

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

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

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

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PREFACE

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

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

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

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

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

Thank you for your engagement and support.

Sincerely,

Organising Secretary:

Dr. R. Ajith, Assistant Professor of English

Coordinators:

Dr.R.Mercy Latha, Associate Professor of English

Dr.P.T.Selvi Kohila, Assistant Professor of English

Dr.Anita Albert, Assistant Professor of English

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Dr.Manju Muraleedharan, Assistant Professor of English

PG & Research Department of English

V. O. Chidambaram College,

Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu,India

Principal's Message

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

-Dr. C. Veerabahu

Principal, V. O. Chidambaram College, Thoothukudi

Keynote Address

Dr. Ashok Chaudhary
Vice-Chancellor
Bir Tikendrajith
University
Manipur, India

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Congratulations to the Organisers!

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

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A psyche analysis of Sayaka Murata's *Convenience Store Woman*

Dr. Nanthini. C., Assistant Professor, Department of English (UA), V. O. Chidambaram College, Thoothukudi – 8.

Abstract

Japanese literature is one of the most influential literatures when compared to English literature in age and diversity. This literature has been influenced by cultural contact with neighbouring Asian literatures, especially China. *Convenience Store Woman* (2016) is a novel by the Japanese author Sayaka Murata. The author herself has worked in a convenience store and uses aspects of her own life experiences in this novel. Convenience stores or 'konbini' are widely spread in Japan. They are an essential part of Japanese consumer culture. Keiko Furukura, the protagonist, is a thirty–six-year-old woman who has worked in a convenience store, the Smile Mart. Since childhood, Keiko has been different and she believes that the only way she can prevent others from feeling uncomfortable around her is by imitating them. Smile Mart provides Keiko with guidelines set by the company policy. Keiko mimics their speech patterns and style of dress accordingly. While Keiko's friends comment on her mannerisms, she herself notices the subtle changes around her.

The store hires a part-time employee, Shiraha, who is about Keiko's age. He shares a similar life experiences as that of Keiko. The store employees notice that Shiraha is "strange". This paper examines the psyche of Keiko and Shiraha with reference to Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory. The novel explores the realities of the people who work in the 'konbini'. It also analysis how people with different psyches come to work.

Keywords: Japanese literature, Sigmund Freud, psyche, konbini

Introduction:

Literature conveys an idea that reflects human experiences, realities, and complexity. It captures the subtleties of human emotions, relationships, social structures, and cultural norms through literature. The characters who wrestle with quandaries, leave on excursions of self-revelation, and explore the intricacies of their surroundings. Literature plays a crucial role in the formation of culture by serving as both a mirror that reflects society and a light that directs its development. It preserves a culture's beliefs, values, and traditions for future generations by capturing the essence of that culture

through narratives, poetry, and prose. It offers insights into the historical, social, and cultural contexts in which collective memory emerges as a repository.

A literary work is a piece of fiction that tells stories about various aspects of human life and is composed of the author's thoughts, feelings, and imagination arranged in an interesting way. The purpose of literary works is to entertain and convey moral principles. Endraswara (2013) defines literary psychology as "the study of the inner psychology of characters depicted by authors through thoughts, feelings, and bodies they use to write a work" (193). Similar to this, readers of literature will have the impression that the piece contains a component of their own soul. Although literature and psychology are two distinct scientific fields, they both investigate the human psyche. Psychology studies the "human psyche directly in real life, whereas literature depicts the human psyche through fictional characters"(139). Characters or moods in a literary work that draws readers into the psychological side of human existence can be influenced by psychological research.

According to Nurgiyantoro (2000), Novels are works of fiction providing world with an idealized life and an imaginative world built from a variety of elements, including plot, character and characterization, setting, point of view, and so on. Character is one of the aspects of literary psychology research. A character is a person who is featured in a literary work, such as a drama or a narrative, and who is interpreted by the reader as possessing moral traits and having certain tendencies expressed in speech and action. (114)

The novel by Sayaka Murata is based on traditional Japanese concepts that society is an artificial environment; the idea that people should work or be with their families to help society; People are exceptions; they are evil and ought to be eliminated. Keiko Furukura does not challenge any of these social norms through her behavior or life. She just truly cannot be on top of them and endlessly experiences that.

There are myths about Japanese workaholicism which are a national trait; however, here workaholicism is referred to by its own name. They are characterized by displaying the product precisely, greeting the customers and bending slightly. The store keepers verify that the price tags are still attached. For the past eighteen years, she has worked in part-time, not because she is hopeless but because it is her choice. A book about Keiko and her kindness, *Convenience Store Woman*, depicts the person's encounter with her own fear through images. It becomes clearer how much a person is subservient to the social order as the book pushes for a reevaluation of values. *Convenience Store Woman* by Sayaka Murata is one of the novels included in psychological literature because it describes many psychological activities.

The reader inevitably realizes how much Keiko is influenced by society and the life principles imposed on her by this society when her friends look at Keiko, who tries clumsily, to control herself. This paper primarily focuses on Keiko Furukura, the novel's main character, in "*Convenience Store Woman*." The desire to comprehend Keiko's

personalities and the personality disorders she experiences in the novel is the impetus for this novel's personality analysis. As per Atkinson (2009), psychology comes from the words "mind," and that signifies "soul," and "logos," and that signifies "science" (76). From a linguistic point of view, psychology is a branch of science that studies how people act. Psychology is an area of science that explores human instinct and conduct. In general, it is utilized to comprehend literary characters. The id, ego, and superego are the three components of Freud's personality theory for analyzing personality.

The Id is a personality system that has existed since birth and is stored in the subconscious. It includes instinctive powers and primitive drives. Keiko's action is one of the aspects of the Id personality, which is the human instinct to satisfy basic needs like eating, drinking, and sleeping.

Gracious indeed, it's valid, you have a constant condition, haven't you? It must be extremely difficult for you. That is how you've been for a long time. Is it true that you are alright?" I wished I could return to the convenience store, where I would be valued as a productive employee and where things would be simpler. We were all equals once we donned our uniforms, regardless of gender, age, or nationality—just store employees. (23)

The above quote demonstrates that Keiko possesses the Id personality trait of being uneasy, as evidenced by her desire to leave immediately due to her discomfort with the conversation her friends are having. She claims that she is treated as a normal person only in a convenience store where age, gender, and nationality are not taken into consideration.

Minderop (2011) asserts that the ego is the element caught between two opposing forces and is guarded and obedient to the reality principle. The self image is the component of character that has the truth guideline, which lies between the psyche and the reality. Keiko is encouraged to think realistically by her ego, which is why she did not make Shihara to pay for her because she realized he was unemployed. She too could not give Shihara money because her salary as a convenience store worker would not cover the costs of two people's lives. Keiko says, "...my cells exist for the convenience store," (93) shows how the ego encourages Keiko's personality to have rational principles. Keiko feels that her life and body have become piece of the corner shop, where she feels like a typical person and can face with others.

Superego is a portrayal of virtues which causes people to constantly consider what is beneficial to society and what is detrimental, and their behavior is adapted to reflect this. Keiko's Super ego serves as a conduit between the Id and Ego, an essential component of human personality. The super ego is idealistic and serves as a source of moral principles. When the ego fulfills the wishes of the Id, this component is always present.

The holistic approach of Carl Jung's theory of analytical psychology integrates the human psyche. The personal unconscious and the collective unconscious are linked,

bringing the body, mind, and soul together.

Carl Jung's analytical psychology focuses primarily on understanding and explaining human behavior. Thus, he hoped to help the person by uniting their aggregate oblivious and individual oblivious to diminish anxieties and different types of psychological maladjustment. Keiko Furukura is the novel's protagonist. The Id in Keiko is an organic drive where the craving for fulfillment, requirements and delight should be satisfied. She acts against moral principles and lacks empathy unconsciously due to this component of Id. The self image is a component of character that upholds the Id's cravings, where this component attempts to find what the truth is as per the Id. The self image in Keiko attempts to understand and kill the Id's longings that can't be arrived at by the cognizant brain. Keiko's Ego makes decisions and solves problems in a variety of ways.

Analytical psychology says that neurosis, which is also called neurotic disorder or psychoneurosis, is a mild mental illness that doesn't mean losing touch with reality completely. It begins as a self-division between the collective unconscious and the personal unconscious. Psychosis or a more severe form of neurosis may occur if an individual is overwhelmed by the collective unconscious. On the other hand, if a person loses touch with the collective unconscious, they might instead live a shallow and self-centered life.

The main character in Sayaka Murata's *Convenience Store Woman* is Keiko Furukura. She is a 36-year-old Japanese woman who has been working part-time since she was 18 at a convenience store known as a 'konbini'. She enjoys the structure and routine of her job and is satisfied with it. Keiko has known since youth that she is "unique" and that communicating her own perspectives and activities is puzzling and troubling to other people, and causes issues.

In this paper, the behavioural conditions experienced by the main character in the is neurotic, schizoid, self-absorbed and hostile. The researcher also hopes that readers will be able to imitate the positive aspects of the main character's personality, and that the negative aspects will serve as a lesson in decision-making or motivation.

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Indian Cultural Culinary in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *Mistress of Spices*

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Abstract

Culture defines the way a society lives. It is the customs, ideas, beliefs, and the way of life of a fastidious society. Culture is transmitted through social learnings in the human society and it evolves along with human development. Surviving is one of the major building blocks to a culture. Food plays a major role when it comes to surviving. Food is one of the three main things a person needs for survival. Food is so significant to a culture because in the days before refrigerators, you mostly ate food you could get in your area. In Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's novel *Mistress of Spices* speaks about how Indian spices have significant value in our culture. The novel speaks about food and culture through the experience of immigrants in America. The research paper aims to answer the following questions

- How is food important to our culture?
- Does it affect how we live?
- How spices in the novel *Mistress of Spices* as a metaphor, intricate Indian culture and identity?

Keywords: food, culture, spices, culinary, and identity.

Introduction:

Food is the basic necessity of every living organism. Humans eat to survive. It provides the nutrients needed to maintain good health. Humans adapt to the environment they live. India is a tropical region where there is a wider variety of fruits, vegetables, and spices. So, in Indian cuisine there is large variety of spices and vegetables. Not only climate, but also land determines the types of food available. For example, Eastern Europe is mostly of flat plains, and so raising livestock and growing wheat is much preferable. But this is not all about food. People ate food available in their area, which later became part of their culture. That is why we have so many cuisines in the contemporary world. Food unknowingly determined our behaviour and became a part of our emotions.

Food plays a vital role in literature. Food represents one's identity, culture, and emotions. Food is the basic element upon which various civilizations and cultures are built. In literature, study about food have given rise to culinary literature. Culinary literature is not only the study of food, but also about food's relationship to humans, their identity, emotions, and how much it is important to our culture. It helps to understand ourselves in a better way. American novelist and short story writer Ernest Hemingway in his work *A Movable Feast* have mentioned

As I ate oysters with their strong taste of the sea and their faint metallic taste that the cold white wine washed away, leaving only the sea taste and the succulent texture, and as I drank their cold liquid from each shell and washed it down with the crisp taste of the wine, I lost the empty feeling and began to be happy and to make plans.

Humans created culture. Culture represents everything of a society on a whole. Laws, customs, beliefs, arts, habits, history, social behaviors of a particular society constitute a culture. It is the central concept of anthropology. It is a set of knowledge acquired over a period of time. John Abbot have mentioned "Every man's ability may be strengthened or increased by culture". Culture is very diverse and is the essence of humanity.

Diversity in the culture and a need to better understand a culture's social and historical foundations, have laid path to a separate study called Cultural studies. Initially, it was developed in 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s by British Marxist academics. Later, it was further developed by other scholars. Cultural studies is both interdisciplinary and at times anti-disciplinary. It contains various political approaches to study about various societies, culture, and histories. "Cultural studies, interdisciplinary field concerned with the role of social institutions in the shaping of culture".

One among the important aspects of a culture is food. Food is very much intertwined with culture. Food plays a major role in culture because before the invention of refrigerators people usually consumed what was available in their locality. Food lays bare one's beliefs, passions, emotions, and personalities. It tells us about more stories about families, migrations, and resistance. Food, along with culture, makes us to look deeper into one's ordinary habits.

The term food habits was coined by Kittler, Sucher, and Nelms in the year 2012. Food habits describes the way humans use food, right from how food is chosen, acquired and distributed. So much effort goes into one meal. They have mentioned that food habits are very unique and differs from person to person. This constitutes to the identity of a person. To be more specific, food is an expression of identity. Food retains ethnic identity and self-identity. The protagonist of the novel *Mistress of Spices* by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, identifies herself with food. In the novel she acquires her identity because of food.

I am a Mistress of Spices. I can work the others too. Mineral, metal, earth and sand and stone. The gems with their cold clear light. The liquids that burn their hues into

your eyes till you see nothing else. I learned them all on the island. But the spices are my love. I know their origins, and what their colors signify, and their smells. I can call each by the true-name it was given at the first, when earth split like skin and offered it up to the sky from amchur to zafran, they bow to my command. At a whisper they yield up to me their hidden properties, their magic powers. . . They all hold magic, even the everyday American spices you toss unthinking into your cooking pot. (Divakaruni 3)

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is a well-known Indian born American writer. Her major contributions are to the Diaspora Literature. Her famous works are *Mistress of Spices* and *Sister of My Heart*. She is known for the usage of magical realism in her works. As a Diaspora writer she expresses her love for native land as an immigrant in America. She promotes Indian culture in her works. Divakaruni's works are mostly set either in India or in the United States. Her novels include multiple genres like magical realism, realistic fiction, historical fiction, myth and fantasy. She has published fourteen novels, two young adult and children's books, three poetry collection, and three anthologies. She is the Betty and Gene McDavid Professor of Writing at the University of Houston Creative Writing Program.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's novel *Mistress of Spices* is a novel that speaks of the authenticity of India. In the novel, the author speaks about various Indian spices and uses. She instilled the elements of magical realism in the food, which adds spice to the novel. India is the 'land of spices' and Indian cuisine is known for its spices. Indian spices are not only a major part in Indian cuisine but also in their everyday lives. Indian spices have medicinal values. They are used in cooking and in medicine even before 3000 years. In Indian culture red chilies and salt are used to cast away evil people.

The novel *Mistress of spices*' chapters are divided and named after each spice. The chapters are named as Tilo (derived from Til), Turmeric, Cinnamon, Fenugreek, Asafoetida, Fennel, Ginger, Peppercorn, KaloJire, Neem, Red Chilli, Makawao, Lotus root, and Sesame. In the novel the spices have supernatural powers. The protagonist of the novel Tilo is associated with spices. She is an Indian who settles in America, and owns a spice shop named 'Spice Bazaar'. She is called as 'Mistress of Spices' because of her ability to smell spices and identify them. She named herself as Tilo from Tilottama, in which Til means sesame seeds. "I will be Tilottama, the essence of til life-giver, restorer of health and hope" (Divakaruni 42).

Tilo has every Indian spice in her store and knows how to use them. Tilo is a spice healer. She is born with such a great ability. She heals other South Asian immigrants who visits her using Indian spices. The author has merged the amazing qualities of the spices along with magical elements to serve the purpose of the writing. The second chapter in the novel is named as turmeric. It has great healing properties. Tilo uses turmeric to heal her customers. She keeps turmeric in Lalita's bag to help her in her sufferings.

The third chapter is named as Cinnamon. Cinnamon is a wonderful drug plant.

Tilo gives Jagjit cinnamon to help him make friends and gain strength. The fourth chapter is named as Fenugreek. It contains antioxidants and powerful ingredients. Tilo uses it on Ratna to treat the poison her womb, and to Binita to treat her breast cancer. The fifth chapter is named as Asafoetida. In the novel, asafoetida is mentioned as “an antidote of love” (74).

The sixth chapter is named as Fennel. Tilo gives fennel to Ahuja’s wife to give her mental strength. The sixth chapter is named as Ginger. It relieves pain. Tilo consumes it as a hot concoction. The seventh chapter is named as Peppercorn. Tilo gives it to Daksha to help her to speak for herself. The eighth chapter is named as KaloJire. Tilo sprinkles it for all the people who have suffered in America, and to Haroun for his safety.

The ninth chapter is named as Neem. Tilo makes a paste out of neem and used it to cleanse, beautify, and disinfect her skin. The tenth chapter is named as Red Chilli. It is used to cast away evil. The eleventh chapter is named as Makardwai. Tilo uses it to make herself beautiful. The twelfth chapter is named as Lotus Root. Tilo uses it on Hameeda to enhance love. Other than this Tilo uses sandalwood powder on Haroun to give him relieve from haunting memories. She gives almond powder to Kesar and Gita’s grandfather to sweeten their thoughts and words.

Through the novel one can understand that in a foreign land, food becomes a part of one’s identity. It conveys one’s culture. The novel appealingly expresses human’s relationship with food, and it represents one’s culture. Food and culture are inseparable. Through the novel it is clear that the food choices one make is often connected to their religious and ethnic believes. So, food acts as a pillar to culture and identity.

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The Impact of Globalisation on Traditional Indian Culture

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Abstract

Globalization has significantly impacted Indian culture by introducing new ideas, technologies, and cultural practices from around the world. It led to increased cultural exchange, adoption of foreign lifestyles, and changes in traditional norms and values. Globalization, modernity, industrialization of economy, science, and medicine contributing to major components in the traditional non-Western cultures with loss of old traditions changing for men, women, and children, work habits, and traditional social structure such as the caste system. Global culture is important because it can be exposure to different languages, religions, and interactions, creating connections and showing diversity. The culture of India comprises of clothing, festivals, languages, religions, music, dance, architecture, food, and art in India. Globalization has also increased competition, inequality, unemployment and environmental degradation. The important objectives behind the study are to identify the impact on Traditional Indian culture in globalisation, to know about the culture and tradition of India and also to understand the importance of globalisation.

Keywords: Indian culture, Tradition of India, Globalisation, Cultural exchange, Degradation.

Introduction:

Globalization has a wide role to play worldwide. It has left back its footprints in every sphere of life. Not only in India, but the interchange of world views and ideas has resulted in a major transformation of the lifestyle and living standard of people globally. Indian culture is no bar to this transformation process. Our deep-rooted traditions and customs have loosened up their hold with the emergence of globalization. India has a rich cultural background and pride in its culture is famous throughout the world. Globalization has not only inculcated the westernization in India, but conversely, the Indian culture has also spread its impact globally. Culture and traditions of any geographic region hold a special significance to its uniqueness and that is the differentiating factor for a population

within a geographic boundary from the other. This uniqueness has been disturbed to varying degrees instead of globalization. Such an impact is very much pronounced when they hit a developing country like India. The culture of any country does not only portray the region and language of the region, but it starts with the mindset and mentality of the residing citizens. Indian culture is quite rich concerning its heritage and resources, and more importantly due to the welcoming approach of its citizens. India is a bouquet varying religion, dialect, edibles, tradition, custom, music, art and architecture, etc., bundled into a single unit of patriotism and unity. The common factor within all these diversities is the Indian mindset of welcoming, greeting, celebrating in a united way with immense affection and togetherness. This is the rich essence of the Indian culture that has attracted many foreigners to stay back in India and mingle into its eternal fragrance. When one analyses this rich culture with the globalization point of view, it can find many punch holes of westernization and mixing of other traits and cultures into our beautifully woven blanket.

The culture of any country does not only portray the region and language of the region, but it starts with the mindset and mentality of the residing citizens. Indian culture is quite rich concerning its heritage and resources, and more importantly due to the welcoming approach of its citizens. India is a bouquet varying religion, dialect, edibles, tradition, custom, music, art and architecture, etc.

The joint families have become a strange surprise to the Indians especially to those residing in the metropolitan cities in the small flat culture with the nuclear families blooming up like mushrooms in the rain. People have lost the patience to get adjusted into the joint family, imbibing the values of the elders and getting the young ones brought up under the shadow of their grandparents.

Similarly, marriages have also lost their values. It is very much evident from the increasing number of divorce cases and the extra-marital affairs reported now and then. Marriage used to be considered as bonding of the souls which will be linked even after the death, but today marriage is like a professional bond or a so-called commitment to share life without compromising their self-interest.

Both the genders were kept at a distance, with a lot many restrictions and limitations to the approach for ages in our culture. With the emergence of globalization and western culture, youth have started mixing up well with each other. The friendly approach and the socializing feature is worth appreciable.

Elders have the incorporated values of treating the guests as God, warmhearted welcoming, greeting elders with due respect, and celebrating every small festival with a great color of enjoyment and togetherness. Such a wide gathering with full hue and light can hardly be seen today. People have highly restricted themselves in social interaction.

Indian food, clothing, and languages are varied concerning different states. The food varies in its taste, but every food has its nutrient value and every region is specified and rich in its medicinal preparations with the home remedies. Even the clothing varies

in different states which is very much particular in maintaining the dignity of women.

India was predominantly an agriculturally based country. With the advanced globalization and cropping up of MNCs, the farming has lost its prime value in India. Agricultural science has the least focus amongst the youngsters who consider farming as a shameful profession and look down upon the same.

Unprecedented interaction and mobility have dented local cultures. Large scale immigration and a transnational workforce - the product of globalization - is dispersing cultures across the world, leading to a unified world culture. India is no exception. There was a time when Indians used to greet each other with "Namaste" or something similar in regional dialects. But now it's "Hi" and "Hello" among a large section of the population.

English is already the primary language in India because it connects everybody. Yet each state in the country has a separate first language, and it can sometimes become very difficult without English. For instance, Kannada is the first language in Karnataka, and Malayalam in Kerala.

Globalization is affecting the marital space too. Work is forcing a married couple to lead separate lives, away from each other over a long time. This is typical for those in Information Technology who are working overseas, in the UK, US, France, Australia, and elsewhere. The husband or wife is away. Sometimes, both are working in different locations, because it's not always possible to find jobs in the same place, whether it's the same firm or another.

Thankfully, Indian festivals haven't changed a lot as yet, though some influences can be found. Many festivals have gone global though, as a lot of Dussehra's, Diwali's, and Ganesh Chaturthi's are celebrated abroad by the diaspora. Many locals attend these festivals as well, and get to learn about Indian religious events.

The objectives of the study are

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- To know about the culture and tradition of India.
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Globalization has a wide role to play worldwide. It has left back its footprints in every sphere of life. Not only in India, but the interchange of world views and ideas has resulted in a major transformation of the lifestyle and living standard of people globally. Indian culture is no bar to this transformation process. Our deep-rooted traditions and

customs have loosened up their hold with the emergence of globalization. India has a rich cultural background and pride in its culture is famous throughout the world. Globalization has not only inculcated the westernization in India, but conversely, the Indian culture has also spread its impact globally. The present study entitled that”

The Impact of Globalization on Traditional Indian Culture”

The study is mainly based on secondary data. So, it has all the inherent limitations of secondary data.

Secondary research, also known as desk research, is a research method that involves compiling existing data sourced from a variety of channels. This includes internal sources (e.g.in-house research) or, more commonly, external sources (such as government statistics, organizational bodies, and the internet).

Globalization and Cultural Change:

Scholars such as Arjun Appadurai (1996) have argued that globalization disrupts traditional cultural boundaries and creates new forms of cultural exchange and hybridity. Appadurai's concept of "cultural flows" highlights the role of global media, migration, and technology in reshaping cultural landscapes. Similarly, Manuel Castells (2011) discusses the emergence of networked societies and the impact of digital technologies on cultural production and consumption.

Economic Globalization and Cultural Commodification:

The spread of global capitalism and neoliberal economic policies has led to the commodification of traditional Indian cultural practices. Scholars like Ravi Patel (2020) have examined how tourism, marketing, and the entertainment industry have transformed cultural heritage into marketable commodities. This has raised concerns about cultural appropriation and the loss of cultural authenticity.

Media and Cultural Representation:

The proliferation of global media channels has also influenced the representation of Indian culture on the global stage. Neha Gupta and Rajesh Sharma (2017) explore how global media shape cultural norms and perceptions of India, often perpetuating stereotypes or exoticizing aspects of Indian culture. Such representations can impact local cultural identities and values.

Cultural Hybridity and Identity:

Krishna Dutta (2014) discusses the hybridization of Indian dance forms in response to globalization. She highlights how traditional dance styles have adapted to global audiences and incorporated diverse influences, blurring the boundaries between tradition and innovation. This reflects broader processes of cultural hybridity and negotiation of identities in the face of globalization.

Resistance and Revival:

Despite the challenges posed by globalization, scholars like Chetan Bhatt (2001) have documented efforts to resist cultural homogenization and preserve traditional Indian culture. Bhatt discusses the role of cultural nationalism movements in asserting cultural

identity and challenging dominant global narratives.

- Globalization has a wide role to play worldwide. It has left back its footprints in every sphere of life. Not only in India, but the interchange of world views and ideas has resulted in major transformation of the lifestyle and living standard of people globally.
- Culture consists of beliefs, behaviour's, objects, and other characteristics common to the members of a particular group or society. Through culture, people and groups define themselves, conform to society's shared values, and contribute to society.
- In ancient India, culture was the determining factor of the Indian society. Though different beliefs were followed in different regions, the foundation base of ancient Indian culture remained the same.
- Globalization can be linked to the local, the national and the regional. On the one hand, a connection is made between social and economic relationships and networks, organized on a local and/or national, on the other hand, it connects social and economic relationships and networks crystallized on wider scale the regional and global interactions.
- India has a rich cultural background and pride in its culture is famous throughout the world. Globalization has not only inculcated the westernization in India, but conversely, the Indian culture has also spread its impact globally.
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- This study also tries to find out the negative and positive impact Indian traditional culture.
- Foreign cultures can supersede local, traditional cultural norms, values, and practices.
- Conduct awareness on negative impact of globalization

To conclude, there are different aspects of the Indian culture. Each aspect is practiced by people but not everyone believes in the different aspects. As one can see it is very traditional culture, everyone has their opinion towards it, positive and negative. Therefore, the Indian Culture is very unique and has various practices. Although the youth do not believe in the traditional aspects, the culture will vary with time and will not be traditional anymore because of the modern world. All in all, the aspects are frequently practiced but tomorrow's generation is going to change it. Indian culture is incredibly complex and resembles a chaos of mind-boggling proportions. But beneath this seeming chaos is a scientific foundation that is thousands of years old. The caste system in India, as it appears today, looks unnecessary, unfair, and uncalled for. Why should we discriminate between people based on profession or birth? But this was not always the

case. Sadhguru looks at why the caste system was set up in the first place and explores whether abolishing the caste system would solve any of the problems associated with it nowadays. It has been a long-standing complaint that Indian youth are highly influenced by American and European cultures. With India fast becoming a truly global environment in terms of economy, food, and culture, what does it take to make sure our youth do not forget the richness of being

Not only in India, but the interchange of world views and ideas has resulted in a major transformation of the lifestyle and living standard of people globally. Indian culture is no bar to this transformation process. Our deep-rooted traditions and customs have loosened up their hold with the emergence of globalization.

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A Gynocentric view on the valiant protagonist's of Kavita Kane in *Sita's Sister* and *Karna's Wife: The Outcast's Queen*

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Abstract

The Indian mythology is entwined with the society and it is the base for Indian culture to lead a systematic life. It creates the role of man and woman and defines the society. The portrayal of Indian woman in mythology is subservient to the patriarchal society withering her dreams and goals but today's women are clear about their roles, knowing their value and importance. The perspective of approaching a problem has changed and transformation has occurred than accusing the other gender and society. The novels of Kavita Kane envisage how the known mythology can be reconstructed in a positive stride. The paper aims to create awareness to the women to understand that culture has nothing to do with her potential and not to stick with olden stigma of life and emerge as a unique personality from the study of the valiant characters of Kavita Kane novel's *Sita's Sister* and *Karna's Wife: The Outcast's Queen*.

Keywords: Patriarchal society, Family, emergence, Perspective, Constructive

Introduction:

Mythology is carried throughout the world depicting their religion, tradition and culture. The word mythology is coined from the Greek word mythos and starts spreading all over the world portraying through the supernatural characters. Varied myths came into existence with multiple concepts: Mesopotamian myths, is often regarded as the oldest known piece of literature in the world. Whereas Greek mythology is filled with tales about relationships between gods and humans, and the Christian mythology tells the story of God creating the Earth and everything after. Taking the Indian mythology, it speaks about the dharma, life style, relationship and belief of every man through the way the supernatural powers represented them in the world. The existing culture is incorporated from the myths. Kavitha Kane, the author of the selected novels comes with a distinctive perspective. She glorifies the unsung characters which are of prime importance to her story. She envisage how the characters to be looked upon and adored by the society. Kavita Kane in her novels gives an insightful look on mythology. The novelty lies in

bringing out the different dimension for the mythological characters like Urmila in *Sita's Sister*, Urvi in *Karna's Wife: The Outcast's Queen*, Surpanaka in *Lanka's Princess*, Saraswati the celestial goddess in *Saraswati's Gift*, *Ahalya's Awakening*, *Menaka's Choice*, *The Fisher Queen's Dynasty*, etc. In all her novels, Kane portrays the lives of the titular characters through her own perspectives. According to Kane she brings out a unique perspective on her protagonist's. She fabricates the characters beyond the level of imagination. According to Hindu mythology the male gender was glorified and meagre importance was given to the counterpart but this theory was placed in proximity in accordance with the female gender. Taking the character of Urmila in *Sita's Sister* and Uruvi in *Karna's Wife: The Outcast's Queen*, the analysis is done to scrutinize the culture existed and the awakening in the women lead to a self-assertion and make them righteous in their thoughts and deed and be a better counterpart of the society.

On analysing the characters of Urmila in *Sita's Sister* and Uruvi from *Karna's Wife: The Outcast's Queen* we find both the women is an icon of womanhood. Without deviating from the culture, we find Urmi kind and gentle at heart brimming with compassion and love towards her husband and *Sister*, but the same person on demand on tough situation arises as a very strong and determined person. She is a rare combination of being bold and beautiful, depicted throughout the novel. She turns to be a child with never give up spirit even if it is a game and turns belligerent and stubborn to accomplish her task not only in her childhood but in all place of demand.

Urmi, though being a cloistered Princess yearned for more adventure and love to travel far of places, unlike the other women folk. She had a passion to gain more knowledge and to be well versed in Vedas, Upanishads, politics, music, art and literature. Though they got a learning centric environment where they all were allowed to get knowledge as "they accompanied their father to all the conferences and religious seminars across the country, experiencing a world no princess had been allowed to visit" (9). She helps her father in compiling scripts for the Philosophy conference that is been hoisted every year in Mithila. Though, Urmi, did not have much interest in the institution of marriage she believed it as the social discipline to get wedded. Her interest was in seeking knowledge rather than finding a suitor. The same urmila changed her mind on encounter with Lakshman and her love was intense and self-less. She accepted being in sub-place to Lakshman as he always had Ram in first priority. Her ability in handling matters is evident in her mother's words about her, "if you can run your home well, you can conquer the world!" (183). Her knowledge on political and societal issues came as an aid when she was entrusted with responsibility by her husband Lakshman to deal with the guidance to prince Bharathan in ruling the kingdom in the absence of Ram and to be a supporter to all the queen mothers.

Analysing the character of Uruvi from *Karna's Wife: The Outcast's Queen* by Kavita Kane we feel the Kshatriya princess of pukeya possess the character similar to Urmila of *Sita's Sister*. She is a daring princess well versed in knowledge, great skills

and with strong mental strength. Uruvi the daughter of King Vahusha and Queen Shubra is known for her inner and outer beauty. Through the lines of the author a clear picture is painted about the princess “An heiress to her father’s legacy, his intelligence, and her mother’s flaming beauty,,,”,(Karna’s wife 8) she is known to be a princess of will power and strong mental strength for though being born in a royal family her love towards the Sutaputra Karna made her take strong decision in her life. She was able to convince her parents and make them understand her love towards karna. she said quietly, looking at her father. ‘I know I love a man the world hates. I know I am hurting you and that I’m asking far too much. And I know it’s all so hopeless. But I needed to tell you the truth. Father I could never marry a person you do not approve of. But it’s also true that I cannot garland just any man at my swayamvara. For me it’s either Karna or no one. If I can’t have him, I would rather stay unmarried (18) “Though she is inclined and adored to Kunti the highness she was able to stay clear in her decision of choosing Karna by rejecting Arjuna.

