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TEXTUALIZING A REVENGE TRAGEDY: HAIDER-HAMLET

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Abstract

William Shakespeare was a brilliant playwright and writer of the Elizabethan era. Among several of his greatest works, Hamlet was one of his most famous. Haider (2014), an Indian adaptation of Shakespeare's Hamlet set in Kashmir in 1955 during militancy and a brutal Indian counter-insurgency, caused controversy almost immediately after its release. He is well-known for his admiration of William Shakespeare's writings. He based his 2003 blockbuster film Maqbool on Macbeth and reappeared in 2006 with Omkara, his adaptation of Othello. According to critics, Bhardwaj has succeeded in bringing out the raw emotions of Hamlet in the film while remaining firmly focused on Kashmir. The film offers, this paper suggests, an example to probe much debated metaphors of adaptation theory, global Shakespeare studies and postcolonial studies, with special regard to understanding adaptation as 'revision'.

The theme of surveillance has been explored in much-politicized Hamlet adaptations. In Haider, traumatic psychological subjugation of the individual living under surveillance is shown. Most of the analysts feel that earlier films based on Kashmir largely failed to highlight the real issues and Haider tries to fill that gap. Catastrophe is an important aspect of Shakespearean tragedy that is responsible for all tragic flaws. Haider's search for his father, his mental disorder and death of Arshiya are the never-ending sources of catastrophe. This paper presents a detailed comparative analysis between the source text (Hamlet) and the adaptation (Haider) to explore the various points of contact and departure between the two.

Keywords: Indian Adaptation, Insurgency, Surveillance, Psychological Subjugation, Catastrophe.

Vishal Bhardwaj's award-winning film Haider (2014), an Indian director completes his trilogy of adaptations of Shakespearean tragedies, that continues to receive critical attention of 'global Shakespeare' studies (Sen 2019). After Maqbool (Macbeth) and Omkara (Othello), Haider tackles Hamlet, displacing the action from Denmark to Kashmir, which is the Himalayan mountain region and war zone between India and Pakistan since the Partition in 1947. Considering that renewed unrest and conflict in the area, the film appears hauntingly timely and darkly realistic. The film offers, this paper suggests, an example to probe much debated metaphors of adaptation theory, global Shakespeare studies and postcolonial studies, with special regard to understanding adaptation as 'revision'. Withdrawing from Peter Widdowson's definition of the term as

combining, in 'strategic ambiguity', "the meaning of revise, that is, producing a new, corrected version of, and re-vision, in the sense of seeing an 'original' in another light and thus re-evaluating it" (Widdowson 164), revision appears as both critical activity and artistic/filmic practice.

Being a generic fusion of realist docu-drama, Bollywood movie, and espionage thriller, Haider intersects the Hamlet -inspired revenge plot with references to journalist Basharat Peer's memoir *Curfewed Night* (2011). It details the harsh realities and human rights violations in insurgency-torn Kashmir in the mid-1990s. Basharat Peer collaborated with Bhardwaj on the screenplay, which is published in both Hindi and English. Taking its cue from the film's controversial reception that runs the gamut from censorship, criticism that Indian movie does not need the high-art 'crutch' of Hamlet. Haider presents an adaptation of two source texts: one 'global' and one 'local', first an Elizabethan revenge tragedy, and the second a contemporary war memoir. The tension between global appeal and 'regional paradigms' continues in the strategic fusion of cultural, filmic, and theatrical traditions. The result, this paper argues, "drawing also on Amrita Sen's reading of the film's aesthetic politics" (Sen 2018, 2019), it is a transcultural adaptation that transcends metaphors such like 'appropriation' or 'indigenization'. Instead, it can be rather understood as a transcultural 'contact zone' (Pratt 1991, 2008) and 'cross mapping'. The latter concept highlights the need for negotiation across differences, an element of dialogic intertextuality and of conversation between pervasive 'thought figures', ingrained in the global cultural imaginary, such as Hamlet, and revisions that attest to their 'afterlife'. By placing a great emphasis on communality and having the ending turn from revenge to forgiveness, Haider interrogates the transcultural appeal of Hamlet and draws attention to histories and realities of the violent local conflict. It reveals a revisionist agenda that captures both hidden political realities and a haunting refiguration of Shakespeare, also transcending what might conventionally be conceived as a Bollywood adaptation.

This seems challenging to find a source text that rivals the cultural authority of William Shakespeare's famous revenge tragedy. While Hamlet is arguably the Shakespeare play, or even work in the whole "western literary canon" (Crowl 1), that has seen the most adaptations, it has certainly inspired so many movie versions across the globe that "the attempt to catalogue them amounts to a book in itself" (Hatchuel and Vienne-Guerrin 17). Especially in India, where Shakespeare is an integral part of its literary history, Hamlet remains among the most popular plays to be staged and adapted into different media. More than half a century ago, Jan Kott famously compared Hamlet to 'a sponge' which "immediately absorbs all the problems of our time" (Kott 64), and the play continues to serve contemporary versions as a means to grab attention to recent political turmoil.

It's most important reclamation is thus perhaps that of Kashmir as a location in contemporary Hindi film, rather than that of Shakespeare i.e Denmark. Haider, this paper suggests, appears primarily as a trans-cultural 'contact zone' and suitable case to explore strategies and conceptions of revision text more generally. I shall begin with the answer to question of how it has been and might be categorized as a 'Shakespeare film' through a brief literature review. This first part shows the wide array of critical and analytical metaphors available which complement each other but each involves a different pitfalls, in order to then introduce the conceptual value of the 'contact zone'.

In the second part, the analysis will engage in more detail with the movie and its reception. For it being both a Shakespearean adaptation and a film about location Kashmir, from its first release onwards Haider movie has had to deal with the accompanying debates about its politics and ethics of adaptation in more than one way. Finally, drawing on Elizabeth Bronfen's notion of cross mapping allows me to conclude the particular strategies of adaptation as revision in Vishal Bhardwaj's film. The global nature of William Shakespeare's plays complicates many debates of cultural belonging and appropriation from the onset, renders the contested opposition of original—adaptation particularly which is hard to uphold. With Shakespeare coming with a huge inter-textual apparatus and having been absorbed into the pop culture and adapted into every possible medium, "there is no 'original' or 'masterpiece' against which the adaptation might be evaluated and interpreted" (Burt 2003, 17).

Hamlet, in particular, has been set against an incredibly "wide range of historical periods or national landscape" (Crowl 24). This makes it difficult to decide what is 'indigenized', and, from the point of postcolonial criticism, even harder to determine what should be called subversive in a Shakespeare film. Robert Burt and Lydia Boose emphasize:

There is no point, at which we cross a border clearly marking (Western) Shakespeare in Asian films from Asia in (Western) Shakespeare films, the indigenous Shakespeare from the foreign. (Burt and Boose 7)

The disintegration of oppositions between foreign/native, local/ global and the debates of if and how Shakespeare is used as a means of 'writing back' or being employed irreverently for 'local' purposes, complicates evaluations as well as attempts at 'localisation' (Burt 2003b, 266, 296). Haider, as will be shown in the following, exemplifies this challenge to 'critical notions of "localization"' (Young 380). What is more, all adaptations, in particular are so-called 'postcolonial' ones and are as much in dialogue with other adaptations with as Shakespearean source text, especially where there is a long tradition of adapting Shakespeare, from the beginnings in Parsi theatre to Bollywood films, which both have a special affinity, stylistically and thematically, with the bard's plays. (Paterson 63; Jess-Cooke 4).

Bhardwaj's film may serve as example for some of the contested issues allhinging on the fact that adaptations studies as it does many other fields: categorization requires simplification which runs counter to the study object's (here the artwork's) ontology. As critics note, though there is hardly a lack of scholarship in the field, models of post-colonialism and diasporas imaginary do not adequately address the complexities of global Shakespeare transnational cinema and transcultural adaptation studies. Aside from theoretical pitfalls, "the critical field has yet to take due account of worldwide depth and diversity" (Burnett 2012, 2; see Burt 2003a, 2003b), although this is changing very rapidly. Still, even if 'Shakespeare film' has long been recognized independent genre and as global, which renders, theoretically, the metaphor of 'appropriation' redundant, alternative categories. Consequently, Mark Thornton Burnett concludes, "Much ink has been spilled in recent years debating the most appropriate language to capture the relationship between the Shakespearean 'original' and its filmic reinvention" (Burnett 2012, 4).

Where transnational cinema is usually lauded to foster transnational understandings and to arise "in the interstices between the local and the global" (Ezra and Rowden 4), notions of the transnational or the transcultural, which imply the loss of borders or atleast a continual crossing of them, sit, at least on the geo-political level, uneasily with Haider. Above all, the film deals with the reality of bordersb the action is determined by the Line of Control between India and Pakistan and crossing them equals loss and death, rather than cause for celebration. Similarly, in my opinion, it would be a stretch to classify Haider as a 'postcolonial' adaptation, despite the fact, of course, that the Kashmir conflict is inseparable from British colonialism and its aftermath.

However, "the application of terms such 'domestication' or 'indianization' which have been applied to describe Haider" (Dutta 145; Chakraborti 153), that primarily highlightsthe film's use of Indian setting and character names, suggesting removal of tracesof foreignness and a favouring of Indian cultural counter parts. Mean while the descriptive label 'indigenous', which might offer itself as another suitable alternative, runs the risk of perpetuating assumptions about cultural hegemony and authenticity, especially with regard to Indian Shakespeare film. As Sandra Young argues in her study of Haider, this privileges the association with the return to anative tradition over the function of 'making current' within a complex and twisted globalized world. Inthis Indian context, it is furthermore hard to pin point a beginning for Afrocentrism or to identify which people/culture count as indigenous in the first place.

Agreeing with Young and Sen's conclusions, the best example in my opinion to illustrate why Shakespeare is not merely translocated (to India/Kashmir) and then indigenized in Haider is the 'Bismil' scene in movie. It functions as the film's the famous play-in-the-play, 'Mousetrap' scene, originally staged by Hamlet to accuse this uncle of having murdered his father in order to take over power and marry his mother.

