos and expectations. Her narrative, therefore, serves as a powerful reminder that the path to true liberation necessitates both recognition of shared human concerns and an unflinching confrontation with the specific challenges faced by different groups within society.

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The Trauma of Tantalized Tactile Tears in and Through: The Poetry of Tara Patel

C Viji

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to focus on how poetry can be used as a device to expurgate the societal ordeal of a woman's yearning for her passions to be fulfilled. Poetry is a form of literature which is based on the association of words and rhythm. Poetry as a genre is not new to Indians. Indian poets imitated their masters especially the romantic and the metaphysical poets during colonial period 1825-1900. After colonialism the next stage of poetry can be termed as the Nationalism 1900-1950 where Indian poets took to revolutionary writings. During Modernism, 1950-1980 the whole of Indian writing scenario changed, as poets started to reveal their inner feelings which the readers could recognize as their own. Post Modernism 1980-present, saw a radical shift where the whole lot of Indian poets took up to portray the plight of soulless people, the trauma of the poor, the conflicting mind of Indian women and their desires ending up in tears. The new Indian poets evolved as a distinct voice of India, particularly the Indian women poets. They used verse to propagate the sense of togetherness to reconnect man and woman in the most organic unadulterated ways. One such poet, who appeared on the poetic arena and shot to fame with just one volume of poetic collection "Single Woman" to her credit, was Tara Patel. She adhered to her own principle of writing by selecting her own dictum emphasizing that the conflict between man and woman and the elders in society is due to lack of communication, misunderstanding and their inability to see life from a young person's point of view.

Key words: Trauma, Expurgate, Tantalized, Tactile

Introduction

Tara Patel, born in 1949, Gujarat spent her formative years in Malaysia, returned to Bombay took interest in writing and worked as columnist and journalist, after coming in contact with Nissim Ezekiel, inspired by him, Patel, proved herself as an accomplished writer with her only poetry collection *Single Woman*, which was published in the year 1992 after which she ceased to write.

The Outspoken Crusader

Single Woman was published when India was almost at the third phase of Feminism. When most of the Indian women writers focused on the aspects of feminism with varied authoritative plans and wrote about the skirmishes and tunings essentially involved in the male dominated society, it was Tara Patel who did not wish to be shadowed by all these gimmicks used an assertive voice to discuss the issues close to a woman's heart. In a unique language she propagated and made woman realize the need for a natural freedom. Her ability to speak is strong as she reveals her feelings of unfulfilled passion with a male companion, through her persona, in the poems like *Woman, In Bombay, In a Working Women's Hostel, Of Now and Then* and *Request*, however this cannot be termed as being over submissive. In an artistic pursuit she was ready to speak on issues which were considered as taboos. She wanted everyone into the fold take a lead and spread the word of righting the old wrongs.

While other Indian women poets' works were of feminist concern like gender issues, sexual autonomy and liberation Tara Patel's was a sort of reparations about self, it was not a

misandrist; it was a sense of cry and desolation. The crying here denotes cry as existential crisis. Her persona's cry for love and relationship with a man is seen in her sexual frustrations as she is trapped in a social-cultural milieu and as a woman suffers inwardly. She becomes a critic of the dominance of man here. This is portrayed in the poem *In a Working Women's Hostel*.

I kick aside the warm weather of my blanket
the touch of my own thighs, breasts,
is an embarrassment.
In the wintercold I fold myself up in supplication
To hear myself more clearly

The voice of her persona, is full of anguish and pain, and the overflowing aggression is due to the deprivation of indispensable love, she now wants to leave no table unturned, time has come for women to have a freedom of choice. Why should women be subjected to all sorts of trials and tribulations in the man-made world, she wants to revive her life. Life of abandonment and disappointments that she faces in the metro like Bombay is purely that of a socially locked Indian womanhood.

To her men is the strength to tide over all snags. The metros usually give everyone a sense of hostile feels due to lack of communication between one another. The persona in the poem *In a Working Women's Hostel* may have taken a bold step to live an independent life in the metro, but the life in the metro like Bombay sends her a loud and clear message that the life which she opted for is a dangerous one, the lines

.....Twelve storeys above the city
The terrace is my great outdoors.
.....I walk to and fro. A nun without a vocation!
proves the point.

But Tara Patel makes her persona not to succumb to the traditional expectations, she allows her heart to heal by patching up her torn self, the love in her heart for her man is not traumatized, the society has brainwashed her by infusing male norms and attitudes, why should her persona be the one who champions the cause of women's minimal standards for female desires. Tara Patel allows her personae to rebuild her love, why should she eat alone, why cannot she experience a joy of having a meal with whom she loves.

Have lunch with me one of these days.
I miss you most when I'm eating alone. ["*Request*"]

As one ages, the reality is, a lonely woman desires to be bestowed with love. The anguish of a lonely lady takes a different manifestation. Without any false pretensions and regardless of any social norms she frankly says that she has not led a complete life.

A woman's life is a reaction
to the crack of a whip.
She learns to dodge it as it whistles
around her ["*Woman*"]

Unable to compromise between female aspirations and social outlooks, she may not be chaste as her mother, but the poet makes her reader understand that she is not an imperfect woman.

She indeed confesses in large amount about her own desires; in her dejected and unhappy lonely existence she expects for a romantically ideal man to satisfy her burning desires of love.

His invitation to go swimming naked
Was turned down
.....I needed.
I should have gone to share the sun's wine with him.
In such a man's arms it must be
Permanently afternoon [*"Calangute Beach, Goa"*]

She feels that she is denied of an idyllic relationship and demands to taste the sense of warmth and tenderness of a loving man. Life is to be lived not to be wasted without a companion.

'A woman can feed herself.
Love begins
With a man.'
And so on and so on. [*'In a Working Women's Hostel'*]

She is honest and does not mince words when she discloses her carnal desires. The bond between a man and woman though broken should be revived. Her attitude is not of any rebellion. She feels one individual cannot dominate another; it is necessary to see through the eyes of others.

I'm no longer obsessed with a blind emotion
Which promises everything and nothing. [*'Request'*]

To be more precise she wants a man to explore her body, to satisfy her desires and to be mutually satisfied. She does not want to perish, she never wished to abandon the romantic quest for true love or did she never willed to keep her passions dormant. The kiss of a man transforms her, she feels that her ailing body needs to experience the sensual pleasures. The grey zone of love is separation, the fear of being considered as a disposable commodity is handled deftly by the poet. Her struggle to find fulfillment in her sensual pleasures is because she is confined to a conformist society. Though she yearns for someone who could lift her mood, she dares to go against nature even when the world is becoming increasingly materialistic.

anyone could have touched baby-smooth skin
with kisses [*'Woman'*]

However, when subjected to trials and tribulations she stands to face the disappointments and dejections. She starts to celebrate the female desires without any sense of shame or guilt. *You have to be young forever to be in love/like that.* When speaking about the body she says it is the woman's body that has the capacity for experiencing a wide range of emotions.

The Taciturn Of Subdued Woman

So far Tara Patel who appeared to be a radical voice by allowing the readers to dig deep into our age-old customs and traditions abruptly takes a turn. The tenacity of her unconventional tone suddenly cracks. Tara Patel who showed the quality of pellucidity, free from obscurity,

clear and transparent thoughts become reticent. Her expectations of love from a man becomes an act of supplication, thanksgiving and praise. She requests for a charming meditations, she wants to open her heart and show the depth of love. She loves to recover from the painful past, she does not want to leave it as though everything is over.

You cannot forget me so completely.
Remember me a little and meet me sometimes.[*'Request'*]

In order to increase her spirits and show him her power of love-breathe she starts requesting for his attention in a courteous way. The protagonist here, requests the men of the world not to abandon her, and understand that she is conscious of her own rights. As ageing is in the process, life cannot be led by just mutual allegations, ageing is subjected to strategic planning of togetherness and companionship. She yearns for the love to be continued. The poet who had such an audacity to say bold things now starts to unpack the treasure of love and highlight the unchanging nature of a woman's iniquities. She is bored of being neglected and rejected; love of a man will negate the past.

I will not bore you with details of how I lived
for months after your exit[*'Request'*]

Moments of selflessness is combined with painful sacrifices, no doubt love can stand the test of time, but the power of love sometimes obstructs genuine affection, when society comes in between one's personal relationship.

A man should look up a woman sometimes
For old times sake.
For reasons other than those which are obsolete.[*'Request'*]

As the setting is Indian, unknowingly her Indianness emanates under the social constraints. Her persona which courageously confronted the traditional social barriers through the romantic journeys is forced to strike a delicate balance between the societal anxiety and heart-rending decisions. To move away from the regional background that she has come from along with the age-old traditional principles', needs fresh strength.

The enduring nature of single woman is highlighted throughout her poems, the unchanging nature of women attached to their traditions is echoed all over. The depth of her longing for a companion is born out of her loneliness, as a loner she wishes to uncover the layers of profound benefits of love that is denied to her due to customs. As a covenant she makes it feel that the denial does not stem from the society whereas it is self-denial that has eclipsed her natural freedom.

When we met his 'Hello' was quick
Mine slow
.....
Exchanging notes on East and West
I asked his name
He didn't as mine.
.....His invitation to go swimming naked
Was turned down
.....
A goodbye can be a hug and

“Women’s lib in India isskin -deep, baby.’
For weeks I can brood of nothing else.

With unique metaphors and wonderful similes, the poet/narrator describes how she regrets for declining the invitation of an American whom she met at a beach in Goa. Like a red bulb his persuasive voice keeps hitting her mind on and off

He is a growing regret,
a red bulb off and on reminding me of men
I cannot afford. [‘*Calangute Beach, Goa*’]

Quotidian Life of A Single Woman

Without the love of a man, life of a solitary woman is an abyss. To Tara Patel every emotion of a woman is connected with social issues. To create an honest and friendly environment where partners could relate with each other becomes highly challenging. In her poem *Of Now and Then*, she brings out the trauma related to denial of bodily pleasures, she feels alienated when the body-psyche relation which is mutually interdependent and complimentary in nature becomes obnoxious.

You want to talk to someone.
You want to talk to someone seriously, quietly,
without the distraction of getting angry,
or crying, or touching.
You don't want to beg.
You want to talk to someone,

The beauty of her language lies in her right choice of words, line after line she strikes with brilliant vocabulary which makes readers gripped to her writing. Her words punch the heart of the readers, with her luscious language she captures the dilemmas faced by women and the unemployed during the pursuit of a perfect life journey. The verses usher a brilliant and delectable intrigues as one reads, the lines from the poem titled *In Bombay*

Time passes even when unemployed.
..... I have been employed as many times
As unemployed.

A reader would naturally be brimming with a series of intrigues like how could she use such perfectly fitting vocabulary and a variety of non- cliched idioms.

Unemployed, one makes friends who
are unemployed.
Picked up at the employment bureau
Where silence is articulate.
The unemployed dare not lose their temper.

The voice of the unemployed single woman, cannot be more beautifully picturised than in these lines, *Unemployed people try to sleep at any/Time of the day*

Of course, when unemployed, the need to spend,

To do everything in excess, increases.
 Cursing comes easily, when a hundred-rupee
 Note is lost or stolen
 It is God who is so and so [*In Bombay*]

The voice of a single woman is tacit; the plight of the soulless in mundane world is painful. Her outburst is the result of isolation, anxiety and depression. Sandwiched between the emptiness in life and loneliness in daily life, it becomes irresistible to talk to someone

You want to talk and talk to someone
 other than yourself.
 In the end, you don't want to talk to anyone,
 you want to keep quiet.
 You want someone to talk to you! [*Of Now and Then*']

Tara Patel portrays how lonesomeness and seclusion of a woman especially single makes them to live a socially excluded life. This leads to a lot of psychosocial discrimination. She has the ability to change her language according to the settings. Every emotion that her personas' display is wonderfully described can be easily related and one can feel as if one is sharing the same feeling as the persona. She bolsters the readers with excellent, vivid and enticing descriptions of the city life. Every society has a value and criteria for assessing people and when evaluating a single woman, it considers her to be abnormal and imperfect.

Am I lonely? Or am I a loner? The difference
 Must be resolved quicklynow. [*In a Working Women's Hostel*']

Since, Tara Patel is very much aware of this social stigma that is attached to a solitary woman, as being a burden to others and with vague future she makes it clear that the status of isolation and discrimination is all because deprivation of male support and not just the materialistic sustenance which he is ought to provide. No doubt having a partner can satisfy a person's need for belonging.

It is not your lack of love which distresses
 Me anymore.
 But because I'm pinning for an old pleasure
 Havelunch with me,
 I'll pay the bill [*Request*']

Cosmos of Her Own

To her, He-(her) Man is a growing regret as he does not consider the sentiments of her heart, she becomes repugnant and violent. In the middle of love extremity, happens the moment of this epiphany where she realizes that she must stop being curbed to her desires. In a moment of revelation an insight, as a spirited and determined adult, she perhaps prepares herself to create a cosmos of her own and the place that she finds is her room.