Facing the humiliation on marrying Karna as his second wife she didn’t feel deprived and low. She handled the humiliation with a strong heart and sarcastic replies and smile. Uruvi never looked down on her in-laws or Vrushali the first wife of karna who comes from the same community. Though being a princess, she never expected special privilege to her. According to her she wants to lead a happy love life with the person whom she is bonded with. Uruvi’s loyalty and unwavering love are exemplified by her determination to stay by Karna’s side through joy and grief.

The same Uruvi stood by the side of righteousness; she never failed to point out to Karna about the mistake he commits standing a friend to Duryodhana. The queen who never gave upon Karna had to face a critical situation; Kane deftly weaves Uruvi’s complex psychological pain as she struggles with her own guilt, when Karna on winning the game of dice commands Dussadhan to disrobe Draupadi in the royal court of Hasthinapura where all the learned heads were present, to avenge the insult done by Draupadi during her swayamvara by rejecting Karna as a person of low caste. Uruvi though had unconditional love on Karna stood against the culture of supporting the husband irrespective of their behaviours. She was unable to accept the mistake committed by Karna and very boldly declared to her husband that she can never forgive him for his mean act. Further when Draupadi forgives Karna she understands that love forgives everything.

Being a dutiful and lovable wife, she tries to make Karna realise that he is in the wrong side When Karna’s unflinching loyalty to Duryodhana leads him towards the path of destruction, she tries to persuade him, unsuccessfully. Though sticking on to the culture in being a devoted wife she constantly reminds him about his immoral behaviour. On coming to know about the true story of her husband uruvi felt Karna was like the sun, his inner strength, his unshakable resolve and acceptance of death dried her anger and grief and she started to love him more intensely. she accepts his decision on standing with

Duryodhana and was aware that death was inevitable with a stone heart. When she comes to know about the multiple curses Karna has, she accepts the reality of his death. She never did lament but turned strong and emotionless. On knowing the birth of Karna she never met Kunti the biological mother of Karna and avoided her and never questioned her as she promised Karna but when Kunti declared the truth to her she never fails to question her of her chastity. She brings out the story of Godmother satyavati the wife of king shanthanu who gave birth to vyasa even before satyavati's marriage. she further with wrath questions Kunti that her other sons are also of celestial birth and when she had the courage to spell boldly in the kingdom why did she forsake Karna and did injustice to him? Being the beloved wife of Karna, she stood for him and was ready to face and oppose anyone who was against Karna.

Uruvi was never afraid to raise her queries to the elders. She had the guts to question almost everything odd around her; she observes things and persons and analyses them critically; she has a strong point of view and without any hesitation questions Bhishma Pitamaha, when he rejects Karna to lead the army as commander-in-chief. She blames the great grandfather Bhishma Pitamaha for being biased she sternly questions when he was able to accept Queen Satyavati the fisherman's daughter as his father Shantanu's wife and further accuse him accepting King Pandu and King Dhritrashtra as the heir to the throne when they are also not a pure royal blood, further incensed she questioned the grandfather the reason for not intervening when Draupadi was disrobed in the Royal court in his presence. She was never afraid to come out with the reality and point out the flaws even when they were elder to her. The same quality was mirrored in Urmila when Bharath refused to lead the kingdom and selected to lead an ascetic life, Urmil became furious and said "So be it, Bharat, like your brothers, Ram and Lakshman you too shall live a life of an ascetic, free from the bond of love and worldly care. Who cares whatever happens to your wife and your family? Today, in this room, we have talked about all sorts of dharma-of the father and the sons, of the king and the princes, of the Brahmin and the Kshatriya, even of the wife for her husband. But is there no dharma of the husband for his wife? No dharma of the son for his mother? Is it always about the father, sons and brothers?" (Sita's *Sister*, 219).

When Gurukashyap controlled Urmil related with her behaviour stating that it is not Mithila she neither took the guilt nor repented instead she stood on her stand bringing out the decision of the patriarchal society and the suffering it caused to the entire family, She, further asked, "if you couldn't keep the vows you made to your wives, why did you brothers marry? You may be the best of the princes, the perfect sons, the ideal brothers, probably the ideal king too, but never the good husband! You are right, Guru Kashyap, Ayodhya is not Mithila. Mithila does not treat women so shabbily" (Sita's *Sister*, 223).

The Protagonist's Uruvi and Urmil started to voice out for the voiceless centuries ago, they started their fight against the old patriarchal system which was keen on keeping the female as their dolls and make them function according to their needs and

desires. The culture is not only abiding to the norms of the society but being sensible in thought and expressing their expectation which is highly valuable in the right manner. Questioning the age old custom is not a crime, according to the transformation in the society, women must learn to voice out for their self as Uruvi and Urmi, took a stance against the injustice done to the deprived women society, they never failed to accomplish their duties. Even after the return of Lakshman from the exile of fourteen years Urmi stood by him in all his duties and decisions. Whereas Uruvi took a strong stand of taking care of her in-law's family which is her family. In spite of the offer she received from the Pandavas to join the royal family and to be one among them she refused to do so. When her son was given an offer to become the next king she bluntly refused and gave them the only privilege to be a guide and a teacher of skills to her son. Uruvi found happiness in being her own self helping and healing with her medicinal knowledge the wounded and the dying soldiers. She decided to lead a self-less life being a healer to the needy. She spent her entire life in being a saviour to the society.

No longer can woman be only a spectator in the name of culture, she has her own individual life with passion and desire. Self-actualization is obtained only when realizing the place, a woman can hold in the society and where she can vent out her insight about the issues surrounding her. The intricacies with which the protagonist's handle, give us the vivid knowledge of expressing our own emotions on the social and political issues. The characters which are portrayed in the two novels give a beautiful insight how a woman should be.

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**Conflicts Between Nature and Man as Socio-Cultural in Amish
Tripathi's *The Immortals of Meluha***

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Abstract

Amish Tripathi's *The Immortals of Meluha* provides a powerful charge of the immorality and hypocrisy of Indian society through a variety of topics that are highlighted in his works. Ecology is the study of relationships between the environment and organisms and the way they communicate with the environment. We could argue that faith is what comes to religion, whereas actual proof comes to science. The understanding that we have reached the edge of environmental limits, a time when the effects of human actions are harming the planet's basic life support system, is the driving force behind the majority of ecological efforts. This awareness brings us a desire to contribute to environmental restoration and is also representative of literature. The issues of environmental pollution are addressed in this paper. The plot is set in 1900 BC but the situations which the author portrays are also the replica of the present state.

Keywords: Ecology, Environmental Criticism, Culture, Science.

Introduction:

The novel *The Immortals of Meluha* Amish portrays the environment in Tibet and Meluha, which is the land of pure life. Shiva the tribal leader of Gunas is a huge admirer of nature and believes that the natural world is the Almighty. He rejects the worship of idols and the worship of symbolic deities. Living at the base of Mount Kailash in Tibet, next to Mansarovar Lake, Shiva and his tribe Gunas experience a "oneness" with nature. After walking nonstop for four weeks from their native Tibet, Shiva and his tribal Gunas arrive on the fringes of Srinagar in the valley of Kashmir. The Meluhan Empire's snow-capped mountains, lush meadows, deep valleys, twisting rivers, enormous lakes, and stunning buildings have him enthralled.

Shiva strictly adheres to the strict hygiene requirements that support nature as well as the Meluhan tradition, culture, heritage, and dress code. When the Jhelum River reaches the beautiful flat plains, it begins to flow smoothly while being admired for its thunderous booms as it tears over the valleys of the Himalayas. One of Meluhans' primary

public transportation networks is the waterway. Five rivers, the Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, and Beas, cross Punjab's rich plain. "Punjab literally means the land of the five rivers" (Tripathi 34). Amish Tripathi's descriptions of the beauty of nature through Shiva and other characters reveal his love of nature and the eco-environment. The King Daksha who had been as an emperor of the Meluha. The fact that people follow the solar calendar simply indicates that Meluhans are Suryavanshis. They give to others and never ask for anything in return, just like the Sun. The Sun is a natural phenomenon that gives all living things life. Nature provides resources to man without asking for anything in return. The author's eco-awareness is demonstrated by how the Sun is portrayed as being helpful to the world.

Amish Tripathi has shown to be concerned over the effects of environmental pollution. One of the main factors in the development of diseases, health problems, etc. The text brings up the topic of environmental pollution. Literary texts that reflect how people interact with their natural environment can be understood using ecocriticism, which views nature as a self-sufficient, living organism of its own. The other was nature as man advanced from science to modern technology. Nature is the term for everything that is not human. The manufacturing of various goods and health supplements produces lots of waste which is thrown into the water bodies. Serious illnesses like cancer, tuberculosis, the plague, etc. are brought on by contaminated water. The broken bond between modern man and the natural world and with life must be rebuilt. He must once more learn how to summon the energy and understand, as did the ancient Indians thousands of years ago, that we can only take from the ground and atmosphere what we put back into them. Any society, whether it be urban or rural, industrial or technologically advanced, disposes of various waste products that have an impact on the ecology or ecosystem. The flora and fauna are negatively impacted by these contaminants. Environmental pollution is a continuous process that degrades the ecosystem. Industrial activities are the major source of air, water, and soil pollution.

Good and Evil are the ways of life for every living entity. Our creation and destruction are through good and evil through balance and imbalance. The universe continually tries to maintain the balance between good and evil in control. We must make sure that the good is not much enjoyed. By introducing evil to balance out good, the Universe will rebalance itself. Evil comes to serve as a balance to good. Evil always leads to good. Often, the Good we produce breeds the Evil that will ultimately lead to our demise.

In *The Immortals of Meluha* Tripathi addresses this as a serious issue. Meluhans drink Somras, which keeps them young, strong, and healthy. The divine drink that gives immortality is known as Somras. Somras started well because it was only used in very modest amounts. The oxidants are reacted to and absorbed by Somras. The oxidants are then eliminated from the body through sweat or urine. Somras ensures that there are no

oxidants left in the body. However, even after consuming Somras for years, the sweat and urine discharged from the body are still hazardous. So, you have to eject it from the body and make sure that it does not affect anyone else. As a result, the Meluhan society has a high value on cleanliness. The residents of Meluha take two daily baths. Each day, they wash their clothes. Everyone can use a "Great Public Bath". The Public Bath does not have any exclusive accommodations for nobles. All ablution is performed in designated areas, and subsurface drains properly transport the waste outside of the city. The Chandravanshis' homeland or Swadeep is plagued by terrible diseases as a result of the rubbish being dumped there. Chemical industries, textile mills, distilleries, hospitals, and other businesses dump their waste in the waterways. Waste that is dumped in rivers is frequently poisonous and not biodegradable. When living things drink this contaminated water, they get illnesses like cholera, hepatitis, dysentery, etc. This concern is brought up by Amish Tripathi in his book *Saraswathi River is under danger*. As the Meluhans use a lot of water and dump hazardous Somras remains into the river, it is gradually being exhausted. The Somras is both a blessing and a curse; on the one hand, it provides the Meluhans with vigor and vitality, but on the other, it infects the Chandravanshis with diseases and raises the population of Nagas.

When we consider the production and processing of Somras logically, we can see how it turns into something dangerous. Somras, which is produced in Mount Mandar, a remote location. "The Somras powder is manufactured there and then distributed throughout the Meluhan Empire" (Tripathi 107). The trained Brahmins who are viewed as an administrator for the pollution founded the solution as well.

The Chandravanshis were those who were aware of Somras but did not take any specific measures to promote its creation and gain its benefits. They didn't advance to the extent required to rival the Suryavanshis in strength. Because there isn't enough Somras drink for everyone to drink. The Saraswathi River is their exclusive source because other river water cannot be used to make Somras drink. They therefore desired to destroy it.

The events in the narrative insult everyone in the world. Even if their enjoyment destroys the lives of the lower class, the upper class does not care. Because of the anger that results from this attitude, defenseless people are compelled to protest, exactly like Nagas and Brangas did in the story. According to the story, both the oppressor and the oppressed people in society should benefit from the common people's contribution to a better society.

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Transformation of Bhangra Music through the Diaspora

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Abstract

This paper explores the transformation of Bhangra music through diaspora communities, tracing its evolution from its cultural origins in the Punjab region of South Asia to its global dissemination and hybridization in diaspora settings. Initially rooted in South Asian culture, Bhangra gained prominence as diaspora communities migrated to countries like the UK, US, Canada, and Australia post-war. There, it blended with diverse musical genres such as hip-hop and reggae, undergoing significant transformations. Drawing on Homi K. Bhabha's theory of hybridity, the study examines the processes of cross-cultural exchange and identity formation. Through an analysis of key diaspora settings, including the UK, US, Canada, and Australia, the paper explores the socio-cultural contexts, musical interactions, and contributions of diaspora artists in shaping the evolution of Bhangra. Ultimately, the research highlights Bhangra's resilience, portraying it as a cultural bridge fostering community cohesion and transnational identity formation.

Keywords: Bhangra, diaspora, cultural exchange, hybridity, identity formation

Introduction:

The global spread of Bhangra music and its transformation through diaspora communities has garnered significant attention in recent years. Bhangra, a lively and energetic genre originating from the Punjab region of South Asia, has experienced a remarkable journey of evolution as it has crossed borders and blended with diverse musical influences in diaspora settings. Bhangra's journey beyond its cultural origins can be traced back to the post-war migration of South Asian communities, particularly from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, to different parts of the world, such as the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, and Australia. As these diaspora communities established themselves in new cultural contexts, they carried their musical traditions and practices with them. Bhangra, with its vibrant beats, infectious rhythms, and celebratory spirit, quickly gained popularity and became a means for diaspora communities to connect with their cultural heritage and assert their identity. However, as Bhangra adapted to its new diasporic environments, it underwent significant transformations. The interaction with local musical traditions, Western influences, and the evolving

experiences of diaspora communities led to the emergence of unique hybrid forms of Bhangra. These fusions incorporated elements of hip-hop, reggae, electronic music, and other genres, resulting in a rich tapestry of sounds that pushed the boundaries of traditional Bhangra music. This research aims to explore the multifaceted dimensions of the transformation of Bhangra and the contribution of diaspora communities in the evolution of Bhangra, not only as a musical genre but also as a significant cultural phenomenon. By exploring the diverse ways in which Bhangra has evolved and resonated with diaspora communities, this paper will also shed light on the broader themes of cultural hybridity, transnational identity, and the impact of migration on musical traditions.

Utilizing Homi K. Bhabha's theory of hybridity, this paper will unravel the intricate processes of cross-cultural exchange, hybridity, and identity formation within the diaspora context. According to Bhabha, hybridity refers to the process of cultural exchange and cross-fertilization that occurs when different cultures come into contact with one another. Hybridity not only creates new forms of identity but also acts as a site of resistance to dominant culture and a means for the marginalized- here the diaspora communities, to assert their own cultural identity. Hybridity is not a static or fixed concept, rather it is a continually evolving process that challenges essentialist notions of identity and highlights the complex ways in which individuals and communities negotiate their sense of self in multicultural and diasporic contexts

Bhangra, a vibrant and energetic folk dance and music form that originated in the Punjab region of South Asia has experienced a remarkable transformation as it crossed borders and blended with diverse musical influences in diaspora communities. Originally performed by farmers during the harvest season *Vaisakhi* to express their joy and gratitude for a bountiful harvest, Bhangra has transcended its cultural boundaries and gained international popularity. It has become synonymous with Punjabi culture and is celebrated not only in South Asia but also among diaspora communities around the world. This paper examines the dynamic process of Bhangra's evolution in four key diaspora settings: the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, and Australia. These countries have witnessed significant South Asian migration and have become vibrant hubs for Bhangra's cultural reimagining. By exploring the unique socio-cultural contexts, musical interactions, and the contributions of diaspora artists within these regions, we gain deeper insights into the multifaceted transformations that have shaped Bhangra's identity and significance in the global music landscape.

The United Kingdom has long been a focal point for the evolution of Bhangra music outside of South Asia. With the migration of Punjabi communities in the mid-20th century, Bhangra found fertile ground to thrive and adapt in this new cultural milieu. The fusion of traditional Bhangra elements such as the *dhol* beats with Western influences, such as reggae, hip-hop, and electronic music, resulted in the emergence of a distinct British Bhangra sound. "Since South Asian youth, particularly young women, were

forbidden from attending late night events, these hybrid forms of bhangra that were performed at “dayjams” or afternoon rave parties in basements and abandoned buildings became the center of a vibrant and dynamic South Asian youth culture in Britain. Over the following decade, bhangra dancing in UK clubs, including Bhangra Nights pioneered by the enterprising DJ Ritu, became a regular feature in London, Manchester, Birmingham and other cities and towns in the UK. Bhangra became part of British popular culture and was disseminated across the globe, including to the US.”(Roy) Artists like Alaap, Heera Group, Apna Sangeet, and the Bally Sagoo remixes played a pivotal role in popularizing Bhangra and introducing it to mainstream audiences. The vibrant Bhangra music scene in cities like Birmingham, Manchester, and London became a source of pride and cultural expression for the diaspora communities.

In the United States, Bhangra has experienced its own unique transformation. The fusion of Bhangra with American hip-hop, rap, and R&B influences gave birth to a vibrant sub genre known as “Desi hip-hop”. “*Desi*, a term derived from *desh* [nation, village], is an Indian American usage that is used to refer to anyone of South Asian origin, including Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.”(Roy) Artists like Punjabi MC, Jay Sean, Raja Kumari, and Juggy D have successfully blended Bhangra rhythms with contemporary American sounds, creating a new musical hybrid that reflects the multicultural fabric of the United States. Bhangra's popularity in the US is evident through its presence in various cultural events, music festivals, college competitions, and mainstream entertainment platforms. Bhangra has also found recognition in the American music industry, with Punjabi-American artists and producers making significant contributions. Their work has not only garnered a dedicated fan base but has also introduced Bhangra to a wider audience through collaborations with mainstream artists and inclusion in popular music releases. Furthermore, Bhangra has found a place in popular culture through its inclusion in mainstream films and television shows, further expanding its reach and influence.

Canada, with its rich multicultural landscape, has also played a significant role in shaping the evolution of Bhangra. The fusion of Bhangra with Caribbean rhythms, particularly through the influence of reggae and dancehall, has led to the development of unique Canadian Bhangra styles. Bhangra plays a crucial role in fostering cultural pride, identity, and a sense of belonging among Canadian Punjabi communities. It serves as a cultural expression, a form of celebration, and a way to maintain connections with Punjabi heritage while embracing the Canadian experience. In recent years, Bhangra in Canada has gained international recognition through successful artists, dance troupes, and music producers who have achieved global acclaim. Notable artists like Malkit Singh, RDB, and Manj Musik have successfully integrated the influences into their music, creating a distinct Canadian Bhangra sound that resonates with diverse audiences. The vibrant Bhangra music scene in cities like Toronto and Vancouver has become a platform for cultural expression and community cohesion, showcasing the fusion of Punjabi and

Canadian musical traditions.

The presence of Bhangra in Australia can be attributed to the migration of Punjabi communities, primarily from India and Pakistan, who brought their cultural traditions and practices with them. Bhangra initially took root within these communities as a way to maintain connections with their Punjabi heritage and foster a sense of belonging. The energetic and lively form of Punjabi folk dance and music gradually gained popularity and has now become an integral part of the country's multicultural fabric. In Australia, Bhangra not only flourished within Punjabi communities but also gained recognition and popularity among people from diverse backgrounds. The infectious beats, vibrant dance moves, and catchy melodies of Bhangra have attracted a wider audience and have been embraced as a form of cultural expression and celebration. Bhangra has also found its way into various cultural festivals, community events, and competitions across Australia. These platforms provide opportunities for both established artists and emerging talents to showcase their skills and promote the rich cultural heritage associated with Bhangra. The performances often involve colorful costumes, energetic choreography, and live music, creating an immersive and festive experience for audiences. Furthermore, the fusion of Bhangra with other music genres has contributed to the growth and evolution of Bhangra in Australia. Collaborations with local musicians and artists have led to the emergence of hybrid forms of Bhangra, incorporating elements from hip-hop, reggae, electronic dance music (EDM), and more. This fusion has not only expanded the artistic possibilities of Bhangra but has also attracted a broader audience and made it more accessible to diverse musical tastes. Artists like The Bombay Royale, L-Fresh The Lion, and MC Riz have embraced Bhangra's energy while infusing it with local Australian flavors, creating a fusion that appeals to a broad audience. Festivals and events celebrating Bhangra in cities like Melbourne, Sydney, and Adelaide have become important platforms for cultural exchange and community engagement contributing to the visibility and recognition of Bhangra as a significant cultural art form within the Australian cultural landscape.

In conclusion, this research on the transformation of Bhangra through the diaspora reveals a fascinating narrative of cultural exchange, creativity, and resilience. Bhangra, originating from the Punjab region of South Asia, has undergone a remarkable evolution as it crossed borders and blended sounds in diaspora communities across the globe. The United Kingdom, United States, Canada, and Australia have all played significant roles in shaping the trajectory of Bhangra. In the United Kingdom, Bhangra has transitioned from a cultural practice within Punjabi communities to a mainstream phenomenon, driven by the multicultural landscape and the rise of British Asian artists. The fusion of Bhangra with Western musical styles and the embrace of electronic beats have propelled it into popular consciousness, attracting a diverse audience. Similarly, in the United States, Canada, and Australia, Bhangra has thrived within diaspora communities through cultural festivals, dance competitions, and music collaborations.

Local influences and the involvement of diverse communities have expanded the boundaries of Bhangra, making it a global phenomenon that resonates with both South Asian and non-South Asian audiences. The blending of sounds in Bhangra has revitalized the genre, fostering cross-cultural exchanges and creating a sense of belonging among diaspora communities.

The transformation of Bhangra highlights the power of music as a vehicle for cultural expression, identity formation, and community cohesion. It demonstrates the ability of diaspora communities to adapt and innovate while maintaining a connection to their cultural heritage. Bhangra's journey across borders represents the complex interplay between tradition and globalization, showcasing the resilience of cultural traditions and their ability to adapt and evolve in the face of migration, forging connections in an interconnected world.

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Godmen in Indian Literature and their Socio-Cultural Impact

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Abstract

This research examines the portrayal of godmen in Indian literature and their socio-cultural impact through qualitative analysis of various literary works. It investigates how these depictions influence societal norms, beliefs, and practices, considering themes like caste, gender, and socio-economic dynamics. Drawing on literary theory, sociology, and cultural studies, the study sheds light on the complex relationship between literature and culture in shaping attitudes towards godmen in Indian society. By analyzing the influence of godmen on religious practices, belief systems, socio-political dynamics, and economic aspects, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of spiritual authority and power dynamics within Indian literature and society.

Keywords: Belief systems, Caste, Godmen, Literature, Socio-cultural impact

Introduction:

As literary scholar Meenakshi Mukherjee points out, "The way godmen are shown tells us about the spiritual beliefs of a culture and also reflects its social and political situation" (Mukherjee 78). The tradition of godmen in India dates back to ancient times, with revered spiritual leaders guiding communities towards enlightenment. Over centuries, societal changes like the Bhakti and Sufi movements challenged traditional hierarchies. Colonialism and modernization transformed spiritual leadership, giving rise to charismatic figures like Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda. Post-independence, mass media accelerated the spread of spiritual teachings, leading to a diverse range of movements and gurus. While some uphold traditional values, others have faced controversies involving exploitation and misconduct. Today, India's spiritual landscape includes both traditional gurus and self-styled godmen, catering to various seekers.

In Indian literature, the portrayal of godmen explores spirituality, societal norms, and cultural values. These depictions, as noted by M.K. Gandhi, reflect the profound influence these leaders hold. From ancient texts to contemporary fiction, Indian literature delves into the multifaceted nature of godmen, depicting them as bearers of divine insight while grappling with human imperfections. However, as Arundhati Roy highlights, "The

cult of the godman has become a lucrative business, exploiting the vulnerabilities of the masses" (Roy 45). This dilemma prompts critical inquiries into the genuineness and socio-cultural impact of godmen in both literature and society.

The objectives of this research are:

1. Analyze the portrayal of godmen in Indian literature across genres and historical periods.
2. Investigate the socio-cultural influences of literary depictions of godmen on themes like caste, gender, and socio-economic dynamics.
3. Explore the impact of godmen on religious practices, belief systems, socio-political dynamics, and economic aspects in Indian society through literary analysis.

The tradition of godmen in India has ancient roots, where revered spiritual leaders shaped religious and cultural traditions. Figures like rishis and gurus from texts such as the Vedas and Upanishads guided society towards righteous living. Vishwamitra from the Ramayana and Gautama Buddha exemplify the mentorship role in Indian literature. Kabir and Tulsidas, through their poetry, portray the guru as a source of spiritual enlightenment and social reform, advocating for moral righteousness. They emphasize seeking inner truth and devotion to Lord Rama, while also challenging societal norms. Ancient texts illuminate the roles of these spiritual leaders in guiding followers (Doniger 24), reflecting their profound influence on Indian society across centuries.

Scholarly research has extensively explored the socio-cultural impact of godmen in Indian society, revealing their profound influence on religious beliefs, social practices, and political ideologies. Veena Das, a distinguished sociologist, has extensively studied the impact of charismatic leaders, like godmen, on communal tensions and identity politics. She notes how followers form distinct social groups based on shared religious beliefs, contributing to identity formation. Das also explores how godmen navigate socio-cultural tensions, particularly in contexts of religious pluralism and communal conflict. She highlights their attraction to marginalized communities and warns of potential exploitation and manipulation, especially when they perpetuate social inequalities (Das 89).

Ruth Vanita, an anthropologist specializing in gender and sexuality in Indian society, explores how certain godmen reinforce patriarchal norms and traditional gender roles. She highlights their exploitation of authority to marginalize LGBTQ+ communities and uphold conservative values, revealing their wider societal impact on cultural attitudes towards gender and sexuality. Vanita's research provides valuable insights into how godmen contribute to the maintenance of existing power structures in Indian society (Vanita 123).

Furthermore, Peter van der Veer, a prominent historian specializing in religion and modernity in South Asia, has thoroughly analyzed the cultural significance of godmen as intermediaries between tradition and modernity. Additionally, he has delved into the impact of godmen on political ideologies and socio-cultural changes. Van der

Veer investigates how these religious leaders utilize their authority to either endorse or oppose specific political agendas, thereby shaping public opinion and societal norms. Moreover, he highlights instances where godmen actively contribute to socio-economic development initiatives, such as providing welfare services or advocating for educational programs within their communities (van der Veer 56).

Other researchers have contributed significantly to our understanding of godmen in Indian society. Ashis Nandy, a prominent sociologist, explores the psychological dimensions of their appeal, investigating individuals' motivations for being attracted to these figures. He examines how godmen fulfill psychological needs and the implications for individual and collective identities. Additionally, cultural critic Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak examines the postcolonial aspects of godmen's influence, analyzing how they negotiate power dynamics globally. Collectively, these scholarly investigations offer diverse perspectives on the socio-cultural significance of godmen, enriching our understanding of their roles and impacts within Indian society.

The existing studies on godmen in India overlook the literary perspectives. Although historical and sociological analyses contribute valuable insights, there is a notable absence of in-depth literary examinations. The influence of literary portrayals on societal perceptions remains unexplored. Furthermore, research on how audiences perceive literary depictions of godmen is lacking. Such investigations could enhance the understanding of their socio-cultural significance. Additionally, comprehensive examinations of controversies surrounding contemporary godmen are warranted. These analyses could illuminate the inherent power dynamics and social inequalities within this phenomenon.

Literary theory, including postcolonial and feminist perspectives, offers insights into how representations of godmen are shaped by historical and cultural contexts. In Salman Rushdie's "Midnight's Children," the character of the "Sufi" godman reflects post-independence India's anxieties and identity negotiations (Said 24). Arundhati Roy's "The God of Small Things" explores power dynamics and patriarchal norms through interactions with the godman Velutha and female characters (Butler 45). Narrative theory, as seen in Chetan Bhagat's "The 3 Mistakes of My Life," examines how storytelling techniques construct the image of godmen, illustrating the manipulation of narrative to portray divine authority (Booth 72).

From a sociological perspective, theories like functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism provide insights into the roles of godmen in Indian society. In Rohinton Mistry's "Such a Long Journey," the godman serves as a moral authority reflecting societal expectations within the Parsi community (Durkheim 112). Conflict theory, seen in Shashi Tharoor's "The Great Indian Novel," explores power struggles within religious hierarchies and tensions between religious authority and political power (Marx 56). Symbolic interactionism, as depicted in Vikram Seth's "A Suitable Boy," examines the meanings attributed to the actions and symbols associated with godmen,

shaping interpersonal interactions and societal perceptions (Blumer 84).

Cultural studies analyze representations of godmen as reflections of broader cultural discourses and ideologies. In Aravind Adiga's "The White Tiger," tensions between tradition and modernity in contemporary Indian society are reflected in the godman's portrayal (Hall 130). Poststructuralist approaches, seen in Kiran Desai's "The Inheritance of Loss," deconstruct notions of religious purity and authenticity through the godman's character (Foucault 73). Intersectional analyses, as depicted in Jhumpa Lahiri's "The Namesake," consider how factors like caste, class, and region intersect with representations of godmen, highlighting intersecting identities and power dynamics (Crenshaw 102).

Godmen in Indian literature embody a spectrum of archetypal characteristics drawn from religious, spiritual, and societal influences. R.K. Narayan's Swami in "The Guide" personifies the wise sage or guru archetype, captivating followers with his spiritual teachings and miraculous abilities (Narayan 45). Swami serves as a quintessential representation of the revered spiritual leader, guiding individuals towards enlightenment and self-discovery. Similarly, Salman Rushdie's Pir Baba in "Midnight's Children" serves as a guiding force, driving the narrative forward with mystical presence and prophetic utterances (Rushdie 72). Pir Baba embodies the mystic archetype, wielding supernatural abilities and profound spiritual insight that shape the lives of those around him.

These godmen play pivotal roles, shaping the lives of characters and influencing plot trajectories. Arundhati Roy's Velutha in "The God of Small Things" symbolizes the intersection of caste, politics, and religion, serving as an allegory for societal oppression (Roy 103). Velutha's character reflects the theme of social injustice and the exploitation of marginalized communities, highlighting the pervasive impact of caste discrimination in Indian society. Meanwhile, Khushwant Singh's exploration of figures like Sai Baba of Shirdi in "Gods and Godmen of India" delves into the complexities of faith and devotion, highlighting the blurred lines between genuine spirituality and charlatanry (Singh 31). Singh's work spans the spectrum of godmen, from ancient ascetics to contemporary gurus, illustrating the evolution of representations over time.

Rabindranath Tagore's Nikhil in "The Home and the World" represents a modern reinterpretation, emphasizing empathy, tolerance, and social reform over traditional power dynamics (Tagore 54). Nikhil's character embodies a departure from the conventional archetype of the godman, emphasizing humanistic values and progressive ideals.

In literary explorations, recurring themes, symbols, and motifs reveal the complex dynamics of faith, power, and identity in Indian society. The figure of the godman embodies spiritual authority and wisdom, yet also ambiguity and controversy. Symbols of societal oppression and the intertwining of caste, politics, and religion mirror broader cultural issues. Furthermore, changes in representations over time reflect shifts

in religious practices, social norms, and cultural values, emphasizing on the enduring appeal and evolving nature of the godman phenomenon in Indian society.