Staged outdoors in front of the old temple site in Srinagar, 'Bismil' is the movie's performance highlight and mixes several theatrical and dance traditions in a choreographed spectacle, featuring singers, dancers, and three life-sized puppets. While the music blends Bollywood song and Kashmiri folk music with western opera. The choreography presents a dynamic fusion of Bollywood dance movements, Martial arts, and Western contemporary dance. In the second half of the scene, several theatrical distancing techniques are employed in an almost Brechtian manner: life-size puppets appear throughout, symbolizing Haider's uncle, and his parents, and not just the love triangle, personal betrayal and murder but also atrocious war crimes, the hundreds of dead bodies being thrown in the Jhelum River. The amalgamation of artistic traditions which are simultaneously trans-local and localized which achieves a tragic grandeur that hauntingly underlines the movie's political and aesthetic agenda. It epitomizes why Bhardwaj's film, in its totality, presents viewers with a "complex creative encounter" (Young 387)

Following Burnett (2019), who recently proposes a regional prototype or methodology for investigating Indian Shakespeare films, we might still see Bhardwaj's film as a 'regional' adaptation of Hamlet. This allows for theorization in a framework with distinct cultural features without favouring the nation-state as a point of reference; it calls for taking account of "regional distinctiveness" (Burnett 2019, 157; see Burnett 2012, 6), of local traditions and belief systems; it acknowledges the film as adaptation in close alliance with (Bhardwaj and Peer's) 'articulation of a regional politics and pride' (Burnett 2019, 159). Apart from the movie's treatment of the 'Mousetrap scene' in 'Bismil', which also pays admiration to regional theatrical traditions such as the Kashmiri bhand pather, examples include Haider's 'to be, or not to be' speech, in which the soliloquy and existential crisis is reframed as a collective one in a public scene, symptomatic of 'a regional condition that cuts across political and personal categories' (Burnett 2019, 169). Taking a slightly different attitude, Sen takes Bhardwaj's allusion to the memory of indigenous performance tradition as both political critique (resisting any one nation's heritage and choice of political allegiances) and a gesture of emancipation, if "read as the filmmaker's homage to the emergent Kashmiri Shakespeare that has recently gained global critical attention" (Sen 2019, 394).

Taking into account Haider's obvious engagement with the Bollywood folklore, yet another genre label thus needs examining in this context, namely that of paraphrasing it as a 'Bollywood Shakespeare' film. Though Bollywood appropriations of Shakespeare offer a distinct 'coupling of two transnational global phenomena', "which, at a first glance, sets them apart from other kinds of Shakespeare adaptations, it quickly becomes hard to identify what this categorization actually means" (Dionne and Kapadia 2014, 11–12). More crucially, the use of Bollywood as a descriptive catch-all term generally risks homogenizing a wide range and diversity of Indian cinematic engagements with Shakespeare and disregarding "regional differences and traditions of

film and theatre” (see Trivedi and Chakravarti; Burnett 2019, 157). Still, Bollywood movie is an inherently hybrid and high quality art form mixing multiple generic and Western and Indian traditions of film, drama, and dance which has reached globally worldwide.

The Bollywood-inspired and much encouraged song-and-dance-episode in Haider (e.g., ‘Bismil’, or the ‘grave-digger’ song) challenge national/cultural identification and create what Gopaland Moorti call a ‘contact zone’ in the context of the globalization of Bollywood. Taking the sign from these studies, the metaphor of the ‘contact zone’ call up Homi Bhabha’s well-known concept of the ‘Third Space’, as a dialogic meeting ground and a space where processes of negotiation of different cultures as well as periods of history take place. The idea was first introduced by Mary Louise Pratt (1991) in her essay “Arts of the Contact Zone” but is most commonly transformed to her study *Imperial Eyes. Travel Writing and Transculturation* (1992), which saw an updated and expanded edition in 2008. Pratt explains ‘contact zones’ are “spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination—such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths” (Pratt 2008). Transculturation, the second key term in her work, Pratt understands as a phenomenon or circumstance produced by the contact zone and as processes of selection and interposes from materials transmitted to (once) subordinated, marginal groups by a dominant, metropolitan culture. Despite Pratt’s pivot on contact as both negotiation and conflict, her concept has also been condemned, and not unjustly, for its implication of ‘contact’ as a peaceful meeting among equals which risks glossing over colonial violence, while enforcing the very binaries it seeks to eradicate (Loomba 69).

In other words, the contact zone creates ‘newness’, as and through discursive aesthetic practices, as Bhabha employs the term in *The Location of Culture* (212–35). It is this part of the concept of the contact zone transcending literal geographical spaces which are relevant in the context of global Shakespeare and Indian Shakespeare film studies. In this sense, Pratt’s concept illuminates the filmic strategies and the reception of Haider discussed in next part. Conceiving of the film as a ‘contact zone’ a metaphor particularly apt on the level of content and setting maintains a critical gist that allows side stepping the limitations of terms such as indigenization and links the focus on regional methodologies with that on global forms and forces. Bhardwaj’s adaptation of Hamlet can thus be understood as a transcultural contact zone, as well as an ‘auto ethnographic’ text/artwork to bring in Pratt’s third key term auto ethnography where the latter;

Involves partly collaborating with and appropriating of the idioms of the conqueror. Auto ethnographic texts are typically heterogeneous on the reception end as well. That is, they are usually addressed both to metropolitan readers and to literate

sectors of the speaker's own social group. They are bound to be received very differently by these different readerships. (Pratt 2008, 9)

Specifically Bhardwaj's Statement:

'Kashmir is the Hamlet of my film' has been criticized for reducing Kashmir to stereotypes of violence and threatening to reduce the region and the people's sufferings to 'theatrical characters' and 'mere Shakespearean fictions', even more problematic in light of the bard's implication in India's colonial history (Sen , 87–88).

Similarly, Brian Walsh acknowledges, "Making the struggles of Kashmiris visible through an over determined cultural classic like Hamlet is potentially a difficult task given that many viewers might be inclined to prioritize the supposedly "timeless" Shakespearean insights into humanity over the local details of governmental oppression and sectarian violence" (Walsh). At the same time staying loyal to a position commending an independent Kashmir, the triumph of Haider lies perhaps in managing "to tell the story of the long-running conflict in Kashmir without trying to please anyone", as Waraich proclaims. Set in Kashmir, but using Hindi and Urdu as the main film languages, Haider does not require any precursory knowledge of Hamlet; this, in turn, has given rise to debates of whether such a politically motivated film, focused on realities on the Indian subcontinent, actually needs what critics have referred to as "the crutch of Shakespeare" (Ahmed, Ammar, and Ayaz 122). Sen puts this question poignantly in his reading and asks if the film uses Shakespeare as "a neo-colonial apparatus" (Sen 2019, 388). Despite the evident value of Shakespeare as a global cultural material and its long-standing complication with Indian artistic production, this also reflects persisting (patriotic or postcolonial) evaluation about the continued use of Shakespeare as a source of admiration in light of India's own rich literary or published tradition. This brief survey may serve to underline the film's intrinsic ambiguity reflected in its reception. Haider congregates elements of Shakespeare, popular Indian cinema, and "a reporter's sense of realism" (Modak and Roy 160). It engages Bollywood conventions such as song-dance numbers, especially in the complicated choreographed 'Bismil', which features dancers and life-sized marionettes (puppet) symbolizing the love triangle between Khurram (Claudius), Ghazala (Gertrude) and Haider/Hamlet's father. As mentioned earlier, the scene presents as a powerful mixture of Western operatic, Bollywood and Kashmiri folk traditions. Accordingly;

It especially the focus on regionally based artistic practices, that is, the Kashmiri folk theatre *bhand pather*, which traditionally fuses dance, dramatic dialogue and puppetry, that functions to subvert the globalized Bollywood aesthetic in this scene. (Burnett 186 and Sen 390)

Haider duplicates several iconic moments of Hamlet, such as the grave-digger scene with the conciliation on Yorick's skull (V, 1), Hamlet's accidental killing of Polonius

(Parvez, Arshia's father) (III, 4), and Hamlet's aborted attempt to kill his praying uncle (III, 3), as well as the 'play-within-the play' (III, 2), staged to reveal his uncle's and mother's guilt. With few deviations, all Shakespearean characters have a correlative in Haider, but Indian names: Haider/Hamlet's father is Dr. Hilaal Meer, a medical doctor who, out of humanitarianism, performs an appendix surgery on a leader of a regional militant separatist organization in his own house. During a repression, he is 'disappeared' by the police and his house is burned to the ground. Hearing the news, Haider, a student at university in India, returns home to Kashmir to search for his father. In this, he is supported by his girlfriend Arshia (Ophelia), who is a journalist and whose father, Pervez (Polonius), is the police commissioner. He finds his beloved mother, Ghazala, living with his uncle Khurram, who is a local political leader struggling for power.

The archetypal ghost only appears in the second half of the movie, as the mysterious Roohdar figure (Rooh-meaning spirit in Urdu), who is real and not his father's ghost, but, apparently, his father's inmate in the detention torture camp, who get through being thrown into the river. Roohdar puts Haider on the revenge mission, transferring his father's last words to him: "Tomy son, Haider. Tell him to avenge my betrayal by my serpent of a brother" (Bhardwaj126). Thus, Haider is repositioned from his grief and the community of protesters he had joined to "the personal, and mostly solitary, violent revenge trajectory familiar from Shakespeare's play" (Walsh). The movie never makes clear if Roohdar is a friend or foe, for he is an agent of young men, exploiting their temper for political ends and he later gives Haider the armaments to kill Khurram.

Equivalently, hauntingly chilling and ironic at the same time, Haider's variation of the 'to be, or not to be' soliloquy appears in several apperances. In one of the scene, Haider is shown among a crowd of protesters, holding banners in their hands which read: "Shall we be or not be?" (Bhardwaj 106; see Walsh). In the central 'to be, or not to be' scene, Haider, who is seen visibly distraught by the search for his father, gives a speech on the streets of Srinagar:

Can you hear me? Hello...According to the UN council resolution number 47 of 1948...Article 2 of the Geneva Convention and article 370 of the Indian Constitution...There is but question! Do we exist or do we not? If we do...then who are we? If we don't...then where are we? If we exist, then why do stand here? If we don't exist, where did we lose ourselves? Did we exist at all? Or not? Our suffering comes from their chutzpah. (Bhardwaj 143)

Haider turns the prototypical Shakespeare an question into a political slogan and assertion and Brian Walsh notes, it is thus transformed from an individual existential crisis into a collective one. Haider's words catch the Kashmiris' sense of victimization and oppression, a state of (non) being without national rights and helpless against family

members being 'disappeared' by the military or the police. Haider's obviously traumatized state reflects Hamlet's 'madness.' The quest for his father, as well as the rising sense of betrayal and distrust that shatters his family and by extension, the entire region causes Haider's mental instability and political radicalization. Haider here becomes a focalizer for the communal suffering set against the political backdrop of violence and 'rotteness' in Kashmir.