Crying is a terminal argument. I
 Return to my room [*In a Working Women's Hostel*']

The theme of the poem is the message a poet sends to communicate through his/her piece of literature. The world can change but can it change for a single woman, can she totally forget the harshness of the past. The harshness of her age, can make her live only in her own cosmos. She can never lead the full spectrum of life cherishing the exuberant memoirs. People can say begin life's worth whatever your age but life can never be inspiring

Waking up at night is a symptom of aging
.....Listening to my own confessions is a
Third-degree past-time [*'In a Working Women's Hostel'*]

Being exhausted and drained in search of a supportive male partner and exit from unfulfilled relationship the poet makes her personae to take time to rebuild her self-love. She has to learn to function in isolation, the life of a single woman becomes excruciating, when one develops the fear of being left alone.

I function as a one-woman courtroom.
I have sealed up my life in black envelopes
addressed to no one in particular.
'Confidential. It is the rough wool of a man
You want tonight and every night. [*'In a Working Women's Hostel'*]

The real trauma lies when the tantalized tactile tears fall as the whole world declares that all the arousing desires or expectations of a single woman are unattainable. Everything related to the sense of touch comes to a standstill and life becomes dreadful.

I have come to a standstill.
The passing days have a posthumous
Touch to them. [*'In a Working Women's Hostel'*]

Conclusion

As Salvatore Quasimodo, the Italian poet, translator and winner of Nobel Prize for literature in 1959, once pointed out, "Poetry is the revelation of a feeling that the poet believes to be interior and personal which the reader recognizes as his own." Tara Patel as a poet with the power of the pen has penned her feelings and experiences in a magic way. Her voice and experience are that of the masses, that of what is happening in the world of a single woman. She has indeed through her unique style has inter-woven her words and emotions and has thus become the spokeswoman of all single women. Her understandings and perceptions of a Single Woman's sufferings have indeed created a certain emotive response from her readers. The candid and open manner in which she narrates about *Self*, attacking the world of men in a soft and frank manner speaks about her congeniality towards other sex. The sort of power and spark which she received through her only collection of poetry shows what an acclaimed poet she is. Carl Sandburg defines poetry as "an echo, asking shadow to dance." These poems of Tara Patel, on women's body and sexuality are the ones that show how women are burning with passions; their feelings that are put in magnitudes through these poems indeed commemorate the scarred soul of a single woman, but at the same time provide assistance to spur every woman.

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The Portrayal of Communal Issues in Recent Indian English Fiction

Vivek Kumar

Abstract

This research paper tries to explore the theme of communalism in Indian English fiction in the new millennium. Communalism in India refers to the division and conflict between religion and ethnicity. The paper focuses on a selection of contemporary Indian English novels published in the first decade of the new millennium, analyzing the representation of communalism and also how these works contribute to the larger discourse on communal tensions in India. It aims to shed light on how these novels reflect, critique, and engage with the theme of communalism as a complex social and political issue. Through close reading and interpretation of these novels, the paper explores the narrative techniques employed by authors to convey the complexities and nuances of communalism, and also how these literary representations contribute to shaping public consciousness and understanding of the issue and thus an attempt to bring harmony and tolerance to preserve India's diverse cultural fabric.

Keywords: Communalism, Secularism, Religion, Riot, Society, Politics, Culture, Tolerance

The arrival of the new millennium brought new hopes and fresh aspirations amongst people everywhere in the world. For India twentieth century is of momentous significance. India has done well in every field (science, literature, music, art architecture, industrial development, etc.) since its freedom, and now it is among the leading countries of the world. But instead of its growth and development India seems to have learned a little from history and seems to be still living in the days of partition, as communalism still affects our social life and politics to a great extent. No other phenomenon has affected life in the subcontinent so adversely as communalism. Communalism came to the stage as early as the beginning of the eighteenth century as evidenced by a communal riot in Ahmadabad, no one had any inkling about the magnitude and character it might assume in the future. The heart rendering experience of partition however did not put an end to the communalization of Indian society and polity. It only exacerbated it, at least in India, as the memories of inter-communal violence were invoked for political mobilization. As a result, during the post-independence period, communalism continued to plague social consciousness in the country. This success of communal forces heralded a new stage in the development of communalism.

Violence both spontaneous and premeditated has always been an integral part of communalism. But now it has become more and more intense, inhuman, and brutal. Earlier communal tensions and resulting violence did not lead to large-scale mayhem and murder. Their reach was limited and was generally suppressed quickly; the state and society then exercised a restraining influence. Now communal riots are large-scale events like Ayodhya, Godhra, Kandhmal, Muzaffarnagar, etc. Victims are larger in number, but the manifestation has become so cruel that it is difficult to associate the perpetrators as human beings. A major social consequence of communalism in recent times is the segregation of people based on their religious beliefs and more grievously, the displacement of the population from their traditional areas of residence. This is a general phenomenon in almost all the cities for quite some time after each communal riot, people move to the areas where their co-religionists can provide safety. Large-scale displacement of the population has been a common consequence of almost all communal incidents in recent times.

A novel being a strong medium to portray what is happening in society has attracted writers to portray what they feel regarding an incident or an issue. In the first decade of the 21st century, writers like Shiv K. Kumar, Shashi Tharoor, Manju Kapur, Kiran Nagarkar, Rohinton Mistry, and a few other writers presented the brutal faces of communalism in their novels. Shashi Tharoor in *Riot: A Novel* (2001), Manju Kapur in *A Married Woman* (2002), have portrayed the Ayodhya issue, Shiv K. Kumar in *Two Mirror at the Ashram* (2006) has portrayed the Hindu-Sikh relationship, Rohinton Mistry has presented the tyranny of a political party in his *Family Matters* (2002), and Kiran Nagarkar takes terrorism for his *God's Little Soldier* (2006).

In *Riot: A Novel*, Shashi Tharoor takes the Ayodhya issue and Ram *Janambhoomi* Movement as the central issue of his novel. Shashi Tharoor is a diplomat who has worked in the United Nations as a Joint Secretary and was nominated by India for the election of General Secretary of the United Nations, has presented India during the late eighties when the Ram Sila Poojan program and collection 'consecrated bricks' was going on. *Riot* deals with aggressive Hindu forces, *Ramsila Poojan* Procession and the riot in the wake of that procession, and other issues of the Ram *Janambhoomi* Movement. Shashi Tharoor's *Riot* deals with the Ayodhya dispute and Operation Blue Star, the important historical events in India in the last two decades of the twentieth century, that gave birth to two severe riots, in which thousands of innocent lives were lost, but the core issue in the novel is communal riot which has been a social stigma in independent India.

Riot gives an account of a riot that breaks out in Zalilgarh, a small town in the U.P. on September 30, 1989, in the wake of the Ram *Sila Poojan* Program. The focus is not on the killing of people, but on that of a Christian named Prascilla Hart, a 24 years old PhD scholar at New York University, who was carrying out field research in India and voluntarily working on a population control project run by the American group HELP-US, which works for women empowerment. The story unfolds with the arrival of the parents of Prascilla Hart in India and the narrative proceeds through the accounts of a dozen or more characters all of whom relate their version of events surrounding her killing and these are documented in 80 pieces down from journals, diaries, letters, cables, interview, scrapbooks, notebooks, transcript, translation, etc. of different size and distinctive style to add verisimilitude to the fictional details. Though the novel deals with a riot in a fictional location, the novelist studies the fresh wave of communal frenzy which gripped India against the backdrop of the dispute over Ram Mandir and Babri Masjid in Ayodhya in 1989. Tharoor sees the whole issue from a historical perspective.

It was Harsh Mander's *Unheard Voices* an unpublished account and the newspaper account of a young girl, Amy Biehl from Palo Alto, who has been killed by a black mob in the violence of South Africa, paved the way for *Riot*. "American Slain in India" (Tharoor 1) is the hook on which Tharoor has hung his novel. The novel starts with the news of the death of Prascilla Hart, who is stabbed to death in Zalilgarh town in the U.P. during a riot. Tharoor zooms out this small snapshot into a much wider canvas about the fragile communal relation in India and animosity between two communities rising to a fever pitch in a small town in Northern India. We are introduced to District Magistrate V. Lakshman, Superintendent of Police Gurinder Singh, a Muslim scholar Professor Mohammed Sarwar and a political leader Ramcharan Gupta. All these characters represent their particular outlook regarding the present scenario Ramcharan Gupta represents the violent fundamentalist agenda, Prof. Sarwar presents Muslim status in independent India and presents a secular outlook, Lakshman and Gurinder Singh, both are government officers and try to solve communal problems and bring back normalcy. Although the views presented by these characters are their particular view and cannot claim universality or truth for every Indian, they are of great significance to understanding the socio-political scenario of that time.

Riot appeals for tolerance through Prof. Sarwar who presents a short history of Indian heritage and the inheritance of Muslims to Indian soil. He tells Randy Diggs:

It was India's historic destiny that many races and cultures and religions should flow to her, and that many a caravan should rest here..... one of the last was that of followers of Islam. They came here and settled for good. We brought art treasured with us, and India too was full of riches of her own precious heritage. We gave her what she needed most precious gift from Islam's treasures, message of human equality. Full eleven centuries have passed since then. Islam now claims on the soil of India as Hinduism. (Tharoor 108)

Lakshman also makes comments on religious fundamentalism and its impact on Indian society. He describes the greatness and liberalism of the Hindu religion. He says that "he belongs to the only major religion in the world that does not claim to be the only true religion," (Tharoor, 144) unlike Muslim and Christian. He finds it very strange "how can such a religion lend itself to fundamentalism," (Tharoor 144) because "it is a creed that is free of the restrictive dogmas of holy writ that refuses to be shackled to the limitation of a single holy book" (Tharoor 144). He further says that although Hinduism has faced several invasions, it has not suffered a fatal blow because of "large, eclectic, agglomerative, the Hinduism..... is a matter of hearts and minds, not of bricks and stones," (Tharoor 145) so fundamentalism is little bit odd for Hinduism. Lakshman says: "Actually, it's a bit odd to speak of "Hindu fundamentalism", because Hinduism is a religion without fundamentals: no organized church, no compulsory beliefs or rites of worship, no single sacred book. The name itself denotes something less, and more, than a set of theological beliefs" (Tharoor 143).

Through his novel *Riot*, Tharoor goes deep into the subtleties of power politics in contemporary India in the backdrop of the Hindu nationalist's version of cultural revivalism, the rise of violent forces, and the demolition of the Babri mosque in Ayodhya. Writers like Khuswant Singh had long ago looked at the realities of religious communal tension with straightforward narratives; Rushdie's *The Moor's Last Sigh* contains the ingredients of satire on the abettors and accomplices of communal tension. But Tharoor's *Riot* is, as Mr. Tripathi writes in *The Asian Wall Street Journal* in 2001, the reflection of deft handling of the complicated problem presented with "an accurate picture of the thinking of the various forces that are competing for the supremacy in contemporary India" (Tripathi <http://shashitharoor.com>). *Riot* is a comment on the political scenario of current India and on the aggressive forces which again took birth in the wake of the Ram *Janambhoomi* Babari Masjid episode. He seems to leave a message through the novel, by quoting Iqbal "*Na samjhogey to mit jaogey aye Hindostan walon/ Tumhari dastaan tak bhina na rahegi daastanon mein*. If you don't understand, o you Indians, you will be destroyed. Your story will not remain in the world's treasury of stories" (Tharoor 257). Tharoor asks for more contribution and determination to maintain India's integrity and diversity. As he depicts through Gurinder's father: "The whole point about India is that this is a country for everybody and everybody has the duty, the obligation to work to keep it that way" (Tharoor 158).

Tharoor in *Riot* has presented the Ram Sila Poojan program in the wake of the Ram *Janambhoomi* Movement. Manju Kapur in her second novel *A Married Woman* has presented the whole Ram *Janambhoomi* – Babari Masjid episode followed by severe riot in India as one of the themes. Though the major focus is on the quest for the identity of a woman, in the background of that quest, the Ayodhya episode is portrayed. Through the

turmoil of the family life of Astha, the protagonist of the novel, Kapur has presented the communal turmoil of India and its effect on society. The novel is a story about Astha an educated upper middle-class woman. Kapur tries to record every major incident that happened in the wake of the Ram *Janambhoomi* Mandir – Babri Masjid episode (collection of consecrated bricks, *Rath Yatra*, Kar Seva, and the demolition of Babri Mosque). Though it does not record any communal riot but it successfully records the worst incident that engulfed the life of thousands of people not only in India but also abroad. The novel also revealed how political parties used religious sentiment for their political purposes whether communalists or secularists.