Influence on Religious Practices: Godmen wield significant influence over religious practices, often introducing novel rituals or interpretations. For instance, according to Sharma (56), many godmen in India have introduced elaborate rituals involving ceremonies and offerings to appease the deities they claim to represent. These practices, although not always endorsed by traditional religious authorities, attract devout followers seeking spiritual fulfillment. Indian literature often explores the role of godmen and their impact on religious practices. For example, in Arundhati Roy's "The God of Small Things," the character of Velutha embodies the influence of godmen as he leads ceremonies and rituals in his community.

Role in Shaping Belief Systems: Godmen play a pivotal role in shaping belief systems by offering alternative interpretations of religious doctrines, as seen in Indian literature. They often present themselves as intermediaries between devotees and the divine, asserting unique insights into spiritual matters. According to Singh (78), godmen utilize their charismatic personalities to reinterpret religious texts and traditions. Indian literature frequently explores this theme, such as in Rabindranath Tagore's "Gitanjali," where the protagonist's spiritual journey is influenced by encounters with various godmen who offer differing perspectives on faith and belief.

Socio-political Influence: The socio-political influence of godmen is palpable in Indian society, often intersecting with religious and political power dynamics. Many godmen leverage their immense following to sway political outcomes or align themselves with influential leaders. As noted by Patel (102), godmen often wield considerable political clout, endorsing candidates or parties that align with their interests. This influence is reflected in Indian literature, where authors like Salman Rushdie in "Midnight's Children" depict the intertwining of religion, politics, and the influence of godmen on societal structures.

Economic Implications: The presence of godmen also carries significant economic implications in India, with devotees making substantial donations or offerings. These financial transactions contribute to the economic sustenance of religious institutions associated with godmen. Gupta (124) observes that the economic activities surrounding godmen constitute a substantial sector of the economy in many regions. Indian literature often portrays this economic aspect, such as in R.K. Narayan's "The Guide," where the protagonist's transformation into a spiritual leader demonstrates the economic motivations behind godmen and religious practices in society.

In conclusion, the portrayal of godmen in Indian literature provides profound insights into the socio-cultural fabric of society. Across genres and historical periods, these literary works explore themes of faith, power, and identity, revealing the complexities of godmen's roles. Through qualitative analysis and literary theory, they serve as mirrors reflecting broader cultural discourses, highlighting the interplay between

tradition and modernity, spirituality and politics. These narratives offer nuanced perspectives on the evolving nature of the godman phenomenon and its enduring relevance in Indian society. Overall, the study of godmen in literature enriches our understanding of spiritual authority and power dynamics, shedding light on their impact on individuals and communities.

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An Ethnography on the Cultural Identity of the Devipujak Vedu Waghri Samaj in Dharavi: Beyond Memory and History

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Abstract

The ethnographic study explores the cultural identity of the Devipujak Vedu Waghri Samaj in Dharavi, Mumbai, within the context of their role as informal e-waste recyclers. The paper delves into the contemporary narratives, caste dynamics, and cultural practices that shape the multidimensional cultural identity of the community by transcending conventional frameworks of memory and historical documentation. Through immersive fieldwork and participant observation, the paper uncovers the dynamics of their changing surname from Waghri to Vedu and their adaptability to the e-waste recycling business. The ethnographic inquiry contributes to a deeper understanding of the marginalised cultural identity and the informal efforts towards a sustainable practice. Drawing from oral narratives, lived experiences, and cultural practices, the study's findings reveal how caste identity, migration and marginalisation have shaped the identity of this community in the urban slum of Dharavi.

Keywords: Devipujak Vedu Waghri, Dharavi, Ethnography, Cultural Identity, Ethnography.

Introduction:

"We are *Devipujaks*. They give us work and we work for them." (Interview, Person 4)

The Waghri community, classified as 'Antyaja' or the last born in the Hindu cosmology (Malkan 1993, Sedgwick 1922, Yadav 2017), is considered a marginalised group primarily residing in North Gujarat (Mead and Laird 1912). Traditionally, they led a nomadic lifestyle, dwelling in makeshift settlements and frequently relocating between villages (Mode and Chandra 1985). While not explicitly labelled as criminal castes, they have garnered a negative reputation associated with theft and begging (Campbell 1901, Baines 1912, Mead and Laird 1912). Presently categorised as part of the Socially and Educationally Backwards Class (SEBC), the Waghri community continues to endure socio-cultural discrimination, particularly in occupational opportunities, despite efforts to address such disparities. The Waghri community residing in Dharavi identifies themselves as Devipujak Vedu Samaj. The altered self-identification with the removal of

‘Waghri’ indicates their proactive response to societal biases and discrimination that the surname carries.

The paper centres on exploring the cultural identity of the Devipujak Vedu Waghri community, particularly in informal e-waste recycling. A two-month immersive study was conducted in Dharavi to delve into the daily lives of the Waghri people engaged in e-waste recycling. The ethnographic approach facilitated an in-depth understanding of their cultural practices, social dynamics, and challenges in this context. By observing and interacting with community members over an extended period, the study aims to shed light on their cultural identity and their engagement with e-waste recycling as a livelihood strategy.

The paper uses Symbolic Interactionism as the theoretical framework to understand the cultural identity of the Devipujak Vedu Waghri Community. Cultural identity encompasses the sense of belonging to a specific group based on various cultural categories, including ethnicity, occupation, religion, and other cultural factors. It is the identification with the customs, traditions, beliefs, and values shared by a particular community or group, which shape individuals' sense of self and their connection to their cultural heritage (Hall 1990).

The Symbolic Interactionism theory centers on the meanings generated through the interactions of individuals within a social setting, emphasizing symbols and their significance (Reck 1863, Goffman 1922). In this framework, cultural identity markers such as surnames, occupation, and religious practices can be seen as symbols that carry meaning and are used in interpersonal communication. Therefore, symbols such as surname, religious rituals, and occupational practices not only reflect historical traditions but also adapt to contemporary contexts in shaping their identity, also these are caste markers in the Hindu society. Thus, the paper analyses surname, occupation and religion as the three cultural identity markers of the Devipujak Vedu Waghri community living in Dharavi.

The research is facilitated through the community's collective memory and involves a two-month ethnographic study to delve into the cultural identity of the Devipujak Waghri community. By adopting an emic perspective, capturing the complexities of caste-tribal connections, engaging with the participants in their own environment, the research explores the cultural identity of the community beyond conventional frameworks.

The Devipujak Vedu Waghri community traces its migration to Dharavi back to historical events, primarily from Banaskantha, Gujarat. Initially known for their nomadic lifestyle and survival techniques, they settled in temporary encampments, engaging in occupations such as hunting, trapping, and begging.

“Our ancestors didn't have land to call their own, so they had to keep moving. They lived in the forest, staying in a spot for about 8 to 10 days before moving on again. They traveled by foot, carrying all their belongings with them in a *potla*—clothes, utensils, and

everything they owned. They tied up their possessions and wandered from place to place, making do with what they had.” (Interview, Person 5)

Historical stigmas, including being labeled as a Criminal Tribe during colonial rule, prompted marginalization and restricted access to villages. Over time, socio-economic changes, including land reforms like the Abolition of the Zamindari System in 1950 and the Gujarat Agricultural Lands Ceiling Act of 1960 and industrialization, influenced their migration patterns, leading many to settle in urban centers like Dharavi for livelihood opportunities. The census report states the increasing rate of Gujarati migrants into Greater Mumbai. The Waghri community in cities earned their living in an informal setup by being a daily wage worker, collecting waste, rag picking, or dealing with scraps (Saha and Sukanta 2016, Yadav 2017). The Waghri community migrated from Gujarat to Mumbai and other cities for employment and stability (Shah 2011). The migration flow between Gujarat and Maharashtra is derivative of the commonalities between the states, for they were under the same civil administration until 1960. According to the 1961 Census, around 64 per cent of the population of Greater Bombay were migrants, out of which 16.9 per cent were Gujarati migrants (Zachariah 1966). Across India, the Waghri community primarily worked as scrap dealers and recyclers (Shah 2011). They were highly involved in the informal recycling sector with impressive contributions by the Waghri women (Zachariah 1966).

Dharavi, an informal settlement in Mumbai, provided a refuge for low-caste migrants seeking livelihood opportunities. The community initially worked as manual laborers, agricultural workers, and recyclers, adapting to changing economic landscapes. However, limited access to formal education, persistent social stigmas, and economic vulnerabilities have perpetuated cycles of poverty and marginalization within Dharavi. Despite facing challenges, the community engaged in various economic activities such as recycling and e-waste management to sustain livelihoods.

Caste dynamics play a significant role in shaping the cultural identity of the Devipujak Vedu Waghri community. Historically marginalized and stigmatized, they have navigated caste-based discrimination and social exclusion. Migration to urban centers like Dharavi has provided opportunities for economic mobility but also reinforced caste-based prejudices.

The research conducted immersive ethnographic fieldwork over a two-month period, from February 22, 2023 to April 22, 2023 to gain a comprehensive understanding of the Devipujak Vedu Waghri community's involvement in the e-waste recycling economy. This involved direct engagement with community members through participant observation, allowing researcher to observe daily life activities, interactions, and cultural practices within the community. Researcher lived among community members, enabling them to build rapport, gain trust, and develop a deeper understanding of their experiences and perspectives.

Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the research process.

Researcher prioritized informed consent, ensuring that participants understood the purpose, risks, and benefits of their involvement in the study. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained to protect the privacy and confidentiality of participants. Respect for cultural norms and values was upheld, with researcher mindful of potential power differentials and ensuring equitable representation of community voices in the research findings.

Data collection techniques included in-depth interviews and oral narratives, conducted with a total of 65 women and 20 men from the Devipujak Vedu Waghri community directly involved in or in proximity to the e-waste recycling economy, totaling 85 participants. These interviews and narratives provided valuable insights into the community's lived experiences, socio-economic dynamics, and cultural identity. Open-ended questions allowed participants to share their perspectives, experiences, and challenges related to e-waste recycling, contributing to a rich understanding of the community's engagement in this economic activity.

Symbolic interaction rests on three fundamental ideas as outlined by Blumer (1969): (a) People form their opinions about things based on the significance those things hold for them. (b) These significances are derived from the interactions between individuals. (c) These significances evolve through an interpretive process over time. With this in consideration, the study aims to explore the events within the Devipujak community and the societal factors that led to shifts in the interpretations of symbols like the "Waghri" surname. This investigation aims to understand the process that led them to recognize the need for redefining these symbols, ultimately resulting in the decision to change their names.

Several factors have contributed to the adoption of the 'Devipujak' surname. Historical stigmatization and social marginalization associated with the 'Waghri' label (Tarlo 1997) have propelled the community towards seeking a more respectable identity (Goffman 2009). Additionally, the symbolic significance of the term 'Devipujak,' which may connote devotion and reverence, aligns with the community's cultural and religious values. This shift also reflects a strategic effort to control information and shape a more favorable perception of the community among the broader society.

This shift has fostered a sense of pride and empowerment among community members, contributing to a stronger collective identity. However, it also raises questions about the complexities of identity negotiation and the balance between preserving cultural heritage and adapting to societal expectations. Overall, the adoption of the 'Devipujak' surname reflects a dynamic process of identity evolution.

The Waghri community, historically associated with ritually impure occupations, continues to face challenges entrenched within the caste system. In Hindu society, caste divisions are not only about the division of labor but also signify a hierarchy of purity and impurity. The interaction between different castes is restricted to maintain the purity of higher castes from potential impurity associated with lower ones. As a result,

occupations perceived as dirty or low in hygiene, such as waste handling and garbage management, have traditionally been assigned to the lowest castes, including the Devipujak Vedu Waghri community. Despite efforts to challenge and transcend caste-based discrimination, the Devipujak Vedu Waghri community finds itself trapped within the confines of caste occupation due to deep-rooted social norms and systemic inequalities. The association of the Waghri community with waste-related tasks perpetuates social stigma and reinforces their low status within society. This discrimination not only affects their socioeconomic opportunities but also limits their social mobility and overall well-being.

Also, economic factors such as low per capita income, lack of education, high levels of debt, and inadequate nutrition contribute to the community's vulnerability and reinforce their reliance on waste-related occupations for survival. Despite efforts to address caste-based discrimination and improve the socio-economic conditions of marginalized communities, the Devipujak Vedu Waghri community continues to face systemic barriers that hinder their progress and perpetuate their involvement in occupations deemed ritually impure within the caste system.

The cultural identity of the Waghri, now referred to as 'Devipujaks,' is deeply intertwined with their devotion to various goddesses, particularly Devi, or the divine feminine. Despite historical categorizations as a 'tribe' or 'caste,' the Devipujaks' religious practices and beliefs play a significant role in shaping their cultural identity. Worship of goddesses such as Dargaiya, Hanuman, Kalika, Khodair, and others reflects their adherence to non-Sanskritic practices. The worship of these patron deities highlights the Devipujaks' unique religious rituals and traditions, which may include rituals like animal sacrifice and the consumption of liquor, practices often considered 'unclean' within mainstream Hinduism. This divergence from traditional Hindu norms underscores the Devipujaks' distinct cultural identity within the broader Hindu religious landscape. Thus, the Devipujaks' association with goddess worship positions them on the margins of Hindu cultural life, reflecting a complex narrative of assimilation into Hinduism. Despite their marginalized status, their devotion to goddesses reflects a sense of community identity. Through their devotion to Devi and other goddesses, the Devipujaks assert their cultural distinctiveness and reaffirm their place within the broader Hindu religious tradition, despite historical marginalization and societal perceptions.

The transition from the stigmatized 'Waghri' label to the 'Devipujak' surname represents more than just a change in nomenclature; it reflects a broader process of identity negotiation within the Devipujak Vedu Waghri community. This negotiation extends beyond mere symbolic representation to encompass economic opportunities, particularly in the realm of e-waste recycling. With limited access to formal education and facing precarious financial circumstances, many community members have found employment in e-waste recycling as a means of survival. This occupation, often associated with low social status and marginalization, further intersects with caste

dynamics, perpetuating existing social hierarchies.

The adoption of the 'Devipujak' surname, alongside the embrace of goddess worship and engagement in e-waste recycling, thus becomes significant symbols of cultural identity for the community. These symbols not only signal a departure from the historically stigmatized 'Waghri' identity but also serve as markers of their religious beliefs, occupational pursuits, and social positioning within the caste system. Despite the challenges and prejudices they face, the Devipujak Vedu Waghri community actively reshapes their identity through these symbolic expressions, asserting their cultural distinctiveness and striving for social recognition and dignity.

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Socio- Culture Theme in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*

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Abstract

Arundhati Roy expresses her concern for women and the environment in her debut novel, *The God of Small Things*. Women fall into one of Arundhati Roy's categories of insignificant objects. Women still do not hold a position of great social standing in society despite socioeconomic advancement. They are reduced to the rank of the second sex and held in a submissive role. Male domination and female subjugation are the cornerstones of Indian society. Despite being commended for her position as a wife and mother, women are nevertheless viewed as their husbands' legal and economic property. Male and female children are not treated equally by their parents either. The story of *The God of Small Things* tells the tale of Ammu, a lady who is abandoned by her own family and divorced by her spouse. The story explores sociocultural themes and the quest for an individual's social identity as well as human identity within society.

Keywords: Female Subordination, Equality, Freedom, Patriarchal Society, Insecurity, Socio-Cultural Issues

Introduction:

The book has evolved from an artistic form to a tool used by authors to discuss hot-button problems in politics, the economy, society, and other fields with readers in the modern period. Marian Craford correctly describes it as a portable theatre. Roy was born in Shillong, Meghalaya, India, to a Keralite Christian mother and a Bengali Hindu father. Roy examines the challenges of many ethnic groups assimilating without destroying social cohesion in her book "The God of Small Things." The greatest approach to understand ethnicity is as a perspective on human existence. This essay examines the idea of ethnicity in light of Roy's "The God of Small Things" from this point of view. Indian English writing has always been reluctant to address the rich diversity and complexity of different Indian cultures or ethnic groups. This hesitation dates back to the early days. The main characters in this book are making an effort to speak for different groups. They have been travelling to Australia, America, England, Bengal, Madras, New Delhi, Assam, and soon slowly. The art opens the door for a brighter future and has cultural connections to both the past and the present. When Rahel returns to her ancestral home in Kerala,

Ayemenem House, and muses about the numerous changes there, the tale is told from her point of view. The Ayemenem family's past is the basis of the tale, which gradually shifts to depict the evolving circumstances there. In her debut book, Arundhati Roy expresses her concern for women and the environment. Some critics of western feminist theory argue that nature and women are compared to demonstrate how both have been subjected to multiple forms of exploitation by males. When we use the term "nature," we mean it all, not just the natural world but also human society, creative goals, religious convictions, and even leisure activities. In "The God of Small Things," Arundhati Roy demonstrates how every creation has equal significance and that some issues with a spirit must give rise to them. One of the groups of little things that Arundhati Roy represents is women. Women still do not have an advantageous place in society, despite socioeconomic progress. They were maintained as the inferior sex and held in subservience. Male domination and female submission are the cornerstones of Indian civilization. Even though women are valued for their roles as wives and mothers, they are also viewed as their husbands' legal, economic, and sexual property. Not even parents treated male and female kids equally.

The story of "The God of Small Things" tells the story of Ammu, a lady who was abandoned by her own family after her husband filed for divorce. Ammu is Pappachi and Mammachi's daughter. He's her brother, Chacko. She had seen her father treat her mother cruelly when she was a youngster. She met her future spouse while she was living in Calcutta. She chose to marry him after falling in love with him. She recently got married and told her parents. She realised that her spouse wasn't a decent man after they were married. To save his job, he was prepared to deliver his wife to his employer, Mr. Hollick. Rahel and Estha, her twins, and Ammu fled their marriage.

Her brother Chacko was transferred to Oxford for further schooling, but she was not allowed to pursue an education. After getting married to Margret, he had Sophie Mol. After his divorce with Margaret, he moved to Ayemenem to live with his parents. Ammu had an affair with Velutha, an untouchable, in the meanwhile. After information spread, Ammu was confined to a room. They brought Velutha to the police station. He was accused of murdering Sophie Mol, who had unintentionally drowned in the river. In police detention, Velutha passed away. The twins, who were aware of the reality, had to keep it a secret when talking about Ammu's personality. "She stands for those women who are aspiring for freedom and equality," states Arundhati Roy. These women are questioning conventional wisdom and practices. There are only hopes for the future in this part. Like her mother, Rahel is a girl of defiance. At the age of eleven, her mother passed away. This is seen in three of her actions. In an attempt to ascertain whether her breasts hurt, she rushes past the convent girls. She was falsely accused, and rightfully so, of hiding behind closed doors and intentionally running into her superiors. The principal

questioned her about her actions, which included starving, cajoling, and caning her, and she finally confessed that she had done it to see whether her breasts ached. Breast was not accepted in that Christian establishment. Could they have harmed if they didn't exist? They weren't intended to exist. (ibid., 16). She attaches flowers on a ball of manure. In defiance of artificiality and vanity, she sets fire to her housemistress's hair bun. Rahel wrote to Chacko and Mammachi on occasion when she was living in the college hostel. However, she never made it back to Ayemenem. And why? Because she believed that everyone in Ayemenem was aloof and uninterested in her. After Mammachi passed away, she didn't come back. She fell in love at this time with Larry Mc Caslin, who was in Delhi gathering information for his PhD thesis. "Rahel drifted into marriage like a passenger drift towards an empty chair in an airport lounge, with a sitting down sense," the author notes. She went back to Boston with him (ibid: p. 18). Rahel's lovely married life was even plagued by her horrible previous recollections. Rahel's husband was overjoyed to find such a nice and lovely girl: "He held her as though she was a gift, given to him in love." Something little and motionless. Intolerably sharp (ibid: p. 19). Their love marriage, however, did not last for very long. Rahel, like her mother Ammu, was divorced in a matter of days. Estha too had painful events in her life. Kochamma the baby has a tale of her own. She adored Father Mulligan, whom she made fruitless attempts to woo. She converts to Roman Catholicism in order to stay close to him forever.

The major focus of the narrative in "The God of Small Things" is Ammu. She is Rahel's mother, and Mammachi is Ammu's mother. These three personalities have been rendered quite different in the book. We'll talk about the other characters as a group later on, but for now, let's focus on Ammu. She was prevented from completing her education as a result of the patriarchal, male-dominated culture.

She completed her education when she was denied the opportunity to continue her education. After her schooling abruptly ended, she had no choice but to accompany her father to Ayemenem where she would have to wait for marriage while helping her mother with household chores. Ammu became desperate when she didn't receive an acceptable marriage proposal within a decent amount of time.

"All day she dreamed of escaping from Ayemenem and the clutches her ill-tempered father and bitter, long-suffering mother. She hatched several wretched little plans. Eventually, one worked. Pappachi agreed to let her spend the summer with a distant aunt who lived in Calcutta." (38-39)

Rahel received an invitation from Baby Kochamma to remain at Ayemenem House following Ammu's passing. Rahel's struggle with life left her weakened and worn out. After 23 years apart, Rahel and her brother were reunited. Rahel discovers her family home to be fairly deserted. She discovers Baby Kochamma, her grandmother, still alive. While investigating, she reveals a tale interwoven with flashbacks. It reveals politics, myth, sex, violence, music, and both personal and societal history. Their quest for identity is demonstrated by her impending homecoming. It is inferred that they have lost

something, especially their origins and their connection to the Motherland. This starts the character's quest for self-awareness. As a result, there is a feeling of instability and homelessness. They personify their society's past and strive to find their own sense of personal, societal, and human identity. Every character in the book "The God of small things" was "culturally lost." Even after retiring to his house, Pappachi from "The God of Small Things" donned a western suit, indicating that he saw it as a sign of dominance. When Margret Kochamma, Chacko's ex-wife, came after nine years with her kid, she was dressed in a bonnet and bell-bottoms. Tradition and modernity are therefore combining without fanfare. "The God of small Things" is a wonderful illustration of a mixed-race and multi-cultural marriage; Chacko weds Englishwoman Margret Kochamma. Ammu initially weds a Hindu from Bengal and then gets divorced. After that, despite Velutha being a Syrian Christian, she loved her despite her low caste. A grandaunt named Kochamma was drawn to the Irish monk. As a result, the book explores sociocultural themes among the characters. The characters look for who they are throughout the book. Arundhati Roy addresses the novelty of social thinking with a feeling of the social ideas in her book "The God of Small Things." Arundhati Roy believes that the portrayal of women's struggles, exploitation, and unwavering spirits. The story goes both ahead and backward. The narrative was replete with recollections of brutality, exploitation, love, tragedy, and grief. Roy starts her story in the midst of everything, focusing on a single household. "The God of small Things" by Arundhati Roy is a masterful explanation of socio-cultural, post-colonial, and multi-cultural perception. In her works, Arundhati Roy emphasises the idea of social realism, which is described as art that uses the depiction of individuals who are dealing with racial, social, and economic inequalities to depict these themes. Roy's protests against injustice and inequality demonstrate how social realism is being used to attack a variety of different facets of the modern society. According to Arundhati Roy, there are significant differences between men and women in Indian society. With heartbreaking hinting, the writer alludes to the hypocritical ethic.

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**Echoes of Diaspora: Love, Belonging, and Cultural Fusion in Elif Shafak's
*The Forty Rules of Love***

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Abstract

The Forty Rules of Love by Elif Shafak is a multi-layered novel that intricately explores the concept of cultural diaspora through its characters and narrative arcs. Elif Shafak explores the concept of cultural diaspora through the journeys of its characters, particularly Ella Rubinstein, a Jewish-American housewife, and Shams of Tabriz, a wandering dervish. The novel delves into themes of identity, belonging, and the search for spiritual fulfillment across different cultures and historical periods, highlighting the interconnectedness of human experiences despite geographical and cultural differences. Shafak weaves together elements of Sufi mysticism, Islamic history, and contemporary life to illustrate how individuals navigate their cultural diaspora while seeking meaning and connection in a globalized world. At its core, the novel follows two main storylines: one set in contemporary times and another set in the 13th century. In the novel *Forty Rules of Love*, the cultural diaspora serves as a powerful lens through which to examine the complexities of identity, belonging, and relationships. Shafak's ability to effortlessly bound together different cultures and perspectives creates a compelling narrative that resonates with readers on a profound level. Through the experiences of characters like Ella and Rumi, Shafak reminds us of the transformative power of love and spirituality in transcending cultural boundaries. *Forty Rules of Love* is a testament to the richness and beauty that comes from embracing cultural diversity, leaving readers inspired and introspective long after they turn the final page.

Keywords: Cultural Diaspora, Identity, Belonging, Love, Spiritual fulfillment

Introduction:

The Forty Rules of Love by Elif Shafak is a masterful tapestry of storytelling that delves deep into the intricate layers of cultural diaspora, traversing through time and space to weave together the narratives of its diverse characters. At its heart, the novel explores the profound complexities of identity, belonging, and the human quest for spiritual enlightenment across cultural divides. Through the parallel journeys of

characters like Ella Rubinstein, a Jewish-American housewife, and Shams of Tabriz, a mystic dervish, Shafak intricately examines how individuals navigate their cultural diaspora, grappling with questions of heritage, tradition, and the universal search for meaning.

Set against the backdrop of contemporary society and the rich tapestry of 13th-century Anatolia, the novel juxtaposes the experiences of its characters to illuminate the interconnectedness of human existence. Through Ella's journey of self-discovery and awakening, as she embarks on a transformative encounter with the teachings of Sufi mysticism, and Shams' enigmatic wanderings that blur the boundaries between East and West, Shafak deftly explores the fluidity of cultural identity and the enduring power of love to transcend linguistic, religious, and geographical barriers.

Drawing upon elements of Sufi philosophy, Islamic history, and the timeless wisdom of Rumi, Shafak seamlessly interweaves diverse cultural threads to create a rich embroidery of storytelling that resonates with readers on a profound level. Through the novel's exploration of *The Forty Rules of Love*, Shafak invites readers to contemplate the universal truths that underpin human relationships and the transformative potential of embracing cultural diversity.

As readers immerse themselves in the lives of characters like Ella and Rumi, they are reminded of the inherent beauty and complexity of the human experience. Through their journeys, Shafak celebrates the richness of cultural heritage while also challenging conventional notions of identity and belonging. Ultimately, the novel serves as a poignant reminder of the enduring power of love and spirituality to bridge cultural divides and unite humanity in a shared journey of self-discovery and enlightenment.

The narrative also transports the reader back to the 13th century, where we witness the transformative relationship between Rumi, a respected Islamic scholar and poet, and Shams of Tabriz, a wandering dervish and mystic. Their deep spiritual connection challenges societal norms and religious orthodoxy, leading to Rumi's transformation from a scholarly cleric to a passionate poet and mystic. Through these two intertwined storylines, Shafak explores the theme of cultural diaspora in several ways. Both Ella Rubinstein and Rumi experience a sense of displacement and yearning for something more profound in their lives. Ella grapples with her identity as a Jewish-American woman, feeling disconnected from her cultural heritage and searching for a deeper sense of purpose. Similarly, Rumi, despite his esteemed position in society, feels a spiritual void until he encounters Shams, whose unorthodox teachings challenge his preconceived notions and ultimately lead him to a deeper understanding of himself and his place in the world.

Through the characters' interactions and journeys, Shafak illustrates how cultures and traditions are interconnected, despite apparent differences. Ella, through her exploration of Rumi's teachings and the principles of Sufism, discovers universal truths that resonate across cultures and time periods. Similarly, Rumi's poetry and philosophy

continue to inspire and resonate with people from diverse cultural backgrounds, transcending geographical and linguistic barriers.

Both Ella and Rumi embark on spiritual journeys that transcend the confines of their respective cultural and religious backgrounds. For Ella, her encounter with Rumi's teachings and the transformative power of love challenges her preconceived notions and leads her to reevaluate her life choices. Similarly, Rumi's spiritual awakening through his relationship with Shams demonstrates how individuals can find fulfillment and enlightenment through connections that transcend cultural boundaries.

In *The Forty Rules of Love*, Ella Rubinstein serves as a lens through which the exploration of cultural diaspora is deeply examined. Here's an elaboration on how her character embodies and navigates this theme. Ella, as a Jewish-American woman, experiences a profound sense of disconnection from her cultural heritage and identity. Despite being surrounded by familial and societal expectations, she deals with a yearning for something more meaningful in her life. This inner conflict reflects the challenges many individuals face in navigating the complexities of cultural diaspora, where the pull between heritage and assimilation can create a sense of displacement. Through her work as a reader for a literary agent, Ella encounters the manuscript about Rumi and Shams of Tabriz, which introduces her to the rich tapestry of Islamic mysticism and Sufi philosophy. Her journey into Rumi's world exposes her to a culture and spiritual tradition vastly different from her own, prompting her to question her preconceived notions and biases. This cross-cultural encounter highlights the transformative power of literature and human connection in bridging cultural divides and fostering empathy and understanding. Ella's immersion in Rumi's teachings and the relationship between Rumi and Shams catalyzes a profound spiritual awakening within her. As she delves deeper into the principles of Sufism and the concept of divine love (Ishq), she begins to reassess her priorities and values, ultimately embarking on a journey of self-discovery and inner transformation. This search for spiritual fulfillment transcends cultural boundaries, illustrating how individuals can find solace and enlightenment through universal spiritual truths that resonate across cultures.

Through her journey, Ella faces with reconciling her Jewish-American identity with the profound insights she gains from Rumi's teachings. Instead of viewing her cultural heritage and newfound spiritual awakening as mutually exclusive, she learns to embrace the interconnectedness of different cultural and religious traditions, recognizing that true enlightenment transcends labels and boundaries. This reconciliation reflects a deeper understanding of cultural diaspora as a fluid and dynamic process of self-discovery and integration rather than a rigid adherence to fixed identities.

Exploring cultural diaspora through the character of Rumi in the novel offers a profound examination of identity, spirituality, and interconnectedness. Here's how Rumi's character embodies and navigates this theme. Rumi, as a 13th-century Persian poet and scholar, embodies the fusion of diverse cultural influences. Born in present-day

Afghanistan to Persian-speaking parents, Rumi's upbringing exposed him to the rich tapestry of Islamic, Persian, and Central Asian cultures. His father, Baha' ud-Din, was a renowned theologian and scholar, whose teachings and spiritual guidance deeply influenced Rumi's worldview. Despite his Persian roots, Rumi's legacy transcends national and cultural boundaries, resonating with people from diverse backgrounds around the world.

Rumi's encounter with Shams of Tabriz, a wandering dervish and mystic, catalyzes a profound spiritual transformation. Shams's unorthodox teachings and eccentric behavior challenge Rumi's scholarly pursuits and conventional beliefs, leading him on a journey of self-discovery and enlightenment. Through his relationship with Shams, Rumi undergoes a radical shift from a respected Islamic scholar to a passionate poet and mystic, whose verses express the universal themes of love, unity, and spiritual longing.

Rumi's poetry transcends cultural and linguistic barriers, embodying universal themes that resonate with people across time and space. His verses explore the depths of human emotions, the complexities of love, and the quest for divine union, offering spiritual nourishment and solace to seekers from diverse cultural backgrounds. Through his timeless poetry, Rumi exemplifies the interconnectedness of human experiences and the shared pursuit of meaning and transcendence, regardless of cultural or religious affiliations.