Haider's modification is thus inspired by current politics rather than the past or a 'writing against' Shakespeare's tragedy, and it authenticates the tentative note of optimism for survival and the people of the region. Blending together rather than juxtaposing both pretexts, the ending illustrates the film's "strategic ambiguity" (Widdowson 164) in a nutshell, the result is a revision that re-evaluates the pretexts and produces something new.

To conclude, Haider's 'cross mapping' of Hamlet on to contemporary Kashmiri reality, an approach that supports the entirety of this article's view of Haider as 'contact zone.' At the end of Haider, we see a reconstruction of Hamlet's revenge tragedy, but the focus is on an area, Kashmir, where it normally does not linger. Haider attests to Hamlet's haunting after life as a thought figure, the effects of which transcend simplistic cultural binaries of 'us' against 'them'

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**THE EROSION OF AMERICAN FAMILY: SEARCH FOR HOME WITHIN
CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN CULTURE IN *DEATH OF A SALESMAN* & *THE
AMERICAN DREAM***

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ABSTRACT

*The American imagination in the present century has kept moving between the two central images of man—one of idealism and despair, and the other of strife and promise. The American playwrights, in particular, have been directly resolved to the depiction of human conflict in terms of man's capacity to control the chaos and the faith that man must somehow be able to guarantee or resuscitate the force of will which can eliminate the chaos and disorder that surround us. The final analysis is that modern American Drama is the symbolic chronicle of the human struggle for — survival and prevalence, for identity and purpose, for meaning and promise. This paper focusses on the decay of the American family, which can readily be seen as a synonym for the non-viability of today's American society. The American family gives the quintessential picture of the whole American culture today. Both Arthur Miller and Edward Albee treat this recurring theme in their plays more fully which marks the next stage of development that culminates in their definitive treatment of the American family in *Death of a Salesman* & *The American Dream*. Couching the problems of America in the metaphor of the breakdown of the American family, *Death of a Salesman* & *The American Dream* make them more accessible and understandable to the audience.*

Keywords: Family, Home, Culture, Dream, Identity, Selfhood, Struggle

Introduction

The general opinion about the 20th century is that it was an age of nightmares, an age of broken values, an age in which man was alienated from all sources and became rootless and disintegrated. Pressures of a standardized and regimented society have forced man to live at different levels of identity resulting in tension which seem to threaten his very entity as a human being. In a megalopolitan civilization, man is continuously suffering from spiritual isolation and it is felt that he has come to the end of his tether. The prominent American dramatists give an idea of their understanding of the human situation within the framework of symbolism and the strategy of selfhood. They also express within this framework their verging degree of commitment to the existence and the fate of man. They describe the helplessness of modern man. They also depict in dramatic terms goals of man and his values and the consequent adjustment of modes of human selfhood.

Arthur Miller and Edward Albee appeared on the literary horizon of America at a time when American people were facing a period of transition, and American Drama and the Theatre of the Absurd were in jeopardy. They carried forward the legacy of American Drama

left behind by the great American dramatists by writing and producing plays which portrayed the existential dilemma of the American people and the pain, frustration, anguish, despair born out of it. Both represented the fear and anxiety of the American society who looked into the changing scenario and future apprehensively. In their hands, American drama found new and wider dimensions and was enriched with new language, techniques and themes. Both Arthur Miller and Edward Albee suggest the possibility of returning to an America that was once strong, held promises and nourished its people. This return, however, is possible only when America's reality is confronted squarely, when the crimes of the past are acknowledged and atoned for and the young can be enlisted to accept their responsibility for the recreation of the Dream.

American dream is one of the finest portraiture of the vapid and emptiness of many as American cultural concepts. The dominance of the American female, her inordinate sexual hunger and selfishness, the emasculation of the male, the appallingly vapid all American boy love of material comfort of the old illusory world to avoid harsh realities, the sense of insecurity in the midst of material abundance; incapacity for genuine emotion the craze for conformity, the much publicized

American love of children and family the myth of optimism and progress all this has been satirically treated with the view to dramatizing the spiritual emptiness of American life. Harold Clurman(1967) opines:

Lest this be misunderstood, it should be added that there are two versions of the American dream. The historical American dream is the promise of a land of freedom with opportunity and equality for all. This dream needs no challenge, only fulfilment. But since the Civil War, and particularly since 1900, the American dream has become distorted to the dream of business success. A distinction must be made even in this: The original premise of the American dream of success popularly represented in the original boy parables of Horatio Alger was that enterprise, courage and hard work were the keys to success. Since the end of the First World War, this too has changed. Instead of the ideals of hard work and courage, there is salesmanship. Salesmanship implies a certain element of fraud: the ability to put over or sell a commodity regardless of its intrinsic usefulness. The goal of salesmanship is to make a deal, to earn a profit—the accumulation of profit being an unquestioned, end in itself. (Clurman,1967,pp. 212-13)

Depicting the search for home within contemporary American culture, Arthur Miller and Edward Albee are no more optimistic about what this culture has to offer. Nevertheless, the plays assert that retracing roots is necessary no matter what the cost of outcome. Concurrent with this interest in home is a shift from the lone individual to people in relationships as a way of exploring possible reintegration and the forging of a community. This task of reshaping the cultural debris is hindered by many forces— internal and external to the individual. The inner conflicting desires of the characters or what may be called the 'obsessional behaviour' of the characters, builds the psychological barrier. The social barrier includes the bankruptcy of the past passed on from father to son, the surrounding social or political environment, the alienation of man from land, the apparent vacuum created by the scraping of old values and the essential claustrophobic nature of the American family. Arthur Miller and Edward Albee bring into

focus the interplay of all these forces and the subsequent plight of American family life.

The family has been called by Freud as the 'germ cell' of civilization. It is the corner-stone of the socialization process of the individual. In fact, family confers status on the individual, that is, it gives him a certain identity. This search for identity is the most extensively explored theme in contemporary American drama. Related to this, is the obsession of the modern American playwrights for the failure of family harmony and its disintegration. As long as the family exists with love, with its ideals and morals, it continues to be a training ground for the young mind. When indifference and personal selfishness sets in, it destroys family life. Parental indifference towards their children results in the disintegration of the family. The American family, today, is in a serious sociological plight.

Home and Family in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*

Home and family life has always been for Miller a major issue. He is concerned with the primal family before and after the economic 'fall' which is to say, before and after external social pressures have disrupted the essential family peace and unity. The family as a primal sociological unit seems to have dominated all Miller's plays. Without giving any direct answers he has presented the conflicts, the relationships and the effects of the family background on the protagonist's lives and character. He has also shown the relationship of the family with the wider social world and the way in which society influences family life and economic security. His major family plays focus on the family in crisis trapped in moments of stress and conflict resulting from present or past actions that threaten to destroy its members' individually or collectively. Miller reveals the utter negativeness of society and history, and yet offers the ultimate human self as the redeemer and transformer, and also the creator of its own social and historical environment. *Death of a Salesman*, to some extent, strikes a balance between the social problem of the shattered myth of success and Willy Loman's sex and family problems. Miller expressed his basic attitude toward the role of

social forces in drama in an address in which he said:

I hope I have made one thing clear... and it is that society, and you cannot even create a truthfully drama psychological entity on the stage until you understand his social relations and their power to make him what he is and to prevent him from being what he is not the fish is in the water and the water is in the fish.(Motrin,1978, p.185)

The play *Death of a Salesman* is really a challenge to the American dream. The play begins with the classical requirement that its protagonist be at a turning-point in his life. The salesman comes home carrying wearily the two battered, black sample cases which are his cross. They are like the two sons he has carried through life; they are a burden we want him to set down with honour, but we sense almost at once that they are to be his coffin. It is obvious from his first words that he has lost command of them just as he has lost control of his sons, control of his car, control of his mind.

Willy Loman is not in the eyes of his sons just a man, but a god in decay. To his first son Biff, Willy was a god who would protect him from all misdemeanour, who could 'fix' even a failure in mathematics; to his sons, Willy Loman was Salesman—Lord of New England. It is this illusion of sexless godhood that is shattered when Biff at seventeen comes to Boston on a surprise mission (to get his father to 'fix' a math failure) and catches Willy with a lusty woman, then breaks down, weeps, and walks out on his father who is on his knees pleading for forgiveness, understanding, and lost godhood. This is the repressed scene of infidelity and smashed authority dramatized in the restaurant. And it is followed immediately by the mother's accusation against her sons for killing their father by their whoring. This is as close to the original battle fought ages ago by man and his sons as has ever been put upon the stage. It is this very thinly and yet very adroitly disguised Oedipal murder which gives the play its peculiar symbolic prehistoric power. It is not only modern man exploited; it is also Neanderthal man raging against the restraint of civilization's dawn.

Every gesture of Willy Loman is visualized as psychoanalytic interpretation woven into reality. For example, near the end of the last act

Willy comes out of the washroom of the restaurant and is found on his knees by a waiter who cannot understand what is beautifully clear to the audience. For the audience has just shared Willy's hallucination of a scene of years ago, in which his son Biff caught him in a hotel room with a woman. Willy hammers at the present on the anvil of the past.

Again, it is the mother fighting savagely for the father as she accuses the sons; it is the mother who sets off the older son's fury. It is she who has faced with the father the agonies of salesmanship, refrigerators, mortgages, life insurance, exhaustion and withering. Her rage at being old and dried-up is implicit as she fights like a she tiger against the sons who have cast off the father for their own sexual philandering. It is thus she who is the protagonist of the external social theme: a society that destroys fatherhood makes primitives (criminals) of its sons.