In *A Married Woman*, the author blames the British policy of ‘divide and rule’ for the division of Hindus and Muslims, “We have seen what the British succeeded in doing. They believe in ‘divide and rule’. They ploughed rivers of blood through our country. The same dark forces threaten us now. It is politicians who are creating religious insecurities to get votes” (Kapur 196). Both Kapur and Tharoor portrayed that politicians are using history to acquire power because history has two faceted functions it “can be used to build or to destroy” (Kapur 196). Manju Kapur in *A Married Woman* is of the view that politicians are using history to destroy the composite culture of India, Indian diversity, and the Indian tradition of tolerance. The appeasement policy and soft handling of a serious matter is only an election ploy to get votes to remain in power “The locks on the Masjid were opened to appease Hindu sentiments. Then the Muslim Woman’s Bill was introduced twenty-five days later in Parliament to appease Muslim sentiments. Both communities were pondered as an election ploy” (Kapur 116). She condemns “both BJP and the Congress is encouraging fascist forces in the country and in failing to take quick action against the threats to the Babari Mosque” (Kapur 174-175).

Along with the political system, the novelist of *A Married Woman* also portrays the role of police in the communal riots and the ways their treatment sows the seeds of the next communal riot. Astha’s visit to Ayodhya reveals to her the bitter fact that “the officials in the state police who feel it their duty to personally assist all those similarly inclined” (Kapur 184).

Along with portraying the Ayodhya episode and the demolition of Babri Mosque, Manju Kapur also portrays that small activist group, who worked day and night to keep normalcy and harmony in India through the character of Aijaz, Pipee, Astha, and the activist of Street Theatre Group. Kapur through her novel tries to give the message that have to recognize to real foe of society and to be responsible. She says, “For how long will they loot my village?/ Taking a torch I will go/ Through the world I will wonder/ To make my village safe for me” (Kapur 175).

Through her novel, Manju Kapur tries to depict selfish political leaders and vote bank politics as the root cause behind the communal problems in India in recent times. It is for their own purpose that political leaders “encourage social division along religious lines,” (Kapur 175). Kapur wants citizens to be responsible to recognize the dividing forces and appeals to work unitedly to fight with communal forces so that India can be made free from any kind of communal hatred and discrimination, as intended in the above four lines.

Shashi Tharoor and Manju Kapur both portrayed Ram Mandir and Babri Masjid episodes in their novels but Shiv K. Kumar takes the 1984 Anti-Sikh riots as the background of his novel *Two Mirrors at the Ashram*. It is a veiled commentary on the Indian society torn between the forces of modernity – materialism, consumerism, sexual freedom- and at the same traditionalism. The novel convincingly portrays the contemporary modern ‘Waste Land’ where values of honesty, piety, care, and commitment are overlooked in favour of selfish motives. The Protagonist of the novel Rajesh Sahani – novelist, habitual drinker, womanizer, and atheist – enters into the sylvan ashram of Swami Shanti Swaroop at

Mullagarhi in remote south India, in search of characters and story for his next book, goes through a spiritual journey and transformation. Along with the spiritual journey of Rajesh, Shiv K. Kumar has presented the violent Delhi of 1984 against the Sikh community in the wake of the assassination of Indira Gandhi. *Two Mirrors at the Ashram* records the pictures of arson and murder and miseries of Sikhs during 1984. It depicts the communal relation of those days and succeeds in arousing our sympathy for those who were murdered or suffered in the communal riot.

The communal holocaust that followed the death of Indira Gandhi was “as devastating as the one that followed the partition in 1947” (Kumar, Shiv K. 1). Because it left the entire Sikh community to go through the same experience as they faced or witnessed during partition. Like other riots, the anti-Sikh riots were a political manifestation of public anger against a community.

To conclude we can say Shashi Tharoor’s *Riot* meditates on the communalism in recent times, over the issue of Ram Janambhoomi Babri Masjid. Like the other novelists of the past, he also talks about the association of political leaders with communal forces. He counts the British ‘divide and rule’ as the root cause of hatred in pre-independence India and finds the happening in recent India through communal forces. *Riot* is a comment on the political situation of India. It is a comment on those who blindly believe their leaders who on the other hand beguiling them for their purpose. He seems to ask for more contribution and determination to maintain India’s integrity. Like Rushdie, he also advocates that History should not be treated as a dead end because it is not a record of what happened but what is recorded in text, books, literature, and other mediums. It has to be treated as a discourse and instead of proving anything; there should be a kind of churning for the solution of problems. Manju Kapur’s *A Married Woman* also deals with the Ayodhya issue and growing aggressive nationalism. Like Tharoor, Manju Kapur also counts politics and political games as the root cause of communal hatred. She blames the appeasement of the government for violent Hindu and Muslim forces which gives them chances to rise. On communal issues, Kapur speaks as someone who had lived through the unrest of communal violence. The novel gives the view that the secularism of India will stand or fall depending on the courage and clout of those willing to fight the aggressor in the mane of tolerance and liberty. Shiv K. Kumar in his *Two Mirrors at the Ashram* presents the anti-Sikh riot of 1984. It presents the idea that communal violence is a kind of reaction that gets burst against hidden anger against a particular community.

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~English Language Teaching~

Teacher-Student and Academic Performance

Asmathunisa Begum

Abstract

Teacher-student relation is more than parent-child's. While students just come through the latter, they are made by the former. Students seem amenable to the suggestions of a teacher only when they are convinced that they are accepted by the teacher of their attitude or status. A loving society is established with the concern of the teacher to it and its individuals. Teacher's offhanded attitude is detrimental to the harmony of the world. It is necessary that an individual has to opt this profession out of his volition and carry through his job joyfully.

Keywords: amenable, offhanded, detrimental, volition

Every individual has a way to perform things in his own way which has no parallelism with others. His particular way of doing things reveals his behavior. His personal life, social connections, economic status and family background impel him to form an attitude which, in turn, is presented through his behavior. As it involves genetic element, he inherits qualities from his parents who are the strong pillars of his character building. Learners who come together at a place to perform the activity of learning are identified by different types as they are the products of different individuals produced in different environments. The teacher who takes over the project of teaching has to be aware of the family history of the learners and its ambiance to prepare himself with effective remedy measures to gentrify the character of learners. Dedication of the teacher to profession is indispensable to conduct this operation for healthy results. It is not just enough if the institutions contain efficient teachers, it is equally important that they work with concern and attachment.

The teacher should be a right substitute to a parent who can skillfully administer his family with his loving disposition and lead it towards noble destination with his wisdom and power of discrimination. It is necessary that teachers should accept teaching not as a profession but as vocation. In the absence of love teaching looks like a mere mechanical activity where teachers and learners perform their activities as mere duties which would reflect no liveliness.

It is prerequisite in Teaching – Learning process that the teachers have to create a very pleasing impression of them among students. Solid relations between educator and learner are adventitious to learners. (Klassen et al., 2012) When students develop positive attitude towards the teacher, accelerating the process of learning is, by all means, not an arduous task. Students should be convinced that the teacher is their benefactor and guide. This notion forms a strong base to the building of Teaching and Learning in which the teacher and the ward feel secured from attitude problems and justify their roles by happily engrossing themselves in the activities uninterrupted by any psychological impediments. When attitude is individual's inherent quality, teacher is certainly not an exception from it. It is not as simple as it is imagined that a single person has to deal with so many heads that seem determined to evaporate his enthusiasm and it seems like a battle between one and many. The misconduct of learners impairs the connections between the teacher and the learner and will noticeably replete the teacher's appreciation. (Split et al., 2011) If the teacher

aims at victory in this battle, he should primarily reform himself to stand beyond human deficiencies and get full equipped to obviate any obstacle that would rattle the serenity of his purpose. Obviously his individuality suffers heavy damage because of the frequent attrition by the complicated tendencies of the wards and it is not canny if he loses his temper at times to alleviate the heaviness of his mind. His momentary emotion may permanently sap his motive as it creates diverse effect among learners and they mark borders to bifurcate themselves from teacher. His solitude and love for his profession supply him required energy to carry through this onerous task. He has to be very conscious of his behavior and keep ever smiling even in the most adverse situation also. How the learners handle the process of learning depends on the kind of attitude they have cultivated towards learning and then practice it consistently to achieve their goals. The issue is overt that all students are not homogeneous in their thinking abilities, reactions to same stimuli, and memory retrieving capacity, for example, when the teacher frames a sentence like ‘Darling not now’ different students offer different explanations as under:

- Probably a little daughter is badgering her mother at midnight for an ice cream and mother says, ‘Darling not now.’
- A lover is asking his beloved for a kiss in a crowd and his beloved denies saying, ‘Darling not now.’
- A student tries to raise doubt in the middle of the lecture and the teacher says, ‘Darling not now’.

Whatever be the answer to the question it has its roots in their thinking which is formed because of their behavior that is likely established because of their family or environment or society. Environment can largely influence an individual’s behavior. When the learner is provided sagacious environment he constructs a healthy attitude for the society of which he is a responsible member. For his all round development the learner needs pleasant physical and healthy social environments. While spacious classrooms seating arrangements, building model, greenery all around will make physical environment convenient to go ahead with the process of teaching and learning, the presence of loving individuals makes social environment conducive to learning. His physical comforts are the issues of great importance as they successfully interrupt his attention and upset his commitment to his goals and objectives.

The teachers and the management should take every care to provide this basic facility to students in educational institutions. They should see that the learners feel relaxed at the sight of every object in the institution and feel comfortable to carry on with their project. Learners respond positively to the environment in which they live and behave accordingly. Hence the teacher should create the environment that would fulfill the learner’s demands and help them hone their skills in the field of their choice. So learning centers should focus on establishing needful environment where learners can grow towards success. Preparing the students for learning is the activity which the teacher should carefully perform. Any pressure on them would aggravate their antipathy to learning and this is more severe when they are impelled to learn something which they feel useless or irksome. At this juncture teacher’s amicability and intelligence will serve the purpose. The teacher should elucidate the learners why they ought to concentrate on a particular learning item by submitting examples and references before them for their judgment. It is for this reason the teacher should go abreast with the latest and be quick in updating knowledge.

Education institutions should opt right persons to assign this responsibility. The founders of learning centers should accept their share of responsibility in protecting the discipline of the society by producing noble individuals whose behavior is altered, principles

are reconstituted, thoughts are elevated and civility is built by teachers. Any chaos in the world is due to narrow thinking of the man who was once a member of some institution. The off-hand attitude of such place where he comes to visualize his destiny will gradually develop cynicism in him and he will be a perfect villain by the time he leaves the institution. He has no importance for human values and therefore lives as a constant threat to the society. Curriculum is teacher's best aid to achieve his objectives.

A successful teacher is he who knows how to make use of the curriculum to reach his goals in teaching. He has an objective to teach any lesson or poem or any language item. He comprehends what message the author or poet desires to communicate to the world through his writing and how its awareness or implementation would edify its mode of living to sustain its existence. He then proceeds to gather information or empirical evidences to support the writer's opinion to impart to students that would undeniably keep them motivated throughout their lecture. His diligence to collect the details, his elucidation of facts and truths the validity of his demonstration supply sufficient source to learner where from they derive proper motivation that would make their way clear for further learning. The teacher who applies the conditioning principle will carry through the job of strengthening learning abilities among students. The teacher's appreciation or a word of praise or encouragement will be a good stimulus that would generate a good response from students. After giving a comprehension test to students and analyzing their answers, if the teacher complements them saying, 'Good you have done well' 'Really wonderful, well done'. 'I am happy with your performance if you work more seriously you will do it better'. 'Congratulations! Go on, you have done fifty percent of your job. 'Read it again and try to think it in a different way, so that you do it hundred percent'. Such complements imbue the minds of students with exultation and work with more commitment and better performance.

Conclusion

The teacher-student relationship is, in fact, a solid foundation to the character building of students. There are occasions where teachers have opportunities to learn from students. The teacher has to play the most significant role in assessing the psychology of students to provide them what they exactly need. Furthermore winning the trust and love of students reduces the apprehension of a teacher and effectively functions in achieving his objectives.

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An Insight into L2 Learners' Listening Comprehension: their Challenges and Opportunities

S Parvathavarthini

Abstract

Listening skill has always been an enigma when it comes to ELT and ELL context. A decade ago, access of materials to teach English Listening skills was a challenge. Listening content mainly consisted of audio cassettes, CDs, software that were purchased by the institutions and made available in language laboratories. Digitalization has changed the scenario and now it provides easy access to plenty of English content to use as materials for listening in ESL and EFL classrooms. With more materials come more challenges. The content available online consists of various English speakers who come with different accent, pronunciation and culture. The paper aims at analyzing the challenges and opportunities that the students encountered in their journey of listening comprehension while getting exposed to various materials. It also tries to find ways to solve the problems faced by learners.