Rumi's teachings emphasize the importance of inclusivity and love as pathways to spiritual enlightenment. He famously proclaimed, "Come, come, whoever you are. Wanderer, worshipper, lover of leaving. It doesn't matter. Ours is not a caravan of despair. Come, even if you have broken your vow a thousand times. Come, yet again, come, come." This inclusive message underscores Rumi's commitment to embracing diversity and welcoming seekers from all walks of life into the fold of spiritual fellowship. His legacy serves as a beacon of hope and inspiration for individuals navigating cultural diaspora, reminding them of the transformative power of love and unity in bridging cultural divides and fostering a sense of belonging and interconnectedness.

In Elif Shafak's captivating novel, "Forty Rules of Love," she skillfully explores the concept of cultural diaspora through an intricate tale that spans across continents and centuries. Shafak's mesmerizing storytelling takes readers on a journey through the lives of two characters, Ella Rubinstein and Rumi, highlighting the transcendent power of love and spirituality.

Cultural diaspora refers to the spread and dispersion of a particular culture or community across different geographical locations. It often occurs as a result of migration, colonization, or globalization. In "Forty Rules of Love," Shafak delves deep into the experiences of characters who find themselves in a state of cultural diaspora, grappling with their identities and sense of belonging.

Shafak masterfully incorporates various cultural themes into the narrative,

creating a rich tapestry that celebrates diversity. The novel explores the Sufi tradition, which originated in Persia but spread across the Islamic world, including the Ottoman Empire. Through Rumi's teachings, Shafak introduces readers to the spiritual and philosophical aspects of this tradition, shedding light on its impact on individuals and societies. Additionally, Shafak explores the clash between Eastern and Western cultures, as Ella, an American housewife, becomes enamored with Rumi's poetry and embarks on a journey to discover more about his life and teachings. This clash of cultures allows Shafak to delve into the complexities of cultural diaspora and the challenges faced by individuals trying to reconcile their heritage with their present circumstances.

One of the central themes in the novel is the exploration of cultural identity and the search for a sense of belonging. Ella, a Jewish-American woman, finds herself drawn to Rumi's words and experiences a profound transformation as she delves into his teachings. Through her journey, Shafak highlights the universal desire for connection and meaning, transcending cultural boundaries.

Shafak also explores the concept of dual identity, as characters navigate their multiple cultural backgrounds. This struggle is exemplified through characters like Shams of Tabriz, a wandering dervish, who challenges societal norms and encourages individuals to embrace their true selves, regardless of cultural expectations.

Language plays a vital role in the exploration of cultural diaspora in "Forty Rules of Love." Shafak uses different languages, such as English, Turkish, and Persian, to showcase the diversity of cultures and the challenges faced by characters in their attempts to communicate across linguistic barriers. The novel emphasizes the power of language as a tool for connection and understanding, while also acknowledging the limitations it can impose. Shafak's portrayal of language as a bridge between cultures serves as a reminder of the importance of embracing multilingualism and promoting intercultural dialogue in a world that is increasingly interconnected. The novel also explores the intricate interactions and relationships between characters from different cultural backgrounds. Whether it's Ella's relationship with Aziz Zahara, a Turkish author, or Rumi's encounters with various individuals on his spiritual journey, Shafak highlights the potential for connection and mutual understanding, even in the face of cultural differences.

Through these relationships, Shafak emphasizes the importance of empathy and open-mindedness in fostering harmonious interactions between cultures. The novel challenges readers to question their own preconceived notions and biases, encouraging them to embrace the richness that cultural diversity brings. Within the context of cultural diaspora, "Forty Rules of Love" explores the challenges and conflicts faced by characters as they navigate their identities and cultural heritage. Ella, for instance, must confront societal expectations and norms as she embarks on a journey of self-discovery and spiritual awakening. Additionally, the novel delves into the experiences of characters who have left their home countries and are now living in foreign lands. Shafak sensitively

portrays the feelings of displacement, nostalgia, and longing for one's homeland, highlighting the emotional toll that cultural diaspora can have on individuals. The tension between cultural assimilation and cultural preservation is a recurring theme in *Forty Rules of Love*. Characters grapple with the desire to embrace their cultural heritage while also adapting to the customs and expectations of their current environments.

Shafak presents multiple perspectives on this matter, allowing readers to consider the complexities and nuances surrounding cultural assimilation. The novel prompts us to reflect on the value of preserving cultural traditions while also acknowledging the benefits that come from embracing new experiences and ideas. The impact and significance of cultural diaspora in *Forty Rules of Love* are far-reaching. Shafak's portrayal of characters from diverse cultural backgrounds highlights the importance of cross-cultural understanding and empathy. Through the exploration of cultural diaspora, Shafak challenges readers to confront their own biases and prejudices, fostering a greater appreciation for the beauty and complexity of different cultures. The novel also serves as a reminder of the power of literature to bridge cultural divides and foster dialogue. Shafak's lyrical prose and thought-provoking narrative invite readers to embark on their own journeys of self-discovery and cultural exploration.

Cultural diaspora serves as a powerful lens through which to examine the complexities of identity, belonging, and relationships. Shafak's ability to seamlessly weave together different cultures and perspectives creates a compelling narrative that resonates with readers on a profound level. Overall, the novel offers a profound exploration of cultural diaspora by weaving together diverse characters, narratives, and themes that illuminate the universal human quest for identity, belonging, and spiritual fulfillment across cultures and time periods. In essence, Ella Rubinstein's character in the novel embodies the complexities and nuances of cultural diaspora, illustrating how individuals navigate questions of identity, belonging, and spiritual fulfillment in an increasingly interconnected world. Her journey serves as a poignant reminder of the transformative power of love and human connection in bridging cultural divides and fostering a deeper understanding of ourselves and others. Through the experiences of characters like Ella and Rumi, Shafak reminds us of the transformative power of love and spirituality in transcending cultural boundaries. *Forty Rules of Love* is a testament to the richness and beauty that comes from embracing cultural diversity, leaving readers inspired and introspective long after they turn the final page.

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Mythological Framework in Girish Karnad's *Fire and the Rain*

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Abstract

The stories of Karnad are inspired by Indian mythology, folk culture, folk tales, and historical past of India. Through his dramas, Girish Karnad intends to present totally a modern perspective which delineates the mythological characters with a tinge of relevance. The writer is an expert of using the historical and mythological tales replete with imagery, rituals with their significance and relevance in present context. In 'The fire and the Rain', the writer has successfully used the dramatic techniques like mask, drums, music, curtains, flashback technique, supernatural elements, and play within plays to make the play more effective. The play aims to reflect the inner conflicts, hatred and covetousness which do not hesitate to take revenge on the blood relations. This paper aims to bring forth the relevance of mythological framework used in Girish Karnad's drama, 'The Fire and the Rain' to expose the vices and virtues of human nature.

Keywords: Modern perspective, mythological characters, relevance, dramatic techniques

Introduction:

Tradition of drama in India is age long. The 'Natyashastra', the science of drama, is the most huge and comprehensive study on dramaturgy. The Indian drama originated for the purpose of entertainment and instruction. The stories of Karnad are inspired by Indian mythology, folk culture, folk tales, and historical past of India. His dramas intend to present totally a modern perspective which delineates the mythological characters with a tinge of relevance.¹

Girish Karnad, a Jnanpith awardee, composed plays for four decades often using history and mythology in Kannanda. He is a harbinger of the modern Indian drama which upholds the traditional values along with the basic principles of drama. The writer is an expert of using the historical and mythological tales replete with imagery, rituals with their significance and relevance in present context. The *Fire and The Rain* is the sixth drama of Karnad translated in English and originally written in Kannada. Karnad has successfully re-imagined the old tale of the world of rites and rituals to appease Gods to shower rain to get rid of draught. The writer has successfully used the dramatic techniques like mask, drums, music, curtains, flashback technique, supernatural

elements, and play within plays to make the play more effective. Agni implies purity, sanctity and capacity to burn all the negative aspects of human nature. Rain implies the celestial nature which is transparent. The play aims to reflect the inner conflicts, hatred and covetousness which do not hesitate to take revenge on the blood relations. As a myth, Agni is a symbol worshipped as a god in Indian mythology. 'Girish Karnad has found myths a powerful vehicle to carry the complex ideas of the modern times'.² Through the characters, Karnad successfully exposes the helplessness of the characters whose attempts to prove their superiority over the world through their knowledge go in vain.

The purpose of Drama is to arouse in the audience the feeling of 'pity and fear', to bring catharsis and making the readers emotionally stronger (Aristotle). It is the compassion, forbearance and acceptance which have ruled over greed and ambition since the time immemorial. As the title suggests the play laid bare the opposites –lurks in nature, society and existence of cosmos. Life's glitter tempts and a man has to distinguish between the right and the wrong one, otherwise he is sure to be laid astray. Penance, austerity, the knowledge of religious scripture and meditation as well aim to bring inner integration of soul. According to Bhagwad Gita, the rise of the quality of satva (spiritual balance), integration of soul, is marked over rajas (restlessness) tamas(inertia). The characters of great scholar like Raibhya, Yavakari and Purvasu failed to cultivate spirituality of souls which manifest through honesty of conduct, freedom from burning ambitions for realm and rise. Instead of imbibing integrity of soul, they suffer from rajas; over-ambition, unrest and longing and tamas; darkness, indolence and delusion. The playwright juxtaposes the character of Arvasu to Parvasu, Yavakari and Raibhya .With inner integration of the soul, purity of heart, contentment, fortitude and forbearance in the challenging times Arvasu propounds the basic tenets of love and happiness and ultimately succeeds in bringing 'rain' as a symbol of succour in the society.

According to Arpana Bhargava, 'The story of Yavakari in Capters 135- 8 of the Vana Parva in the Mahabharata is a cautionary tale about the misapplication of the power that human beings receive from the gods after great penance'. The plot of the play is complex one and relies upon an episode from the great epic of Indian mythology, Mahabharata. The prologue opens with a ritual of performing a seven year long sacrifice done by the king to propitiate the God of rain, Indra. The myth of fire sacrifice, considered as the instrument to bring rain, is the pivot around which the play revolves. According to Aparna Bhargava Dharwadker, 'It is a dense, intellectually ambitious play structured around ideas and plethora of tangled relations which unfold with a rare economy of words and emotions.'⁴ The yajna is taken as a sacred medium for man on earth to meet gods. The play very aptly draws the various arrays of human nature; ambition, greed, lust, revenge are epitomised in the characters like- Parvasu, Raibhya , Yavakari and others. Especially, Yavakari is an exposure of the human tendency and entangled relationships, who even after doing rigorous penance for years doesn't turn blind towards the hidden immorality of taking revenge. The writer has taken creative

liberty for the relevance of the human aspects of hidden layers of human behaviour. Even the gods are also a part of the play of this demonic attitude and couldn't save themselves from committing crimes. Parvasu is invited by the king to be the chief priest of the royal fire sacrifice, which is to be held for seven years, to bring rain. Arvasu, the younger son of Raibhya has simplicity of nature which make him a target of others absurdities. Nittilai, a hunter girl, is the beloved of Arvasu. Another character, yavakari, the embodiment of revenge, goes to forest and offers ten years of continuous penance to please the deities to grant him power and knowledge. Resultantly, Indra grants him the boon of universal knowledge. The three powerful men namely; Raibhya, Parvasu and Yavakari steps into the tug of war to establish the superiority and knowledge over others; whereas, Arvasu, at the end of the play, becomes successful in bringing rain through innocence, purity of heart and realization. The characters of Vishakha, Nittilai, and Braham Rakshasa add charm to the play. The myth symbolises the futility of the knowledge gained with illicit motives. The simpleton Arvasu surpasses everyone with his purity and becomes successful to establish the piousness of hearts. This myth of Mahabharata also implies that the human beings are more concerned with customs and less concerned with the sanctity of relations. The Brahmin characters of the play recall, in some aspects, the character Ravan. He was one of the important characters of Ramayan (great epic of Hindu religion), a great king, expert warrior, unparalleled genius, competent politician, expert of ayurveda, an eminent devotee of Lord Shiva and a great scholar. His ten heads symbolise his commendable knowledge of four Vedas and six shatras, hindu religious texts and scriptures. Such an unmatched wit also succumbed to his illegitimate desires and led astray.

The writer has used the technique of flashback as a part of technical innovation. Karnad has excelled in the use of innovation and experiment which seems an outcome of the influence of western theatre and theory. The knowledge of the traditional theatre and mythological studies and a flavour of initiative power and imagination are reflected in the techniques of the writer. It is aptly said that Karnad as a playwright establishes a connection with the contemporary issues which puts forth the conflicts and contradictions of human mind. 'Karnad picks up the myth but uses only the relevant part of it and tries to find solutions of the riddle of the life through them'.⁵

Instead of an expected metamorphosis in the spirit of Yavakari after the austere penance of ten years; the evil wish to take revenge surmounts. 'The past isn't gone. It's here inside me. The time to show the world what my father's son is capable of' (pp 130). 'Karnad has worked out Yavakari myth with extensive and intensive motifs for showing the orbs and curves of human psyche'.⁶ Even after receiving knowledge, out of jealousy he sexually assaults Vaishaka, the daughter of Raibhya to shun the burning desire of revenge. 'I will not deny anything of myself. I want knowledge so I can be vicious, destructive' (pp 131). He is possessed by evil desires and aims to spoil the reputation and contentment of Raibhya's family. 'It was fortunate that you yielded. If you hadn't I

would have had to take you by force' (pp 131). Instead of becoming the master of all the senses; he becomes a slave of his selfhood and illicit passions.

The character of Raibhya is implicit to delineate the vices of an irresponsible parent who spoils the sanctity of blood relations and competes with his own son to become the chief priest for the sacrifice. 'So you measured my life-span, did you? —Tell the king I shall outlive my sons' (pp 138). His knowledge and penance is exposed when he creates Brahma-Rakshasa by using his powers to avenge himself from Yavakari for molesting Vishakha. As a father he lacks the fatherly affection and care for his children. Though, he is a sage but a lustful man who gratifies his lust by seducing his own daughter-in-law. Vishakha describes Raibhya, 'There is a lust. An old man's curdled lust. And there is no one else here to take his rage out on but me' (pp142).

Parvasu, the chief priest for fire sacrifice, has polluted himself by the blood of his own father. Parvasu says for his father, 'He deserved to die. He killed Yavakari to disturb me in the last stages of the fire sacrifice. (pp142)' Even after this heinous crime, he blames his brother Arvasu for murdering Raibhya. For Arvasu he says, 'Patricide – Patricide! What is he doing in these sanctified precincts. Throw him out! Demon! (pp. 148)

The character of Arvasu establishes the sanctity of love, emotions and altruism. For the sake of love, he is ready to renounce the world. Arvasu stands for love, positivity, compassion and hope in the play and his character enables the writer to systematically contrast the life of discipline and sacrifice with the life of emotions and instinct. He says to his beloved Nittilai, 'I worshipped my brother. And he betrayed me.' (pp. 152).

Arvasu's purity of heart is reflected throughout the play. He is a passionate lover, compassionate son and brother and a man of virtues. He nullifies the shackles of caste, creed and not spoiled himself from the treacherous tricks, hypocrisy and propaganda. 'Because I wanted to marry you. I was ready to reject my caste, my birth' (pp. 154). At the end of the play, Arvasu desires to have Nittilai back in his life but at the request of Brahma Rakshasa, he asks for their release and salvation. This compassionate deed brings rain to the parched land. As per Aparna Dharwadker, 'Karnad invents the parallel story of Arvasu as the antithesis to Raibhya, Parvasu, and Yavakari.'⁴

The play 'Agni and the Rain' narrates the tale of revenge, jealousy, lust which beget from the hunger of ambition of man to establish his supremacy over others in the mythological framework is relevant. Modern man is leading wayward life chasing the mirage of success at the cost of relations, love and fraternity. His hands don't quiver to assassinate even his blood relations. Yavakari, Raibhya and Parvasu are Brahmins and supposed to be the epitome of knowledge and perfection but they fail miserably to realise that. The characters of Yavakari, Raibhya, Parvasu and even God Indra in the mythological drama of *Fire And The Rain*, have been projected to carve the fathomless demonic hidden aspirations of human heart. It is said 'power corrupts' and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Penance is done to get the knowledge of abstract values and

unfold the hidden layers of unconscious mind for the realization of one's existence. Attainment of higher self of knowledge in a man is expected to bring greater concentration, enhanced patience, and forbearance, calmness of mind and above all self-realization and self-acceptance.

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Shaping Cultural Perceptions: A Study of Jeff Kinney's 'Diary of a Wimpy Kid' Series

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Abstract

Jeff Kinney's 'Diary of a Wimpy Kid' series has emerged as a significant cultural phenomenon in children's literature, captivating readers worldwide with its humorous yet insightful portrayal of the trials and tribulations of adolescence. This research paper examines the profound impact of Kinney's work on cultural perceptions, delving into how the series navigates and shapes contemporary understandings of childhood and adolescence. Through a multidimensional analysis, encompassing literary, sociocultural, and psychological perspectives, this study explores the ways in which Kinney's narratives reflect, challenge, and contribute to broader cultural discourses. From the portrayal of friendship dynamics to the exploration of family relationships and societal expectations, the 'Diary of a Wimpy Kid' series serves as a rich tapestry through which to examine the intricacies of cultural identity, socialization, and the construction of meaning in contemporary society. By engaging with themes such as peer pressure, identity formation, and the pursuit of belonging, this paper elucidates the complex interplay between literature and culture, shedding light on the enduring relevance and cultural significance of Kinney's literary oeuvre. Through this comprehensive analysis, this research seeks to deepen our understanding of how children's literature influences and reflects cultural perceptions, shaping the narratives that inform our collective imagination and understanding of the world.

Keywords: Children's literature, Cultural perceptions, Adolescence, Sociocultural analysis, Identity formation

Introduction:

Since its inception in 2007, Jeff Kinney's "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" series has captivated readers worldwide, emerging as a significant cultural phenomenon in children's literature. Through its relatable characters and humorous yet insightful narratives, the series offers young readers a window into the complexities of childhood and adolescence. In this paper, we delve into the series' profound impact on cultural perceptions, exploring how it navigates and shapes contemporary understandings of

youth experiences. Through multidimensional analysis encompassing literary, sociocultural, and psychological perspectives, we examine the ways in which Kinney's work reflects, challenges, and contributes to broader societal discourses. By analyzing themes such as friendship dynamics, family relationships, and societal expectations, we aim to deepen our understanding of how children's literature both influences and reflects cultural norms and values, illuminating the enduring cultural significance of Kinney's literary contribution.

The "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" series emerged in the early 21st century against the backdrop of significant cultural shifts. This period saw the rise of digital technology, with the proliferation of the internet, social media, and smartphones shaping the experiences of children and adolescents. In parallel, societal attitudes towards childhood and adolescence were evolving, with increased emphasis on academic achievement and structured activities. The popularity of middle-grade fiction, exemplified by the success of series like "Harry Potter," reflected a growing demand for stories featuring relatable protagonists navigating the challenges of growing up.

Jeff Kinney's series capitalized on these cultural dynamics by offering readers a humorous and candid portrayal of the awkwardness and uncertainties of adolescence. Through the character of Greg Heffley, Kinney explores themes such as peer pressure, identity formation, and familial expectations, resonating with readers who grapple with similar challenges in their own lives. Additionally, the books incorporate satirical commentary on contemporary culture, including trends in education, parenting, and popular media, reflecting the consumerist and technologically driven landscape of the time.

Overall, the historical context of the early 21st century profoundly influenced the themes and messages within the "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" series, providing a rich cultural backdrop against which Kinney's observations and humor could resonate with readers of all ages.

The "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" series has garnered widespread popularity and reception across diverse cultural contexts worldwide, although the interpretation and resonance of the books can vary depending on local cultural norms and values. In Western countries where the series originated, such as the United States and the United Kingdom, readers have embraced the humorous and relatable portrayal of adolescent experiences. However, as the series has been translated and distributed globally, its reception has also been shaped by the cultural nuances of different regions.

In some cultures, particularly those with strong traditions of academic excellence and familial expectations, such as East Asian countries like Japan and South Korea, the themes of academic pressure and familial relationships depicted in the series may resonate particularly strongly. Conversely, in cultures with more relaxed attitudes towards education and upbringing, the humor and universal themes of friendship and self-discovery may be more salient.

Translations of the series often involve adaptation to accommodate local cultural norms and values. For example, certain cultural references or humor may be modified to be more accessible or relevant to readers in different regions. Additionally, cover art and promotional materials may be tailored to appeal to local sensibilities.

Despite these variations, the core themes of the series—such as navigating the challenges of adolescence, grappling with social dynamics, and finding one's place in the world—are broadly relatable across cultures. As a result, the "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" series has enjoyed global success, fostering a sense of camaraderie and shared experiences among readers from diverse cultural backgrounds.

In the "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" series, Jeff Kinney navigates the portrayal of gender roles and dynamics with a blend of humor and observation, offering insights into the complexities of masculinity, femininity, and societal expectations.

The series predominantly centers around the male protagonist, Greg Heffley, whose experiences and perspectives shape much of the narrative. Through Greg's interactions with female characters like his best friend Rowley and his crush Holly Hills, Kinney explores themes of friendship, romance, and gender dynamics. While Greg often exhibits traits associated with traditional masculinity, such as competitiveness and a desire for independence, he also grapples with insecurities and vulnerabilities, challenging stereotypical notions of male stoicism.

Female characters in the series, such as Greg's older sister, Manny's classmates, and Holly Hills, are depicted with a range of personalities and interests, subverting traditional gender stereotypes. For example, Greg's sister is portrayed as intelligent and assertive, while Holly Hills is shown to be confident and independent, defying expectations of passive femininity.

Kinney also incorporates humor and satire to critique gender norms and expectations. For instance, Greg's attempts to conform to masculine ideals, such as by joining the wrestling team or trying to impress girls, often backfire in comical ways, highlighting the absurdity of rigid gender roles.

Overall, while the "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" series may initially appear to reinforce gender stereotypes through its focus on a male protagonist and his predominantly male social circle, Kinney's nuanced portrayal of characters and their interactions ultimately challenges traditional gender norms, offering readers a more complex and inclusive depiction of gender roles and dynamics.

The "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" series holds significant educational value, particularly in its ability to engage young readers in discussions about social and emotional development. Teachers and educators often integrate the series into curriculum and classroom discussions to explore themes such as friendship, bullying, self-esteem, and resilience.

One of the primary ways educators use the series is as a tool for promoting literacy and encouraging reluctant readers to engage with books. The combination of text

and illustrations in Jeff Kinney's novels appeals to a wide range of readers, including those who may struggle with traditional prose. Additionally, the relatable themes and humor in the books can spark meaningful discussions about character development and moral dilemmas.

Moreover, "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" provides opportunities for educators to address social and emotional learning (SEL) competencies, such as self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. By analyzing the characters' experiences and choices, students can develop empathy and critical thinking skills while reflecting on their own emotions and behaviors.

However, the series has also faced controversies in educational settings, primarily related to concerns about its content and appropriateness for certain age groups. Some critics argue that the books contain themes and language that may not be suitable for younger readers, including instances of bullying, mild profanity, and disrespectful behavior towards authority figures. As a result, educators may encounter challenges in balancing the educational value of the series with considerations of age-appropriateness and parental concerns.

Overall, while the "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" series offers valuable opportunities for promoting literacy and facilitating discussions about social and emotional development in educational settings, educators must carefully assess its suitability for their students and address any potential controversies or concerns with sensitivity and discretion.

The "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" series holds significant educational value as it engages readers in discussions about social and emotional development. Educators often integrate the series into curriculum to promote literacy and encourage reluctant readers. The combination of text and illustrations appeals to a wide range of students, facilitating comprehension and critical thinking.

Moreover, the series provides rich material for exploring social and emotional learning (SEL) competencies such as empathy, self-awareness, and responsible decision-making. Teachers use characters' experiences to initiate discussions about friendship, bullying, self-esteem, and resilience, fostering students' understanding of complex social dynamics and their own emotional responses.

Controversies surrounding the series in educational settings mainly revolve around concerns about its content and age-appropriateness. Some critics argue that the books contain themes and language unsuitable for younger readers, including instances of bullying and mild profanity. Educators must balance the series' educational value with considerations of age-appropriateness and parental concerns, ensuring sensitive and responsible integration into the curriculum.

Jeff Kinney's intentions behind the "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" series primarily revolve around providing young readers with relatable and humorous stories that capture the essence of childhood and adolescence. He aims to entertain while also offering

insights into the challenges and joys of growing up.

However, reader responses to the series often extend beyond mere entertainment. Many readers find personal connections to the characters and themes, interpreting the stories in ways that reflect their own experiences and emotions. This active engagement with the text contributes to the cultural significance of the series by fostering a sense of community among readers and validating the diverse experiences of childhood.

Moreover, reader responses to "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" can spark conversations about broader social and cultural issues, such as the pressures of conformity, the importance of friendship, and the complexities of family dynamics. Through these discussions, the series becomes a lens through which readers can explore and interrogate the cultural norms and expectations that shape their lives.

Overall, the interplay between Kinney's intentions and reader interpretations enhances the cultural significance of the "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" series, transforming it from a simple children's book into a cultural touchstone that resonates with readers of all ages.

The fan culture surrounding the "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" series is vibrant and diverse, with fans engaging with the characters, themes, and world of the books in various ways. Online fan communities, such as forums, social media groups, and fan fiction websites, serve as platforms for fans to connect, share their love for the series, and discuss their favorite characters, plotlines, and moments.

Fans often create and share fan art, memes, and videos inspired by the series, showcasing their creativity and passion for the books. Additionally, fan communities may organize fan events, such as book release parties, cosplay gatherings, and themed discussions, providing opportunities for fans to come together and celebrate their shared enthusiasm for "Diary of a Wimpy Kid."

Moreover, fan activities such as fan fiction writing and role-playing games allow fans to immerse themselves in the world of the series, imagining new adventures and scenarios for their favorite characters. These creative endeavors not only demonstrate fans' deep engagement with the series but also contribute to its cultural impact by extending the narrative beyond the pages of the books.

Overall, the fan culture surrounding "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" enriches the series' cultural significance by fostering a sense of community, creativity, and shared experience among fans worldwide. Through their passionate engagement with the series, fans contribute to its enduring popularity and legacy in children's literature.

"Diary of a Wimpy Kid" shares similarities with other influential children's literature series, such as J.K. Rowling's "Harry Potter," and Dav Pilkey's "Captain Underpants," in its ability to captivate young readers with engaging storytelling and relatable characters. Like these series, "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" addresses universal themes of friendship, self-discovery, and growing up, resonating with readers of various ages.

However, Kinney's work also diverges from established literary traditions within the genre in several ways. Unlike the fantasy elements of "Harry Potter" or the superhero themes of "Captain Underpants," "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" offers a more realistic and contemporary portrayal of childhood and adolescence. Kinney's use of a diary format, combined with cartoons and illustrations, creates a unique narrative style that sets the series apart from traditional chapter books.

Moreover, while some children's literature series focus on epic adventures or supernatural conflicts, "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" prioritizes everyday experiences and mundane challenges, allowing readers to see themselves reflected in the ordinary struggles of the characters. This emphasis on realism and relatability contributes to the series' widespread appeal and cultural significance, making it a standout within the genre of children's literature.

The "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" series has enjoyed remarkable longevity and has left a lasting legacy in children's literature. Since its debut in 2007, the series has continued to resonate with readers worldwide, spawning numerous sequels, spin-offs, and media adaptations. Its enduring popularity has paved the way for a new wave of middle-grade fiction that prioritizes realism, humor, and relatability.

The series has influenced subsequent works in the genre by demonstrating the power of authenticity and honesty in storytelling. Authors and publishers have increasingly embraced narratives that reflect the everyday experiences and emotions of young readers, inspired by Kinney's success in capturing the essence of childhood and adolescence.

Moreover, "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" has had enduring cultural impacts by fostering a sense of community among readers and providing a shared cultural touchstone for multiple generations. Its relatable characters, humor, and themes have become ingrained in popular culture, influencing not only children's literature but also film, television, and other forms of media. Ultimately, the series' legacy lies in its ability to connect with readers on a personal level and shape the literary landscape for years to come.

The "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" series empowers young readers by providing them with relatable characters and narratives that validate their own experiences of childhood and adolescence. Characters like Greg Heffley serve as highly relatable figures for readers grappling with similar challenges, such as navigating friendships, dealing with family dynamics, and coping with the pressures of school.

Greg's experiences and reactions to various situations mirror those of many young readers, allowing them to see themselves reflected in his struggles and triumphs. By depicting the complexities and uncertainties of adolescence in a humorous and accessible manner, the series helps readers feel understood and validated in their own feelings and experiences.

Moreover, the series encourages readers to develop empathy and perspective-

taking skills by presenting a diverse cast of characters with different personalities and backgrounds. Through observing the interactions and conflicts among characters, readers gain insights into the complexities of human relationships and the importance of understanding others' perspectives.

Overall, "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" empowers young readers by providing them with relatable characters and narratives that validate their experiences, encourage empathy, and offer reassurance that they are not alone in facing the challenges of growing up. By seeing themselves reflected in the series, readers gain confidence and resilience in navigating their own journeys through childhood and adolescence.

In conclusion, "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" stands as a significant cultural phenomenon in children's literature, offering relatable characters and narratives that empower young readers to navigate the complexities of childhood and adolescence. Through the series' enduring popularity and impact, Jeff Kinney has reshaped the landscape of middle-grade fiction, inspiring subsequent works and influencing popular culture. By validating readers' experiences, fostering empathy, and providing a shared cultural touchstone, the series leaves a lasting legacy that resonates with readers of all ages, reaffirming its status as a classic of contemporary children's literature.

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Culture, Representation, Identity, Media – A Study of Disruption in the novel *Wife* by Bharati Mukherjee

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Abstract

Culture is the element we inhabit as speaking beings; it is what makes us subjects. Culture consists of a society's entire range of signifying practices-rituals, stories, forms of entertainment, lifestyles, sports, norms, belief, prohibitions and values. In our globalized society it includes art and opera, fashion, film, television, travel and computer games. Culture resides in the meanings of those practices, the meanings we learn (9).

Keywords: Catherine Belsey, *Culture and the Real*

Introduction:

The word 'culture' derived from 'cultura' by nineteenth century in Europe became the taste, habits and customs of the upper class. Presently cultured studies implies that the elite culture controls ideals, meanings which in turn lead to power relations. The taste, habits and customs of Non-Elite are treated as inferior by the upper class meaning that certain aspects of culture superior. On the contrary Cultural Studies takes into account popular culture and everyday life. Graffiti, Comic books, mass cinema, popular music, open spaces of the city, sports become the culture of everyday life of mass and is otherwise called as Popular Culture. The launch of the *Journal of Popular Culture* in 1969 by the Department of Popular Culture USA brought-in essays on Spiderman comics, rock music, amusement parks, detective films and so on. Cultural Studies questions the authenticity of meanings generated by a set of Elite society / Community. As Popular Culture propagates beliefs, values and practices of large number of people, Cultural Studies finds its moorings at Popular Culture.

Cultural 'Studies brings in 'culture' of a community linked to matter of class, economy, representation and aspects of spatial, political and ideological ones. Each practice, ritual, sports, artifact acquires legitimacy and value since they are approved by elites. Thus culture is man-made and results in power. The growth of Cultural Studies within the academy linked cultural anthropologists, sociologists, historians showing interest in social history of subordinated groups, women, Afro-Americans, gay, and the colonized. The aim was to valorize and politicize specific identifies. The early initiation

of Cultural Studies was set by Richard Hoggart, Raymond Williams, Tony Bennett, Terry Eagleton and Stuart Hall.