The play, now, resolves itself powerfully upon its basic and hidden motivation; the guilt of a younger son for his hatred of his elder brother, for Willy Loman is also a younger brother. For again the repeated hallucination of Willy's older brother Ben appears, this time summoning Willy now to come away to new adventure (Death) in. Ben's bragging, nagging refrain: "I was seventeen when I went into the jungle, and when I came out I was twenty-one and rich!"(Miller, 1998, pp.36-37) Here, in the play's final resolution, the entire necessity for the technique of hallucination becomes clear, though in fact it was announced at the very beginning of the play when Willy Loman commented that his elder brother Ben who struck it rich, is dead. Willy Loman, himself a younger brother (low man on a totem pole), was determined in his time to 'lick the system' by the magic of salesmanship and become 'No. I Man'—a son with a deep guilty hatred for his older brother.

As a salesman, he himself wants to become a hero; he has hallucinations of Ben as a hero, an old salesman as a hero, Biff as a hero—even if he is a football hero. Willy recalls how Ben went into the forest and emerged rich; he remembers how the eighty-four-year-old salesman did his sales job unflinchingly just with the help of the telephone and dominated everybody, including his customers. Willy's

dreams about Biff's career show the intensity of his illusions:

WILLY: Without a penny to his name, three great universities are begging for him, and from there the sky's the limit, because it is not what you do, Ben. It is who you know and the smile on your face! It's contacts, Ben, contacts! (Miller, 1998, p.65)

Thus, Willy unwittingly attaches importance to personality, persuasive power and the ability to outwit others by hook or by crook as being basically necessary for a successful survival in this world.

The hectic activities and the struggle for existence that characterise the present-day life are also not spared when Willy cryptically observes:

BIFF: And it's a measly manner of existence. To get on that subway on the hot mornings in summer. To devote your whole life to keeping stock or making phone calls or selling or buying. To suffer fifty weeks of the year for the sake of a two-week vacation, when all you really desire it to be outdoors with your shirts off. And always to have to get ahead of the next fella. And still—that's how you build a future. (Miller, 1998, pp.10-11)

Thus Willy consciously admits that life consists of only these things, although in points of fact, he also tried to live in this fashion by chasing after illusions all through his existence. It is his inability to get away from the beaten track of existence, an existence that is steeped in false ideals and universal commercialism that has become the main reason for his destruction of hopes. But one of his two sons, Happy, is wiser when he expresses frankly that "everybody around me is so false that I am constantly lowering my ideals" (Miller, 1998, p.120).

The height of pathos is touched in the scene when Linda explains to both of her sons as to how far their father has been suffering in his old age for their sake even by agreeing to work on "straight commission, like a beginner, an unknown of five weeks" (Miller, 1998, p.41). When this touches off a retort from Biff that his father's employers are being 'ungrateful bastards', Linda swiftly silences him by a biting counter thus: "...are they any worse than his sons!" (Miller, 1998, p.41). It is her inability to be patient any more with her sons' irresponsible

and indolent way of life that has forced her to come out with this caustic comment and in this Miller has achieved his sense of tragedy more explicitly.

Although Biff, the elder son of Willy on whom the father has pinned all his hopes and who could not 'find himself' for the last fourteen years for a proper settlement in life, did quarrel with his father often by attacking him mercilessly for having doted on him, he has pathetically clung to his father's essential goodness. His concern for his father and the fondness he displays towards him are eloquently brought to light when his younger brother's girlfriend Miss Forsythe attacks Willy as not being worthy to call himself their father. Biff is instantly provoked and he goes to the defence of Willy thus: "Miss Forsythe, you have just seen a prince walk by. A fine, troubled prince. A hard-working unappreciated prince. A pal, you understand? A good companion. Always for his boys" (Miller, 1998, p.90). In these lines, Miller establishes the abundant affection Willy's sons bear for him, although they could not see eye to eye with him on other matters. It is this affection and love that the sons bear for their father that makes the play tragic in more than one sense as this bond of relationship is based on sincerity tempered by sympathy.

Willy Loman has values that were born out of dreams and his desire to scale spectacular heights on the social ladder by his personal charm and persuasive salesmanship. The fact that the values were hard to maintain especially in a world of combative and conflicting interests had been driving him mad. When ultimately his values of successful career and prosperous life could not be realised, Willy sacrifices his personal life for the failure of his dreams by the act of suicide. His death earns him the sympathy of every member of his family as they demonstrate their concern for Willy in the 'Requiem' scene. Rightly did Biff remark that his father, "had the wrong dreams. All, all wrong" (Miller, 1998, p.111). His 'hubris', his arrogances lay in his thinking that he could reach the top in that society. The tragedy with Willy is that he has become so much part of the system of false values in a materialistic world that he dare not even deign to think of himself as apart from its Willy's

decisive resolve of killing himself is the cumulative effect of his agonies and the setbacks he has suffered by the demolition of his illusions. He achieves dignity in death, as he leaves a sizeable chunk of money to his family out of the insurance he had earlier executed.

In *Death of a Salesman*, Miller's attitude to Willy Loman is ambivalent. He has nothing but pity for Willy, the salesman, who can no longer justify his existence once he loses his ability to sell and whose fate mirrors a world in which the absolute value of the individual human being is believed in only as a secondary value. However, Miller's criticism is reserved for the web of deception and self-deception which Willy has woven round his own life and the lives of his sons, Biff and Happy. Thus for all his foibles, on account of which Willy has become a victim of his delusions that eventually takes his life.

Since his function precludes a normal human relationship, he substitutes an imitation of himself for the real man. He sells his 'personality'. This 'personality' now becomes only a means to an end namely, the consummated sale is a mask worn so long that it soon comes to be mistaken even by the man who wears it, as his real face. But it is only his commercial face with a commercial smile and a commercial aura of the well-liked, smoothly adjusted, oily cog in the machine of the sales apparatus.

Willy Loman never acknowledges or learns the error of his way. To the very end, he is a devout believer in the ideology that destroys him. He believes that life's problems are all solved by making oneself "well-liked" (Miller 34) in the salesman's sense and by a little cash. His wife knows only that he is a good man and that she must continue to love him. His sons, who are his victims, as he has been of the false dream by which he has lived, draw different conclusions from his failure. The younger boy, Happy, believes only that his father was an incompetent, but he does not reject his father's ideal. The older boy, Biff, comes to understand the falsity of his father's ideal and determines to set out on new path guided by a recovery of his true self.

So, the play is a dull picture of a broken-down, loud-mouthed, not too bright or presentable

braggart of a salesman who comes home irritable at his diminishing powers, disappointed in his sons, coddled by his wife who is full of solace but empty of excitement; a worn-out old man jealous of his relative's (next-door) success, and unable to obtain a more sedentary job better suited to his state of impending collapse. The irony of Willy's tragedy is that material wealth is only a mirage. He not only fails to live up to the image of an ideal father, but also never comes anywhere in his goal of immense wealth. At the end of the play, he is in moral and financial ruin, and can only think of suicide, so that his son Biff can have the benefit of the insurance policy. Willy Loman cannot directly identify the opposition. For Willy, the American dream of success is possible but Willy seeks short cuts to success, and having ultimately failed as salesman, gardener, mechanic, husband, father. Willy commits suicide. He too has destroyed himself, his son, and his family through the guilt that economic future in a highly materialistic society inflicts.

Home and Family in Edward Albee's *The American Dream*

Albee's plays highlight man's existential predicament in the modern loveless and hypocritical society where people seem to have surrendered their individuality. *The American Dream* is a one act play by Edward Albee. Through the depiction of relations between the character and their responses to particular situations, conflicts and tensions are seen to emerge. Their living conditions are shown to be so stressful that most of them get alienated from self and the world as is the case with Daddy in *The American Dream*. There is a lack of contact or communication between persons which makes an individual have a feeling of being a stranger among friends, family members and the people at large. Such a state comes only when an individual perceives an absence of meaningful relationships between his status identification his social relationship, his style of life and his work. Anne Paolucci(1972) sums up the relevance of his work in *Edward Albee: A Retrospective and Beyond*:

He dismissed the literal message of the political and social realism of the forties, fifties

and sixties as subject for drama and gave American theatre new content and form portraying our post existential tensions on stage swept bare of standard conventions. (Paolucci, 1972, p.15)

In the play, he attacks:

...the 'assumptions and ideals that shape the American cultural pattern: the success myth, the image of American manhood and womanhood, the ideal of marriage stability and of a happy integrated family.(Choudhuri, 1979,p.140)

The play portrays what is left of the American dream- vis-a-vis their shared household. The American dream is personified by the handsome young man who masks a hollow interior under his perfect exterior. When the play starts, Mommy and Daddy are shown sitting in their living room having small talk about a hat, quibbling with Grandma who is piling, nicely-wrapped boxes on the floor and waiting for them. The decor of the room suggests lack of intimacy of the inmates. The door-bell rings and announces the arrival of Mrs. Barker neither Mommy and Daddy nor Mrs. Barker remember why she is there. This gesture of forgetfulness signifies their lack of interest in the happenings of activities taking place around them.

Mrs Barker represents bye-bye adoption agency from where they had bought 'bumble' but with 'bumble' dead, they want to adopt another child. The door- bell rings for the second time, A young man called the American dream stands in the doorway. He is very handsome and ready to do anything for money. During his conversation with Grandma, he blurts out the truth that he is the identical twin of 'bumble' who was mutilated to death. He laments that beneath his beautiful body, lies the sterility of the soul for he lacks emotions. Both the human body minus soul and the empty picture frame portray betrayal of promise as well as failure of a dream both at political and personal level.

Albee also voices his concern about "the emotional void between husband and wife, parent and child as well as with the problem of the rejection of aged"(Stenz, 1978, p.25). His portrayal of alienation of married partners represents his castigation of the defunct family system of America. Mommy and Daddy have

no equilibrium in their relationship although they are living together under the same roof. In spite of all the years shared there is only "emptiness between them" (Stenz, 1978,p.30). Their marriage has been an act of convenience — a sort of social contract with no emotions involved. Both have entered into it to fulfil own desires; for Mommy it is a key to material comforts for Daddy fulfilment of sexual desires. Both of them live in their own separate illusionary worlds where Mommy's materialism and Daddy's workaholic attitude are not to be shared. Even their conversation is meant to fill the vacuity in their lives and revolve around such petty things as hat and its colour. Their conversation is "as empty and meaningless as the symbolic empty gilt picture frame that hangs over the sofa" (Bigsby, 1967, p.76).