Key words: Listening comprehension, teaching and learning L2 listening skills, Barriers and challenges to acquire listening skills, cultural barriers to listening comprehension

Introduction

Digital Era has widened the scope for teaching learning process. It has given access to enormous amount of teaching-learning content to the field of education. Getting access to listening material had been a challenge before, but now there are plenty of materials available for the teachers to choose from. These are from various channels that are from all over the world. It is not just British English or American English but English spoken from almost all the continents reaches the digital platform. These many Englishes pose a problem for the teacher and learners as it comes with different accents, background, culture and pronunciations. When the world is made reachable with internet, it is an advantage for the learners to get exposed to all kinds of Englishes. Hence, it is necessary to identify the barriers in introducing all the content and help the learners understand all kinds of Englishes.

Background to the study

In engineering colleges in Tamilnadu, CLT approach is employed to teach English. Hence all the four language skills are taught and assessed. The books that are prescribed and given for reference consist of CDs and links to materials for all the four language skills. These books consist of a myriad material especially when it comes to listening content. The objective of the course is to enhance the English communicative skills of the engineering students to make them compete in the global arena. The syllabus consisted of American and British English, their differences in usage, vocabulary and pronunciation for quite some years. In the current regulation and syllabus, the English is all inclusive, and the result is listening content from Australia, India, America, Britain, New Zealand, and so on. When the same was introduced to the students, their reaction and response to the different content was not the same. They responded differently to different content. The paper aims at recording their journey while engaging in listening comprehension when they were exposed to different Englishes. It also tries to analyze their challenges and opportunities that they encountered while trying to understand the English content they were exposed to.

Review of Literature

Davitishvili, N. (2017) in his work has talked about the importance of cross-cultural awareness to teach English as a second language. He emphasizes that the L2 learners need to understand the cultural variations to become fluent in the target language. Further, he goes on to say that language learning is not just phonology and lexicology, it is more about the native speakers' cultural aspects, their attitude, custom, ethnicity (550). He considers it necessary for the language teachers to create intercultural awareness by giving short introductions before introducing learning materials so that the L2 learners can learn and understand the content with ease.

Bose, P. (2021) in her article titled "Academic Listening in the Indian context," talks about the importance of Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) to attain higher order listening skills. In order to attain this academic listening skills which does not have the fringes or extra addition like context, background she suggests three strategies. The first is to listen to slow and simple speaking from a relevant context, the second stage is to listen to various language content in English to get exposed to various cultural aspects. The third stage is to listen to academic content like NPTEL courses. Here again, she stresses the need to understand the background and cultural aspects in the initial stages of developing listening skills. Listening at the intermediate level which is purely academic, is understanding content independent of the context and background according to the researcher.

Rath, G P et al (2022) have given some suggestions to enhance listening skills and acquire academic listening skills to language teachers. The researchers have stressed the importance of active listening in the post-COVID environment, where listening is the main requirement to involve in online classes and courses. Further, the best way to engage in active listening is to ask valid questions. Likewise, the listening framework for teachers according them is the three-part framework which involves, pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening activities embedded in the listening materials. They also quote Flowerdew and Miller's (2005) eight dimensions to listening comprehension which include individualized, cross-cultural, social, affective, contextualized, strategic, intertextual, and critical aspects of the materials used for L2 learning.

The above literature revealed that there is a paradigm shift in listening skills after COVID and digitalization. The above works give strategies to improve listening skills. But, they have not taken into consideration materials available from different English speaking countries of the world.

Hypothesis

The study hypothesizes that listening content from different English-speaking countries with variation in accent, pronunciation and cultural background poses additional challenges to ESL and EFL learners.

Research questions

1. What are the barriers faced by L2 learners in comprehending the listening content that are from various English-speaking countries?
2. What kind of impact does culture depicted in the listening materials have in the process of listening comprehension?

Methodology

A class of 55 first year engineering undergraduate students was sampled. Out of these learners 18 of them were girls and 37 of them were boys. Three tools were employed, one was observation, the second was a questionnaire, and the third was a group interview. The students were made to listen to five different videos from different countries as prescribed in their syllabus as part of their laboratory activity. The five videos had pre listening, during listening and post listening activities. The learners were asked to write down a summary of the video along with a few new words they have heard and then a couple of learners were asked to tell the summary. At the end of each listening activity, the learners were asked to record their experience. At the end of fifth video the learners were asked to sit in groups and answer a questionnaire followed by a question-and-answer session where they were asked to compare all the five videos and deduce which was difficult or easy to understand and give the reasons for the same. Based on the questionnaire, group interview and observations by the teacher an analysis was made to find the barriers to listening comprehension.

Discussion

The learners were exposed to different Englishes found in the world through the listening content. The five videos with different dialects of English include

- (i) MS Dhoni's interview soon after the 2011 world cup finals
- (ii) British Prime Minister Theresa May's speech in European Union at Brussels
- (iii) Michelle Obama's discussion with women on women empowerment
- (iv) Australian PM Kevin Rudd's talk
- (v) New Zealand PM John Key's interview with a news channel

These videos were re-accessed via youtube.com and used for the listening sessions. The videos have been selected in such a way that they represent the dialect of the educated people of the country they represent. This would prevent any dialectical variation or the introduction of idiolects into the scenario.

The pre-listening activity included two questions about the content of the video. For instance, for the first video, it was about 2011 world cup and their opinion on MS Dhoni. Likewise, for the second video, it was on European Union and previous Prime Ministers of Britain. With regard to the while listening activity, it was again about the content, about answering one or two questions, a gap filling activity. Later on, for the post listening activity they were asked to write a summary. Learners carried out the activity for all the five videos. At the same time, for the content on English from New Zealand and Australia (Video No. 5 and 4) their response was minimal. They showed more enthusiasm towards Video No. 1, the one on the cricket match. Still, the videos with British English and American English were met with some interest, though the response was comparatively less to that of Cricket content. On the other hand, these responses were better than the last two videos one with New Zealand and Australian English.

During the interview sessions, the learners revealed that they had more interest in listening to people that they already knew. Likewise, if the content is relevant to them, they felt the need to listen to them. Further, they also felt that British English and American English were comparatively familiar to that of the New Zealand and Australian speakers. They also revealed that along with pronunciation and accent, their background, the costumes and appearance created a foreign environment to the learners. This was more evident in the fact that though all the learners were able to relate to first video on cricket match, it is the

response of the boys that is more. On the contrary, with respect to Michelle Obama's discussion, girls found it more engaging and entertaining as it was more relevant to them. On the whole cultural variation or similarities creates interest or disinterest among the learners. Further, it also helps the learners to understand the content better.

The same is revealed in the questionnaire that was collected afterwards. The questionnaire had two sections. The videos were categorized from Video 1 to Video 5. The first section consisted of 5 open-ended questions each pertaining to one video with regard to the difficulty aspect of it. In the open-ended questions about what is difficult in the five videos, most of them (35 members, 63%) have responded by saying they were from Tamil medium or vernacular medium schools, so they find it difficult. 72% of them have said it is faster, especially M S Dhoni's speech is fast hence difficult to understand. Apart from the first video, other videos are found to be not related to the learners, Video 2– 40, Video 3- 43, Video 4-50 & Video 5-50. The second section of the questionnaire was closed questions with 5-point Likert scale options. The questions included

- (1) The level of difficulty for the videos were
The majority of the learners felt it was difficult for Video 4 (50) and Video 5 (51)
- (2) The background like costumes, setting was new
Majority of the learners felt it was new or different for Video 3 (35 boys). Girls (17 girls) strongly disagreed with the statement.
- (3) The situation was not relevant to me
Many girls (15 Nos.) have felt the situation was not relevant to them for Video 4 and Video 5. At the same time 30 of the boys have strongly disagreed to the statement. The situation is topsy turvy with regard to Video 3 on Michelle Obama's discussion, here 33 boys have strongly agreed to the statements confirming the irrelevance of the situation to theirs. Girls, have strongly disagreed to the statement, making it clear it is relevant to them.
- (4) The pronunciation is different than what I have heard so far
The learners strongly agreed to the above statement as follows: video 2 and 3: 45, video 4: 50, Video 5:51 nos. of learners.
- (5) The content or the topic on which they speak is new to me
Learners strongly agreed to the above statement with regard to all the videos except the first video on cricket.
- (6) The words in the video were difficult for me
This statement is also strongly agreed by all the learners for all the videos.
- (7) The speech was very fast
This statement was strongly agreed for Video 1 by all the learners
- (8) The length of the sentence was long
This statement was strongly agreed by most of the learners for almost all the videos

Findings

After observation and analysis, it was found that learners have difficulty listening to the content that is foreign to them. Further, they are de motivated by the background, different accent, unusual setting and other cultural aspects that are new to them. This is revealed from the fact that women in different attire make the class share a smile. Apart from the linguistic aspects such as pronunciation, vocabulary and sentence structure, there are also other things that baffle the learner. This includes the cultural aspects like background, costumes, appearance, their accents and speed.

Validation of the hypothesis and Recommendations

The study revealed that the intercultural and cross-cultural variations affect the learning process especially with respect to the listening comprehension of the learners. The cultural shock that they encounter looking at a different background and custom prevent them from concentrating on the content. Likewise, the linguistic aspects of the materials pose few other challenges that come with the dialectal variations like tone, accent and pronunciation. Though, the learners have been exposed to British and American variations there are also other variations in the world that cause barriers. The language teachers need to spend some extra time in introducing them to various accents and background before introducing the Englishes found around the world. In the global scenario it is relevant to introduce various dialects to the learners to help them communicate globally. Hence, instead of avoiding such differences in bringing about various materials, the instructions can be modified to cater to all the challenges that would arise while introducing such content.

Scope of study and Limitations

The study was conducted with just 55 students. The barriers and challenges listed were limited to variations in language and culture, in addition to the above listed problems there are other cognitive gaps that need to be catered to the understanding of a new content. The study needs to be extended to bigger numbers, as even with this number the cultural conflicts arise not with foreign culture alone but gender differences also. For instance, cricket finds favour with boys, and Michelle Obama's discussion finds favour with girls. Both boys and girls have individualized opinions that act as motivating and demotivating factors. There could be other factors that might influence the listening comprehension that can be used by teachers to introduce more relevant content to the learners.

Conclusion

The global village has shrunk further after the COVID digitally. The educational content from one corner of the world reaches the other corner of the world easily. This gives ample room for the teachers and learners to access large amount of learning materials. There has been paradigm shift, especially with regard to listening skills acquisition and assessment. At the same time, the use of materials accessed on the other side of the world comes with its own share of problems. It lies in the hands of language teachers to frame their language instruction in such a way that those problems are converted to surmountable challenges that help the learners become globally communicative.

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Benefits of Integrating Authentic Material in Language Classroom

Pinali Vadher

Abstract

Enthusiastic ELT teachers continue to seek out and learn new types of teaching materials in order to create and develop unique ways of teaching the language and meeting the wants and needs of their students/learners. Fortunately, language teachers have access to a broad array of diverse materials. Authentic materials are one of the teaching materials, and they are very effective in language teaching, and their incorporation into language teaching has the ability to provide desired results. This is particularly because we live in the information and technology age. Authentic materials are currently in high demand in both language learning and language teaching. This research article focuses on the use of authentic materials in language instruction. The purpose of this research is to investigate the benefits and drawbacks of using authentic materials in language classroom. It also discusses how to choose the best authentic material for language teaching from the plethora of teaching resources available to ELT teachers.

Key words: Authentic Materials, Integration, Language Teaching

Introduction

English language teaching deals with the teaching of the language to non-native speakers. In Indian context, English is the official language and it is taught as EFL, ESL and ESP. The language classrooms found in India are of heterogeneous kind, in which though students are of more or less same age but from diverse socio-economic cultural and educational background. Hence, it becomes difficult for the teacher to cater to the learning needs and requirements of each and every student in the classroom. To tackle this situation and make one's own language classroom interesting and gripping, authentic materials are of great help. The benefits of using authentic material are that they bring "real world, real communication" in the language classroom and thus becomes a bridge which connects language learners to the external world. Authentic materials provide real-life examples of language used in everyday situations. They can be used to add more interest for the learners. They can serve as reminder that there is an entire population who use the target language in their everyday lives. The rich language found in authentic materials provides a source of input language learners need for acquisition. Guariento and Morley (2001) suggest that the use of authentic materials in teaching of the language dates back to the beginning of communicative movement in which an attempt was made to simulate "the real world" in the classroom. Authentic materials are one of the major features of CLT. The idea that language learning successfully comes through an ability to communicate real meaning when the learner is involved in "real communication" is the central theory of CLT. CLT and associated versions of this approach (including Content-Based Instruction) and Task- Based Language Teaching (TBLT) place significant emphasis on the use of authentic materials. Richards (2001) and Kilickaya (2004) strongly believe that authentic materials play a crucial role in language teaching.