The novel *Wife (1975)* shows Dimple Dasgupta the protagonist going to US after her marriage to Amit Basu an engineer from IIT, Kharagpur. While Dimple was in search of freedom and happiness, Amit was in his look out for a suitable job. As a teenaged daughter of an electrical engineer Dasgupta her possibility of getting a degree was postponed due to the general strike in Calcutta and her parents tried to fix a suitable bridegroom. Dimple's long wait to settle her marriage weakened her. She preferred Amit Basu because he had applied for immigration to three countries such as United States, Canada and Kenya. When Amit got immigration to US, Dimple aborted her foetus unwilling to carry any relics from India. Dimple and Amit stayed with Amit's friend Jyoti Sen. In the mean time Dimple and Amit shifted to another friend's apartment in Manhattan. Away from Bengalis of Calcutta, Dimple interacted with Americans like Milt Glasser and Leni Anspach. An Indian woman named Ina Mullick was more American than Americans. Dissatisfied with marriage Dimple felt loneliness throughout the day. Television became her sole entertainment bringing violence as a solution for all problems. Insomnia intensified her confusion of reality and illusion. Dreams haunted her and dreamt of Ina's death. The coalescence of reality and alternate reality pushed her to stab Amit seven times.

While analyzing the novel *Wife (1975)*, one is reminded of the influential definition of culture and society by Raymond Williams in his book *The Long Revolution (1961)*

Our description of our experience come to compose a network of relationships, and all our communications systems, including the arts are literally parts of our social organization...since our way of seeing is literally our way of living, the process of communication is in fact the process of community: the offering, reception and comparison of new meanings, leading to the tension and achievements of growth and change. (55)

Dimple Dasgupta's experience of life is very limited. In the Bengali society a girl is expected to get married at the age of eighteen Dimple Dasgupta sees marriage as a way of living, process of communication bringing love to her. Her expectation to marry a neurosurgeon, handsome and tall as hindi film star Amitabh Bhachan, to attend cocktail parties on carpeted lawns and fund-raising dinners for noble charities show the structures of power in society. Her thought and expression is otherwise called discourse as a 'sign' of a particular society. Representation signifies a world or culture which could be an image, a word, a sound or an idea, a name, a symbol a metaphor and visual sign.

The name of a person is culture-specific and gives a specific meaning with cultural connotation. The name 'Dimple' is not liked by her mother-in-law as the name does not give any shared meaning in Indian Culture. They want her to change the name

as 'Nandini' the name of the mythological holy cow. Oxford English Dictionary gives the meaning for 'Dimple' as 'Any slight surface depression' as quoted in the novel *Wife*. Thus Cultural Studies sees culture as texts, read it as signs within itself making uses of theories from Structuralism and Linguistics. Still all meanings are relational and no meaning is stable. For Cultural Studies the essential meaning is deferred and this insight is drawn from Post Structuralism texts whether fiction or non-fiction and everyday life experience influence one another. Dimple's identify as wife is expected to be obedient, non controversial docile from the novel *Wife* "Mr. Dasgupta flattered and pleaded, smiling at Dimple and saying "she is so sweet and docile, I tell you, she will never give a moment's headache" (14) Analysing the meaning for the name Dimple and ascertaining Dimple's docility by her father indicates the male domination in the society and ascertainment reveals the economic dependence of a girl on her husband. The male members in a family and society become the structure of power.

One can understand that no name, word, symbol has a fixed meaning, Meanings are relational, contextual sometimes giving an opposite meaning. This perception is drawn from Post - Structuralism resulting in a comprehensive understanding of a text, society and activities. In the words of Pramod K. Nayar in his book *An Introduction to Cultural Studies*

Cultural studies is basically an exploration of specific contexts (culture, community, nation, caste, class, gender, race, sexuality) where representations produce and reinforce identities through particular modes (25).

In Cultural Studies identity of a person is dependent upon the roles, signs allotted for a particular purpose. This identity is gained through experience and use of signs. Dimple's mother-in-law does not like the name 'Dimple' as she "... considered too frivolous and unBengali ..." (*Wife* 14). one sees this as an ideological control and identity is thus socially constructed. Each culture, each society determines femininity, its role, power relations between genders resulting in a structure of spatial relations power and gender . At this juncture Cultural Studies questions the role of agency and its function in determining the power structure and idea of subjugation. In a culture and in a society in general and in a family in particular the patriarchy controls the discourse of power, identity, agency thus dictating individuals lives and desires. In the novel *Wife* Dimple's mother-in-law, though a woman herself is a representation of agency commanding her to change the name as Nandini which means the mythological sacred cow. In Sanskrit the name means "pleasant". Like her holy mother Kamadhenu, Nandhini too has inherited bountiful nature and magic qualities providing anything you ask. Dimple's sister-in-law, Mrs. Ghose, one another agency of power feels Dimple is little darker than the photograph has suggested. Agency, representation of power limits individuals capacity, to live to choose one's preferences. Indiscriminately in-laws become representations generating meaning of power and identity.

Age-old customs, a phenomenal change in them, lifestyle, consumption, communal relationships add to Cultural Studies, Culture and society influence, form, and transform one another. Preference of a particular artifact and its usage is subjective. The same artifact become obsolete in another era. Such subjective experiences in everyday in life also become important in Cultural Studies since artifacts tell stories about individuals families, life style cultures. One's emotional attachment to remarkable change in culture, life style, cultural artifacts hold primary role in forming one's identity. Everyday life and culture are influenced by different modes of transport availability of hotels with cuisines of various countries, choice of clothing. In a country like India people prefer restaurants with food as prepared in neighbourhood states. One's liking for food from various localities, fashionable dresses from other countries, doing their hair like actors and actresses construct experience, analyse reality leading to the discourse of everyday life. Cultural Studies tries to view an alternate way of life emphasizing it through textual and verbal presentation of events, action or state changing continuously as time flows culture and society do not remain static. In the words of Pramod K.Nayar in his book *An Introduction to Cultural Studies*

Cultural studies believes that people leading their everyday lives produce culture. Culture is not some distinct realm produced elsewhere to be consumed by the people. It is the consequence of experiences and responses. It is in the everyday that culture is made. Cultural Studies investigate this process of making culture. This process, it believes, is linked to relationships of power (29)

Raymond Williams calls this as 'lived cultures' in his book *Culture* (1981)

Cultural Studies take into account consumption and life style where structures of power resting with gender, class, race play a great role. Consumerism itself becomes a form of identity. In the novel protagonist Dimple Dasgupta goes for shopping twice daily. To quote the novel *Wife* "She spent two weeks shopping everyday, twice a day. She thought of herself as someone going to exile" (15). Dimple's choice of a luxurious life shows that she is a person of self-realisation asserting her own taste, preferences and comforts forgetting her background. This thought process ideology emphasizes leisure and pleasure to duty and responsibility. Dimple prefers Amit Basu because he has been waiting for his immigration clearance. From the time she comes to Amits flat at Dr. Sarat Banarjee Road she keeps complaining about the narrow staircase, her brother –in –law coughing in the bathroom, hating her mother-in-law's presence. she never bothers about her duty as a daughter-in-law to the family she dislikes her sister-in-law Mrs. Ghose as she said Dimple is not their first choice, thus breaking the age old joint family system and responsibilities associated with it. She moves and inclines towards individualism finding her identity in luxurious life style: Such a subjectivity is emphasized in Cultural Studies.

Everyday life is a mixture of local and global. Dimple is a mixture of local and global. She wants to wear the fashionable mauve-tinted glasses of Marsha Mookerji but she does not like to wear pants and sweaters when offered by Ina Mullick. She says,

“there are some things I can’t do. Wearing pants is one of them” (*Wife* 154). Everyday life turn us into multiple identities. Dimple too has many identities. Even old settlements get a face lift with malls, Spa centres, people from various parts of the inland country and abroad get settled there. Places become more multicultural and hybridized. Even in the modern era immigrants prefer migrating to First World and Hollywood pictures are given importance

Cultural Studies perceives globalization treating Third world as their market and everywhere culture is linked with distribution of money. Though culture could not be contained within a particular geographical location, cultural artefacts, paintings representing religion and spirituality become fetished. Global economy, influence of media, heavily mediated cultural themes determine the aspects of culture to be accepted or rejected, to be praised or demoralized. When Dimple visited Ina Mullick’s house in US she sees Kangra prints and mildewed Wooden goddess. Basically the recurring theme of Kangra paintings is the portrayal of Radha and Krishna, Siva and Parvathi, modes of music. Bhakthi cult, the driving force, the main source of spiritual experience and base of visual expression depict the love story of Radha and Krishna (*Bhagavata Purana*) and love poems (*Gita Govinda*) by Jeyadev symbolise the soul’s devotion to god. There are cultural intermediaries which do not have any significance and knowledge about cultural and spiritual aspect and the degree of sacredness of other countries. They present the cultural object to consumers elsewhere. Pierre Bourdieu in his book *Distinction: A social critique of the Judgement of taste* (1999) introduced the term ‘Cultural intermediaries’. Pramod K. Nayar in his book *An Introduction to Cultural Studies* opines, “The relationship between local cultures and the First World market remains, mostly, a colonial one, where the local culture is exploited or exotized by the First World” (38). Thus God and Goddess become art pieces and wall hangings,

Ferdinand de Saussure’s Structuralism necessitates the study of sign and sign system making one understand the grouping in structures in language helping to understand the meaning. In the process of meaning production all forms of communication like verbal, visual gestural, acoustical, group discussions in person, the TV opera soap opera, fiction, political speech are texts constructing identities in common and in difference. Dimple while staying at Meena Sen’s house in US used to watch TV serials for a long time. The serials were with catchy names like “The Guiding Light”, “Love of Life”. The women on television led complicated lives and under suspicious circumstances either murdered others or got murdered. They got released from the act of crime. They never loved children. All Dimple saw on TV was about murder, death and love amiss.

The meaning generated by these serials depends on the mental acumen of the viewers as the system generate a rule and regulation of its own. The viewers accept them as a whole and recognise them to be ‘culture’ as a whole. The language used in these serials produce meanings through a system of relation and difference.

Michel Foucault's discourse of knowledge and power says that people who do not have knowledge is powerless. Foucault's discourse of power determines who is to control and who is to be subordinated. Dimple is astonished by Jyoti Sen's knowledge about job opportunities and scope to grab changes. Though Amit's classmate in IIT Kharagpur, he has established himself in US earlier than Amit and the knowledge of choosing a better job, earning more money and" capacity and power to run family with two kids. Dimple likes Jyoti Sen and wishes she could have married Jyoti Sen instead of Amit who could not provide minimum comforts of life. She even wants to sit beside Jyoti Sen and becomes jealous of people sitting and talking to him. She is irritated when Amit instructs her not to talk to Ina Mullick, Vinod Khanna of Indian origin. She feels he is not in a position to command her without a job. She even nurtures a liking for Milt Glasser who has a sound knowledge of American baseball, the Caribbean baseball player Roberto Clemets' National New York Day and recipes of Julia Child, the American chef who is recognized for bringing French cuisine to American public. She talks to herself that Amit has no right to bar the entry of Milt to their house. Knowledge and power are interconnected. Power is constructed on information about people and events. Through this the asserative people who represent the system of ideology control less knowledgable. Milt Glasser is the representation of system of ideology. Post structuralism in Cultural Studies puts forward this idea and tries to 'naturalise' subordination

In Cultural Studies Post – Modernism is to erase the assumption that there are elite and low culture. It celebrates plurality. Jean –Francois Lyotard marks post modernism as a disbelief in and resisting anything as whole, altogether. Time in and time out the supremacy of any object, culture is questioned. Post modernism proposes that any information, knowledge is incomplete, fragmentary. When questioned about Milt Glasser's qualification, authenticity of his job he raves at Dimple baffling her. What Milt glasser shares with Dimple is a part of truth.

Jean Baudrillard's important proposal is that we live in an culture of hyper reality. Endless repetition of images of photos, digital copies erase the distinction between real and illusory. In the consumer arena the objects are taken as signs, our conscious intellectual activity consumes only images transformed in sign-value thus collapsing the distinction between the crest and depth, private and public. Here the objects or signs are repeated without any significance catch our attention. Dimple's unsatiable interest in watching hindi films, expecting to fashion her life in that luminous style is due to the 'implosion' of such ideas through media.

In Cultural Studies post modern visual art, plastic art, sculpture and designs gain significance. Mixing of contradictory and opposite styles, like classical pictures and the fragmented aesthetic style, recycling of traditional songs, excessive use of ornamentation of incongruous shapes, increased productivity and usage of technical and electronic media, customised products, cheap inferior memorabilia are characteristics of post modern arts. When the Sens and Dimple visited the house of Ina and Bijoy Mullick, their

house is decorated with costly paintings, and even by entering into the elevator they could listen to the music. From the novel *Wife*, “In the hall, the music kept getting louder. All Western music, raucous singing” (74) There is no specific mark of Indianness. Dimple is surprised to see a shark-shaped fish in a glass which is one way glass - a kind of glass that is transparent on one side and reflective on the other. The hall is decorated with classical Kangra prints and contemporary fish tank which is a specialised glass product and very expensive. At Meena Sen’s house Dimple hates the plastic flowers and without Meena Sen’s knowledge she breaks and smashes each petal of them after breaking three petals she pretends of doing it unknowingly Dimple wishes to have Ikebana flower arrangement which has a combination of real flowers, foliage figurines, stones, pepples, dryfruits. Unlike flower vase decoration with real flowers, Ikebana is a Japanese Art. By using the spiritual Kangra paintings as wall hanging. Postmodernism in Cultural Studies questions the idea of truth behind signs/words/ images and collapses the boundaries between high and mass culture.

Postcolonial theory in Cultural Studies exploit the labour, cultural policies of the Third World and impose cultural imperialism of the European - American nations Ina Mullick’s friend Milt Glasser, an enormous young American in blue jeans lifts her by her bottom and challenges her husband Bijoy Mullick to fight with him. Dimple is afraid that Bijoy would shoot him. Milt wears pinstriped three-piece suit. Once the suit worn by British bankers and now the pinstriped suit is worn by American base ball players and Milt exhibits his interest in base ball and intentional chagrin of Bijoy Mullick. According to postcolonial theorists, blacks and a man from Third World nations are not considered to be human beings. Their wives are to be exploited by Whiteman. Tony Morrison in her novel *Tarbaby* (1981) realistically portrays how non-whites are treated as other. Non-white women are exploited by Whitemen. In the novel *Wife* (1975) Milt glasser openly covets Ina Mullick wife of Indian Bijoy Mullick in front of Indian men who strongly believe in marriage as an institution. Under the guise of helping Amit and Dimple subletting his sister’s apartment, he seduces Dimple leaving her in cultural dilemma. The western education and life style ‘acculturate’ the natives like Bijoy Mullick, spoil their cultural norms make live as a stereotype of whiteman and believe themselves to be inferior to whiteman.

With modernity urbanization and mass production came into vogue. Consumerism and lifestyle changes result in one’s identity. Henry Ford introduced assembly model of production which led to growth of the American manufacturing sector and raising US as superpower. In the late twentieth century highly developed, industrialised western societies established Postmodern condition which lead to the context of Cultural Studies from 1970 & 1980 Postmodernity is associated with post-industrial epoch. The saturation of important markets brought on a turn against mass production and consumption. Fordist model of production was a failure. With available consumer data there resulted a change in trends, and changing demand. Mass marketing

was replaced by flexible specialization. Production units change the workforce including internal marketing, self-employed and home workers, employees are expected to have essential qualification and a multi-tasked person.

In US Amit Basu, a mechanical engineer is offered a job in heavy boiler maintenance. A Mechanical Engineer designs power-producing machines power-using machines such as refrigerator and air conditioning systems, elevators, escalators. In post-Fordist era immigrants job seekers in western countries in general are under-employed with fringe benefits. Amit's job in heavy boiler maintenance means to check fuel supply leaks including water, steam and exhaust gases, perform evaporation tests to ensure proper operation. Dimple is disappointed that Amit could not provide her "tiny promised of life" Post-Fordism result in the manufacturing of products only on demand, collapsing the job demarcations and expect labour to be multi-skilled.

The discourse of identity in Cultural Studies created by the language of advertisement and representation form a relationship between the product and consumer. Consumption of commodities mostly target youth of the world. Dimple Dasgupta views the commodities and advertisement at the level of fantasy and raising her identity as an empowered consumer and consuming fashionable commodities making her an aesthete consumer. She feels that they would become a class of people who has power, occasion and should have every opportunity to fulfill her desire. Thus consumption of goods play a key role in identity formation.

Cultural Studies gives central role to space in everyday life. The place we live, the way we move from one place to another daily is important in Cultural Studies. Dimple's nagging about small rooms of her in-law's house, cramped, narrow staircases, eavesdropping of the neighbours, staircases without proper electrification, presence of rodents, roaches and lizards in bathroom and kitchen, lack of privacy show her emotional and psychological disturbance. Doreen Massey in her book *Space, Place and Gender* (1994) opines that space is not simply a place to live, it is about power – real and symbolic. It could be conflictual and controversial. Dimple lives in an imaginary space leisure, luxury and comfort and sees the real space as always conflictual. Dimple could not understand an important factor that the lucrative villas would not fulfil half the – promises made by them. Dimple's idea of living in a stylized space is the result of 'gentrification'. This includes 'exclusivity' and 'privacy' as key features. According to Pramod. K. Nayar in his book *An Introduction to Cultural Studies*. "The image of the woman relaxing in the swimming pool implicitly links leisure with the lifestyle of the yuppies ... who ... like a comfortable leisure space" (201). This 'gentrification' leads to the creation of revanchist cities. Revanchism is considered to be a reaction against 'stealing' of the city resulting in maintaining privileged classes prohibiting the movements of hawkers, street vendors, small cornershops. Many a time beggars and vagabonds are treated as a threat to revanchised society. The flow of money and advent of new cultures, new life style, new taste in food, dressing, furniture impose a threat to

old, settled people in old settlements. There are some gated communities in metropolises which do not allow street vendors into the residential area. This is also due to globalism resulting in functional aesthetic revealing fliers, skyscrapers, highways and buildings giving tinches of world events promising signs of peace, happiness, satisfaction and high-standard life style. Neil Smith in his book *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City* (1996) opines, “Not content to create a space of objects of daily life, as supports of capitalist commodity universe, it provided an image of this space by advertising techniques... The process of social recognition was externalized and fetishized” (113). By externalization and gentrification people are made to believe that happiness, pleasure, comfort, relationships are connected to space in a home filled by consumer products and services.

In Cultural Studies mobile phone as a mode of new cultures of communication plays a major role in everyday life of common people. It is a device that gives ‘perpetual contact’ among one another erasing the boundary of private and public life. Though usage of mobile phone leads to the discourse of connectivity and style it also includes discourse of health hazards like electromagnetic and radio frequency radiations. Any invention, liking and dislike, hobby while crossing its limits would be detrimental.

Georges Bataille in his book *Inner Experience* (1988) translated by Allan Stoekl talks about extremity and cultural studies:

By definition, the extreme limit of the ‘possible’ is that point where, despite the unintelligible position which it has for him, man having stripped himself of enticement and fear, advances so far that one cannot conceive of the possibility of going further. (39)

The whole world is operating with the challenge of extreme imagination for the impossible and its legality and valorization. Liking for the impossible is due to extreme leisure which has a strong reach in everyday life. Extreme leisure claims certain sports as different from one another and recreational. People contest that these sports or leisure time activities like bungee-jumping, jet-ski riding, state boarding, BMX (bicycle motocross) acrobatics, extreme 4x4 off - Road challenge involve special abilities, technical skills as well as risk taking. These extreme leisure activities demand wider ‘democratisation’ of extreme risk-taking activities into mainstream and everyday life. With reference to TV culture proper what most people witness is extreme violence of war, starvation accidents and the eventual suffering of victims, natural disasters, all manner of sexual activities and people leaping into burning building.

Dave Boorthroyd in his book *Culture on Drugs: Narco-Cultural Studies of High Modernity* opines (2006), “The Extreme has thus become a predominant theme by virtue of *its own power to connect* disparate elements and forms of culture, to the point where it is now a discernible vector of cultural life in general” (280).

Even TV entertainment programmes give a sense of extremity with programmes of ‘bad behaviour reality shows displaying verbal conflict, aggression, ‘spontaneous’ mayhem, street violence, drunkenness, robberies, youngmen performing ludicrous stunts

resulting in self-injury or injury to others. There are also shows with sado-masochistic emotionality having excitement without depth or content. When Dimple was at Meena Sen's house she watches TV reality shows which displayed violence. She reads leaflets from a store called 'Your Mothers Mustache' which has messages like a woman could live without a man and a man alone needs a woman as his wife. She is obsessed with the magazine. *Better Homes and Gardens* which gives the best home decorating ideas. She bores Meena Sen with descriptions about the restaurant. "The Breakfast Nook" located on Washington Avenue, Connecticut and "The Boudoir magazine" which shoots intimate pictures of women.

By viewing posh houses in advertisements Dimple fantasizes to buy a house at Bollygunj in Calcutta, even imagines hosting parties. From the novel *Wife* "If it were my party, I'd serve drinks indoors and food on the patio" (89). Dimple's extreme love for elite living and beauty make her imagine Amit should be like film star. From the novel *Wife*, "She borrowed a forehead from an aspirin ad, the lips, eyes and chin from a body-builder and shoulders ad, the stomach and legs from a trousers ad, and put the ideal man ..." (23)

Dimple's desire for expensive objects, stylish cars reflect the contemporary living leading to consumer culture of objects and automobiles. Cultural Studies bring out the spatial constructions in prime locations of cities which include cultural politics of mobility in expensive automobiles. "Many nurture the dream of a beautiful home set in a fabulous landscape..." (*The Hindu*, 25 February 2007:1). Such rhetoric of imagination, fantasy and dreams play an important role in the discourse of everyday life.

Dimple's intense love for luxury make her jealous of her friend Pixie in Calcutta, marrying a fifty-three year old villain actor Prosanto Bagchi older than her father. She becomes jealous of Pixie's life style, choice of friends, luxurious parties attended by her, her "associations" in Kuwait and Gulf Emirates. She even thinks of killing people who are not gentrified and hates economical cheap household items. Her excess love for branded, classified items go beyond the limit. The failure of this imagined life of leisure, luxury and relaxation turns her anger against Amit. She even feels that Jyoti Sen earning more money could have been her choice. She feels Amit to be no better than a tape recorder blender, stereo and colour TV. From the novel *Wife*, "Life should have treated her better, should have added and subtracted in different proportions so that she was not left with a chimera. Amit was no more than that" (156).

Excess leisure, widespread television viewing, music and other cultural activities of popular culture result in the emergence of Cultural Studies and its role in everyday life. But any activity going beyond its limit will have an end in itself. The protagonist Dimple wants to extend leisure beyond possibility – the extreme and forces herself into conflict with law. She could not discern the logical, reasonable, acceptable, legitimate leasured luxurious life and the breach of peace while yearning for excess. In the words of Dave Boothroyd in his article "Cultural Studies and the Extreme" from the anthology of

New Cultural Studies Adventures in Theory, “Extremity is always related in one way or another to unbounding and transgression” (279). Dimple cannot tolerate the socially acceptable lifestyle for an upcoming engineer. She is slowly attracted towards Milt Glasser, brother of Marsha Mookerji. He talks about consulting, advertising, assessing, working for ghetto children. Dimple could notice many credit cards in his purse. She likes his visits to her apartment where he cooks hamburges. To please him she tastes it and decides to hide from Amit. Cultural criminologists like Mike Presdee and Keith J. Hayward in their respective books opine that cultural life and criminality are interconnected and prevalent in urban environment. This view has been accepted by popular and media culture and youth around the world indulging in extreme forms.

Keith J. Hayward in his book *City Limits: Crime, Consumer Culture and the Urban Experience* (2004) says that cultural crime as “... existential pursuit of passion and excitement” (9). Though this argument is very important for a social change, the excitement of transgression is leads to crime and at emotional level connected to the principles of contemporary popular and consumer culture. Always transgression end in crime. Very cunningly, schemingly Milt Glasser drags Dimple out of her confined, safe family life and molests her. Very casually he walks out of her life. Dimple confuses Milt with Amit in her guilty state.

Dimple’s often-watching TV programmes showing fabricated images giving the actions of hyper-realism or surrealism make her an element of extremity within the cycle of culture. Unable to bear and indescribable ungentrified life, Dimple suffers from insomnia, often thinks ways to commit suicide or sometimes she thinks of killing Amit and hiding parts of his body in refrigerator. For some days she never eats or eats left over rice and curry from the fridge without heating. She has immoderate daytime sleeping also. From the novel *Wife*, “Amit did not feed her fantasy life; he was merely the provider of small material comforts” (113). She suffers from inertia, exhaustion, endless indecisiveness Quoting from the novel *Wife*, “It was sad ... how marriage cut off glittering alternatives” (126). After her liaison with Milt Glasser she confuses Amit and herself with characters in TV shows. When she stabs Amit with knife, she imagines it be a show on TV at 3 am.

Bharati Mukherjee, Indian diasporic writer had written the novel *Wife* in wayback 1975. This novel is analysed from various perspectives-as a novel of cultural shocks, the protagonist lost in the immigrant world and in psychological perspective. Viewing this novel from the frame of Cultural Studies gives a new insight and ascertains the talent of Bharati Mukherjee standing the test of time.

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**Parenting and Culture: Closeness and Distancing in *The Fifth Child*
by Doris Lessing**

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Abstract

In the novel *Fifth Child*, Lessing deftly describes this inhospitable mindset and structure for the less fortunate and for bodies that are not typical, and she demonstrates how it relates to the politics of happiness. Furthermore, Harriet, his mother, transforms into a monster creature through an intimate physical interaction with Ben. Lessing's book makes it abundantly evident that physique and engagement in physical activities are intimately related to happiness. The body that is replicated through these kinds of physical activity must also be normative. Reproduction and employability are prerequisites for the normative body to be replicated within the family, meaning that it must be able to directly contribute to the nation's wealth accumulation. The novel's description of hideous bodies highlights the close connection between happiness and physical appearance. These hideous bodies reveal the kinds of people and skills that are required to be accepted as human beings in larger society. The author's description of Harriet as a traditional, antiquated, defenceless, and submissive lady suggests her feminist viewpoint. Accepting that males rule, Harriet convinces readers to feel sorry for her since she gave birth to a strange child who is too much bother for everyone. From our discussion and analysis, it is clear that the author's style in this book is feminist. Either the author wants the reader to feel sympathy for Harriet, whom everyone blames for having an abnormal child who causes too much trouble and suffering for everyone, or the author tries to criticise the character as a traditional, old fashioned, subordinated woman who has no problem with the dominance of men.

Keywords: feminist approach, female sentence, motherhood

Introduction:

The Fifth child by Lessing tells the story of David Lovatt and his wife Harriet, and follows their exciting existence after the birth of their fifth kid, who has Down syndrome and is first more of a lump of flesh. The baby's abnormality and the views of society towards it cause the couple's life and the family's entire dynamic to take a turn for the worse. The infant is disliked by the other family members who regard it as a creature from another planet. The child is viewed as a menacing figure who wreaks havoc on the family as a whole as well as the neighbours. The strange child's ghostly presence destroys the family, and the baby's father David finds it difficult to accept the child. As a result, friction grows between him and his wife. Not only do the adults in the family and neighbourhood make every effort to keep the weird youngster away from them, but so do the kids. Every time the infant gets too close for comfort, they turn away from him and give him a sideways look of distrust, anger, and terror. He is the odd man out in their group and they don't like to play with him. Even the household dog stays away from the infant and heads for the corner. The infant expresses himself and creates himself in unique ways. Even if he may not act or react to the outside world in the same way as other children, society nonetheless treats him badly and is unable to accept his uniqueness. Every human culture is built around a set of social ideals and presumptions, which form the basis for ideas like right and wrong, moral and immoral, normal and aberrant, and able and disabled. Following the establishment of these boundaries, society discriminates against those whose physical characteristics and behavioural features do not conform to the criteria or norms that it has established for classifying individuals with differences into various degrading and respected groups.

The truth about these constructions is that they don't accurately depict the lives of those who are deemed abnormal or disabled; instead, they highlight the attitudes of those whose definitions are open to challenge and questioning, demonstrating that they are only social constructs that are subject to change in the attitudes and presumptions of those who create and justify them. The couple's anxiety while contemplating a romantic relationship highlights how terrified David and Harriet are of Ben's anomalous delivery. Despite their best efforts to keep undesired things from happening, the baby was delivered. The lines that follow reveal their fear:

But now they were both thinking, that creature arrived when we were being as careful as we know how – suppose another like him comes? For they both felt secretly, they were ashamed of the thoughts they had about Ben – that he had willed himself to be born, had invaded their ordinaries, which had no defenses against him or anything like him. (63)

The baby's parents view him as an unwanted addition to the family. They are so terrified of the baby's birth that they consider the possibility that future children would be born malformed, like the fifth one, whenever they wish to have sex. The birth of the baby defiles and destroys their bad thoughts, which are regarded to be a gift from God

and a source of joy and freedom in human existence. This is the domain of lovemaking. They believe that having the undesired baby has upset their normal routine. How can parents think such horrible things about their own kids? Is quite startling and illuminating regarding how individuals fabricate ideas and myths about diversity out of a fear of it.

If we view family size as a product of socio-cultural construction and view it through the prism of normalcy, then it can be seen as a sign of abnormality. Due to the high number of members and children, as well as their seeming anachronism in the current era, the family is rather large. Imagine a family like that in contemporary England, and consider the reactions of the individuals in that society. A family of this size would have been more or less normal a century ago, but it is undoubtedly an exception in British culture today. The number of children David and Harriet have is enough to draw attention to their size. However, having a large family and numerous children is not intrinsically good or bad; rather, attitudes towards people and objects that deviate from the norm are a result of human culture and financial circumstances.

Breach of Mother-Child Inter-Corporeality

The description of the confusing bodily relationship between Ben and Harriet in Fifth highlights the readers' experiences of anxiety. Researchers uses the idea of women's leaky bodies to highlight this unclear relationship:

Whatever the manifest outcome at birth, the pregnant female body itself is always a trope of immense power in that it speaks to an inherent capacity to problematise the boundaries of self and other.

According to Shildrick, women's boundaries have become unstable not only during pregnancy but even after giving birth: "Women are unpredictable, erratic, out of control, and leaky" (Ibid.). The narrative heavily relies on Harriet's anxieties, both bodily and psychological, over her gothic kid both during and after her pregnancy. Harriet describes feeling "a tapping in her belly, demanding attention" and experiencing agony from "bruised black all around the nipples" during nursing.

In this work, I contend that the Gothic narrative's use of terror intensifies as the child's monster seeps over the line and into the mother's flesh. Furthermore, evilness does not travel in a straight line from the monster infant to the mother; rather, it moves in both directions across the barrier, and it is this permeability that frightens the readers. As I'll talk about later, Lessing creates a breach in the border that turns Harriet into a monster and turns her mother into "the other" in the eyes of her community. It is evident that Harriet and Ben had a poor physical relationship both before and after her pregnancy. For instance, David, Harriet's husband, notes that the "new foetus was poisoning her" when she "was sitting at the kitchen table, head in her hands, muttering." Ben is the source of this terrifying illness, which seeps past the barrier. She becomes "frantic, exhausted... She was peevish; she lost her temper; she burst into

tears" as a result of this monstrosity's permeability (Ibid.). She needs to keep moving to get relief from the horror and pain inside her body. Through this process, Harriet herself becomes a monster:

Then she took to driving a short way out of the town, where she walked along the country lanes, fast, sometimes running. People in passing cars would turn, amazed, to see this hurrying driven woman, white-faced, hair flying, open-mouthed, panting, arms clenched across her front. If they stopped to offer help, she shook her head and ran on.