There is lack of essential contact between the two and they are only bearing each other's presence. Through their relationship, Albee attacks the institution of marriage which has lost its significance in the eyes of people.

The root cause of their alienation lies in their unfulfilled dreams. Dreams have always fascinated man because they transport him to a world of ecstasy, fantasy, illusion and hope but when they are not fulfilled it causes anguish, pain and frustration - making life a dull and dreary routine. Both Mommy and Daddy bear this trauma because their dreams have remained unrealized.

Albee focuses on the hollowness, emotional sterility, frustration, anguish of alienation in the life of modern man who is chasing dreams. There is no genuine communication between the characters. Human contract is impossible. "There is total spiritual intellectual status" (Clurman, 1966, p.15).

Grandma plays the role of Albee's mouthpiece in the play and it is through her that he portrays the existential agony of the older generation. In this play, the character of Grandma through her relations with others portray the feelings of rejection and dissatisfaction of the older generation she represents the opposition of generations and old world charm of American humanistic tradition where real values like love, sympathy and concern for each other's welfare was paramount. She is sad by the superficiality of the modern world which has

become mechanized owing to the progress made by science she feels neglected by her own daughter who wants to get rid of her by sending her to a home for the aged. The treatment meted out to her at home gives her a feeling of being unwanted and disrespected woman. She cooks, polishes silver and moves furniture to keep herself busy and to pass her time fruitfully so that old age syndrome may not weigh heavily on her existence.

Grandma's condition reflects the declining phase of American ideal the dreams gone awry. She epitomizes value based existence of American society representing 19th century liberal values in the 20th century. In the dehumanized and alienated environment of the Daddy's household she alone bears the standard of benevolent humanism and essence of dignity associated with man's existence.

Albee calls this play a significant one because through this play the American society's transitional period when people backed by scientific and technical knowledge dared to dream of conquering the whole world. It refers to the ideas of feelings associated with his dream but then dream are illusionary; in this chase man has been left disillusioned, frustrated, anguished and alienated. Entry of young man called the American dream and exit of Grandma occurs simultaneously, former representing hollowness of the American society and later exit of humanistic tradition.

Through the depiction of relations between the character and their responses to particular situations, conflicts and tensions are seen to emerge. Their living conditions are shown to be so stressful that most of them get alienated from self and the world as is the case with Willy in *Death of a Salesman* and Daddy in *The American Dream*. There is a lack of contact or communication between persons which makes an individual have a feeling of being a stranger among friends, family members and the people at large. Such a state comes only when an individual perceives an absence of meaningful relationships between his status identification

his social relationship, his style of life and his work. Many questions start taking shape — who am I? Where do I belong? What is the meaning of my existence? And he sets out to solve the mystery of his existence. Sometimes meaninglessness in life generates a feeling of nothingness which according to Jean-Paul Sartre “lies coiled in the heart of being like a worm” (Kaur, 1988,p.28). Both Willy in *Death of a Salesman* and Daddy in *The American Dream* also encounter a feeling of nothingness. Their repeatedly saying 'I just want to get everything over with' conveys their disillusionment with life.

Conclusion

All of the above discussion shows that Arthur Miller and Edward Albee, however, refuse to mourn at the condition America has come to. Even if one feels they are mourning, more than mourning, they are fighting against this degeneration in the American family life. Miller and Albee's voice is raised primarily to denounce the illusions people nurture as an escape to reality as illusions tend to block the path of communication and become a source of anxiety, despair and pain. But when illusions are broken, the end result is always dramatic and sometimes fatal. So, *Death of a Salesman* depicts the eternal problem of sterility, emotional vacuity and alienation in familial relationships leading to fantasy living while *The American Dream* is about man's preference for superficial values over old cultural values and his race for materialistic ambitions which have converted him into a machine. So, The American Dream of bountiful Eden, the poetic image of the land, seems no longer fulfil able in an industrial, mechanized, computerized and dehumanizing society. For years now the farmlands, like those of Thebes in *Oedipus Rex*, have lain fallow, and the family has lived a monotonous still life from which there seems to be no escape.

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Second Language Acquisition in the Indian Perspective: Pitfalls and Resolutions

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Abstract: *The speedy process of globalization during the last two decades has rendered regional and national boundaries obsolete and brought the people across the whole world closer as never before. The expansion of the means of communication and the strengthening of world-wide internet facilities has given a further fillip to this process. These two factors have necessitated the establishment of the communication network at multiple levels, for which the selection of a world language, which is understood in most of the developed and developing countries, has become imperative. There is unanimity among linguists regarding language as a potent means of communication capable of expressing all sorts of ideas and concepts. However, some linguists have expressed the view that language learning is nothing but habit-formation because the all-important linguistic skills like reading, writing, listening and speaking are learnt effectively through consistent use and practice. The more we are exposed to the use of a language, the better and the faster we can learn it.*

English Language Teaching situation in India is fraught with a number of problems which are unique in the Indian context. The learners of English as a second language in India are exposed to their regional languages before they start learning English. They recognize none of these languages including even Hindi as a common, neutral language because of their strongly marked linguistic prejudices. English has successfully filled this gap because the educated Indians may have their regional biases but they are unanimous in granting English the place of a common, neutral language.

In the present paper, an attempt has been made to discuss the need for an objective estimation of the problems which the teachers and learners of English as a second language have to encounter and the possible solutions thereof.

Key Words: *Globalization, Communication, Llinguistic Skills, Second Languag*

How do we view a language socially? Is it a means of communication or is it an integral part of my being, my identity? English, beyond doubt, is the most sought-after language. But do we learn it just for the love of it or because it creates an impression? Just a quick look around and we get our answer. I will always love my language but to survive I need English. If that is my aim, I can never accept English as language of my own. It will never go beyond the comfort zone of my drawing room's walls. Beyond that begins the role of my language. In my heart, I have an identity of my own which first is of an Indian and thereafter it is the regional identity that I carry. With this regional identity comes MY language - it can be Punjabi, Gujarati, Marwadi, Rajasthani and so on; the next language that I use is Hindi and English obviously remains my last choice because "I am proud to be an Indian" does not evoke enough sense of patriotism in me as "Garv se kaho hum bhartiya hain" does. The underlying feeling may be the same but the affinity I have towards Hindi as my national language does play upon my emotions. This made me ponder over a question "Is acquisition of language directly related to the society that we mingle with?" Inevitably the answer is 'yes'. Any language cannot be taught or learnt unless the learner is socially oriented to learn it. Language is basically used to communicate in various social situations. The status that the language has acquired socially grants it the importance that it enjoys.

English in India has a totally different status in different parts. In some parts, it is the only means of communication; whereas in some parts, people communicating in English are termed to be show offs. In some part, it is a formal way of interacting; whereas in some parts, it is looked down upon with contempt. All this happens in a nation that prides itself on unity in diversity. We remain unified otherwise when it comes to this language; we have very strong feelings about its usage. We are comfortable using this language as means of interaction formally but when it comes to sharing our heartfelt feelings, we automatically switch to the language that we have acquired and not learnt. English unfortunately is still learnt and while it is being learnt there are many factors that work upon its acquisition directly or indirectly.

UNESCO defines second language as a language acquired by a person in addition to his mother tongue. English, the second most widely spoken language in the world has unfortunately failed to make itself a national language in most of the countries. English has become an important part of Indian education during the last decade. It is now introduced into schools at an early age and more children are learning through the medium of English. While English is learnt as a second language, the indomitable presence of mother tongue and the social language makes its acquisition all the more difficult. With so many linguistic varieties present on the scenario, some citizens have problems even using Hindi as their second language. In this scenario, how easy it will be for English to develop a space for its own? The regional differences probably are the biggest barrier in language acquisition.

Many Indian people think that English is a foreign language and it is the most difficult language to learn. They think that it is the language of the British only, not ours. Therefore, this language must not be learnt. We see a kind of terrific tension and terror in the minds of students regarding learning English. This fear in mind defers and discourages them from learning English language. Some of them think that mother-tongue should be the medium of instruction in schools and colleges. Some of them think that English is the language of only elite and aristocratic people. So, these are some of the misunderstandings about English language.

The students in India can be categorized into two; the ones who have regional language as medium of study from the primary level and the others who have English as the medium of study. It then remains a subject in schools and colleges that has to be dreaded with its too many technicalities and irregularities, and which has to be learnt till your 12th standard.

Both teachers and learners have a significant role in uplifting the standards of English language. Many impediments and problems are faced by the teachers and learners of English language. English language can be popularized among the rural children slowly and steadily but not by sudden imposition without any ground work. Hence, the problem of teaching English as a second language to the Indian students starts from the schooling.

Majority of the students are from villages and their parents are farmers and uneducated with lack of survival resources. If nature fails, the survival of the farmers is impossible. Hence, the students are discouraged due to the family conditions. The parents, though interested in giving good educational background to their children, are not able to do so. In contrast, they are forced to employ the children in some jobs in order to earn money. This is the basic reason which hampers teaching. In the second category, the students have enough background in basic education. Their parents are educated and belong to service class. So, a common programme for English language teaching must be framed in the schooling itself.

Nowadays the learner has become an active participant in the language learning process and the teacher a mere knowledge provider and a facilitator in the language learning process. The English second language teacher is a mediator who helps the learner in identifying, focusing, framing and using the second language in such a manner that ensures everlasting dividends. A second language learner would be benefitted if the class tasks focus on meaning-making by the learner, as culturally familiar, are functional and help them fulfill their social, academic and vocational language needs. The process of teaching and learning includes various components: the students, the teacher, the educational institution, implementing agencies of the government, society, parents, and socio-cultural backgrounds. Above all, difficulties in teaching English occur at different levels and teachers of English in India face some difficulties.

For Indians, English is considered as a second or third language because there are many regional languages in India. Mother-tongue influence of those respective languages is clearly visible in the conversation of Indian students. In India, pronunciation changes from state to state, region to region. So, English spoken by such people is too much influenced by speech pattern of their mother-tongue. Students have their own mother-tongue accents and that's why teacher faces difficulties while teaching English as a second or third language.

Indian student is surrounded by many teachers who come in his contact from nursery to college life. He is also in constant contact with his parents and relatives who coax him to learn the language. He listens to the mother-tongue most of his waking hours. But the English language which is assumed as a foreign language is taught in an artificial environment. There are a number of holidays in the school and the time devoted to the teaching of English language is limited. In this way, the influence of the mother-tongue is seen more than the other languages. Thus, the influence of mother-tongue is one of the difficulties in teaching English as a second language.