Scenario of English Language Classrooms in Higher Education in Gujarat

The condition of the language classroom in higher education in Gujarat is worsening due to certain factors. The situation in the English Language classrooms is either unsatisfactory or

hopeless. It has reduced to such level where it will be difficult for the educators to uplift it. The problems are listed below:

- Unprepared teachers for the class
- Dull, dumb & unenthusiastic students
- Bunking the English classes
- Time of the language class in the time-table
- Cramming from the guides
- Tuitions
- No background of English Language
- Taking the learning & study of the language very lightly
- Having no importance of the language
- Mocking at those who are trying to learn the language
- Students' reluctance to read and learn the language
- Hesitation when committed errors in speaking or writing
- Insisting teachers to use vernacular language to teach the language (Translation Method)
- English is taught as a compulsory paper and not as a language.
- Fear of English Language
- Neither teacher nor students feel for any innovations.
- Less or no use of ICT in teaching
- Teacher-dominated classroom
- No motivation from the teacher
- Students lack of interest in learning the language
- Monotonous language sessions
- Non-independent learners
- Over-crowded classrooms
- Inappropriate teaching methods and strategies
- Students (learners) from diverse socio-economic, culture and educational background.
- Lack of research

Due to these reasons, when students come in to the class, they are uninterested. They neither value nor know the significance of the paper because it is taught as a “Compulsory Paper” and not “Language”. Even, when taught, the more emphasis is given on “grammar i.e., structure of the language, prescriptive grammar” rather than “communicative” aspect of the language. They just remain the passive listeners to the teacher and not at all interactive. Thus, the sessions become monotonous and boring for both students and the teacher. The students also lack in the habit of reading and writing. Overall, they are weak in each and every language skill. Their writing suffers the worst due to lack of vocabulary and very poor reading habits. Apart, from this, only prescribed syllabus texts are taught in the language classrooms which has no or less relation to the “real” use of language in the external world. The classrooms are not completely equipped with technology also adds to this problem. Since, the language classrooms are over-crowded, time also has the major impact on students. Hence, differentiated instruction and authentic materials should be used to make the language classroom more interesting and live.

Authentic Materials

The term, “authentic materials” is defined by Nunan (1989) as “any material which has not been specifically produced for the purpose of language teaching”. Supporting the same line of thought, Abersold & Field (1997: 48) states that authentic materials are taken directly from L1 sources and are retained in their original form while using them in the classroom. Thus,

authentic materials are related to “real world, real language” and it is this ‘genuineness’ of authentic materials that helps to bridge the gap between the classroom and the world beyond the classroom. Basically, authentic materials include anything that’s used as a part of communication. There is a large plethora of authentic materials available to language teachers. Gebhard (1996) describes several kinds of authentic materials that can be used by ELT teachers. They are as follows:

- a) Authentic Listening/Viewing Materials: TV commercials, quiz shows, cartoons, news clips, comedy shows, movies, soap operas, professionally audio-taped short stories and novels, radio ads, songs, documentaries, and sale pitches.
- b) Authentic Visual Materials: slides, photographs, paintings, children’s artwork, stick-figuring drawings, wordless street signs, silhouettes, pictures from magazines, ink blots, postcard pictures, wordless picture books, stamps, and X-rays.
- c) Authentic Printed Materials: newspaper articles, movie, advertisements, astrology columns, sports report, obituary columns, advice columns, lyrics to songs, restaurant menus, street signs, cereal boxes, candy wrappers, tourist information brochures, university catalogues, telephone books, maps, TV guides, comic books, greeting cards, grocery coupons, pins with messages, and bus schedules.
- d) Realia (Real world objects used in ESL/EFL classrooms): coins and currency, folded paper, wall clocks, phones, Halloween masks, dolls, and puppets, to name a few. (Realia are often used to illustrate points very visually or for role-play situations.)

Hence, it becomes crucial for the teacher to select the appropriate kind of authentic material from the vast ocean of authentic materials available to them.

Authentic Materials in the ELT Classroom: The Advantages

There are many advantages of using authentic materials in the language teaching. Tamo (2009) mentions that authentic materials are real discourses happening in the actual world. They bring learners close to the world outside the classroom by letting them know what is happening around them. They guide learners toward the language they need for their particular context. Authentic materials are capable of engaging learners in a far better way than textbooks or any prescribed or created materials. Even for autonomous learning, authentic material adds more engagement and interest for the learner. Guariento & Morley (2001) recommend authentic materials because of their motivational aspect by infusing real information from a real text in an innovative language. Berardo (2006) also mentions the benefits of integrating authentic materials in day-to-day language teaching. They are:

- i. Authentic materials provide authentic cultural information.
- ii. Authentic materials give exposure to real language.
- iii. Authentic materials are closer to the needs of students.
- iv. Authentic materials promote creative approach to teaching.
- v. Authentic materials have a positive influence on students’ motivation.
- vi. Authentic materials lead to integrative or intrinsic motivation by developing student’s relationship with the language.

Commenting upon the significance of authentic materials, Mishan (2005:44) goes on to explain that authentic materials represent ‘culture, currency and challenge’ when fused in language teaching in the classroom. According to her, the reason behind this is that authentic materials are more valuable and effective in comparison to other teaching materials.

Reinforcing the same idea, Gilmore (2004:367) states that if our aim in the classroom is to prepare learners for independent language use then, we are obliged to authentic materials since they are realistic models of discourse.

Choosing the Apt Kind of Authentic Material

ELT experts suggested criteria for selecting authentic materials for language teaching in the classroom. Berardo (2006: 63) provides a list of criteria for choosing the apt kind of authentic materials for teachers:

- Suitability of the Content includes: Does the text interest the student?
Is the text relevant to the student's needs?
Does it represent the type of material that the student will use outside of the classroom?
- Exploitability: Can the text be used for the teaching purposes?
For what purpose should the text be used?
What skills/strategies can be developed by exploiting the text?
- Readability: Is the text too easy/difficult for the students?
Is the text structurally too demanding/complex?
How much new vocabulary does the text contain? Is it relevant?
- Presentation: Does it "look" authentic?
Is it "attractive"?
Does it grab the student's attention?
Does it make him/her want to read more?

Similarly, Karpova (1999) also suggests certain benchmarks for the selection of authentic materials in the language teaching classroom. They are as follows:

- a) Content: the content of authentic materials should be appropriate to learners' age, interest, needs and goals.
- b) Tasks: tasks must be sequenced and differentiated. They must include communicative and cognitive procedures so that the learners' background and new knowledge can be integrated.
- c) Teacher-Learner relationship: the materials must be organized in a way that leads to a reciprocal interaction between the teacher and the learner takes place.
- d) Learning strategies: cognitive abilities of the learners must be improved by paying attention to learning strategies.
- e) Learning environment: the environment provided must be encouraging risk-taking and idea sharing.
- f) Social Values and Attitudes: authentic materials must be a reflection of social values and attitudes.
- g) Culture issue: authentic materials must encourage learners' cultural, sociolinguistic, and paralinguistic awareness.

Apart from all these, there are other factors which should be kept in mind while choosing authentic materials are:

- Age of students
- Students' family background
- Students' goals, interests and needs
- What kind of class is being taught?

Most importantly, everything is in the hands of the teacher. According to Tatsuki (2006), “a skilful teacher can find a way to create authenticity through social interaction even with the poorest and most unnatural sounding materials. However, the most brilliantly crafted textbook or infinite teaching resources are useless in the hands of an unskilled teacher”.

Challenges While Using Authentic Materials in the Language Classroom

The most prominent disadvantage of authentic materials in language teaching is their “genuineness” and “complexity” which creates problems for teachers while integrating them in classroom teaching. Since, authentic materials are to be used in their original form, additional preparation is required on teacher’s part for their integration in language teaching and smooth comprehension by learners. Moreover, authentic materials are very time-consuming and at times expensive also.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the use of authentic materials in language teaching can be highly beneficial, motivating and encouraging for learners. Authentic materials provide a sense of achievement to learners because they make learners familiar with the language and how it is actually used in the world outside the classroom. In today’s world of information and technology, it is not difficult for teachers to find authentic materials. One of the most useful resources is the Internet, with large number of varied materials accessible to teachers for incorporating in their language teaching. Hence, the role of a teacher is to prepare learners for the competitive world by providing them with the right kind of authentic material that enables them to develop their necessary skills and awareness regarding how the language is actually used. Moreover, in the COVID and post-COVID world, authentic materials will prove very fruitful in the field of English Language Teaching and Learning because the world is witnessing the transition from “real classroom” to “virtual classroom” and more emphasis is laid on “self-dependant learning or autonomous learning”.

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Post-reading Comprehension Questions in English Textbooks of Secondary School Level in Telangana: An Analysis

Revathi Srinivas

Abstract

Textbooks play a crucial role in developing ESL learners' language abilities. They are a source of inculcating Higher Order Thinking Skills through several activities and exercises based on reading texts. Critiquing the existing taxonomies that describe the various levels of reading comprehension, Diana Freeman (2014) proposes a taxonomy that includes three categories of questions—Content, Language, and Affect with sub-categories in each of these. Using Freeman's taxonomy this study analysed textbooks of classes VII-X prescribed for study in government schools in Telangana, India; investigated the reading comprehension questions that have the highest frequency in the textbooks the differences of frequencies across the three textbooks and their range of distribution. The study further investigated. Findings of the study indicate that textually implicit questions (Content) are found abundantly across the classes. This calls for a redistribution of question types across the books so as to provide a holistic reading experience to the learners and also develop critical reading abilities.

Key words: reading comprehension, Higher Order Thinking Skills, taxonomies, frequency & range of distribution of questions

Introduction

For the ESL learners a coursebook is the main source of language learning. Nunan (1999, pg, 98) emphasising the role of the textbook observes that “it is difficult to imagine a class without books” as the coursebook, he notes, is the most essential component of any language programme. Reinforcing the argument, Richards (2007) & Robinson (1991) aver that textbooks provide the syllabus for learners and impact them psychologically. Cunnigsworth (1995, pg 7) notes that textbooks play multiple roles—they provide samples of written- and spoken discourse, offer exercise, help learners interact with the language, serve as a syllabus, and at times promote learner autonomy through their activities. Further, he (pg. 111) asserts that ‘the use of visuals for presentation and practice in order to provide meaningful contexts is almost universal in coursebooks and forms one of the planks of language-teaching methodology’. Further, on page 113, the author states ‘. . .students are expected to hypothesize about rules, participate actively in learning activities, relate material to their own experiences and personal lives . . .’.

From ancient times to our own times, the course book has had a chequered history, surviving various radical innovations that all but eliminated it. In fact, it has adapted astonishingly well to all climes and times. Thus, while language education, amongst other aims, hones reading abilities of students and enhances their levels of understanding (Beerwinkle & McKeown, 2021; Blything et al., 2020); globalization demands that students use their Higher Order Thinking Skills which include the ability to infer, reasoning, question, synthesize information, think critically and also reflect on their thinking (Ezberci Çevik, 2021; Stevens et al., 2020) the course book, learners and teachers find, is the one unfailing go-to source. Its kin manifest themselves as readers, supplements, manuals, and so on. Selections made from ‘various writers’ or ‘a single writer’ are the subject of endeavours and enterprises that are both art and a science, and are sometimes encapsulated in the name of chrestomathy. The term is derived from the Greek *Khrestos* “useful” and *mahteia* “learning”,

the term forms useful and accurate shorthand for a frequently-referred to tool in the classroom. Activities based on reading passages, particularly in textbooks, should be of a level that will help students develop Higher Order Thinking Skills (Lee (2015)). However, studies conducted by Barutçu and Açıık, (2018) Benzer (2019), to name a few, report that unfortunately coursebooks are not qualified to develop Higher Order Thinking Skills and levels of comprehension, based on their reading of a text, amongst students. The present writer finds this difficult to accept in a world changed by Barthes whose concepts of *liability* and *scriptability* have given us new perspectives. The former refers to easy, effortless reading, and the later to reading that demands considerable efforts from the reader, but Barthes goes on to highlight the fact that a text is both, liable and scriptable. It is up to the teacher and learner to explore a text in the way they wish.

Review of literature

According to Mukundan et al (cited in M. Azarnoosh *et al.* (Eds.), *Issues in Materials Development*, 65–73), .

Reading is undoubtedly one of the most salient and dominant activities in any language learning program. Not only does reading serve as a source of information, but also as a means of increasing and consolidating one's knowledge of the language itself. That is why the ability to read is considered a valuable asset as it is considered highly important for personal, social, and academic achievement. . . . While reading for language is usually practiced in the early stages of language learning, reading for comprehension remains as the ultimate goal of most reading courses.

Gu (2003) supports the above claim on the grounds that reading is one of the most important language skills. Further, the author cites Hoover and Gough (2011) who argues that success in reading comprehension depends not only on language comprehension but also on decoding skills. In other words, readers should be able to both construct meaning from the language in which the text is written, and to identify and process the words and phrases in the reading material.