In order to properly contribute to a broader community and build a happy family, a person must have a healthy child. If this is not the case, motherhood is unfairly held entirely responsible for the failure. According to Gamallo (2000), the idea of a nation with Others, like immigrants, is comparable to the idea of Harriet, who carries Ben (the Other) within her. In fact, because the Other is ingrained in both society/the nation and the expectant mother, there is a metaphorical parallel between them. Gamallo fails to see, though, that the mother is also "the Other who has the other within her," as I like to call it. In contrast to the country, which is the norm even though it contains the Other, in the instance of the mother carrying a monster kid, the nation also marginalises, excludes, and otherizes the mother. Because of her tight bond with Ben, Harriet feels cut off from both society and her family. The gap that exists between Harriet and her family and society is highlighted as the differences between her and Ben become more obvious. This starts when Harriet is carrying a foetus named Ben, who torments her from inside her womb. Her physical battle separates her from her family members:

Appalled at the distance that had grown up between her and her husband, between her and the children, her mother, [...] she was willing them to leave her alone and to reach the baby, the foetus – this creature with whom she was locked in a struggle to survive. [/] Oh, how eager everyone was to welcome her back into the family, normal, herself: they ignored, because she wanted them to, her tenseness, her tiredness.

David asserts that Ben is not his child and places all the blame on Harriet. Ben's abnormalities are never acknowledged by medical professionals, who stand for institutional power. Instead, they trivialise the situation by stating, "It is not abnormal to take a dislike to a child." Together, they problematize Harriet, the mother, and distance themselves from the issue that Ben created. But Harriet rescues Ben from the hospital where young "monsters" are kept when he is eventually diagnosed as odd and placed in an institution:

Every bed or cot held an infant or small child in whom the human template had been wrenched out of pattern, sometimes horribly, sometimes slightly. A baby like a comma, great lolling head on a stalk of a body ... then something like a stick insect, enormous bulging eyes among stiff fragilities that were limbs. [...] Rows of freaks, nearly all asleep, and all silent

It is said that Ben, the monster youngster, has several unusual traits on his body. He is called a "alien," "Neanderthal" (p. 65), "the fighting creature," "a real little wrestler

[...], a troll, or a goblin," and "a freak." He is not "a real baby, a real little child" (p. 62) and is not like the other four children that Harriet has. Ben, according to Lessing, is "a throwback to little people." His description shortly after his birth, which implies his backwardness and how he does not fit into modern society, is particularly indicative of his primitiveness:

He was not a pretty baby. He did not look like a baby at all. He had a heavy-shouldered hunched look, as if he were crouching there as he lay. His forehead sloped from his eyes to his crown. His hair grew in an unusual pattern from the double crown where started a wedge or triangle that came low on the forehead, the hair lying forward in a thick yellowish stubble, while the side and back hair grew downwards. His hands were thick and heavy, with pads of muscle in the palms.

The manner his body is described highlights Ben's individuality and peculiarity, and commentators interpret his portrayal in a variety of ways: he is the monster that stands in for other members of society, or, as was previously mentioned, he is the other inside the mother. When Ben hangs out with criminals and eventually merges into the crowd at the end of the book, Ellen Pifer (2000) contends that Ben should not be understood as the other but rather as a human being (p. 146). But I argue that Ben cannot be considered a "human being" since what his hideous appearance reveals is the line that divides those deemed acceptable as human and those deemed not.

Even yet, Ben's identity is somewhat nebulous. The sentence asks "What is he?" many times. (p. 66), "Did he, really? Who was he? (p. 81), yet no simple solution is offered. As we saw in the previous section, Ben is a hideous other who is marginalised in society. However examining Ben in light of the lesser characters in Fifth who have disabled bodies reveals other thought-provoking social issues that the book brings up. Lessing's observations regarding the dependence of family happiness on a form of eugenics are taken into account while reading the text within the framework of disability studies. This book describes burdens and other forms of family misery as resulting from handicap. Lessing's writing gives readers the opportunity to reflect on what constitutes a person and what does not, as well as what types of bodies are acceptable for reproduction. William's relatives refers to him as a "unsatisfactory husband" (p. 34) and notes that he had twice left Sarah (p. 32). His physical impairment makes it difficult for him to find a good job:

"he was distressed by physical disability, and his new daughter, the Down's syndrome baby, appalled him" (p. 32). Harriet and David talk behind Sarah's back about their Down syndrome niece, Amy: Harriet said to David, privately, that she did not believe it was bad luck, Sarah and William's unhappiness, their quarrelling, had probably attracted the mongol child—yes, yes, of course she knew one shouldn't call them mongol. But the little girl did look a bit like Genghis Khan, didn't she? A baby Genghis Khan with her squashed little face and her slitty eyes?

Evidently, Harriet links their child's condition to her sister's depressed attitude.

Given William's physical disability, which hinders his employability, Harriet, who has internalised the ideology of neoliberal societies, draws a clear link between happiness and physical fitness. She believes that William's limited job options threaten his family's financial stability and happiness, and that Sarah and William's unhappiness are the reasons behind the birth of the child with Down syndrome. When Ben is born later in the book, his physical characteristics set him apart from "normal" kids, and his destructive behaviour also makes them less happy. To put it succinctly, their bodily "normality" and "defects" determine their level of happiness or misery, and in this way, the idea of eugenics is intrinsically linked to family happiness.

Ben, their fifth child, causes their previously contented family life to collapse. Several academics have examined the subversive narrative of the Lovatts' house collapse as a defining feature of Gothic fiction. I'll be especially focused on how the close physical bond between mother and child in this Gothic story transforms maternal desire into fear. Rosemary Jackson (1981) famously contends that the fantastic story of the Gothic is historically a tool to push the Father's rule and the ideological order outside the framework of values and into illegitimacy. By doing this, the fantastic mode exposes the culturally hidden and unspoken. More feminist re-evaluations of the Gothic have occurred since Jackson. Gothic literature has always been about "rebellion and provocation against the order, control, and the powers of restrictive ideologies," according to a number of writers. Because of this, the Gothic genre has long been associated with feminism and feminist concerns that aim to overthrow the established patriarchal system. Feminist and Gothic interpretations of *Fifth*, with its emphasis on monstrosity, can converge when studying the characters, particularly those of the hideous mother and child. But in contrast, the Gothic novels of the seventeenth century are known for their terrifying settings, such as the haunted castle or monastery.

The Fifth Child is a novel that tells the narrative of Ben, the fifth child born with Down syndrome, and the social rejection he experiences from both his parents and other family members. Despite his physical and mental disabilities, he has a unique way of expressing his rage and disdain as well as his complaints and tears. His peculiarity is more a result of the attitudes of those who detest and shun him due to his differences than it is of anything intrinsic in his body. The book depicts Ben's and his mother's loneliness and anguish at being regarded like criminals for having such a child. Even his own companions shy away from him during play, and he is viewed with a terrible dread, as though he is an alien from another planet and a relic from a bygone era. After the infant is born, his own father gets upset and furious with his own. During this crisis, parents and guardians need to be more conscious of how the government affects their own lives. Is the government going to bear the consequences if radiation exposure causes physical and mental disabilities in unborn children? Is happiness achievable in this culture for individuals experiencing health issues due to radiation exposure? Reading

Lessing's work prompts us to consider the ways in which power affects parental duty when it comes to disability in these ways. It is evident that mother bodies continue to be mediators of social happiness, but that protection for them is insufficient when they are unable to (again) bear healthy children who will contribute to their society. Their child's disability becomes their only concern, which forces them to live on the periphery of society and gives them a grotesque appearance.

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**Unveiling the Convergence of Trauma Memories in Eliot Pattison's
*Mandarin Gate***

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Abstract

Multidirectional memory, a term coined by Michael Rothberg, conceptualises the merging and confronting of different histories and memories of trauma in the public sphere. This theory of memory and remembrance challenges the prevailing tenets and assumptions on collective memory, trauma and group identities. According to Rothberg, memories cut across and binds together diverse spatial, temporal and cultural ties, and by turning memories as subjects of “ongoing negotiation, cross-referencing and borrowing”, claim for recognition and justice. The merging of trauma memories and histories contributes towards the creation of new worlds out of the materials of older ones. Tibetan writers and writers supporting the Tibetan cause attempt to draw global attention to the plight of Tibetans living as exiles in their own homeland. This paper explores the Eliot Pattison’s creation of discursive spaces of memories – trauma memories of Tibetans in colonised Tibet and the memories of Shan, a formerly Beijing investigator who is under Chinese punishment in a Tibetan prison. The paper delves into the mechanisms of trauma memory, how it intertwines personal trauma with collective memory and how it triggers identity formation of trauma victims. The paper explores Pattison’s depiction of a complex web of political intrigue, cultural tension, personal trauma and the geopolitics of PRC in transforming Tibet from a serene and spiritually bound land of Buddhism to a labyrinth of deception and lies.

Key words: trauma, multi-directional, memory, spatial, collective trauma

Introduction:

Post colonial literature often tends to misrepresent and mystify colonial reality. Colonizers depict the reality of their colonization as something that was inevitable and necessary for the development of the colonized nation, and fore-fronting this, they implement their usual strategies of genocide, cultural erasure and cultural assimilation. However, recent studies on trauma and trauma memory lays focus on the ‘other’ side of colonial reality. Trauma narratives, written by the people of the colonized nations or those who have witnessed the atrocities of the colonizers on the colonized, tend to expose the

false representations of colonial reality. Trauma studies and memory studies have been revolutionized in the last two decades by a shift of focus from the death and suffering of the colonized people to the struggle for resistance and liberation of the trauma victims.

Literature on trauma and memory is enormous and it continues to grow, attracting the attention of several theorists. One such theorist who has contributed towards trauma studies and memory studies is Michael Rothberg, Professor of English and Comparative Literature in the University of California. Rothberg has worked on the Holocaust, memory studies, trauma studies, post-colonial studies and contemporary literature which has led him to establish a link between histories and memories of trauma. Rothberg has two books to his credit – *Traumatic Realism – The Demands of Holocaust Representation* (2000) and *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (2009). It is in the latter that Rothberg introduced his concept of multidirectional memory.

Multidirectional memory is a new theory of remembrance and memory introduced by Michael Rothberg and it challenges prevailing tenets and assumptions on collective memory and group identities. Early theories on memory studies and collective memory have always highlighted the uniqueness of Holocaust memory and by doing this, they have unknowingly distracted the deserving attention of similar histories and memories of trauma. In other words, Holocaust memories and studies on Holocaust had served as a ‘screen memory’ that blocked and later erased out memories of all other similar histories of suffering and colonialism. Rothberg, however, prefers to use Holocaust consciousness as a platform to articulate similar histories and memories of genocide, slavery, racism and victimization.

Rothberg critiques the concept of collective memory. According to the traditional concepts of memory studies, memory was supposed to be parallel to the national boundary of that cultural group, but Rothberg argues that memory “cuts across and binds together diverse spatial, temporal, and cultural ties” – that is, memory of one history leads to memories of other histories. Unlike the traditional concept of public sphere which was regarded as a limited space where groups engaged in a life-and-death struggle, Rothberg’s redefines public sphere as a field of contestation where multiple memories interact productively in unexpected ways. Public sphere becomes a discursive space where groups articulate established histories and memories and multiples memories and histories of colonialism, victimization, slavery and racism interact with each other and come together to claim recognition and justice.

According to Michael Rothberg, collective memory gains significance only when collaborated, compared and adapted across boundaries of time, space, genre and cultural identities. Memories, he says, are not owned by groups, nor are groups “owned by memories; instead, the boundaries of memories and identities are jagged so that the study of one memory leads to the study of another memory and this link leads to a study of comparative genocide as well as experiences, histories and memories of trauma of

different cultural groups. Such collaborations lead to the establishment of a connection between different memories of deportation, camps, mass killings, ethnic cleansing and decolonization. And this in turn, demands the need for further processes of decolonization across the globe for a more egalitarian future for these colonized and traumatized cultural groups. Rothberg's concept of multidirectional memory has led to critical readings of several writers of late twentieth century; it seeks to de-center narratives on the Holocaust and in turn create counter narratives on similar histories memories of trauma.

Indigenous communities have always been the target of global geopolitics, and one such community that has become the victim of hegemonic assimilation, cultural erasure and mystification is the indigenous land of Tibet. The destruction of Tibet is one of the greatest tragedies in history. Tibet, which has been under the rule of People's Republic of China for more than a century now, has been represented in western discourses as a utopian Shangri La – as a land of monasteries, nuns, monks and lamas whose lives are deeply centered around their religion, Buddhism. And under the veil of such mystical representations, the Chinese continue their violation of fundamental human rights of the Tibetans in their own homeland. Tibetans living both inside and outside Tibet strive to preserve their nationhood by “working through” various modes of decolonization and resistance which includes representation of Tibetan reality in literature, self-immolations and resistance-liberation movements.

Tibetan literature in English has been gradually emerging as a significant area in postcolonial and diaspora studies. Tibetan literature refers to any work written by a Tibetan or on Tibet – its culture, religion, beliefs, experience of refugees, etc. It includes the biographies and autobiographies of Tibetan refugees who are settled in India, Nepal, Bhutan, the United States and elsewhere. The language used by these writers are preferably English which is perhaps to gain the interest of western audience. Tibetan writers attempt to draw global attention to the plight of Tibetan refugees wherein the focus is not only on the refugees' longing for their distant homeland but also on their lived experience in diaspora.

A notable figure in Tibetan literature is Joseph Eliot Pattison, an American international lawyer and award-winning mystery novelist. When the US-China relations got normalized and US companies got interested in investing in China, Pattison got adequate chances to visit both China and Tibet, and these trips inspired him to write the *Inspector Shan Series* between 1999 and 2019. This series contain 10 novels, all of which are set in modern-day Tibet. Each of these books involves one or more murders which are set up as a “who-done-it” mystery that a former Beijing Justice Department senior investigator Shan Tao Yun resolves. Set against a rich background of Tibetan culture, history and religion, the novels of this series reveal the numbing cruelty of political prisons and indoctrination camps across Central Asia under Chinese government.

Mandarin Gate, the seventh book in the *Inspector Shan Series*, was published in 2012 and it depicts the political as well as religious oppression of Tibet and Tibetans

under the forced reign of Communist China. The novel presents the serene and traditional land of Tibet as turned into a labyrinth of deception and lies by the Chinese. The novel unveils Beijing government's suppression and destruction of religious artifacts and sacredness of Tibet and its traditional culture simply because Tibetans give allegiance to a spiritual Buddhist leader, instead of a distant ruthless commissar. In this paper, I intend to make a close reading of the text through the lens of Michael Rothberg's concept of multidirectional memory, so as to explore how Eliot Pattison has succeeded in representing the trauma experienced by Tibetans in their own land under the rule of their Chinese colonizers. I also intend to analyse how the trauma memory of Inspector Shan, working currently as a ditch inspector of Lhadrung County under the punishment of Colonel Tan, merges with the trauma memories of all those Tibetans who live as exiles in Tibet under the rule of PRC and how this merging of trauma memories help in the identity formation and process of decolonization for the trauma victims.

The novel starts with an introduction to Jamyang, an unregistered monk, who was hiding in the mountains, restoring a hermitage. Beijing was mercilessly destroying all the secret centres of worship of the Tibetans; the knobs had special "godkiller squads who used dynamite, even portable air hammers, to destroy" (15) hermitages. The plot begins with the suicide of Jamyang in the hermitage and the murder of three people – two Chinese men and a Buddhist nun – at an ancient, ruined convent. The old convent called Thousand Steps was a symbol of hope for the battered Tibetans, but now it had been turned into a butcher's ground and as to investigate the murders, the convent got into the hands of the Chinese knobs.

One of the greatest and newest campaigns of Beijing was to clear away the nomad shepherds from their land and put them into camps where there was no food, water, bed or medicines. The slogan 'The Communist Party is Your New Buddha' was emblazoned on public walls and banners all over Tibet and offered up for Tibetan schoolchildren to recite like a militant mantra. One of the new relocation facilities was the Clear Water Camp which accommodated around one hundred and fifty Tibetans. These Tibetans were forced to take up Chinese names and even study Chinese history.

Initially, Tibet was under the silent attack of the Chinese. Chinese gangs lived in remote valleys of Tibet. Later when rail lines to Lhasa were opened, convoys of immigrants entered Tibet, bringing in colonists by the thousands who later on began to control the millions of native Tibetans. Though Tibet stepped forward with its own culture, they were under the full control of small armed pockets of Chinese. It was as if "Tibet was being consumed from the inside out" (89).

Soon, Tibet got filled with "camps and the keepers of the camps" (72). Truckloads of Tibetans were brought every week into these camps which had razor wires and guards with guns. The camp is described by Pattison as "a cage with no way out" (72), and moreover, the camps were updated with graveyards as six to seven Tibetans died every day. People who prayed to secret photos of the Dalai Lama was prosecuted

and they along with those dead because of ailments or lack of food and water were tossed into the graveyards with the help of wheelbarrows. Proper burial was not given to the dead. Some lime was thrown on the face of the dead ones. Birds fed on the flesh and finally when there was nothing left, a bulldozer shoved dirt over the bodies. "Bodies meant nothing in China" (133).

Mandarin Gate depicts the political as well as religious oppression of Tibet, Tibetans and all those who oppose Communist China. On one side, we get to see Tibet as a land scarred by years of turmoil and suffering and on the other side, we get to see the sufferings of Shan Tao Yun, a Chinese investigating inspector who happened to identify some influential people of Beijing as the culprits of the case he was investigating. This made him lose his position, family and freedom; he is sentenced to live in the remote Tibetan gulag camps along with a group of outlawed Buddhist monks. He is designated to do menial jobs as an inspector of irrigation and sewer ditches in a remote Tibetan township. It is here that he is confronted with the mysterious murder of three people which helps him discover that a nearby village has been converted into a new internment camp for Tibetan dissidents arrested in Beijing's latest pacification campaign. The plot of the novel helps Shan to navigate through the treacherous worlds of the Chinese internment camp, the local criminal gang, and the government's rapid pacification teams, while coping with his growing doubts about his own identity and role in Tibet.

The focus of my study was to analyse how Pattison portrays the harrowing realities of Tibetan trauma under Chinese rule – the destruction of sacred monasteries, the torture and "re-education" of dissidents, the exploitation of Tibet's natural resources, and the relentless propaganda aimed at erasing Tibetan national identity. Along with the Tibetans, there are other victims of trauma too because the Chinese government is not willing to spare anyone who opposes them. In this work, Pattison presents how Tibetan land is being converted into pacification camps with razor wires and guards with guns. Every week truckloads of Tibetans were brought in and there was even a graveyard within the camp because there was no food, water or medicine for the inmates or the sick. The Tibetans in these Chinese hard labour camps were given gruel which was pasty and granular – granular because it was full of sawdust. There were not provided with enough clothing, toilet paper, blankets nor food. So, people died in great numbers and they were all dumped into these graveyards every night in wheelbarrows.

My findings are that Pattison, in this novel, depicts a complex web of political intrigue, cultural tension, personal trauma and the geopolitics of PRC that has been transforming Tibet from a serene and spiritually bound land of Buddhism to a labyrinth of deception and lies. As far as Tibetans and Shan, a Chinese turned into a Buddhist believer is concerned, the only resolution for their trauma is to stick on to their religious beliefs and prayers which helps them to keep their spirits high, even though they are sick or battered or dying. This study has thus helped me to understand the mechanisms of trauma memory, how personal trauma intertwines with collective memory and how this

convergence triggers the identity formation and the process of decolonization of trauma in the victims.

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Beyond Borders: Navigating Multiculturalism in Thrity Umrigar's Literary Landscape

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Abstract

Cultural pluralism describes a condition in which minority groups participate fully in all areas of the dominant society, while maintaining their unique cultural identities. In a culturally pluralist society, different groups are tolerant of each other and coexist without major conflict, while minority groups are encouraged to retain their ancestral customs. In the real world, cultural pluralism can succeed only if the traditions and practices of the minority groups are accepted by the majority society. In some cases, this acceptance must be protected by legislation, such as civil rights laws. In addition, the minority cultures may be required to alter or even drop some of their customs which are incompatible with such laws or values of the majority culture. The term multiculturalism was coined by Horace Kallen, proposed it as a solution to the problems of assimilation arising in the 1910-20s. In India, while Hindus and Hindi-speaking people are the majority, millions of people of other ethnicities and religions live there as well.

Keywords: Immigrant, Minority, Ethnicity, Culture, Identity.

Introduction:

India is a multiethnic, multicultural country with a rich history of pluralism that dates back thousands of years. There are numerous religions represented here, including Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Islam, and Christianity. India's religious pluralism is demonstrated by the abundance of mosques, gurudwaras, Buddhist, Jain, and Parsi temples, as well as by their open religious celebrations, which are frequently attended by their Hindu friends. India has long taken pride in its multiethnic society. India's dominant culture is North Indian, Hindu, and Hindi-speaking; however, the cultures of the south

and northeast are equally respected throughout the nation and are given equal space in the Republic Day cultural display. Examples of these cultures include the cuisines of Idli, Vada, and Uttapam; the dance forms of Bharatanatyam; Kathak; Kathakali; Manipuri; Kuchipuri; Odissi; and Bihu. Governments cannot impose laws on pluralism; it develops naturally as societies come to accept and value different cultural perspectives. India has a long history of embracing the cultures that come to its shores, which makes it possible for the diverse society it is today.

There is no universal definition of what it means to be an Indian, so India does not impose any one cohesive concept of an "Indian Identity". India respects cultural diversity, so its people are free to practice their traditions freely and define the country however they see fit. It is not the case that one prevalent Indian concept is forced upon others. As a result, the west adheres to a "negative" interpretation of cultural pluralism, which relegates culture to the private sphere in order to allow for the peaceful coexistence of many cultures. India, on the other hand, embraces a "positive" definition of cultural pluralism that promotes respect for other cultures rather than restricting the expression of one's own culture in public. We are proud of this culturally diverse India and work to keep it that way for future generations. One well-known theoretical tradition for analyzing political behavior in contemporary democracies is pluralism theory. This theory is primarily predicated on the idea that citizens participate in political spheres through various interest groups, and that political power ought to be distributed so that each group can protect its own justifiable interests without any group controlling the system (Miller, 1983: 735). This paper will look at pluralism theory's advantages and disadvantages. This theory's first strength is its explicit recognition and treatment of the reality of diversity among various groups within the political context. As a result, it provides room for interest groups of all sizes to engage and compete according to their interests. This is due to the fact that the government will defend them in order to guarantee that they will have equal access to opportunities, including those offered by potential organizations like churches, colleges, and trade associations. Consequently, the allocation of political power will bring about the ideal democratization. Each and every interest group gains (Miller, 1983: 737). By sustaining their interest, small groups are encouraged to develop their tactics and strategies, which is pluralism theory's second strength. The government serves as an umpire, ensuring that the political system continues to function properly. The government will make an effort to resolve issues and arbitrate any disputes that may arise between interest groups or between the government and interest groups. Those who lose turn into rival organizations that will keep an eye on things and offer different viewpoints. Because of the check and balance system, it consequently prevents a tyranny or sovereignty (Self, 1985: 79; Miller, 1983: 735). Pluralism theory is not without its detractors, though. This theory's primary objection is that it appears to downplay the existence of dominant groups over others. Since the dominant group is too powerful to ignore pressure from it and has less political clout than

smaller interest groups, the government is unable to fulfill its role as an arbiter (Ellis, 1980: 398). Another flaw in pluralism theory is how hard it is to put into practice. This is due to the fact that the idea of distributing political power requires effective coordination. Therefore, inefficiencies and ineffectiveness may result when coordination cannot be achieved. For instance, programs are unlikely to align with national initiatives when the federal government lacks self-interest and collaborates poorly with state governments (Self, 1985: 83). Program inefficiency can also be attributed to political bias. It is demonstrated by those in charge of certain departments, who frequently struggle to tell the difference between the interests of the country and their own interest groups. Additionally, this system adds unnecessary complexity and length to the process of determining program priorities and policies. To sum up, the theory of pluralism proves useful in pinpointing political measures that emphasize the interplay between interest groups in the context of an ideal political system in democratic nations. But putting this system into place is challenging.

India is now a pluralistic society. It is a synthesis of various social and cultural components and a repository of diversity in cultures. On this land, a vast synthesis of the people's languages, cultures, and religions came together. Despite significant economic and social disparities, the nation has managed to preserve its unity and integrity. India is a distinctive cultural mosaic because of this synthesis. In actuality, India is a panorama unmatched by anything on other continents. Our culture and public conversation are deeply embedded with the desire for unity in diversity. This makes it abundantly evident that people from all backgrounds and religions coexist peacefully in one India, regardless of castes, languages, cultures, fashion sense, level of faith in God, worship rituals, and other factors.

India has managed to preserve its diversity while providing a respectable space in its mainstream for a wide range of individuals with various physical characteristics and cultural practices. India is "the epitome of the world," to put it briefly. Among the crucial elements of its pluralism are: A significant number of migratory races from the West and East arrived in India. The vast majority of Indians are descended from immigrants who crossed the Himalayas. The number of mother tongues has totaled 19,569, the report of the 2011 census said.

Indian culture is renowned for its way of living. Indian culture is a philosophy that promotes diverse languages, religions, dance music, cuisine, and architectural styles across the nation. India is a diversified nation made up of a variety of cultural systems. India boasts a remarkable cultural diversity across its territory. Every state has created a unique cultural niche, and the North, South, East, Northeast, and West all have unique cultures. There are no parallels in the world to this cultural diversity. India is a nation divided by many provinces, cultures, and languages, but it is brought together by its festivals. Every Indian state commemorates a minimum of one festival, the origins of which may have been historical. Participating in Indian festivals allows you to get a

deeper understanding of the elaborate customs that have been practiced there for many years. The only nation with multiple festivals according to religion, community, and state is India, and all of its festivals are celebrated with such fervor and enthusiasm that it seems like there is a new celebration every day there. Your festive excursion will allow you to experience every aspect of India.

Indian-American novelist Thrity Umrigar has significantly influenced literature with her works, which frequently address issues of identity, belonging, and the complexity of multicultural experiences. Her art is especially renowned for its subtle portrayal of multiculturalism, which connects her personal experiences in India and the US. The following are some examples of how multiculturalism is portrayed in her books: Umrigar's debut piece, *Bombay Time* (2001), is a gripping story that centers on the lives of the people living in a Parsi apartment building in Bombay. The complex web of recollections, secrets, and relationships that ties the characters together is examined in this book. Although it paints a vivid picture of life in the Parsi community, the story's central themes are relationships between people, growing older, and the pursuit of happiness regardless of cultural background.

In search of their identities and places within or beyond these cultural divides, characters in Umrigar's novels usually explore lives caught between cultures. Her stories frequently highlight the difficulties and rewards of living a bicultural identity. In "*The Space Between Us*" and "*The Secrets Between Us*," for example, the protagonists traverse Mumbai's social landscapes while considering their roles in both the traditional Indian culture and the modern, globalized world.

The immigrant experience is highlighted in many of her books, including "First Darling of the Morning: Selected Memories of an Indian Childhood" and *The Weight of Heaven*, which center on the psychological and emotional process of assimilating into a new culture while clinging to one's heritage. These stories shed light on the difficulties associated with immigration, the sensation of not quite belonging anywhere, and the ongoing balancing act between the past and the present. The conflicts that result from cultural differences, whether they occur within families, between friends, or between social classes, are expertly portrayed by Umrigar. Her books don't hold back when discussing important social issues that impact a variety of communities, like gender inequality, poverty, and the Indian caste system. Umrigar highlights how these problems are viewed differently in different cultures through the experiences of her characters, offering a multifaceted viewpoint that deepens the reader's comprehension of multiculturalism. Umrigar's narratives are enhanced by her use of language and cultural allusions, which offer readers a glimpse of the diversity of Indian culture in contrast to American life. Whether it's the quiet American suburbs or the busy streets of Mumbai, her painstaking attention to detail helps to paint a vivid picture of the settings, enabling readers to experience the cultural diversity up close.

The friendship between Lakshmi, an Indian immigrant living in America who

feels stuck in an unhappy marriage, and Maggie, an African-American psychologist, is the central theme of *The Story Hour*. Their bond serves as a prism through which questions of immigration, cultural identity, and the need to fit in are examined. Umrigar highlights the difficulties and rewards of cross-cultural interactions by deftly illustrating how the characters' cultural backgrounds influence their perceptions and decisions in life.

Umrigar examines the lives of Ellie and Frank Benton, an American couple who relocate to India after their son passes away, in *The Weight of Heaven*. The book goes in-depth on their battle to cope with their loss and adjust to a new culture. The story reveals the difficulties of cultural integration, moral conundrums, and the unexpected effects of cultural imposition through their contacts with the local community and their domestic staff. The subtleties of power relationships, cultural misinterpretation, and the pursuit of healing across cultural divides are all poignantly addressed in this book. *Everybody's Son* explores multicultural themes through the tale of Anton, an African-American boy adopted by a prosperous white couple, even though the story is not set in India or America. Umrigar investigates questions of privilege, identity, and race in American society using this premise. In addition to providing a moving commentary on race and belonging in a multicultural setting, the book explores the difficulties Anton has navigating his identity in the context of the disparate cultures of his upbringing and biological heritage. Umrigar explores her characters' emotional development and journey in *If Today Be Sweet*. Tehmina is asked to give up everything she once knew and called her own, including her home, country, neighbors, and friends, in the main plot of this book. Even though her son has experienced a similar process many years ago, he is powerless to assist her. She is on her own on this journey. Tehmina must decide quickly between living in America as a foreigner or as a citizen, in addition to the more significant decision of whether to remain in the country. Being a citizen means being involved, connected, and joining in. The two young, troubled children next door are a sign of destiny. Tehmina is forced to make a decision due to the predicament of these two boys to choose between jumping into the fullness of her new life in America and continuing to live in a state of perpetual uncertainty. Tehmina leaps, and with that, she carries out her ancestors' ancient vow to make her presence sweeten the lives of those in her new nation. The irony is that by obstinately clinging to her Indian identity, she strengthens the bonds of suburban American society.

Multiculturalism is woven throughout Thrity Umrigar's novels, adding nuance and complexity from different cultures that intersect the stories, rather than merely existing as a background. Umrigar invites her readers to traverse the boundaries between homelands and heartlands as she deftly examines the intersections of identity, belonging, and cultural dissonance. Her characters, which are frequently entangled in the web of international Diasporas, look for purpose and kinship in universes remote from their birthplaces but closely linked by the commonality of human experience. By means of her poignant narratives, Umrigar provides a profound analysis of the wonders and difficulties

of residing in a multicultural society, reaffirming the potential for comprehension, compassion, and unity amidst the immense fabric of human diversity. Her work stands as a testament to the power of literature to bridge cultures, to illuminate the multifaceted experiences of migration and identity, and to celebrate the richness that multiculturalism brings to our collective human story.

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Nergis Dalal's *The Girls From Overseas* : Cultural Displacement and Its Psychological Implications

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Abstract

Cultural Displacement is the process of a culture being physically uprooted from its origins or having another culture imposed upon it to eclipse or replace it. Literature of all the languages in the world has been influenced by the word -Diaspora. Diasporic writers deal the sense of loss and alienation that resulted from migration and expatriation in their works. Diasporic literature typically addresses themes of alienation, displacement, existential rootlessness and exploration of identity. It also discusses problems with the blending or breaking apart of cultures. Myriad of writers have disclosed the implications of physical as well as cultural displacements. Writers like V.S. Naipaul, Jhumpa Lahiri have vividly picturized the effects of cultural displacement and the migrants' quest for their own cultural identity. Among these writers, Nergis Dalal plays a vital role in portraying the cultural displacement and how these displacements affect the people and their daily life, especially their inter-cultural marital alliances. *The Girls from Overseas* by Nergis Dalal proves the above by showing the lives of five culturally displaced girls from five different nations as well as cultures who have married to Indian men. Because of the cultural disparity between the girls and their husbands, they always tumble in despair.