At some places in India, we see that teachers do not have updated their knowledge of the subject matter of the teaching. They are not well acquainted with the latest and far reaching developments in the teaching of English. Students in colleges come to college from rural areas school where teachers have a little knowledge of English language. Their English is a mixture of vernacular and English. Some ideas related to English are beyond the memory and understanding of the teachers. Some of the teachers are not well aware of the problems and solutions regarding difficulties in teaching English language. Continuous overhauling is required in teaching learning process. After all, solution must be pointed out. English teacher must be a minute observer and research minded. A teacher should be fully equipped with high academic standard, pedagogical and practical skills; and ethical and moral values. A teacher needs to renew himself/herself to remain innovative and should attend as well as participate in training programmes and workshops on new approaches and modes of teaching. Without competent teachers, it is impossible to achieve the goals and objectives of teaching English in India.

While teaching in the classroom, teacher follows different types of methods like Direct method, Grammar cum translation method and elective method. Many teachers are not well familiar about its use as - Direct method evolved as a reaction to grammar with the aim of introducing the language directly to the learner. In the same way, as he learns his mother-tongue, Grammar cum translational method is mostly followed in most of the schools. The teachers have to seek aid of various traditional and modern methods to achieve the desired results. Several methods have been adopted over the years, grammar translation Method, Direct method, Audio-lingual method, community language learning, silent way, suggestopedia etc. The teacher shows

dislike of new methods of teaching as these methods are only exam oriented, just to pass and go through it.

English language has brought many words from other languages. For example, literature prospered from the words of France, Latin, Germany and Scandinavians. Such words brought from other languages confuse students. Particularly, students in rural areas are not aware of proper pronunciation, spelling and grammatical rules and the pronunciation patterns of English consonant, syllable structure, vowel phonemes etc. Such distinct boundaries confuse students of learning English. Twelve years of school study does not make students gain mastery over English. If a student does not understand anything in English, he/she asks for explanation in his/her mother tongue. ELT specialists view this as a wrong methodology. Audio-visual aids provide models for teaching English - Pronunciations, words and composition of sentences. If the teacher makes optimum use of audio-visual aids in teaching, it will be a proper direction for learning English language. Ultra CDs, LCD projectors should be provided to the students. It helps the teacher to create curiosity in learning language among his peers. In the absence of these aids, English would not be correctly taught. This is also one of the difficulties faced by the English teachers while teaching English language in the class.

Nowadays in this era of Information and Technology, a teacher must do research. The number of researchers is very few in most of the universities and colleges in India. Lack of quality research in the field of teaching & learning English is the main reason behind scanty knowledge of English language. This problem can be solved only by the research work in the field of English - curriculum, evaluation system, methodology, innovative techniques such as audio-visual aids -will definitely reduce the problems in English language teaching.

Some of the educational institutions in India, for example colleges situated in rural areas of India lack modern technology like language lab, Wi-Fi, technology, virtual classroom and infrastructure. Lack of amenities is also one of the problems we face in rural colleges in India. Adequate reading material like newspapers, magazines and periodicals are hardly found in some of the rural colleges in India. Management expresses their inability to attend to those problems. Government should sanction grants for the equipment and infrastructure.

Moreover, students learn basic grammar at school level for the purpose of passing only in the tests and in the examination and not to face any real-life situations. Exposure, too, is far less to them. Emphasis is laid on learning and acquiring rules, not an application of these rules. The sound system is very rich. Generally, more exotic new sounds mean more difficulty learning the language. English has a very rich set of sounds. There is a method in the madness of English spelling. It is based on etymology. Based on how a word is spelt, we can make guesses about where the word came from. English spelling is extremely counter-intuitive. Same is true in

learning to spell because different spellings for identical English sounds are twice as common as different pronunciation allows for identical letters.

Students of the rural areas are very much scared of the English subject. This fear is psychological and to bring them out of fear of the English language, one has to adopt some psychology or hypnotherapy. But English lecturer cannot be a psychiatrist or a hypnotist. This fear is deep rooted in the minds of many students. This is also one of the difficulties in teaching English as a second or third language.

There are also some of the other difficulties in teaching English as a second or third language. They are as — rural background of the students, problem of text book with the students, fear of the English language, lack of interest or proper attention about English language, over-crowded classes, lack of teachers, research work, parents' negligence towards English language, lack of worldwide information regarding English language. Secondly, the infrastructure, viz. school buildings, classrooms, labs etc. is not adequate as required. The first category of the students is almost compelled to attend their classes under the trees even after several five-year plans where a single teacher teaches them all the subjects.

So, when we learn our first language, our brain / mind 'tunes into' the way the particular language works, and we learn to pay attention to particular cues to meaning that are most helpful. To quote Jack C. Richard "Study of the various learning strategies employed by the learner is important and teachers and teaching material should take account of the structural and developmental conflicts that can come about in language learning" (Richard 8).

Teachers have to adopt some Remedial Measures to make his wards acquaint with English as a second language:

- Teacher should analyse learner's errors and plan and organize his material and methods accordingly
- Teachers should motivate students for participative learning.
- To ease problems from the day one itself, an English teacher has to encourage the students to converse in English only.
- Teaching learning is not a one-way process. It is a multi-way process.
- Students in class should be divided into groups for discussion to encourage maximum participation.
- ESL programmes should be arranged which allow students to meet and speak with other learner. This will relieve the pressure of making mistakes because others are undergoing the same experience.
- Design exercises to help students feel confident when speaking English.

- On-line conversation in English (about whatever) can be conducted.

To conclude, we can say that in our country, as already said, 75% of the students belong to rural areas and they come from regional language medium schools. Although with the ushering in an era of globalization, English occupies the pivotal place and the teaching of English as second language is one of the major concerns in the realm of education; yet based on their background, we have to design the syllabus and adopt methods to test their English language proficiency. To quote Kripa K. Gautam “Teaching materials and methodologies have to be developed with a view to achieving as effectively as possible the transaction from the learner’s interim language to his communicative competence”(Gautam 91). Therefore, it is necessary to go for a detailed discussion as to whether the existing curriculum is fulfilling the need of the hour and is suitable to the students in achieving their goals. The rich canvas is dotted here and there with failings but innovative techniques, the emerging paradigms promise a soaring flight. India can be transformed if it launches the mission for empowering the rural population and giving them benefits that are available in cities and towns.

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ਅਕਤੂਬਰ-ਦਸੰਬਰ 2020

ਸੰਨੀ ਓਬਰਾਏ ਵਿਵੇਕ ਸਦਨ:
ਐਡਵਾਂਸ ਇੰਸਟੀਚਿਊਟ ਆਫ ਸੋਸ਼ਲ ਸਾਇੰਸਜ਼
ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਨੰਦਪੁਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਪੰਜਾਬ

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SURVIVAL AND RESILIENCE: CHAOTIC STATE OF HUMAN BEINGS IN CORMAC MCCARTHY'S THE ROAD

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ABSTRACT

Once considered a foundation of knowledge, man was reconceived as a construct of science and technology, religion and history, cultural structure and political fashioning. Once hailed as the horizon of existence and thought, the human being became a self-doubting, mystery lacking all existential certainty other than its own death. Although humanism is not necessarily an optimistic, progressive doctrine which can take on diverse forms, it does presume that humans have some unique significance and power to affect their environment. In these contexts, *The Road* by McCarthy gestures towards future patterns of thought and modes of being which go beyond humanism.

Key Words: Post-Humanism, Speciesism, Transcultural, Chaotic State, Survival, Resilience

The post-human discourse is an ongoing process of different standpoints and movements, which has flourished as a result of the contemporary attempt to redefine the human condition. Post-humanism, transhumanism, anti-humanism and the post-humanities offer significant ways to rethink possible existential outcomes.

Transhumanism offers an extremely rich discussion on the effect of innovative and logical advancements in the development of the human species; and still it holds a humanistic and human-driven point of view which debilitates its viewpoint: it is a 'mankind in addition to development whose point is to hoist the human condition. On the contrary, speciesism has become an integral part of the post-humanist approach, formulated on a post-anthropocentric and post-

humanistic episteme, based on decentralized and non-hierarchical modes. Despite the fact that post-humanism researches the domains of science and innovation, it doesn't remember them as its principle pivot of reflection, nor does it restrict itself to their specialized undertakings, however it grows its appearance to the advances of presence.

Post-humanism seems appropriate to investigate the geological time of the anthropocene. As the anthropocene marks the extent of the impact of human activities on a planetary level, the post-human focuses on decentering the human from the primary focus of the discourse. In tune with anti-humanism, post-humanism stresses the urgency for humans to become aware of their actions pertaining to an ecosystem which, when damaged negatively, affects the human condition as well. In spite of the fact that post-humanism examines the domains of science and innovation, it doesn't remember them as its primary pivot of reflection, nor does it restrict itself to their specialized undertakings, however it extends its appearance to the advancements of presence. The manner in which the people occupy this planet, what they eat, how they act, what relations they engage, makes the organization of who and what they are: it's anything but a bodiless organization. In this expanded horizon, it becomes clear that any types of essentialism, reductionism or intrinsic biases are limiting factors in approaching such multidimensional networks that exceed political, social and biological human realms.

Post-humanism keeps a basic and deconstructive viewpoint educated by the affirmation of the past, while setting extensive and generative viewpoint to continue and support options for the present and for the prospects. Inside the current philosophical climate, post-humanism offers a one of a kind harmony between organization, memory and creative mind, intending to accomplish consonant inheritances in the developing environment of interconnected presence. In these contexts, The Road gestures towards future patterns of thought and modes of being which go beyond humanism. Interpretations of the eschatological significance of human beings have always underwritten visions of apocalypse. In the result of two World Wars humanism has become a slandered thought, while progress bears a resemblance to a dictator negligence for

contrast. Once considered a foundation of knowledge, man was reconceived as a construct of science and technology, religion and history, cultural structure and political fashioning. Once hailed as the horizon of existence and thought, the human being became a self-doubting, mystery lacking all existential certainty other than its own death. Although humanism is not necessarily an optimistic, progressive doctrine which can take on diverse forms, it does presume that humans have some unique significance and power to affect their environment.