Nation (1979b) in his iconic article titled *The Curse Of The Comprehension Question: Some Alternatives* states, “comprehension questions in one form or other are one of the language teaching techniques most frequently used to train learners in reading”. He elaborates on what a good reading exercise should do and elaborates as follows:

A good reading exercise directs the learners' attention to the reading text. That is, the learners need to read the text or at least part of it in order to do the exercise. . . . A good reading exercise directs the learners' attention to features of the text that can be found in almost any text, or to strategies for dealing with any text, with the aim “to develop in the language learner the ability to comprehend *texts*, not to guide him to comprehension of *a text*” (Davies and Widdowson, 1974: 172).

In addition to these, Cunningsworth (1995b) observes ‘Widdowson (1978) and others have shown that comprehension questions can vary in the degree of understanding of the text that is required. Some questions only require literal or surface understanding, and are usually of a straightforward factual nature. In extreme cases, comprehension questions can be answered by matching a word in the question to the same word in the text and then copying out the sentence in the text containing the word. More demanding questions require processing of the

text at a deeper level, so that information contained in different parts of the text is identified and combined to give a complete answer. Yet other questions require inference, where the reader is required to bring to bear information that is not contained in the text, but is essential for interpreting its content.

According to Barrett's taxonomy, Literality, Reorganization, Inference, Evaluation, and Appreciation are the reading comprehension categories (cited in Clymer, 1968). Questions at the *literal* comprehension level help learners identify information that is readily available in the text. Learners synthesise information at the *Reorganization* level and infer what is not explicitly stated by the writer at the *inferential* comprehension level. Learners are encouraged to make judgments of fact vs. opinion, appropriacy, validity, bias of the text at *evaluation* category and respond emotionally to the text at the *appreciation* level. As is evident, the questions under each of these categories are graded and challenging in nature.

Similar taxonomies are presented by Day and Park (2005) and revised taxonomy of Bloom by Anderson et al (2001). Gill (2008) observes that *literal, reorganization, inferential* categories of Day and Park and Bloom's revised taxonomy are similar in nature with reference to questions on reading comprehension.

Mc Donough et.al. (2013) augment the discussion of the taxonomies of comprehension questions. According to them,

Nuttall (2005) identifies five basic question types commonly used for reading. The first of these is literal comprehension. By this she means that if readers do not understand the literal meaning of a particular text, then they are probably not going to get very much else out of that text. The second is reorganizing or putting the information in the text into a different order. Then come questions of inferring or 'reading between the lines'. Writers do not always state explicitly what they mean. An efficient reader can infer meaning not explicitly stated in the passage. This may be seen as an intellectual skill as opposed to a reading skill by some, although there is clearly a measure of overlap. Question types requiring a measure of personal response are often to be found in literary passages where the reader has to argue for a particular personal response supported by reference to the text. The last type of question is quite sophisticated and not all students would need it. Questions of evaluation would require the reader to assess how effectively the writer has conveyed her intention. If the writing is intended to convince or to persuade, how convincing or persuasive is it?

When evaluating questions for use with particular learners, there may not be enough of the right type or form to match their purpose or what the teacher knows about their personal background. A variety of different question forms and types that enable learners to use their different reading skills in appropriate ways is of most use.

Discussing the Comprehension-based approach to a text, Tomlinson (2022) notes that traditional reading emphasizes 'comprehension in the form of the presentation of text followed by post-reading questions on the text'. *Headway* provides classic examples of the Reading Comprehension-Based Approach: True or False, gap filling or matching exercises as varieties of activities that are meant to test reading comprehension. Williams and Moran (1989) identified 3 aims:

- a. to check comprehension
- b. to facilitate comprehension
- c. to ensure that the learner reads the text

(a) and (c) contribute to teachers' class management. Teachers may say that they would like (a) 'to check comprehension' so that if there are any misunderstandings, they can help the learners. Checking comprehension may be said (b) 'to facilitate comprehension', whose focus appears to be on helping learners achieve a higher level of understanding of the texts. The failure to respond correctly to comprehension questions may tell the teacher and the learner that there are some problems during the reading process but the comprehension questions do not give information about the nature of the problems".

Diana Freeman (2014), echoing the idea writes, 'reading plays a vital role in language learning; questions contribute to that learning; all modern textbooks have reading texts and accompanying questions and tasks which enables direct comparison . . . while opportunities abound for teachers to find suitable, appropriate and relevant texts, less emphasis has been placed on what is or can be *done* with those texts. Creating a taxonomy of different types of questions not only allows for comparison and contrast of different textbooks, . . .' Freeman uses the term question as 'a wide umbrella term which encompasses not only genuine interrogatives but also instructions for any text-related tasks. The term 'question-type' is used to refer to the kind of thinking, action or approach which is required of the learner in order for them to provide an appropriate response to a specific question or task. Question 'type' is distinguished from question *form* which refers to the structure of the questions such as . . .yes/no, true/false, either/or, the multiple-choice question or a more open Wh-question'.

Freeman (2014) notes that 'no single taxonomy covered all the different types of questions'. She proposed a new taxonomy with three categories—*Content questions*, *Language questions*, and *Affect Questions* as detailed below.

Categories	Comprehension question type	Description
Content questions	Textually explicit	In this question-type the answer to the question can be found stated directly in the text. There is word-matching between the question and the text. The information required is in sequential sentences.
	Textually implicit	In this question-type the answer to the question is stated directly in the text but is not expressed in the same language as the question. The information is not in the same order. It is separated by at least one sentence.
	Inferential comprehension	In this question-type the answer to the question is not stated explicitly in the text but, rather alluded to. The reader has to combine their background knowledge with the information in the text and make the necessary connections.
Language questions	Reorganization	This question-type requires the reader to reorder, rearrange or transfer information in the text. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting sequences in chronological order • Transferring data into parallel forms (e.g. label pictures/maps, complete a table, translate)
	Lexical	This question-type requires the reader to focus specifically on <i>vocabulary</i> , not information. Included in this category are exercises where the reader <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Guesses the meaning of a word or phrase from the context · Matches definition A with word/phrase B · Uses a dictionary Word attack and text attack strategies are included in this level.

	Form	This question-type requires the reader to focus specifically on <i>grammar</i> or <i>form</i> , not information. Examples of Form questions include exercises where the reader <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Changes a sentence from the affirmative to the negative · Forms the question that goes with a given answer · Explains the use of one tense rather than another (e.g. present perfect not past simple)
Affect questions	Personal response	This question-type requires the reader to offer their personal reaction to the text in terms of likes/dislikes, what they found funny, surprising, etc. The reader can be asked to transfer the situation in the text to their own cultural context and comment. Highly subjective, there is no 'right' answer.
	Evaluation	This question-type requires the reader to make a judgement or assessment of the text/information according to some understood criteria. This criteria can be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Formally recognized independent sources · Teacher provided · Student-set standards The reader is also expected to provide a rationale or justification for their view.

Freeman, D. (2014). Reading comprehension questions: the distribution of different types in global EFL textbooks. In N. Harwood (Ed). *English language teaching textbooks: content, consumption, production*. London: Palgrave Macmillan pp. 205-238

The above discussion enumerates the whole constellation of requirements that comprehension of at text at deeper levels necessitates: questions/activities designed to help learners develop skills of analysing a text i.e., Higher Order Thinking Skills

Research questions

In order to investigate the distribution of questions pertaining to reading comprehension in three books prescribed for study for students in classes VIII, IX, and X, the study used Diana Freeman's (2014) taxonomy and formulated the following research questions:

1. Which reading comprehension questions have the highest frequency in the textbooks prescribed for classes VII-X?
2. Is there a difference among frequencies of reading comprehension questions across the three textbooks?
3. What is the range of distribution of the reading comprehension questions?

Method

Three textbooks, titled *Our World through English*, prescribed for study for students of classes VIII, IX, and X of government schools in the State of Telangana, South India, were analysed. These textbooks are distributed free of cost to the learners. The prefaces of the textbooks claim

The State Council of Educational Research and Training has developed the State Curriculum Framework - 2011 and Position Papers in tune with the National Curriculum Framework – 2005 and the Right to Education Act - 2009. Accordingly a new set of textbooks has been designed to be introduced in a phased manner. . . The main aim of teaching English is to help learners evolve themselves as independent users of English.

Each textbook has eight themes, with a unit each/hence eight units. Each of the units further has two prose lessons and a poem. For this analysis, reading comprehension questions based on poems have not been taken into consideration as they mostly aim at enabling learners appreciate a literary piece. Following the descriptive content analysis model, all the reading

comprehension questions that follow a text, exercises, and activities that aim at developing lexical and grammatical competencies were analysed using Freeman's taxonomies.

Findings and discussion

The findings of the study are presented in the following manner: first a report of findings in terms of distribution of reading comprehension questions across the three categories and grades; this is followed by the distribution of reading comprehension questions based on question types; and finally different grades, and finally the distribution of questions across question types and grades. Words 'class' and 'grade' have been used synonymously in the article.

Distribution of Reading Comprehension Questions based on the three categories

	VIII	IX	X	Total
Content	72	71	88	231
Language	42	46	76	164
Affect	20	23	52	96
Total	134	140	216	490

Table 1: Distribution of reading comprehension questions across categories and grades

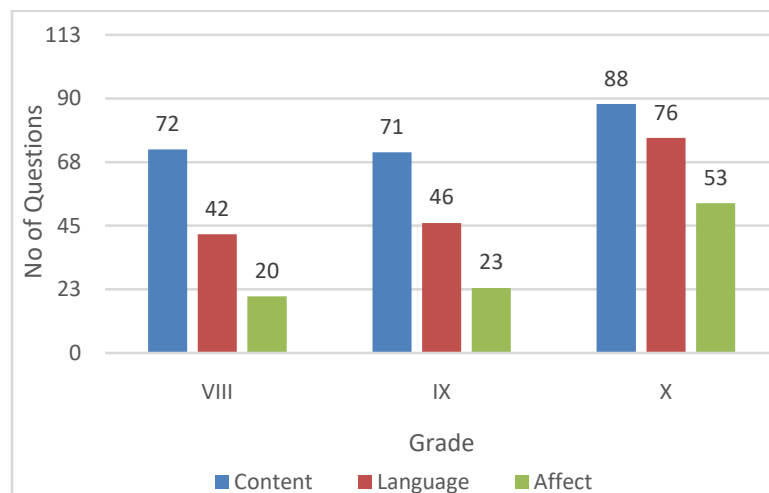


Figure 1: Distribution of reading comprehension questions across categories and grades

Table 1 provides insights into the distribution of reading comprehension questions across the three categories (Content, Language, and Affect) for three different grades (VIII, IX, and X). The table also provides information about the total number of reading comprehension questions for each grade level. Notably, the grade VIII textbook contains 134 reading comprehension questions, while grade IX textbook contains 140, and grade X textbook has 217 questions. Furthermore, Table 1 provides details of the total number of questions across the three classes for each of the three categories. Among the 490 total questions across the three grades, 231 are content, 164 language, and 96 affect questions. Figure 1 is a visual representation of the data in Table 1 through a bar graph. If we observe the data presented in Table 1 and Figure 1, it can be noticed that the percentage of reading comprehension

questions increase and that content questions dominate followed by language and then affect. This distribution seems to have been maintained across the grades.

	VIII	IX	X
Content questions	53.7 %	50.7 %	40.7 %
Language questions	31.3%	32.9 %	35.2 %
Affect questions	14.9 %	16.4 %	24.1 %
Total	100 %	100 %	100 %

Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Reading Comprehension Questions by Grade

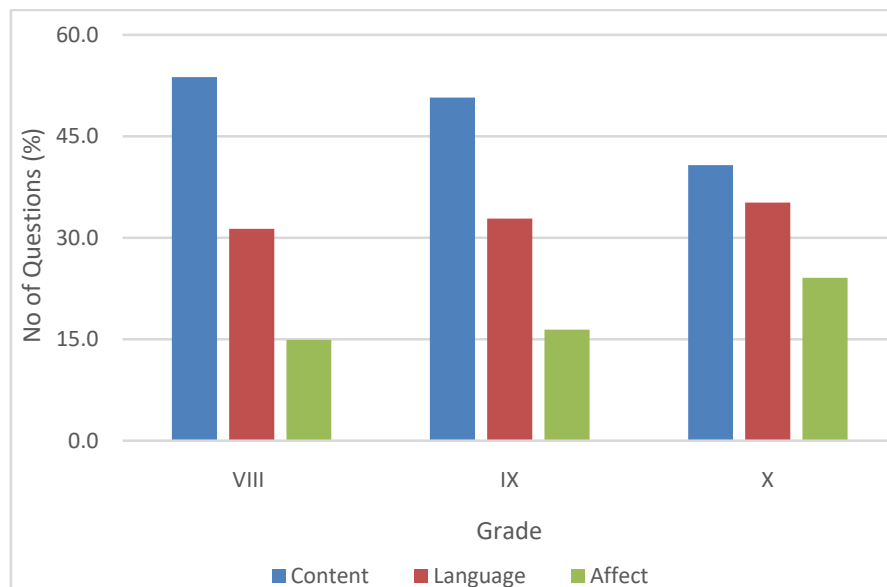


Figure 2: Percentage Distribution of Reading Comprehension Questions by Grade

The paper then discusses the distribution of various categories of question across different grades. This exploration offers insights into the proportion of questions dedicated to each category in the textbook prescribed for study for classes VIII-X. To illustrate, the distribution of content questions (percentage) in the textbook of class VIII was calculated by dividing the total number of content questions (72) by the total number of reading comprehension questions in (134), then multiplying by 100, resulting in a value of 53.7% (Table 2). This data is diagrammatically represented in Figure 2, augmenting information presented in Table 2. As mentioned earlier, a consistent pattern has been observed where content questions take precedence, followed by language and then affect questions. However, a fascinating trend emerges this distribution is examined more closely. While content questions remain prominent, there is a decreasing emphasis on content questions as one progresses through the grades. In Grade VIII, content questions make up 53.7% of the total questions, but in Grade X, this proportion has reduced to 40.7%. In contrast, there is a noticeable increase in the focus on other categories (Table 2).