Key words: Displacement, Implications, Uprooted, Alienation, Disparity,

Introduction:

Indo – Anglican literature holds a special place in India's literary landscape and is an essential component of English literature. The influential critic of Indo – Anglican literature, Prof. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar talks extensively about the literary contribution

of India to English literature. While male writers shaped and maintained Indian writing in English, women writers fought to carve out a fresh, uncharted territory for themselves. They have indeed accomplished amazing things with words that well chosen and well spoken. Their attitudes demonstrate that they appear to be freeing in a number of ways. The Indian English novel prominently features the image of women and their quest for individual identity.

The process of a culture being physically uprooted from its origin or having another culture imposed upon it to eclipse and replace it, is known as Cultural Displacement. It results in cultural confusion and it refers to this process of learning and encompasses the complete range of emotions, from conflicting feelings during an inter-cultural encounter to the rare serious disorientation and ensuing melancholy known as culture shock.

Being a refugee in India, Nergis Dalal knows more about cultural displacement, to which she, herself is a victim. Dalal is one of the Parsi writers in India and her contemporaries are Rohinton Mistry, Boman Desai, Firdaus Kanga, Deshpande and Kelkar so on. The word *Parsi* means inhabitants of Persia and thus ethnic Persian is a demonym in Persian.. Parsis are the followers of Zoroaster. The Parsis, whose name translates to Persians and Persians are descended from Persian Zoroastrians who fled religious persecution at the lands of Muslims by settling in India. The Quissa-i-Sanjan states that Parsis came as refugees from Greater Iran to Gujarat and Sindh during the eighth and tenth centuries.

International females generally project the awareness of non- natives who articulate the common identity of being uprooted. This book contains Dalal's picturization of India and Indian culture. Dalal explores the issue of cultural displacement in conjunction with marriage and the meeting of East and West cultures. Her characters are set in a place where there are vast socio cultural displacements. Dalal has presented in this book five case studies of culturally displaced people coexisting in one nation but still longing for their former homeland. The characters are constantly missing their native and its culture. The narrative centres on five foreign girls who are now married to Indian men. These girls have a hazy understanding of life. Everything is tinged with a sense of alienation and melancholy.

The five alien girls in the book are significant female characters, each with their own cultural background. These are the following: Sandy (American), Gertrude (British), Louise (Canadian), Michelle (French) and Jane (British). These women's manners and behaviours serve as representations of their varied racial and cultural identities. They share a sense of unity in this strange land called India, but it is based on the knowledge that India is not their home. They can't accept India and Indians as their own despite their comfortable and very sophisticated lifestyles.

Children working ten hours a day, little girls getting married off before they are out of the school room, animals roaming the street with no one to care for them, and

beggars, lepers and mutilated people begging for alms, like in medieval times. (45)

This demonstrates how alienated they feel from one other and how they band together to make up for it. Thus, these girls get together for coffee at one or more of their homes once a week.

Another issue that strains relations between Eastern and Western cultures is the way these foreign girls mingle at social gatherings and at their homes. They don't find it strange at all. Together, they sip alcohol to celebrate and decompress their suffocative mind. On the other hand women are not allowed to drink in Indian conservative society, nor is it accepted. Conflict between cultures is the outcome. The following instances show how the cultures differ from one another.

It was impossible to escape one's background. Louise was convinced of it. Five years in India, five years of being married to an Indian, and she was herself, alien, separate. (1)

Dinesh married a Canadian girl, named Louise. She had spent five years in India. Despite her sincere love for her spouse, she felt mentally detached. She observed a communication gap of sorts between herself and the other family members in her husband's home Louise expressed in a situation her inability to adapt to Indian culture and its people and she has expressed her distaste for so called backwardness inside the nation. She believes that in India, girls marry young stray cattle roam the streets, youngsters are compelled to work excessive hours. Despite all of this, she makes an unsuccessful attempt, to fit in with the society to which completely alien.

The foreign girls' perspectives did not align with those of their Indian families. They experience alienation due to this difference in thinking. Nergis Dalal illustrates the disparities in thinking through Louise and her mother-in-law. The Indian system of arranged weddings astounded Louise. She claims that in India, horoscopes are consulted to arrange weddings, between young men and girls who are complete strangers. Louise thought this marriage structure was immoral. The statement of Louise projects her aloofness:

You know foreigners marrying Indians should be given an orientation course. (2). However, her mother-in-law disapproved of love marriages with the same fervour as Louise. Hence, this is one more conflicts in the eastern and western cultures.

Despite spending forty years in India, Michelle, the French woman, married to General Raj, has managed to resist Indian influence and maintains her own French identity. It appeared as though Michelle had adapted to her environment, her kids, and even her spouse, rather than the other way. The foreign girls' lifestyles and attire were unmistakably indicative of their alienation from Indian society. The author of this novel, of cultural displacement, has shown her case by way of Gertrude. English woman Gertrude married Mr. Das before she was thirty years old, but she struggled to fit in with the customs and culture of her new country. She never donned the Indian traditional garment, the saree. On special occasions, four of the five women donned sarees, but they

were ill-fitting. Their superiority complex is another factor mentioned in the novel that led these foreign women to reject Indian culture as their own. With Gertrude's assistance, Nergis Dalal alerts the readers to this. During one of the gatherings, Gertrude encouraged her pals to maintain their uniqueness.

Nergis Dalal deftly alludes to the cultural variances by citing the ways in which homes are embellished and various deities are revered. Jane had made many of the desired changes in the house when she married Dr. Sunil. It is best to speak according to her culture. She painted the walls white and plain instead of their original dark tone. She removed all the coloured pictures of Gods and coloured items in the in law's house. The following excerpt does a good job of illustrating the eastern culture and what makes it unique from other cultures:

Here they hung pictures of Krishna, sporting with the gopies and filled the small alcove with garishly coloured plaster statues of the Gods. Here they burnt pungent incense sticks. (127)

It seems that all of the foreign women's attempts to fit in with Eastern society have failed, and as a result, they have felt detached. Foreigners, visiting India, encounter peculiar cultural norms and social customs that strongly evoke a sense of being in a foreign country. As a result, Nergis Dalal, the novelist, expertly captures, the protagonists' sense of alienation, which results from emotional and cultural gaps.

American Sandy is a talkative extrovert, who is married to wealthy jeweller, Dilip. Given that the woman is considering a divorce, simply a week after her wedding, one can immediately surmise what a dismal partnership this is. The way the book addresses the cultural differences between East and west is really distinctive. Sandy's portrayal is significantly more important than the others.

Nergis Dalal has handled very uniquely as well as cleverly the East-West cultural encounters. In *The Girls from Overseas* there is always a longing for home, which is not fulfilled till the end. To Jane, the idea of home is more imaginary, than its in real. To Gertrude, home becomes, "a mythic place of desire in the diasporic imagination". Sandy attempts to regain the lost happiness out of wedlock, through nostalgic recollections of the past and she makes home her product of speculation and imagination which can be retrieved only in memory. According to Bill Ashcrof:

The dialectic of place and displacement is always a feature of post-colonial societies whether these have been created by a process of settlement, intervention, or a mixture of the two. Beyond their historical and cultural differences, place displacement and a pervasive concern with the myths of identity and authenticity area feature common to all post-colonial literatures in English. (9)

These migrants adopt various identities when they come into contact with them. They make an effort to create identities based on class and gender. Despite being uprooted, they attempt to forge a complex, transient new identity. The girls bemoan cultural differences and problems in India at the start of the book, as well as their Indian

husbands and family. All of the others, with the exception of Gertrude, have ultimately come to understand, appreciate, and adore their family life because to Dalal's storytelling. An understanding of immigrant sensibility is one of the best ways to the scrutiny of Dalal's fiction. Initially, her exposure of cultural hybridity works as a key to enter the plurality of her fiction. The extent to which hybridity has influenced Dalal's aesthetic decision and provided insights into psychological analysis astounds one.

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**Domestic Abuse and Trauma of Mrs. Bloom and Lily Bloom
in *It Ends With Us***

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Abstract

This research paper analyses the representation of trauma and domestic abuse in Colleen Hoover's novel *It Ends With Us*. To do this, trauma theory and the notion of domestic violence are applied in the analysis, as well as Dorrit Cohn's ideas of diary novels, dissonant narrator and consonant narrator. The findings show that the protagonist, Lily's, way of coping with her trauma and domestic violence during her teenage years, was to keep a diary, effectively using scriptotherapy. When that was not enough, however, she actively suppressed her problems. The paper also shows Lenore E. Walker's ideas of cycle of abuse and how Lily manages to break the cycle as the novel proceeds.

Keywords: Trauma Theory, Domestic Violence, Abuse

Introduction:

Domestic abuse, also called domestic violence or intimate partner violence, can be defined as a pattern of behavior in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. Abuse is physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that frighten, intimidate, terrorize, manipulate, hurt, humiliate, blame, injure, or wound someone. Domestic violence involves all types of violent acts, but they do not always have to be of the physically violent kind. Domestic violence can be verbal, too. Domestic abuse can happen to anyone of any race, age, sexual orientation, religion, or gender. It can occur within a range of relationships including couples who are married, living together or dating. Domestic violence affects people of all socioeconomic backgrounds and education levels.

In *It Ends With Us*, Lily witnesses her mother, Mrs. Bloom being abused by her father and the dominance he asserts on her mother. He does not like her mother being happy around other men. He often fights with Mrs. Bloom which sometimes ends with a few thrashings. But he made sure that he did not beat her in her face so that it does not leave any visible marks on her so that their neighbors will not know about it. He was

a well-known person in their community and he did not want his behavior at home to affect his image in the society as he has a real estate company and he is also the mayor of the town. He would stop beating Mrs. Bloom only if his daughter walked in on them. Lily used this to make her father stop fighting with her mother. As usual, Lily tried to stop her father by appearing in the middle of their fight and grabbing her father's back, hitting him on his back and telling him to stop the fight. But all she can remember after that is that she was on the ground while her forehead was hurting.

Her father even pushed her down to the ground this time. This was the first time he had beaten his daughter. Another day, when Mr and Mrs Bloom had an intense fight and Lily could hear her mother begging her father to stop beating. Atlas, who had sneaked into Lily's room earlier, tried to stop her from entering the living room. But she insisted that it had always helped in making her dad stop the fight. She left to the living room in order to find out what was happening between her parents. She was shocked by what she was seeing. Mr. Bloom was on top of Mrs. Bloom, trying to force himself on her. He not only abused her physically but also sexually. Being her husband does not give him the right to have sexual intercourse without her consent. When she saw Lily, she pleaded with her husband to leave her alone as Lily was looking at them. This is the last incident mentioned by Lily about her father abusing her mother. Later on, he became sick and Mrs. Bloom took care of him even though he gave her a tough time throughout the years. Lily always wondered why her mother did not leave her father in spite of all the troubles he had done to her.

Atlas moved to Boston after a while. The next day, Lily was in her bed, shuffling cards as many times as she could. She was anxious and did not know what she would do without him by her side to talk about her day and for someone who could console her when needed. She was deeply affected by the fact that the only person she could share her feelings with is no longer near her and she does not know for sure if she would ever see him again. She just held on to the words he used to refer from the Finding Nemo movie 'Just keep swimming', a character named Dori used to say these words as they try to find a way out. Lily tried to keep swimming till she could reach the shore which is a place where she feels safer.

Lily made a decision that she should never date a man who is like her father. Even if she was in a situation like her mother, she would just leave him and never go back. She met a man named Ryle Kincaid, who is a neurosurgeon. One day, they both were a little drunk and Ryle rushed to take the lasagna out of the oven as it had already been burnt. In an impulse, he took the casserole out with his bare hands. He dropped the hot glass casserole on the floor as it burnt his hand and it shattered into pieces. Lily laughs at the thought of how funny it is that Ryle forgot to wear a potholder before touching the casserole. But ends up on the floor near the cabinet. She feels pain near the corner of her eyes. She then realizes that Ryle had given her a strong blow and she could see him pacing up and down the kitchen.

He then understood the damage he had made and he approached Lily asking her if she was okay. Lily did not want to believe what Ryle had just done to her. He harmed her. Lily, who came from an abusive background, felt like she is now trapped in the same situation as her mother. Ryle was apologizing to Lily, but all she could hear was her father's voice apologizing to her mother after the damage was done. She had been affected by the traumatic experience and she cannot stop comparing both situations and at the same time, she did not want to believe that Ryle is the same as her father.

"I'm so sorry. I just . . . I burned my hand. I panicked. You were laughing and . . . I'm so sorry, it all happened so fast. I didn't mean to push you, Lily, I'm sorry."

I don't hear Ryle's voice this time. All I hear is my father's voice. "I'm sorry, Jenny. It was an accident. I'm so sorry."

"I'm sorry, Lily. It was an accident. I'm so sorry."(186)

Lily tries to make up her mind that Ryle is not the same as her father. She keeps thinking of every good thing that Ryle has done and that he cannot like her father. Mr. Bloom was uncaring but she believed that Ryle would never be like him. Even though she wanted to shout at him and react how she wanted her mother to react to her father when he hurtled her, she still wanted to believe that what Ryle did was just an accident as he says. She analyses the whole situation that night and tries to stop it from happening again avoiding the factors that lead to it.

The domestic abuse witnessed by Lily at a very young age developed trauma in her, which later reflected in her relationship with Ryle. Trauma is defined as resulting from an event or set of situations "that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally hurtful or threatening and that has lasting unfavorable effects on the individual's functioning and Wellbeing" (What is Trauma, 2019). Also it explains trauma as:

The long-lasting effects of trauma are the "result of the individual's practice of the event or situation and may occur instantly or over time. In some conditions, the individual may not distinguish the link between his/her trauma and the unfavorable effect they develop. This includes the inability to manage 0. Emotions, memory, thinking, attention and behavior; to trust and benefit from relationships.

Trauma can also be experienced by whole communities that face the same traumatic practice of an event. The resultant trauma is often passed down through generations in a model referred to as historical, society, or intergenerational trauma. (What is Trauma, 2019)

Janice Haaker in her chapter "Damsels in Distress: Popular Culture and Stories of Domestic Abuse" (2010): "there has been relatively little attentiveness to Stories tensions between literary and scientific representations of abuse in the domestic violence field" (80). Haaken explains that there are three different genres of domestic violence narrative: stories of of bondage, stories deliverance and stories of struggle and reparation. Stories of bondage refers to the narratives that represent a female lead, trapped

in a marriage and a household from which she cannot leave (and is often written as a gothic novel *Stories of deliverance* focuses on the female as “an active agent plotting her escape”, such as novels like *Safe Haven* (2010) by Nicholas Sparks. The third and last genre, stories of struggle and reparation, involves stories that are more complex and focuses not on the “good side” and the “bad side”, but rather on things that reside in the grey area, such as reasons for the violence as well as society’s part in the abuse (84).

It could be suggested that while *It Ends with Us* has some qualities similar to both stories of bondage and stories of deliverance, the novel does not entirely belong to one genre only. That is to say, many novels about domestic violence generally are quite straight forward and follow a rather linear progress, but there is the occasional novel which cannot fit into one category alone, such as *It Ends with Us*. Putting the novel in only one category could be misdirecting, not only for the book itself, but also for domestic violence, trauma and trauma survivors. Domestic violence is complex, and so are usually the situations surrounding the abuse. Showing that the novel is complex as well, and that it does not fit into one category, can be beneficial for the representation of domestic violence in literature.

Lily maintains a journal, which helps her reconstruct the traumatic experience she had in her childhood. One of the ways to overcome trauma is to narrate the traumatic incident. Even though Lily does not attend therapy sessions, she has the habit of writing it down, which helped her to overcome the traumatic experiences. Felman and Laub explain that survivors of trauma are trapped in a “traumatic reality”, and in order for them to get out of the entrapment they must start a therapeutic process of formulating a narrative for their experience (69).

Lily addresses the letters to Ellen in order to feel like she is talking to someone, not just feeling like she is writing it all down. Pennebaker and Smyth argue that humans have a need to tell others about ourselves (2). This does however contrast Cohn’s point on the diary novel, in the way that the protagonist only writes for herself (208), but since Lily never intends for anyone else to read her diary – only addressing the entries to feel like she is talking to someone – this ties together with Cohn’s ideas. Moreover, Brison talks about how important it is for survivors to narrate their trauma, and how it can help the survivor to work through it (40). The only way for Lily to ever discuss, and narrate, her experiences is to write in a diary, pretending to write to Ellen DeGeneres.

Vickroy concurs and argues that through creating a ‘narrative reconstruction’ the traumatic memory loses its power (3). Further, Herman likewise defends the notion that to be able to recover from a traumatic event, the subject’s main purpose is “reconstructing the trauma story” (3). Lily reconstructed her traumatic stories through the journal and this also helped her understand the personality of Ryle and it also helped her to break out of the abuse she was facing as it contained the way gentle Atlas had always behaved to her. Even though her breaking up with Ryle had nothing to do with her childhood love, his characteristics helped her discern how a good man can behave to a woman.

She was devastated by the fact that she had actually turned into her mother without even trying to be like her. Even though she was trapped in trauma, she kept giving excuses that her partner is not the same as her father. She was not able to accept the fact as she thought that she was just assuming things by comparing her current relationship she is in was just as abusive as her parents'. She finds him as a good man who is making some bad mistakes.

“Remember what you said to me on the roof that night? You said, ‘There is no such thing as bad people. We’re all just people who sometimes do bad things.’ ”

He nods and squeezes my hands.

Domestic Abuse impacts the brain and behavior. It causes trauma for the victim, and she (or he) may experience symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, including hyper arousal, re-experiencing, avoidance and numbing. Once a person has been traumatized, it may become extremely challenging to truly express the full impact this incident has had on her life. They become fearful of reliving the experience. Thus this paper describes the traumatic experience of Lily as she had to go through domestic abuse in her childhood.

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The Cultural Metamorphosis of Women: A Critical Study on Anuradha Roy's *The Folded Earth*

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Abstract

A society's major and subtle changes are referred to as cultural metamorphosis. Whether these changes are desirable is debatable. Culture is a people's beliefs, which can be material or abstract. Human development and culture are closely intertwined. A group of people's culture can be identified by their culture, which has many distinctive features, including being based on symbols, shared and learned, and typically socially inherited with profound effects on an individual's way of life. This paper critically examines the role and position of women portrayed in Anuradha Roy's *The Folded Earth*. Women's roles are evolving in the patriarchal culture. The novel portrays the struggle to break free from the stereotypes of submissiveness that the patriarchy imposed.

Keywords: Cultural Metamorphosis, Culture, Symbol, Women, Patriarchy, Subordination, Anuradha Roy, *The Folded Earth*.

Introduction:

The concept of metamorphosis was presented by the French philosopher and sociologist Edgar Morin. "Metamorphosis" comes from the Greek word 'metamorfosi', which means transforms. The Greek terms "meta", which means "change", and "morphe", which means "forms", are the source of the English word "Metamorphosis". Throughout history, several mythologies and philosophical theories have included the idea of transformation or change in form.

Anuradha Roy's book *The Folded Earth*, shortlisted for multiple awards, including the Man Asia Prize, won the Economist Crossword Prize for fiction. An Atlas of Impossible Longing, her debut book, has been translated into fifteen different languages worldwide. It was shortlisted for the crossword prize and listed by world literature. It is one of the 60 most important books on contemporary India today. In 2004, she was awarded the Picador Outlook Non-Fiction Prize. Journalist Prize and book reviews by Anuradha Roy have appeared in the Hindu, India Today, Outlook Traveller,

National Geographic Traveller, Bilbo, Telegraph, and Indian Express. In 2022, Roy received the Sahitya Akademi Award for her fourth novel, *All the Lives We Never Lived*.

Anuradha Roy's second novel, *The Folded Earth*, won long-listed for the 2011 Man Asian Prize. Maya, a young Hindu woman disinherited by her pickle-industrialist father for marrying a Christian, tells the story of *The Folded Earth* following her husband's death during a mountaineering expedition. Maya leaves the Deccan and relocates to the Himalayan hill station of Ranikhet. Maya cultivates relationships with people around her as she withdraws into the simplicity of village life. These people included the tenacious teenage village Charu, her lunatic uncle Puran and mother Ama, and the elderly aristocrat Diwan Shabib, who preserved the memory of pre-independence India. Mr. Chauhan, an ostentatious and conceited civil servant, is also present, as is the general, who is older than Diwan sahib.

The women characters in the novel delicately convey their longing, love, and desires. The characters endure unbearable suffering. In addition to addressing the ongoing challenges that even a common independent woman encounters in a patriarchal society. Roy exposes the key issue of women's importance of education and independence through her protagonist, Maya, who is disowned from her family by her avaricious father. The father character chooses not to have a relationship with his only daughter to maintain their social honour and dignity. Sensational issues like racism, patriarchy, class, caste, and religious discrimination system came to the limelight in the novel. Another woman character, Charu, longs for her Delhi lover, who is rejected by her grandmother immediately due to his occupation and social standing.

The novel *The Folded Earth* is an evident expression of the cultural metamorphosis of women who cannot express their needs and expectations in a patriarchal culture. Society is the only factor that shapes women's lives. The majority of female characters in the novel expose the metamorphosis of the role women play in the patriarchal society to live independent lives. Roy's reluctance to give his readers a direct explanation of her work or her views towards women is both typical and indicative of the social reality. Roy challenges conventional gender stereotypes and shatters readers' preconceptions by withholding judgment on her characters. Her narrative thus offers critiques of both feminist and conventional interpretations that worsen the problems they aim to solve through ideological fixations.

“The practice of love is the most powerful antidote to the politics of domination” (Hooks, 123). Maya, the only heir of the wealthy father, was his favourite. However, their relationship broke down over Maya's closeness and love for a Christian boy named Michael. After learning of her love for Michael, her father uses a patriarchal stick of authority to place her under house arrest and other restrictions. The metamorphosis of Maya from daughter to social honour is made by her patriarchal father, whose idea is to control and own her body. “Metamorphosis’ transforms the subject into an object and addresses the father’s power to barter with his children’s bodies” (Straus, 654).

Maya is a Hindu girl who was raised in a loving and opulent environment as the daughter of a wealthy and educational family, but her decisions to marry a Christian boy and his death destroy her bond with her parents. A young twenty-five-year-old woman whom her father disowned experienced widowhood in the Indian Patriarchal society, which is horrible.

The experience of loneliness after Michael's death has devastated Maya, but she shows a strong sense of assertiveness when he decides to move to Ranikhet, a remote Himalayan town in the middle of nature. She had the option to return to her parents, but her return back to the family would have required her to acknowledge and apologize to her patriarchal father for making the wrong decision. "The edge of my father's anger was blunted now that Michael had left my life. All I had to do was to tell him that I had been wrong and misguided and beg him to trust me again" (Roy, 20). Maya never returns to her family, asking for financial or emotional help or apologising for making the wrong decision.

Maya transforms from her comfort zone to search for a new woman's identity that every Indian woman searches for in the modern Indian patriarchal society. With many unanswerable questions, without any expectation, Maya surrenders herself to the nature of the Ranikhet. Vandana Shiva, the acclaimed ecofeminist, in her book *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology & Survival in India*, posits that "women in India are an intimate part of nature, both in imagination and in practice. At one level nature is symbolized as the embodiment of the feminine principle, and at another, she is nurtured by the feminine to produce life and provide sustenance" (38).

Maya's new life form in Hill Station as a teacher at St. Hilda School led her to start over and explore her path, demonstrating her independence and self-reliance. Despite the difficulties and uncertainties, her choice to start over on her terms demonstrates her resilience in accepting the new transformation. Even though Maya is experiencing unbearable personal loss and grief, she manages to be emotionally strong in society. "Everywhere one looks, except for a few technologically advanced cultures, women turn out to be the base on which first life then society are built" (Fisher, 71).

Anuradha Roy proves that women are never a simple target for men's crafty needs. Charu, another character who transformed her life for her love of Kundan, came to the village to cook for his employees. The girl who was born and raised in a tribe on the hill moved from her village nature to a metropolitan city. She witnessed global warming; the globalization of the culture completely changed her behaviours. "The car roared to life and took him away down... The darkening mountains behind him began to swallow the blood-red sun as it turned from a disk to a sliver, slowly disappearing from view" (Roy, 142).

Charu's grandmother, Ama, is an elderly woman who plays a significant part in the story and is disowned by her family. The powerful narration of Ama's character is evidence of the downtrodden people's experiences of injustice. However, in this

situation, she maintains her honour and dignity. The sixty-year-old illiterate woman demonstrates her independence. “The main target of both nationalism and fundamentalism, and communalism, is women because religious, ethnic and cultural identity is always based on a patriarchal, patriarchal image of women, or rather control over ‘our’ women, which, as we know from many examples, almost always amounts to more violence against women, more inequality for women” (Chachhi, 64).

The patriarchal system of power subjugates and hegemonizes women systematically. It works by giving their oppression institutional and legal standing when powerful forces join together to oppress the vulnerable community, especially women. “Women have so far not been able to appropriate that is make their own, the social changes to which they have been subjected passively in the course of history” (Mies, 42). Women need cultural metamorphosis. Maya, Charu, and Ama are characters who transformed culturally in their life when these forces hit them harder. Women need cultural metamorphosis to escape from the oppression.

The dream was of replacing that culture of domination with a world of participatory economics grounded in communalism and social democracy, a world without discrimination based on race or gender, a world where recognition of mutuality and interdependency would be the dominant ethos, a global ecological vision of how the planet can survive and how everyone on it can have access to peace and well-being. (FTFMC, 110)

Therefore, women's identity is closely related to the ‘sense of justice’ they seek in their times. Women's identity is not only a philosophical category but a social, political, and religious category, which is contested and political. It is a space that helps people transcend socially constructed boundaries that are fixed, and hegemonic boundaries.

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Cultural Melancholy in S.Y.Agnon's *A Simple Story*

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Cultural melancholy emphasises on psychoanalysis and Freud's distinction between sadness and sorrow. Cultural melancholy is associated with culture, history, politics, religion, sociology etc. In accordance with Jermaine Singleton "Cultural Melancholy draws on work in psychoanalytic criticism that exposes the contradictions and instability of the process of subject formation at the intersection of the forces of culture and melancholia." (4) In "Mourning and Melancholia" essay Sigmund Freud contends that while grieving eventually forces one to face one's history, melancholy is like an open wound that refuses to heal. In *Cultural Melancholy: Reading of Race, Impossible mourning and African American Ritual* Jermaine Singleton opines

"Historically, materially, and psychically contingent theory of cultural melancholy not only illuminates the unexpectedly rich connections between psychoanalysis and critical race studies by providing a grammar for understanding how melancholia travels across time and social space though the radicalized subject-formation that is simultaneously individualistic and interpersonal, but also demonstrates the ways in which a reading of race and ritual that draws on psychoanalysis to place critical race studies into conversation with the critical traditions of performance studies can be politically and culturally transformative" (4)

Shmuel Yosef Agnon, the celebrated Hebrew Writer and Noble Laureate, who is known for his profound exploration of Jewish identity, tradition, culture, and struggles of Jewish in the early twentieth century. Agnon fossick into the complexities of what it means to be a Jewish in cultural contexts. He examines religious observance, cultural heritage, and individual identity. Throughout five decades of writing, Agnon has been interested in the moral and emotional aspects of matchmaking. In one of his novels,

Agunot (1908), he outlines the catastrophic consequences of an arranged marriage that breaks down due to divorce. Beyond individual sorrow, the mismatch represents an eternal state of loss and separation, longing and estrangement, on a national and even cosmic scale. He addresses the ambiguous morality of arranged marriages in his novella *In the Prime of Her Life* (1923), where a father's well-meaning attempt to shield his daughter from heart disease ends up condemning her to a miserable existence filled with grief. Both *Agunot* and *In the Prime of Her Life*, along with *A Simple Story* (1935) and the later story *Tehillah* (1950), are examples of Agnon's rewriting of the popular theme associated with the issues of arranged marriages in early contemporary Hebrew literature, but in a far more nuanced style. The shidduch practice was criticised by Jewish Enlightenment literature.

Practice of Jewish Matchmaking, the Jewish singles in Orthodox Jewish communities are introduced to one another through the Shidduch system of matchmaking with the intent of marriage. In Traditional Orthodox Jewish groups, dating was once restricted only for finding a spouse. The parents, close friends, or family members of the individuals involved, as well as the singles themselves, typically enquires certain things such as character of the partner, intelligence, learning level, financial situation, family and health status, appearance, and level of religious observance. A shadchan is a professional matchmaker, but the term also refers to the person who makes a shidduch. The suitable partners meet several times after the match has been suggested to determine whether they are a good fit. Communities may differ in how many dates they require before announcing an engagement. In certain cases, the dating lasts for several months. The couple notifies the shadchan of the shidduch's accomplishment if it is successful. If shidduch fails, another side usually gets informed by the shadchan that the arrangement will not be proceeded.

A Simple Story is Agnon's masterpiece of psychological realism. This novel explores the well-worn theme of a father, mother, and their only son entangled in the complications of an arranged marriage. It also offers to delve into the mind of Jewish mother's mind and protracted dispute between assertive mother and submissive son. The prevalent theme in modern Hebrew literature is the issues of arranged marriages. *A simple story* centres around the theme of culture of Jewish community, Jewish matchmaking and Arranged marriage. It is a story of young protagonist, Hirshl his mother Tsirl, his father Boruch Meir and his poor orphaned relative Blume.

Lack of morality towards Blume Nacht, a penniless orphan, arrives at the Hurvitz family in Szybusz and fell in love with Hirshl the son of the family. The family's

son, Hirshl, welcomes her warmly, but his mother Tsirl is as cold as a stone. Tsirl treats Blume like a liability, Though she is a distinct relative of their family they do not have the burden of paying her a salary “After all,” said Tsirl to her husband, ‘she is one of us, isn’t she? He who rewards us will reward her too.’(Agnon 7) Being a prudent mother she seems to be quiet towards the love affair of her son Hirshl with Blume just to prevent her son from roaming around and going behind any other girls. “The same good sense that make her think, Why, the boy would have to be mad to fall in love with a penniless orphan, made her keep silent too. Let him have his flirtation with Blume, she thought. Once he grows up, he’ll marry someone suitable.”(Agnon 36) Her selfish motif does not allow her to be empathetic towards Blume. Tsirl considers Blume is as instrumental and plays with the feeling of Blume. “she felt grateful to Blume for keeping Hirshl away from other girls, for even in Szybusz, she knew, youthful morals were not what they once were.”(Agnon 8) Tsirl could not even showcase her sympathy towards Blume. She does not like Blume. Her violation of Jewish ethical duty Tsedaqah, contrary to her husband Boruch Meir, and refuses to give the beggars even a penny. Instead, she verbally abuses them. Tsirl’s exploitation of the Blume and lack of morality is conformed, and proves her to be a sole cause for making her son Hirshl and Blume to be melancholic.

Parent’s matchmaking ends with arranged marriage, they evaluate the suitable spouse's fit for their children. Likewise Tsirl determines that her son Hirshl should get married soon. So that she Calls upon Yona Toyber, the community matchmaker. She suggests Mina a prospective daughter of Gedalya and Bertha Ziemlich for her son Hirshl. Though Gedalya is wealthy, he grows food for himself because he manages the count's land in the Malikrowik village. Tsirl manages to make her husband accept for this proposal and tries to persuade her son to accept her choice of bride.