The Road (2006), Cormac McCarthy's famous novel, describes the bleak journey of a father and son across a post-apocalyptic American landscape. The germ seed of The Road came to his mind in 2003 when he was on a visit to El Paso, Texas. McCarthy imagined how the city would glance in the future. McCarthy devoted this novel to John. The tale has met with extraordinary basic achievement, including a Pulitzer Prize and the James Tait Black Memorial Prize. Numerous critics and researchers consider The Road as probably the best work - if not his Masterpiece. Most of his readers agree that The Road is a deeply moving, if also deeply disturbing, work of unparalleled literary genius that transcends any discussion of genre.

McCarthy, both directly (through explicit references) and indirectly (through allusive motifs) invokes the specter of historical events, like the dawn of the nuclear age responsible for overturning the belief in human progress. In The Road, all people groups and animals have been exposed to a holocaust, remains are undeniably more normal than living creatures and the debris of an all-devouring fire debases apparently the sum of the earth. The remnant of whatever reduced the landscape to a wasteland permeates every inch of the novel's setting. ringing to mind the aftermath of an atomic blast and the ashes of bodies consumed in the Nazi concentration camps, this theme suggests verifiable functions that subverted the adequacy of humanism and progress by apparently degrading the poise of human life, devaluing the intensity of human explanation and diminishing the possibilities for what's to come. The father and son flee from sanctuary to sanctuary taking on the characteristics of concentration camp inmates themselves.

McCarthy was seventy years of age when he initially started to conceptualize the dystopian universe of *The Road*, and the dad of a five-year-old kid, John Francis, to whom the novel is committed. Despite the fact that his wellbeing was (fortunately still is) accounted for to be acceptable, it is irrefutable that the one who composed this novel is one who can see the end before him. There may not be an inauspicious, telling, tubercular hack to illuminate us that the base portion of the hourglass is almost full, however obviously McCarthy's viewpoint while making *The Road* was profoundly connected to a man with a more exhaustive handle of the limit of life than somebody a large portion of his age.

Since the time the World War II, the dangers of atomic war and industrialized destruction have shaken humanism to its center, drastically changing originations of end times. All that these past and projected calamities reveal is the transience of life, the depth of human cruelty and the apathy of existence. Making a lie of progress, nuclear war indicts science for pushing our species to the brink of suicide and dismisses progressive attempts to social improvement. By turning seemingly every technological, bureaucratic and philosophical development of Western civilization towards one purpose—the annihilation of all lives deemed unworthy of life—disgraces the humanistic philosophy.

In *The Road*, the entire human world is diminished to soot, apparently past restoration. When the father and son explore a town, they find no people. Nuclear war, genocide and disaster have reduced life to ash, depriving it of individuality and agency. The fact that the novel's narrator does not reveal any of the characters' names draws attention towards the post-apocalyptic loss of human individuality. The adumbration of day light alludes to the dimming of hope that follows humanism's death by atomic fire. All paradigms collapse. The man cannot remember the names of objects; he forgets the appearance of all hues save shades of gray and cannot recall what bygone foods looked and tasted like. Human inventions have become purposeless, valueless; expensive electronic equipment now unfunctional; electrical appliances and tools are scattered by the side of the road. The discarding of tools is particularly significant because for a

long time the use of tools was regarded as what separates humanity from animals. By making apparatuses and human manifestations repetitive, the universe of *The Road* appears to void all that once made people remarkable.

The man frequently turns to creature illustrations in his discourse and contemplations. Like tamed animals reared to bite the dust, they appear to be unequipped for changing their everyday environments, ready to do minimal more with their lives than kill time before butcher. McCarthy utilizes a creature comparison to outline the inauspicious work of human presence in the dystopian world while, portraying the dreary advancement of the pair upon the road, he writes: "They went on. Treading the dead world under like rats on a wheel" (McCarthy 14).

This fear, that in the absence of any meaning or destiny the human life span will become a mere drudgery, as tedious and directionless as a rodent running in a wheel, runs throughout the text. In a constant state of anxiety, laboring to satisfy basic needs for food, water and shelter and fleeing from perceived threats, the protagonists, in many ways, become like haunted animals. In the father's view all other humans appear similarly inflected by animalistic behavior. He detects reptilian calculations in the eyes of a road agent, the first human being other than the boy that he had spoken to in more than a year. The man regards his interlocutor as a beast whose gaunt, conniving appearance gives the impression of an animal inside a skull looking out the eye holes. Unable to reason in any manner other than reptilian, instinctual drive for self preservation, survivors of the catastrophe have lost something long thought to be distinctly human: the ability to respond ethically to others. Though the animalization of humans is a common trope in McCarthy's fiction, it is the fate of characters who cross the fragile boundary separating the civilized from the uncivilized in *The Road* that takes on a particular urgency. When there is no boundary to delineate the civilized and uncivilized, no humanistic philosophy to grant homo-sapiens a purpose, can anyone be fully human?

A tension can be observed in McCarthy's fiction – a tension between the world he imagines and the words he uses to represent it. Noting that McCarthy invariably employs a highly stylized, manmade literary practice to illustrate

environments indifferent to human concerns and customs, critics contend that his novels embody a stalemate between humanist discourse and post-humanist idea. One place we can detect this stalemate is in the plethora of adjectives that McCarthy uses to portray the novels' drab, monochromatic setting: "granitic" (McCarthy 3), "gun metal" (McCarthy 6), "charcoal sketches" (McCarthy 8) etc. Public solidarity is missing and the humans are alienated from each other by technology and corporate culture; citizens are politically detached and self-interested, preferring personal profit over collective benefits.

The Road moves the reader along an appalling excursion to the atomic winter of dystopian America. Following an anonymous dad and child through the fiercest and most hopeless of scenes, the protagonists energetically watch as the two fight incomprehensible chances in their basic mission for endurance. In as reasonable a setting as conceivable McCarthy looks at the physical as well as the mental results of disturbance. His is where the planet breakdowns, yet civic establishments too; discourse, composing, oral stories, recollections and dreams deteriorate and rot as do practically all enunciations and portrayals of language. Incidentally, the lavishness of McCarthy's exposition swells as the words and semantic features of this post-holocaustic earth evaporate. Despite the fact that the impetus of the cataclysm is rarely explicitly named, one can gather that it is for sure the result of an atomic war. The text does describe "a long shear of light and then a series of low concussions" (McCarthy 51) which give rise to a "dull rose glow" (McCarthy 52) that lend credence to this idea. In this setting, a residue cloud encompassing the Northern Hemisphere has delivered the cycle of photosynthesis invalid, executing practically all palatable vegetation. As a direct result, almost all animal life is also destroyed and many humans, in their desperate struggle for life, have resorted to enslaving and cannibalizing one another.

McCarthy has used the scientific theory about long term consequences of nuclear war to create his own dystopic narrative. What is depicted in The Road isn't only the annihilation of animal types or a planet; he depicts the human arranged insight of the death of civilization. Fragmented sentences that mirror the

process of sensory perception are scattered through the text and evoke the fractured status humankind has found itself in, contributing to the ominous mood:

In the morning they went on. Desolate country. A boar-hide nailed to a barn door. Ratty. Wisp of a tail. Inside the barn three bodies hanging from the rafters, dried and dusty among the wan slats of light. (McCarthy 17)

The lack of names, apostrophes and quotation marks in the text also provokes an eerie sense of displacement. The primary heroes are referred to just as 'the man' and 'the boy'. Even the old photograph of his dead wife is eventually left behind. The boy's flute— a magnificent figure of speech for sound, excellence and language – likewise moves unremorsefully discarded. As father and son abandon all but the most essential – food, water, clothing and gasoline, so does McCarthy do away with punctuation marks.

What is also rather interesting is McCarthy's use of the word 'okay' in their dialogue. The word occurs an impressive one hundred and eight times and ends a total of thirty-two conversations and most of the times it is a pleading call for existential reassurance:

Can we wait a while?
Okay. But it's getting dark.
I know.
Okay...
There's no one here...
Okay.
Are you still scared?
Yes.
We're okay.
Okay. (McCarthy 204)

The two reaffirm their status as the heroes, the ones who don't eat individuals, in this way keeping up their ethical honesty and accordingly their mankind:

We wouldn't ever eat anybody would we?
No. Of course not.

No matter what.

No. No matter what.

Because we're the good guys.

Yes.

Okay. (McCarthy 128-129)

As opposed to the moderate discourse where words like alright flounder in their part as transports of complex implications and feelings, McCarthy makes new words in his clear passages: neologisms and kennings are spotted all through, framed out of the need to show the tremendous, dreary stunning disarray that subsumes the duo. This embodies the new lyricism that emerges from a fallen and forlorn world. Much as the father uses the fragments of old epoch to create new post-humanistic tools for survival, new words and meanings are also carved out of the old. This is all in an ironic service of the portrayal of a world where words die. This is best represented in the child's own relationship with language. At the very onset of the novel, the boy is very enthusiastic for a conversation while the father is taking all pains in order to teach the son English alphabet. The two offer exercises, discussions, recollections and dreams and regardless of the self-destruction of the kid's mom or maybe as a result of it, they build up a nearby and private bond. However, as time progress we see the boy retreat from speech. Whereas previously the child clamored for the father's tales, which persistently and consistently reaffirmed their moral status as the good guys who don't cannibalize, he ultimately rejects his father's stories as untrue:

Do you want me to tell you a story?

No.

Why Not?

Those stories are not true.

They don't have to be true. They're stories.