Specifically, the proportion of language questions rises from 31.3% in grade VIII to 35.2% in grade X. Likewise, the attention given to affect questions also increases from 14.9% in class VIII to 24.1% in class X. Notably, Figure 2 illustrates that the differences in question category proportions have become less pronounced in class X.

Class	Content questions	Language questions	Affect questions
VIII	31.2 %	25.6 %	21.1 %
IX	30.7 %	28.1 %	24.2 %
X	38.1 %	46.3 %	54.7 %
Total	100 %	100 %	100 %

Table 3: Percentage Distribution of Reading Comprehension Questions by Category

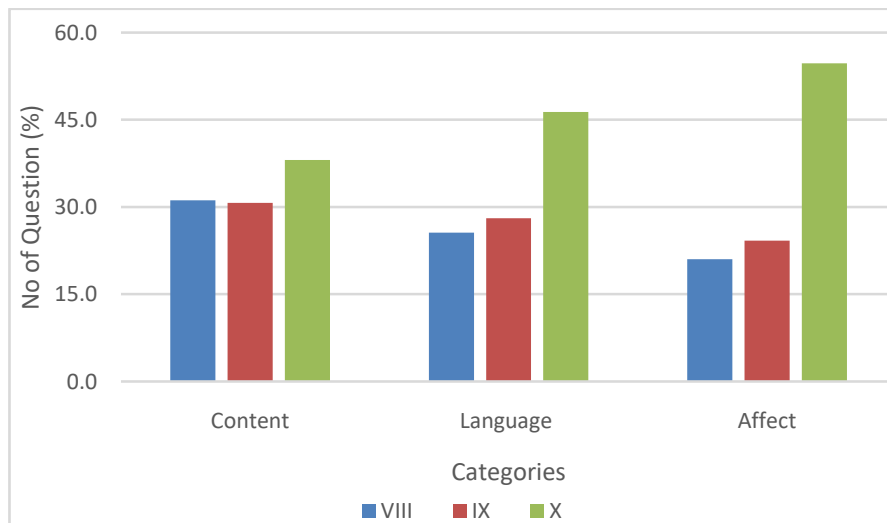


Figure 3: Percentage Distribution of Reading Comprehension Questions by Category

At the next level distribution of categories of questions across different classes was analysed to understand the spread of questions. This helps in understanding the proportion of content questions across the classes to understand which textbook contains the highest number of content questions. To calculate the proportion of content questions in grade VIII, the total number of content questions in class VIII (72) were divided by the total number of content questions across all classes (231). The result was then multiplied by 100, giving a value of 31.2%. These values have been tabulated in Table 3. As mentioned earlier, the distribution of questions across various categories appears increase according to the class. However, an interesting observation emerges when Figure 3 is examined closely. There is a slight dip in the proportion of content questions from class VIII (31.2%) to class IX (30.7%), followed by an increase in class X (38.1%). However, this decline is negligible. Proportion of language questions seem to increase as the learners advance through grades—from 28% in class IX to 46.3% in class X. Similarly, the number of affect questions increase from 24.2% (class IX) to 54.7% (class X).

Distribution of Reading Comprehension Questions based on Question Types

Table 4 shows the distribution of reading comprehension questions across three classes divided into eight question types.

S No	Question Type	VII	IX	X	Total
1.	Textually Explicit	1	17	16	34
2.	Textually Implicit	47	48	61	156
3.	Inferential Comprehension	24	6	11	41
4.	Reorganisation	3	3	6	12
5.	Lexical	23	27	39	89
6.	Form	16	16	31	63
7.	Personal Response	13	19	25	57
8.	Evaluation	7	4	27	38
	Total	134	140	216	490

Table 4: Distribution of questions across question -types and grades

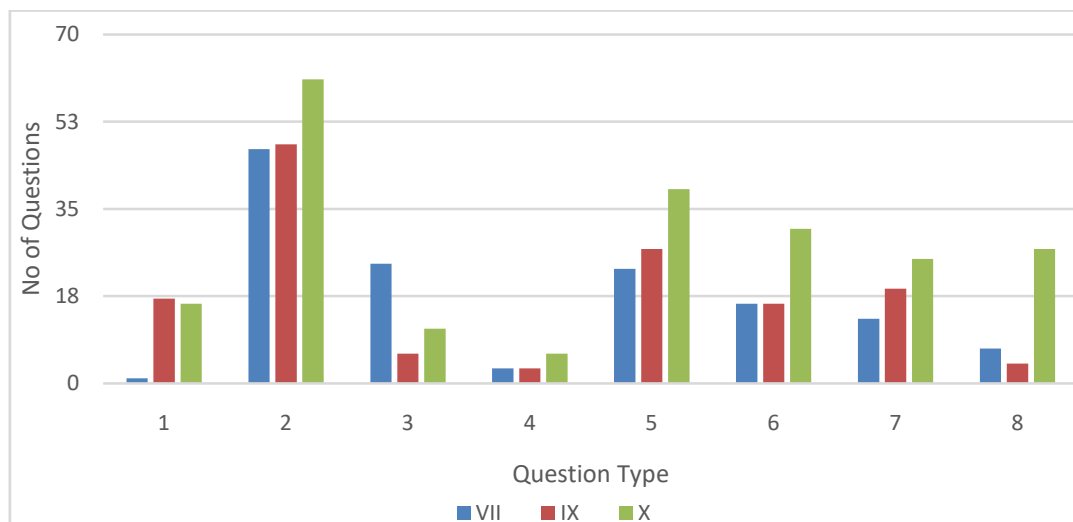


Figure 4: Distribution of questions across question -types and grades

It can be seen that all textbooks across the three grades emphasise the provision of practice in answering textually implicit questions, followed by lexical, and form-related questions. There is a notable scarcity of textually explicit questions in class VIII (1), followed by a noticeable increase in class IX (17) and a slight decline in their number in class X (16). Conversely, there is a steady increase in the number of implicit questions from 47 in class VIII, 48 in class IX to 61 in class X.

A surprising distribution of inferential comprehension questions, considered to be the most challenging among the content questions (Freeman, 2014), is striking. There are 24 such questions in class VIII, reduced to 6 in class IX, and then they see an almost fifty percent increase/a slight increase to 11 questions in class X. This trend defies conventional logic that as learners progress to higher grades, one would expect a decrease in easy questions and an increase in more challenging ones. Among the language questions, it has been found that questions focusing on reorganisation are somewhat neglected, while questions focusing on lexis seem to dominate, followed by questions addressing the form of the genre. The

progression of lexical questions across the three grades seems steady. However, the jump in form-related question form class IX (16) to grade X (31) is a bit stark. Again, among affect questions a steady progression has been noticed across the classes for personal response questions. In contrast, evaluation questions, which are more cognitively demanding follow a different trajectory—with 7 questions in class VIII, 4 in class IX and a substantial 27 in class X. Table 5 below offers a breakdown of question types within each class, enumerating the proportion of each question type specific to each class.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
VIII	0.7 %	35.1%	17.9%	2.2%	17.2%	11.9%	9.7%	5.2%	100%
IX	12.1 %	34.3%	4.3%	2.1%	19.3%	11.4%	13.6%	2.9%	100%
X	7.4 %	28.2%	5.1%	2.8%	18.1%	14.4%	11.6%	12.5%	100%

Table 5 Percentage Distribution of Reading Comprehension Questions across Grades

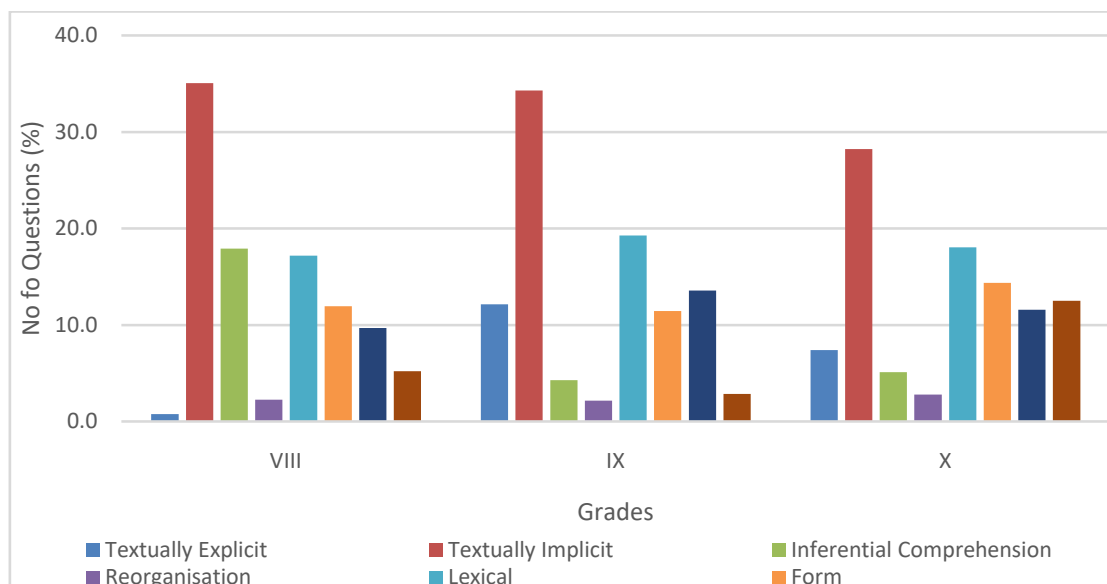


Figure 5 Percentage Distribution of Reading Comprehension Questions across Grades

In line with the earlier observations, Table 5 and Figure 5 reaffirm that textually implicit questions dominate across all grades, followed by questions pertaining to lexis.

Question type	VII	IX	X	Total
Textually Explicit	2.9 %	50.0%	47.1%	100%
Textually Implicit	30.1%	30.8%	39.1%	100%
Inferential Comprehension	58.5%	14.6%	26.8%	100%
Reorganisation	25.0%	25.0%	50.0%	100%
Lexical	25.8%	30.3%	43.8%	100%
Form	25.4%	25.4%	49.2%	100%

Personal Response	22.8%	33.3%	43.9%	100%
Evaluation	18.4%	10.5%	71.1%	100%

Table 6: Percentage Distribution of Questions for each Question Type

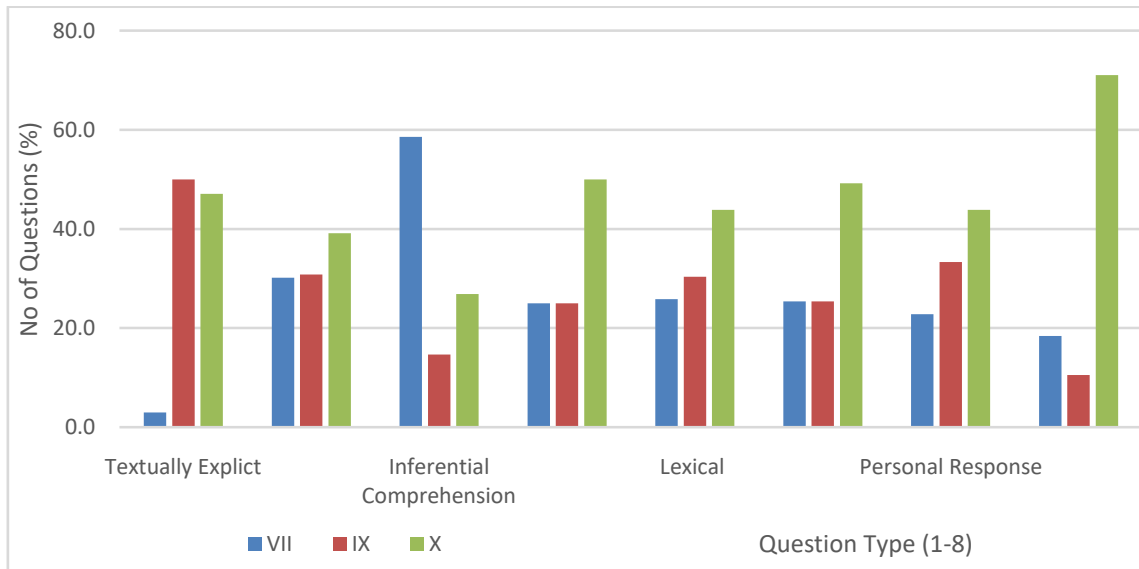


Figure 6: Percentage Distribution of Questions for each Question Type

Table 6 and Figure 6 provide a comparative view of the proportion of each question type across different grades. This comparison allows us to understand how the distribution of each question type evolves across grades. As observed earlier, it is evident that there is a notable reduction of textually explicit questions in class VIII, with an increase in class IX. Inferential comprehension questions are noticeable in grade VIII but decline in subsequent grades. A particularly striking surge can be observed in the prevalence of evaluation questions as we move from classes VIII to X.