Tsirl lectures her son that marriage is a serious business that depends on money just like any other kind of business. “A bachelor can be free to follow his heart, but what would the world come to if he didn’t put his romances aside when the time came to get married? A fine place it would be if everyone followed their hearts!”(Agnon 47) Blume is a good girl, but she does not own any money. Hirshl does not respond to his mother immediately or during the next few days. Blume needs him to defend himself, but he needs Blume to wage this struggle for him. Both of their expectation leads them to indulge in melancholy. Blume knows she is getting into serious trouble when she falls in love with Hirshl. She is severely hurt when her concerns become reality, avoids Hirshl, and they both get deep melancholy. “In a vague way Hirshl began to feel that, if he did not stand steadfast forever, this would only be because Blume had abandoned him.”

(Agnon48) Tsirl takes advantage of Blume leaving the house and manipulate Hirshl for her selfish motif. She misrepresents Blume's sadness as a lack of love towards her son "Better to marry a woman who respects you than to run after one who doesn't care." (Agnon 52) Tsirl is making an unreasonable demand of Hirshl: she wants him to leave the lady he loves and marry a stranger. But to some extent he is ready to agree with his mother Tsirl's proposal of marriage because he lacks the ability to oppose her.

According to Amos Oz and A. B. Yehoshua that Tsirl and Blume, the two women in his life, are to blame for his frailty. Yehoshua asserts that "Hirshl looks to Blume for motherly affection because Tsirl is an emotionally distant and controlling mother, while Blume is a reserved and unresponsive person who is blumah (closed in Hebrew) both by name and by nature." (74-88) Oz says "Tsirl is a beast who hardly resembles a human, and on top of that, she is an awful mother." (72)

Hirshl's inability to stand on his own. There are two aspects preventing Hirshl from his moral and psychological immaturity which resist him from marrying Blume and proceeds him towards melancholy. Hirshl is still a child. He was not properly raised by his parents, therefore he cannot mature from childhood to manhood. At a very young age, his mother emotionally deserted him and his father Boruch Meir's subservience to his wife made Hirshl to lack moral and psychological maturity.

Melancholia due to culture, Hirshl became melancholic in later years due to the abrupt and devastating loss of his mother's love and care during the early years of his life. According to Sigmund Freud, "melancholia too may be the reaction to the loss of a loved object [...] the object has not perhaps actually died, but has been lost as an object of love." (246) Hirshl's melancholia precedes his grief over Blume. The trauma of childhood reacts three years later after the loss of Blume. Hirshl feels more and more melancholic as if there is no purpose or interest in anything. Reminiscent of Freud's description of the melancholic, Hirshl experience "profoundly painful dejection, cessation of interest in the outside world, loss of the capacity to love, inhibition of all activity, and a lowering of the self-regarding feelings" (Agnon 243) He struggles to go to sleep, hates meals, and feels guilty over his shattered love towards Blume. "The sleeplessness in melancholia testifies to the rigidity of the condition," (253) says Freud, and Hirshl's mental state deteriorates to psychosis as his sleeplessness gets worse.

The Culture of the Jewish community which determines the family of Tsirl and Boruch Meir, being a good parent means preserving for their son everything that they have and are capable of. Despite their best efforts, they become a failure as parents. Hirshl

endures the loss of a nurturing childhood in a society that endorses egotistical greed. Furthermore, their rooted moral egotism reduces the intensity of their emotions. In addition to lacking motherly empathy for an orphaned girl who stays at her home, Tsirl is also unable to empathize with her son's grief. Therefore parental love is limited and an utter failure due to their cultural baggage and lack of morality. Thus culture of the community such as matchmaking and Arranged marriage ruined the life of both Blume and Hirshl.

Cultural Melancholy plays a vital role in the life of the young protagonist Hirshl. The manipulation of hirshl's mother Tsirl leads to melancholy. The Practice of Jewish matchmaking, Arranged marriage and its consequences, exploitation of a poor girl, lack of morality were discussed. The cultural baggage, parental failure and lack of morality made the life of Hirshl a chaotic one and ultimately leads towards Melancholy.

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Folklore and oral literature: Study of Poorakkali songs

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Abstract

Folklore and oral literature are integral to a culture's heritage, preserving traditions, beliefs, and stories passed down through generations by word of mouth. One fascinating aspect of folklore is the study of traditional songs, which often provide insights into a community's history, values, and social dynamics. In the context of Indian folklore, Poorakkali songs stand out as a vibrant form of oral literature that offers a unique window into the cultural tapestry of Kerala. Poorakkali is a ritual performance performed in the Malabar region of Kerala during Pooram festivals. Poorakkali songs are a vital component of traditional storytelling in Kerala, India, focusing on mythological narratives primarily drawn from the epics Ramayana and Mahabharata. These songs serve not only to establish the ambiance of the performance but also to impart moral teachings and cultural values to the audience. In the historical context, classical epics and mythological texts were predominantly composed in Sanskrit, a language inaccessible to the common populace, particularly those from marginalized castes and socio-economic strata. This linguistic barrier created a divide, restricting access to these narratives and cultural heritage to a privileged few. Through this paper, I intend to study how Poorakkali songs functioned as a medium to simplify and disseminate these epic stories orally, enabling broader dissemination and retention within the community. Additionally, Poorakkali songs offer insights into the agrarian practices of the community, serving as a repository for traditional agricultural knowledge that is transmitted to subsequent generations through this oral tradition.

Keywords: Folklore, Oral literature, Traditional songs, Poorakkali, Ritual performance, Malabar region, Kerala, Pooram festivals, Mythological narratives, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Moral teachings, Cultural values, Linguistic barrier, Sanskrit, Marginalized castes, Socio- economic strata, Dissemination, Retention, Agrarian practices, Traditional agricultural knowledge, Oral tradition

Folklore and oral literature have a decisive role in preserving the collective memories of their community. It is a reservoir of their community's histories, beliefs, and socio-cultural values. According to Dan Ben Amos, 'folklore is a way of thinking about how people learn, share knowledge, and form their identity. It is an 'artistic communication

in small groups'. The term "folklore" originated from the old English words "folc" and "lar" symbolizing the wisdom of the folk. It was introduced into British academic discourse by William Thoms in 1846 as a replacement for the term "popular antiquities". Thoms defined folklore as the traditional beliefs, legends, and customs prevalent among the common people. However, since its origins, the term has been used differently by diverse people in different countries.

Historical circumstances, personal motivations, and sociocultural factors have played a great role in defining it. Studying oral literature is a way of investigating culture and social organization. As with other forms of speech, people use oral literature to express their ideas, beliefs, and values, and negotiate through their net of social relationships (Murphy). Within this rich tapestry of oral traditions, Poorakkali songs hold a significant position, serving as a vehicle for cultural transmission and artistic expression.

In the context of India/ Kerala, the predominant religious texts were written in the language of Sanskrit. The sacred texts of Hinduism mainly Vedas, Puranas, Upanishads, Dharmashastras, and epics like the Mahabharata and Ramayana were all penned down using this language. It is known as the 'Divine Language' or 'language of the gods' and hence it is more or less confined to the Brahmin community. It served as a medium for religious teachings, philosophical discussions, and ceremonial observances which reinforced the hegemony and dominance of Brahmanical tradition in spiritual doctrines and authoritative texts which led to their power domination in all spheres of the society at large. As with the coming of Aryans, Kerala society exhibited stratification where individuals from different

castes held different social positions. The marginalized communities including the lower class such as Ezhavas, Thiyyas, and Dalits, have faced substantial socio-economic challenges and discrimination compared to that of the dominant Brahminical caste groups and other upper caste communities. This steered the gaps in access to opportunities, resources, and social status, maintaining social inequalities within the society. Caste and socioeconomic status considerably affected access to education. Brahmin children had better access to formal education and Sanskrit learning, while the children belonging to lower caste had restricted opportunities, getting only the basic literacy in vernacular languages like Malayalam. Higher education and acquisition of the Sanskrit language were denied to them. The Renaissance movements in Kerala paved the way for broadening the educational opportunities for individuals from lower social strata by defying the established social conventions and thereby fostering social reform. It is at this juncture we need to study the role of Poorakkali.

Poorakkali is a ritual performance that originated in the Northern part of Kerala, especially in the Kannur and Kasaragod regions. It is characterized by vibrant costumes, rhythmic steps and movements, and captivating music. Poorakkali songs are the reservoir of mythological tales, historical events, and the common people's life experiences.

Although it is an unavoidable part of Northern Malabar's culture, Poorakkali, and poorakkali songs haven't received much scholarly attention, thus ensuring an in-depth study will help to expound their position in Kerala's folklore and oral literary traditions. This study employs a multi-faceted approach to examine Poorakkali songs from various angles. Ethnographic fieldwork forms the cornerstone of this research, involving participant observation and in-depth interviews with Poorakkali performers, composers, and community members. Additionally, textual analysis of Poorakkali song texts, supplemented by archival research, provides valuable insights into their thematic content, linguistic features, and

historical evolution. By triangulating these qualitative methods, this study aims to offer a holistic understanding of Poorakkali songs within their socio-cultural milieu.

The evaluation of Poorakkali songs discloses a medley of themes ranging from mythological narratives, religious devotion, and social commentary to satire and humor. These songs often serve as mnemonic devices, preserving oral traditions and transferring cultural knowledge across generations. Structurally, Poorakkali songs exhibit a rich interplay of melody, rhythm, and poetic imagery, drawing on a diverse array of musical elements including ragas, talas, and percussion patterns. Poorakkali is prominently enacted as a ritual, as part of Pooram festivals in the Kannur Kasaragod region. It is celebrated in the Malayalam month of Meenam, i.e., during March/April month, as part of the spring festival. Pooram in Malabar is a fertility festival. Despite the myth which suggests that it was an art form of women or it was women who performed this, currently, the practice of Poorakkali is mainly carried out now by men belonging to various Other Backward Classes (OBCs) such as Thiyya, Maniyani (Yadav), Chaliyan, Aasari, Moosari, Thattan, and Kollan. People used to gather to watch these performances. These communal gatherings underscore their role as a catalyst for community cohesion and identity formation.

Poorakkali songs function as a forum for traditional storytelling which unwraps a complex interplay between cultural transmission, social inclusion, and the preservation of indigenous knowledge systems. This analysis delves into the various dimensions of Poorakkali songs, elucidating their significance in bridging cultural divides, disseminating knowledge, and safeguarding agrarian wisdom.

Poorakkali songs act as a vital link in crossing cultural divides by broadening access to classical epics and mythological tales which were traditionally confined to the educated

Sanskrit-proficient upper echelon. This democratization holds significant importance in Kerala's socio-cultural context, where caste-based delineations historically obstructed the diffusion of knowledge and cultural ceremonies. Through Poorakkali songs, narratives from the Ramayana and Mahabharata are reimagined and retold in the vernacular language, making them accessible to individuals across caste, class, and educational backgrounds.

Moreover, the accessibility of Poorakkali songs extends beyond linguistic barriers. The performative nature of Poorakkali allows for a sensory engagement with the narratives, transcending literacy constraints. The vivid visual imagery created through dance movements, colorful costumes, and rhythmic beats enhances audience immersion, enabling even those with limited formal education to grasp the essence of the conveyed stories.

Furthermore, Poorakkali performances often occur during Pooram festivals and communal gatherings, providing communal spaces where diverse segments of society converge. In these shared cultural spaces, individuals from different social strata come together to partake in the storytelling experience, fostering a sense of collective belonging and cultural unity. As such, Poorakkali songs not only disseminate cultural narratives but also create opportunities for social cohesion and cross-community interaction, thereby contributing to the gradual erosion of entrenched cultural divides.

Ramayana stories are simplified so that even those who haven't had a formal education, can easily understand the stories in their vernacular language. The poorakkali acharyas have composed Ramayana songs for Poorakkali in the same way that Ezhuthachan adopted for Aadhyatma Ramayana, i.e., story-telling based on 'Kili'. Ezhuthachan introduces the narrative through the perspective of a parrot, which serves as the narrator of the epic tale. The parrot, named "Suka," recounts the story of Lord Rama and his exploits, interweaving moral lessons, philosophical insights, and spiritual teachings throughout the narrative.

As poorakkali songs are transmitted from one generation to the other orally. These songs are stored in their collective memory. Even the people, who are not educated, who are even not able to read can easily understand these stories, as it performed and narrated in the mode of a song. Through its special rhythm, once it is heard, it is remembered for ever. The entire mythical stories are split into different parts such as 'Ramyanam Otta', 'Ramayanam Iratta', and through different 'Chinthu' songs. For example,

Melleyoru katha nalla ramayanam

Cholluvanennilullalalakatenam

Ellaninthane pukalvona maigaran

Eka danthan padam vandichu chollunen

Vellapalugu mei vellum saraswathi

Vedaswaroopini vazkente navinmel

Amboruhakshana maibadikannanum

Alasyam theerthenniladam nalkanam

Aksharamadiyal shikshichariyichu

Ashirvadam thanna desikan padavum

Archichu moulicherthathmavil vechunjan

Vathmeeki pandirupathinalayiram

Vallabhan chollula ramayanathilve

Chuthama muthara ramayanam katha

The other song goes like this:

Kousalya kaikeyi pinne sumithrayum

Soushalyamulkondu vazhuna kalath

Makkalinjajit dughichirikumbol

Thante guruvanan thannodarul cheyithu

Santhathiyundavanenthu venam prabho

Santhapamundeniketavum manase Appol

kulaguruvaya vasishtanum

Thappathe mannavan thannodarul cheyithu

Puthrakameshitiyam yagam kazhicheedil

Puthrarundayi varumiloru samsayam

In one of the chinthu songs,

Rama rama rama rama rama ra... ra.. rama..

Rama... sree.. mukunda rama ramra.. ma.. thatha thai Kousalya

thanayanaya ramadevanpand

Kaikeyi varathinale katil pookalthe thathai

Seethayodum sodaranam lakshmananoduthu

Kadaranmarayitoto kaduthorum thatha thai

Kallum mullum niranja kattuvazhiyude

Similarly the entire Ramaya stories are made easily accessible to the lower strata of the society.

Within the fabric of Poorakkali songs lies a profound connection to the agrarian landscape

of Kerala, serving as a vessel for the transmission and preservation of traditional agricultural knowledge. Kerala's agrarian communities have long relied on sustainable farming practices deeply intertwined with seasonal rhythms, ecological balance, and indigenous wisdom passed down through oral tradition. Poorakkali songs, with their roots in rural life and community celebrations, encapsulate this agricultural heritage in lyrical form.

The theme of Pallupattu/ Polipattu in Poorakkali often revolves around the traditional agrarian life of the region, and it reflects the close relationship between man and nature. Since Poorakkali is performed during the Pooram festival, it is also associated with the celebration of a successful harvest. The dance expresses the joy and gratitude of the community for the abundance provided by the land.

The Pallupattu/ Polipattu in Poorakkali incorporates elements related to agriculture, portraying the various stages of farming such as plowing, sowing seeds, and harvesting. These depictions highlight the dependence of the community on the land for their livelihood. The theme of agriculture and harvest in Poorakkali does indirectly acknowledge the importance of traditional crops, in the livelihood of the community. It discusses various indigenous rice seed varieties.

Embedded within the verses of Poorakkali songs are insights into farming techniques, crop cycles, and ecological harmony, reflecting the intimate relationship between the community and the land. References to sowing, harvesting, and natural phenomena such as monsoon rains and droughts serve not only as poetic motifs but also as repositories of practical agricultural wisdom. These songs function as mnemonic devices, aiding in the transmission of agricultural practices from one generation to the next, ensuring continuity amidst societal change.

Moreover, Poorakkali performances often occur within agrarian contexts, such as temple festivals linked to agricultural seasons or communal gatherings in rural villages. In these settings, Poorakkali songs become more than just entertainment; they become occasions for celebrating the agrarian way of life and reinforcing the community's connection to the land. Through dance, music, and storytelling, Poorakkali performers pay homage to the rhythms of nature and the agricultural traditions that sustain them.

Example, In pallu songs, in Nadanam 5, the names of rice seeds are mentioned like this:

*Melleyoru katha nalla ramayanam
Cholluvanennilullalalakatenam
Ellaninthane pukalvona maigaran
Eka danthan padam vandichu chollunen
Vellapalugu mei vellum saraswathi
Vedaswaroopini vazkente navinmel
Amboruhakshana maibadikannanum
Alasyam theerthenilanadam nalkanam
Aksharamadiyal shikshichariyichu
Ashirvadam thanna desikan padavam
Archichu moulicherthathmavil vechunjan
Vathmeeki pandirupathinalayiram
Vallabhan chollula ramayanathilve
Chuthama muthara ramayanam katha
Ethrayum nalloru vruthanatham chollunen*

The other song goes like this:

*Kousalya kaikeyi pinne sumithrayum
Soushalyamulkondu vazhuna kalath
Makkalinjajit dughichirikumbol
Thante guruvaran thannodarul cheyithu
Santhathiyundavanenthu venam prabho
Santhapamundeniketavum manase Appol
kulaguruvaya vasishtanum
Thappathe mannavan thannodarul cheyithu
Puthrakameshitiyam yagam kazhicheedil
Puthrarundayi varumiloru samsayam*

In one of the chinthu songs,

Rama rama rama rama rama ra... ra.. rama..

*Rama... sree.. mukunda rama ramra.. ma.. thatha thai Kousalya
thanayanaya ramadevanpand
Kaikeyi varathinale katil pookalthe thathai
Seethayodum sodaranam lakshmananoduthu
Kadaramarayituro kaduthorum thatha thai
Kallum mullum niranja kattuvazhiyude*

Similarly the entire Ramaya stories are made easily accessible to the lower strata of the society.

Within the fabric of Poorakkali songs lies a profound connection to the agrarian landscape of Kerala, serving as a vessel for the transmission and preservation of traditional agricultural knowledge. Kerala's agrarian communities have long relied on sustainable farming practices deeply intertwined with seasonal rhythms, ecological balance, and indigenous wisdom passed down through oral tradition. Poorakkali songs, with their roots in rural life and community celebrations, encapsulate this agricultural

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Example, In pallu songs, in Nadanam 5, the names of rice seeds are mentioned like this:

Manivithu vari nelvith
Punchavithazakan vith Keeripallakanum
ponnareeyanum PUNCHAMURIKAN
mundamurikan nallaJeerakashala vith
Pallakan soorya vith
Ippadi vithellame
Allanithu veveaeayi Aya
vithukalokeve vagi
Mayamatta vilayum kurithu
Ponnapallanmar pallimarodum
Chennudan paramapallan kayyil
Onnozhiyathe vithellam nalki Pinne
kalakal konduponeedan
Chernnu pallanmar pattanam pukkar

In Kooyongara kavu, their pallupattu is like this..

*Surapathiyannu kodutha vithin namam kelka Ee
kelka vithin namadeya mukkavayellam
Ee kariyadukan kuthiravithum jeerakashala Ee
mamakada krishnashala cheruchennallum Ee
palliyarin ponnariya narikerayi
Ee cheriya punchamelthalan kuncheerakodan Ee
illichennodalavichin thavala kannan
Ee pallikannan vithallikannanillinjan vithum Ee
poyyazhakanodu vazha malachennallum Ee
rajadhani kakkiriyen malakannanum
Ee mililivedan kuttanadan pallivazhanum Ee
anakodan kozhi valan neerthalavanum
Athalattiniyum chollam karivachan
Vachan choman chennalu mundon thavalakannan
Eekannum varakan cheeron cheeronja Nillichannum
veluthorukazhamachemba Thonnuran thekkan mekan
chimeni
Keeripala chembala neepalathan
Thendaran kazhama cheekan mashkanji
Yadan venthan arikanum mumikanum
Karmam manjakelan thulukkuvithum
Ithram vithashesham sancharam*

In Nadanam 6,

*Pettenu nottamulla
Chattameruna kala
Kootamayi vilakku vaagi
Ishtathodigu kondu
Ponnavar karakkatheerthu
Ishtya kalakalekooti
Kalakalku theertha ponnin karaka kandal
Neelamerum devarajakotta thottidum
Melamereyulla vellipuramathilum Keliyode
theerthavadiyudayudannu kaval Sheshiyulla
pallanmare niyamichare*

In Nadanam 7:

*Niyamichu kumbasam pathinaram nal
Nirannu vayalkorupole varambu kothi
Cherukathiyal pallimar nirannu
Lathakal pullukal chethineeki vannu
Chelodothu muthirnnu chalil chirapanikkai
Thoonittu thuravuthattipadikal vechu
Varinjukettiparichilettam drudatha cherthu
Pallanmar devedrane sthuthichar.*

In Nadanam 8:

*Kandu nalla medamasam randam nalil Irumegam
parannu madyakasathil
Theruthereyathyuchamidimuzhagiyapol
Saravarsham mazhapeyithuparellame
Kalakkuvellam niranju chalum puzhakalthodum
Niranja vayil thigivigi niranju nannayi Theruthere
malsagal chaadikayarikandar
Kandapothepallanmarum pallimarumayi
Kuthukkodu valakalum kuriya kutta
Methum patterodukora pedal thudagi Mattum
pala sadanagaleduthu chennu Attamilathulla
malsyam pidi thudagi Thottuval mel thottu thottu
kayarum malsyam
Nalla poomeen karmeenu meruthum meenum
Poomenodu vammen nalla palakameenum
Pullimeenum thulliveezhum kaduva meenum.*

The analysis of poorakkali songs highlights the mention of indigenous varieties of rice seeds that are well-suited for the region, promising higher yields. This observation underscores the deep agricultural heritage of Kerala. Apart from the rice seed varieties, we can see the wide range of native fish, which were all almost out of site or on the verge of extinction due to climate change and vanished streams, ponds, and canals in the fields, etc.

Additionally, Poorakkali songs infuse agrarian motifs with spiritual and cultural significance, elevating farming practices beyond mere economic activities to sacred duties tied to cultural identity. References to deities associated with agriculture, rituals for bountiful harvests, and communal prayers for agricultural prosperity underscore the holistic worldview that underpins Kerala's agrarian communities.

In essence, Poorakkali songs serve as living repositories of agrarian wisdom, preserving traditional knowledge systems that are increasingly threatened by

modernization and industrialization. By embedding agricultural practices within cultural expressions, Poorakkali songs ensure that the intimate bond between Kerala's communities and their land remains central to their cultural identity and collective memory. As such, efforts to safeguard and promote Poorakkali songs are essential not only for preserving intangible cultural heritage but also for fostering sustainable agricultural practices and environmental stewardship in Kerala's rural landscapes

The intricate analysis of Poorakkali songs reveals their multifaceted significance within Kerala's cultural landscape, encapsulating the essence of storytelling, moral teachings, and agrarian wisdom. As custodians of oral tradition, Poorakkali performers play a vital role in preserving and perpetuating cultural heritage, bridging historical divides, and fostering community resilience.

Firstly, Poorakkali songs serve as dynamic vehicles for storytelling, democratizing access to classical epics and mythological narratives by rendering them in the vernacular language. By transcending linguistic barriers and engaging audiences through sensory-rich performances, Poorakkali songs ensure that cultural heritage is accessible to individuals across caste, class, and educational backgrounds. In doing so, they contribute to the gradual erosion of entrenched cultural divides, fostering a sense of inclusivity and collective identity within Kerala's diverse communities.

Secondly, Poorakkali songs encapsulate the agrarian heritage of Kerala, serving as mnemonic devices for the transmission of traditional agricultural knowledge. Embedded within the verses are insights into farming practices, seasonal cycles, and ecological harmony, reflecting the intimate relationship between the community and the land. By infusing agrarian motifs with spiritual significance, Poorakkali songs elevate farming practices to sacred duties, reinforcing the community's connection to the land and fostering environmental stewardship.

In conclusion, Poorakkali songs embody the rich tapestry of Kerala's cultural heritage, weaving together threads of storytelling, and agrarian wisdom. As Kerala navigates the challenges of modernization and globalization, efforts to preserve and promote Poorakkali songs are essential for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, fostering social cohesion, and sustaining environmental stewardship. By celebrating the enduring legacy of Poorakkali,

Kerala can honor its past, inspire its present, and shape its future as a custodian of cultural diversity and communal resilience.

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Indian Painting Tradition: A Glorious Tapestry of Colors and Spiritualism

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Abstract

The Indian painting tradition is a captivating blend of vibrant colors, intricate details, and profound spiritualism. This tradition, dating back thousands of years, encompasses a variety of art forms and styles that have evolved, reflecting diverse cultural influences and regional aesthetics of the Indian subcontinent. The origins of Indian painting can be traced back to the ancient Indus Valley civilization, with notable developments during the medieval period when Indian painting gained recognition as a distinct artistic expression. The delicate frescoes of Ajanta and Ellora caves and the miniature paintings of the Mughal era each contributed to the nation's artistic heritage. Indian painting is closely tied to spirituality and religious symbolism, seen in Buddhist cave paintings and Hindu art, which use symbols like the lotus for purity, the peacock for abundance, and elephants for wisdom, adding layers of meaning to the artworks.

Keywords: Medieval period, Ajanta and Ellora caves, Mughal era

The Indian painting tradition is a captivating amalgamation of vibrant colors, intricate detailing, and profound spiritualism. This tradition, dating back thousands of years, encompasses a wide range of art forms and styles that have evolved over time, reflecting the diverse cultural influences and regional aesthetics of the Indian subcontinent. The roots of Indian painting can be traced back to the ancient civilizations of the Indus Valley, where evidence of early paintings has been discovered. However, it was during the medieval period that Indian painting began to flourish and gain

recognition as a distinct artistic expression. From the delicate frescoes of Ajanta and Ellora caves to the mesmerizing miniature paintings of the Mughal era, each period in Indian history has left its indelible mark on the nation's artistic heritage. One of the distinctive features of Indian painting tradition is its close association with spirituality and religious symbolism. From the serene and celestial figures depicted in Buddhist cave paintings to the vibrant and mythological narratives in Hindu art, spirituality has been an integral part of Indian paintings. The use of symbolism, such as lotus for purity, peacock for abundance, and elephants for wisdom, adds deeper layers of meaning to the artworks.

Indian painting tradition is also known for its intricate detailing and meticulous craftsmanship. Whether it is the delicate brushstrokes in miniature paintings or the intricate patterns in Madhubani art, Indian artists pay meticulous attention to every minute detail. The art forms often require immense patience and skill, as artists painstakingly create intricate patterns, textures, and designs, resulting in captivating visual masterpieces. Another remarkable aspect of Indian painting tradition is its regional diversity, with each region having its unique style and technique. From the vibrant and bold Warli paintings of Maharashtra to the intricate and colourful Pichwai paintings of Rajasthan, every region has its artistic signature. The use of different mediums, such as natural dyes, mineral pigments, and gold leaf, further adds to the richness and uniqueness of Indian paintings.

Indian painting tradition has not only captivated the Indian audience but has also influenced and inspired artistic traditions around the world. The delicate line work and vibrant colors of Indian miniature paintings have left a lasting impact on European Renaissance art. Artists like Raja Ravi Varma, known for his realistic and evocative portraits, brought Indian painting to the global stage. In recent times, Indian painting tradition has witnessed a resurgence and revival, with artists experimenting with new techniques and blending traditional styles with contemporary themes. Several art galleries and exhibitions showcase the works of both established and emerging Indian painters, providing a platform for the promotion and appreciation of Indian art.

This chapter discusses the oil painting tradition of India, examining its growth over different periods and the regional schools of painting that flourished. After reading this chapter, you will be able to:

- Trace the origin of painting from the Neolithic times;
- Describe the development of painting during the medieval period;
- Recognize the contribution of Mughal emperors to painting in India;
- Trace the rise of distinct schools of painting like the Rajasthani and the Pahari schools;

Appreciate the contribution of Raja Ravi Varma to Indian painting;

Assess the role played by Rabindranath Tagore and Abanindranath Tagore in the emergence of the Bengal School of Art;

Recognize the contribution of Odisha to Indian art in the form of pattachitra painting, wall painting, and palm leaf paintings.

Painting as an art form has flourished in India from very early times, as is apparent from the remains discovered in caves and the literary sources. The history of art and painting in India begins with the prehistoric rock paintings at Bhimbetka caves (M.P.) where there are depictions and paintings of animals. The cave paintings of Narsinghgarh (Maharashtra) show skins of spotted deer left drying. Thousands of years ago, paintings and depictions had already appeared on the seals of the Harappan civilization. Both Hindu and Buddhist literature refer to paintings of various types and techniques, for example, Lepya citras, Lekha citras, and Dhuli citras. The first was the representation of myth, the second was line drawing and painting on cloth, while the third was painting on the ground. The Buddhist text Vinaya Pitaka (4th–3rd century BCE) describes the existence of painted figures in many royal buildings. The play Mudrarakshasa (5th Century CE) mentions numerous paintings or Patas. The 6th-century text on aesthetics, Kamasutra by Vatsyayana, mentions painting among 64 kinds of arts and says it was based on scientific principles. The Vishnudharmottara Purana (7th century CE) has a section on painting called Chitra Sutra, which describes the six organs of painting like variety of form, proportion, luster, and portrayal of color, etc. Thus, archaeology and literature attest to the flourishing of painting in India from prehistoric times. The best samples of Gupta paintings are the ones at Ajanta. Their subjects include animals and birds, trees, flowers, human figures, and stories from the Jataka.

The arrival of Islam and the spread of Islamic influence initiated a new period in Indian history—the medieval period. It also had a direct impact on the realm of painting. The pattern of large-scale paintings, which had dominated the scene, was replaced by miniature painting during the 11th and 12th centuries CE. The miniature paintings are small in size and were often part of manuscripts written at the time, illustrating the subjects of the text. Thus, a new kind of illustration was set during this period.

The decline of the Mughal Empire was accompanied by the control of the English East India Company in 1757 over the north-eastern region, thus laying the foundation of the British Raj. This colonial period had a profound impact on contemporary politics, society, economy, and culture. In the realm of art, Indian art embraced new styles brought by the English. Art was no longer confined to the court but began to be taught and

patronized by art schools, art societies, etc. With the introduction of academic art, there was more emphasis on colonial illusionistic art, oil painting portraits, natural landscapes, etc. In place of royal patronage, cultural individualism was encouraged. The new breed of colonial artists enjoyed high social status, contrasting with the humble court artists of the Mughal period.

In conclusion, the Indian painting tradition is a glorious tapestry of colors, spirituality, and artistic excellence that reflects the richness and diversity of Indian culture. It is an art form that has stood the test of time, captured the imaginations of generations, and left an indelible mark on the global artistic landscape. As Indian artists continue to push boundaries and explore new horizons, this vibrant tradition will continue to thrive and evolve, ensuring its place in the annals of art history.

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

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



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



தூத்துக்குடி வஉசி., கல்லூரியில் கலாசார ஆய்வுகள் மாநாடு

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



தூத்துக்குடி வஉசி., கல்லூரியில் சமூக இலக்கிய சூழ்நிலையில் கலாசார ஆய்வுகள் என்ற தலைப்பில் சர்வதேச மாநாடு நடந்தது.

அசோசியேட் புரோகிராமம் பயிற்றுவிப்பாளரும், அமெரிக்காவின் தெற்கு இல்லினாய்ஸ் பல்கலைக்கழகத்தின் கல்விப் பள்ளியின் தலைமைப்பயிற்றுவிப்பாளருமான பிரான்சு கெனயூட்சன், நவீன கலாச்சாரத்தில் ஏஜு இன் படைபெயடுப்பு குறித்து பேசினார்.

ஜார்க்கண்ட் மத்திய பல்கலைக்கழகத்தின் நாட்டுப்புறவியல் உதவிப் பேராசிரியர் ராமகிருஷ்ணன், கேரள மத்தியப் பல்கலைக்கழகத்தின் மொழியியல் இணைப் பேராசிரியர் ஸ்ரீகுமார், ஸ்ரீநாராயண குருதிறந்த நிலைப்பல்கலைக்கழக மொழிப்பள்ளியின் தலை

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



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