Chi-square test of independence

A chi-square test of independence was performed to explore the relationship between grade levels (variable 1) and question-types (variable 2). The analysis reveals a statistically significant relationship between these two variables, as indicated by the chi-square statistic ($X^2(14, N= 490) = 48.28, p = 0.0001$). The very low p-value of 0.0001 highlights the strong and meaningful association between question types and grade levels.

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total	Chi sq	P
VII	O	1	47	24	3	23	16	13	7	134	48.28	0.0001
	E	9.3	42.7	11.2	3.3	24.3	17.2	15.6	10.4	134		
IX	O	17	48	6	3	27	16	19	4	140		
	E	9.7	44.6	11.7	3.4	25.4	18.0	16.3	10.9	140		
X	O	16	61	11	6	39	31	25	27	216		
	E	15.0	68.8	18.1	5.3	39.2	27.8	25.1	16.8	216		

Table 7: Chi-square test of Independence

In sum, this finding suggests that the distribution of question types that was discussed in above sections for the three grades is not haphazard but follows a deliberate pattern. It indicates that textbook designers have carefully considered this distribution. Therefore, the prevalence of certain question types, such as textually implicit, lexical, and form questions can be attributed to intentional design choices by the curriculum developers. Table 7 presents a distribution of observed values (O) and expected values (E) for the three grades for the question-types, along with the chi-square value and the p-value.

Conclusion

Each of the question types in Freeman's (2014) taxonomy has its own merits. Questions under the Content category move from relatively easy to challenging. The *explicit* question encourages learners to find basic information from the text before they take up challenging questions such as the implicit and inferential ones. Questions under the Language category—reorganization, lexical, and form—assist the learners in understanding the importance of structure of language in developing their linguistic abilities. The next category, Affect, provides opportunities for the students to respond to a text based on their personal experiences and to think about the text at a deeper level. Thus, it can be seen that the question types move from lower order to the higher order thinking skills.

However, findings of the study indicate that textually implicit questions are found abundantly across the grades. This calls for a redistribution of question types across the books so as to provide a holistic reading experience to the learners and also develop critical reading abilities. Smith (2012) avers that along with the teachers and students, coursebooks are 'a third pillar' in the classrooms. It is imperative that materials designers take into consideration the place and role of reading comprehension questions and ensure that the distribution of question types is judicious across the levels.

The study focused on analysing textbooks of classes VIII, IX, and X. It would be useful to extend the analysis from classes I-X to ascertain a comprehensive distribution and frequency of categories and question types.

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~Casual Writing in English~

A Glimpse of Mithila: Hidden but Glorious History of Humanity

Nitesh Kumar Mishra

Today, the great and glorious, history and culture, of Mithila has rarely been told interestingly apart from poetic or folk songs. Due to which the glorious culture of Mithila remained unknown. People do not even know what Mithila has given to human civilization. Folk song folk literature, Chitrakarita is that vibrant and rich part of Mithila, which has described the social and culture aspects of life in many images and colours for the cultural understanding of any society. It is necessary to go to all the aspects of the natural environment of the human beings, social system, economic political system, religious sentiments, etc. Therefore, we also study it by dividing it into two parts; the first is the society which is educated, civilized knowledgeable, wise, sensible and with classical ideals. The second society is known by folk life. They have different types of ideals. People's beliefs and folk customs are predominant in their life. Folk element is that aspect of culture which occurs in rural environment as well as in urban environment in general. Culture river of Mithila has strengthened it by staying connected with the mainstream of Indian culture. In Maithili folk songs the soul of Mithila becomes profound. The culture of Mithilas is the spiritual culture because it has threaded the meaning of life in a very beautiful way in the garland of spirituality of life. For example: Embrace your natural surroundings living and eating in the family social system, religious thought, moral sense etc. The whole structure of family and social life here is based on the ideals of religion and duty.

Mithila is where the ideas are churned on the test of logic. To inquire, to question, to argue, whether the subject is politics, social or religious is not considered wrong. The scholar used to prove and answer them on the skill of knowledge. The earliest description of Mithila is mentioned in the shatpatha Brahman text and it has also been glorified in Valmiki Ramayan. It has also been mentioned in 'Vishnu Puran' that Mithila is a sinless and absolute region and it is a holy land where Sita was born. This is the land of knowledge and grace. Prayag and other religious land are virtuous. This holy earth has lived up to the ideal values like immemorial and gave it to the world. This area has always been a source of knowledge and power. Untouchability, sex discrimination, apartheid and physical deformity, never mattered here. Here the king also cultivates, by ploughing and is accessible to the farmers. The great scholar, Ashtavakra who was challenged with eight limbs, was accepted as Guru by King Janak. No such example will be found in any other culture in the world.

Maitreyi, Gargee, Gautami, Bharti became the identity of the great scholarship of Mithila, Asthra and Shashtra were studied by both men and women in Mithila the study of shatpatha Brahman during the Vedic Upanishad period. The Rajyasabha of Mithila was very prestigious and well-known. The chief councillor was the sage Yajnavalkya, who was proficient in Vedas. Mithila of that period was very advanced in education. Spiritualism and art, culture, women's education had reached its height in Mithila. The art of debate gives Mithila a distinct identity. Yajnavalkya the legend of Mithila composed the Yagyarakya Smriti, which is the basic idea of Mitakshara, which is the topic of lectures collectively all over India. Today's Indian constitution is also affected by Mitakshara. Gautam Muni The founder of the famous Nyaya Sutra was a legend of Mithila whose erudition was respected by all and his 'Nyaya Sutra' is still an ideal. Today Indian constitution is influenced by Shukdev Muni who had gone to the royal assembly of King Janak of Mithila to attain spiritual education was astonished to see its worldly splendour. When Ram-Laxman was come to

Mithila for the first time both the princes were bewildered to see whose splendour and prospect which snows that Ayodhya of that time could not be compared to the glory of Mithila.

There was a place of public opinion in electing the king. The king also had to depend on the decision of the council of ministers and the people's council. Apart from this, there were villages, which controlled the king. The governance system of Mithila is discussed in detail in 'Jaimini Upanishad' and 'Chandogya Upanishad'. The power of the committee, which you can also call today's Lok Sabha, was immense; it had the right to elect the king and to remove him. There was respect for the royal position in the society and not for any particular person. Only the king who obeyed the interests of the subjects was respected. 'Matsya Justice System' was popular in many other areas but in Mithila. According to the Matsya Justice the big fish swallows the small fish, it is their right. The rich and the criminal were respected and protected in this Justice system but in Mithila, whether weak or strong, poor or rich, foolish, or educated; everyone got respect and justice equally, where all were equally punished for committing the same crime.

The story of the dark age of Mithila is when King Ajatashatru of the Haryak dynasty deceitfully attacked his maternal grandfather's kingdom 'Lichchhavi' and caused great bloodshed. He created a mastery over his glorious prosperity, destroyed the republic, and re-established the monarchy. Haryak dynasty was known as father killers and was not in the favour of their subjects. They were dictators and self-centred, and the subjects was unhappy. The unrest in the system of government was at its peak. After some time, the dynasty of Shishunag was established in Mithila. Many dynasties came and government in Mithila like Nand dynasty, Mourya dynasty and Shunga dynasty but none were permanent. Pushyamitra Shunga was the great ruler of the Shunga dynasty. Regarding their governance, the coins obtained from excavations by Archaeological Department show that in those days there were organized institutions in the state to conduct business in the city and to control it.

The state system was secular and all the rights of the then prevailing Vedic, Jain and Buddhist religions were equal. Although the system of governance was democratic, but now it was not for the common person, the king was elected by the feudatories of Mithila. That is why is also called Lichchhavisangh. Governance was decentralized by the king was at top. Minister, commanders, ministers of Justice, ministers of religion, ministers of trade, etc were presented who were elected from the union. To choose occupation Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra had their freedom.

The ritualistic and sacrificial practice had created fear and discontent among the common people. It is said that necessity is the mother of invention. It was at this time that Jainism and Buddhism emerged, in which there was no place for violence. These people were vocally opposed to the practice of sacrifice. The common public found it auspicious and people started joining it. The common people found this new religion easy and accessible. The people started joining it and gradually this religion spread to other Janpads with Magadh, Kaushal, Videh and Vaishali.

In ancient times, the trade business of Vaishali, Mithila, Champa and Rajgarh were very prosperous. The people here used to make their living from agriculture and animal husbandry. The villagers lived a contented life as they were the owners of the fields. Merchants were prosperous by doing business through water and land routes in the country and abroad, and used to make the country prosperous. Coercion was not a practice. People used to see Beggary from the point of view with disgust. However, the political instability and looting started by Ajatashatru in the fight for supremacy among royal power, Mithila's position became like a ball of a football game. Some political developments happened due to which Chandradev sat on the throne of Kannauj and Maharaja Nanyadev started the establishment of his Rajkul in Mithila which was Karnat Kshatriya. After fourteen hundred

years of slavery. Mithila became independent under the leadership of Nanyadev and again proceeded on the path of political, social and cultural development. This lasted for about more than 200 years. From the study of contemporary literature of that time, it is known about the governance system of karnat Kshatriya Rajkul that even though it was a Raj Tantric system but the king was Praja Palak. The King has a monopoly on the state and he ruled with the help and advice of a ministers or a council of ministers. However, Raja Harisingh was the last ruler of this dynasty after whose defeat the independence of Mithila also ended. This was followed by the rule of the onward clan who were not completely independent they were under their sultan. Even at the time of this dynasty, the old system of governance remained in Mithila. The king of this dynasty were also Prajavatsal, in this era many texts were written on the law, in which the learned were Pakshdhar, Vachaspati, Misha Mishra, etc. The scholars of this period considered it appropriate to present the Smritigranth, Manu and Yagyavakiya.

When we want to know about the life and culture of medieval India and its part Mithila, then Varma Ratnakar, written by the great scholar Jyotishwar helps a lot. Varma Ratnakar is a contemporary book that throws light on the life of Rajyasabha and common people. The system of governance of both Karna to Panwari dynasty is very much similar in the era of their rule. The character and intellectual development of human life in Mithila had become equal to the extreme progress and propagation of Indian culture of King Janak and Yagayavakya. Since ancient times, Nalanda, Kashi, Mithila and Takkshashila were the centre of knowledge, science and learning

From the point of view of develop and study of Sanskrit literature, art, music, etc, this medieval age can also be called the golden age of Mithila. During this period, many texts, bhashya and theme of texts were created in all parts of literature and science and spread among the public. Among the eminent scholars of the 14th century, there are 4 special exemplary Jagaddhar, Vidhyapati, Shankar Mishra and Vachaspati Mishra. Vidhyapati was a scholar of versatility and an exclusive devotee of Bhagwan Shiva. His poems, songs, and Nachari are still sung and recited from house to house in Mithila. With his efforts, along with Sanskrit language, the regional language Maithali also started developing. Famous and inspirational sentence of Vidhyapati is “desi bayana sab jan mitta”. Along with education, art, also flourished during this period. There was a lot of development of architecture, Sculpture, illustration, art and music during this period. It was the custom of Mithila to decorate the doors of the house with paintings at the time of all auspicious rites and that is also present today.

The influence of foreigners has also been a lot on our life, our society, in our Hindu life four purusharthas have been told Dharm, Arth, Kaam, Moksha. But in other culture materialism gave primacy to the latter. In the Vedic age, where king Janak was prosperity in spirituality, Mithila’s splendour was appropriate even in material prosperity.

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