Yes. But in the stories we are always helping people and we don't help people. (McCarthy 268)

It is clear that their past merry and encouraging talk has continuously fallen into a deadness of solidified quiet. The kid attempts to go inside himself since he is continually keeping himself reserved from stories. In any case, the

profundity of language isn't just made show in the kid's repugnance for words. Associatively, different instances of proficiency and phonetics break separated. Tropes of this phenomenological breakdown abound. Any time the duo discovers a book or a library it is always within a context of destruction. The library, as it appears in its ruin, was essentially a space of expectation. Dying words become the un-mourned victims of the apocalypse. All books in this novel are swollen and shapeless, water-damaged and faded, found, glanced at and without exception tossed away. They are ignored and dismissed as useless artifacts from a bygone era. Words have faltered and language has failed in this post-humanist culture where the self-deceptive centrality of the human is laid bare with the collapse of human culture:

The names of things slowly following those things into oblivion. Colours, the names of birds. Things to eat. Finally, the names of things once believed to be true. More fragile than he would have thought. How much was already gone? The sacred idiom shorn of its referents and so of its reality.
(McCarthy 74-75)

Finitude and death are also emphasized as key constituents of post-humanism. The specter of death is present throughout the text; the father, who takes his son across a ravaged landscape, near devoid of animal or plant life, realizes that he is dying. He has one bullet in his gun, which the boy is instructed to take his life with if cannibals attack them. The post-human condition urges us to contemplate who and what we really are currently turning out to be. Contingent upon how we pick, our post-human age will be possibly one that speaks to the humanistic age in an all the more mechanically refreshed way or one where an equal, responsive and mindful connection is in progress among people and the remainder of the world.

The Road adequately derails the long held perception of the human being as occupying a natural and eternal place at the very centre of things. The very machinery that humanity distinguished itself from and the belief in a unique essence are all but blatantly questioned in this post-humanist work. In the humanist record, individuals are outstanding, independent and set over the world

that lies at their feet. As opposed to this, McCarthy presents a humankind without humanism; an animal types without reason, respect and fate. He considers how the impacts of and on the contemporary techno-culture and bio-innovation power through a reconsidering of the upright natures and characters of the human. It is humanism, not the human in the entirety of its typified and prosthetic intricacy that is abandoned in post-humanist idea.

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SHIFTING SYNDROMES : MAPPING THE MARGINS IN DATTANI'S SELECT PLAYS

□ Dr. Neelam Bhardwaj*

ABSTRACT

The present paper focusses on that segment of Indian society which has been marginalised because of a 'different' sexual orientation. Mahesh Dattani deals with the unconventional issues of gays, eunuchs and incest victims in some of his plays while most of writers of the genre conveniently brush these hush-hush issues under the carpet. Some of his plays depict the inner tribulations and turmoil of these margins and explicate how they get bogged in the overly imposing socio-cultural paradigms:

- *On a Muggy Night in Mumbai* deals with the plight of gays
- *Seven Steps around the Fire* deals with eunuchs
- *Thirty Days in September* is a play of incest

This is a confident Mahesh Dattani, raking up such controversial issues with cheeky humour in his version of a contemporary 'romantic comedy', and deftly drawing the changing contours of a multicultural India with its multiple voices.

Keywords : Sexual Orientation, Socio-Cultural Paradigms, Marginalization, Women, Gays, Eunuchs, Incest.

- Why do these victims fear the society which has wronged them?
- Why do they feel guilty of something for which they are not at fault?
- Should we not change our mind-set towards these victims and allow them a life of dignity, confidence and self-esteem?
- Will the gays remain the "other" even after being recognized by the Indian Law?
- Will the court judgements really mould the reality?

These are some of the questions before us to ponder over. By thinking over these issues, we would liberate these victims from the stifling framework of a cruel hidebound society and give them a space in the sun. This is the special generic quality of drama; within which context we have tried to assess some of the the works of Mahesh Dattani.

Among the contemporary Indian dramatists writing in English, Mahesh Dattani has the distinction of being the first Indian playwright to be honoured with the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1998. He created a space in the Indian literary scenario for this special new genre of writing — Indian drama in English. Dattani's abundant literary works stuffed with a variety of themes and voicing contemporary issues with a special intensity, unparalleled scholarly ability and dramatic aptitudes, has procured him world-wide approval however his contribution to Indian drama is far more outreaching than the acknowledgement received. Dattani is not writing in 'vacuum' but he has his fingers on the pulse of the contemporary Indian society. This powerful rendition of the socio-cultural issues of Indian society sets him apart as a virtuoso in his metier. Dattani himself admits in an interview in New York (September 18, 2000) with

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Newsweek's Vibhuti Patel, "I became a writer because there are no plays in English on contemporary Indian issues".

In most of Dattani's plays, there is a steady concern with the unstable predicament of the margins and an investigation of their condition unwinding the implied psychological working of their stressed personalities pitted against a world which reduces most of them to a non-entity entangling them in the socio-cultural webs woven by the majority. Dattani has taken a bold step in taking out these issues from under the rug and presenting them openly to the society to which they belong. He proposes the free expression of one's true self without necessarily falling into the categories like heterosexuality, homosexuality and bisexuality. The major concern of his plays is to depict the homosexual situation as an identity crisis which results from being marginalised and oppressed. His characters are the individuals who find it difficult to 'come out' to the society and thus struggle to survive under the societal constraints.

Broadly viewed, margins constitute the outermost limits of centrality. In the socio-cultural context a margin is equivalent to 'other'. Marginalized individuals or groups in a society do not feel incorporated into the societal mainstream and are often or actively and militantly kept out of the value-system of the mainstream which comprises self-styled 'normal' people. Normality/Centrality is assumed by the mainstream by its materialistic or socio-cultural power as against the dominated margins—the under privileged, the sub-normal, the alien or the different. Dattani empowers his readers to have a superior knowledge into the issues relating to margins.

Dattani's plays depict his astonishingly authentic treatment of his characters and their strikingly lifelike experiences which make us feel along with them, as also feel for them, something which all drama aims at, but does not necessarily accomplish. We empathize with the characters and experience their predicament, travails and dilemmas and feel stirred to revamp our goody-goody attitude towards society and our scornful disdain for the margins who rather need to be acknowledged and

embraced into the mainstream.

The plight of the such a small group of characters who like rebels try to trespass the mainstream only to find themselves ridiculed and crushed by the stronger forces which do not allow them to transgress the rigid boundaries of sociocultural norms and the prescribed modes of conduct. They have been fighters all their lives and indeed it can be said of them that they are like 'Bravely Fought the Queen' against all odds and tangles. These characters bring to fore the socio-cultural paradigms which operate through the joint family system and a clash between the traditions and modernity and the occidental and the western values. The socio-cultural norms force the characters to wear masks to conceal their real identities. They, however, drop their masks towards the end of the plays and experience a catharsis of their strangled emotions. Sometimes these rebels or outcasts try to find their own solutions and 'Do the Needful' accordingly, without compromising their dignity and dreams. The religious, social and cultural prejudices of the mainstream community often push these marginalised characters to a periphery where they remain seething and at times on the look-out for rising in mutinous retaliation, only to be rebuffed more sternly by the majority.

In the wake of the Delhi High Court verdict in favour of gays which is bound to allow the gays in India some space and freedom which had hitherto been denied to them. Gays no longer need to live as 'The Invisible Minority' like Prakash, Bunny, Ranjit, Dipali of Mahesh of Dattani's play *On a Muggy Night in Mumbai*. *On a Muggy Night in Mumbai* holds a special significance and the playwright does not end his quest for the 'invisible' here and he goes on to the 'third gender' in *Seven Steps Around the Fire* and with his usual modern humour and exposes some myths in the 'invisible' community and the ills prevalent in that society. At last, *Thirty Days in September* uncovers some intensely 'invisible' horrifying faces that haunt the society. Taut and sombre, the play implicitly makes the viewer party to the traumatic betrayal that scars the psyche of the child sexual abuse victim as it finally gives a hearing to the abused.

On a Muggy Night in Mumbai : Plight of Gays

Destroying all manner of stereotypes and the resulting oppression, *On a Muggy Night in Mumbai* emphasizes the need to transcend the 'given' for honesty in self-expression. *On a Muggy Night in Mumbai* is an example of the playwright's preoccupation with bringing to the centre stage what is referred to as 'fringe' issues that remain on the periphery of social concerns. Gay life is enjoyed like a festival in this play. Along with this celebrated theme, this play also manages to infuse friendship as well as esteems and companionship in the middle class family among its topics.

The story is set in one locale: the living cum drawing room of Kamlesh, a much demanded fashion designer living in Mumbai. He is engaging a couple of visitors in that living room and needs assistance. Kamlesh's flat is located in one of Mumbai's more advantaged area, Marine Drive. It is beautifully outfitted but very much a part of the tumult of the city. The setting of the locale changes in *Mango Soufflé* and the scene changes to the isolation of a farmhouse in the suburban areas of the Metropolis, Bangalore. Here, they have decided to opt for the top floor. From the balcony of the flat, they are looking down at one of the marriage celebration on the outside from a safe distance and feel zealous assuming their safety. These people are really difficult to understand but they are people who care each other the most. Given the space for a sitcom-like satire, the fondness between Dipali and Kamlesh works superbly, regularly stacked with incongruity that a woman is an object of love. To which Kamlesh asks if he were a man, they would be in love. On this, Dipali yells "If we were heterosexual, we would be married . . . Aaaagh!" (Dattani 82).

More shock and surprises are in store for the readers. Kiran, Kamlesh's sister, pays a visit and her arrival brings a disclosure: she is all geared up to wed Ed. Ed is no one else but Prakash, Kailash's former lover. The situation which is already bewildering turns out to be all the more messed up as the characters are set in opposition to extremely tricky issues. Kamlesh can't uncover reality to Kiran and end her shaky happiness. The ending of the play depends on chance occurring when the sexually

unambiguous photograph of Ed and Kamlesh is found as ID is none else but Prakash himself.

So, the various shades of gay are also catalogued dexterously -the overt, the escapist, the comfortable and the complete hypocrites who would have both this and that. Kiran is going to wed a gay says unwittingly enough, says that she truly wishes they would permit gay men to wed. Ranjit, also gay, replies caustically, "Oh, they do. Only not to the same sex"(Dattani 121). The play is full of such cutting quips that make no bones about the author's own sympathies.

But *On a Muggy Night in Mumbai* closes on a perky and radiant description. Various inquiries are hurled. Would homosexuality be able to change to heterosexuality? But instead of preaching directly, Dattani dramatizes social groups and delineates characters for the stage one starts to identify with confronting real life, genuine issues.

The audience too should then start to move beyond expectations for the generalization. Conversely, the initial shock that runs through a conventional audience upon the discovery of two men making love in bed would become diluted, and perhaps dramatically less potent. Unlike the West, of course, one must consider the conventional celebration of strong male bonding and sexless closeness in India and other Asian societies. Sharad is aware of the implications of his insinuations, and this part of the action acquires a deep resonance as the gay man addresses the lesbian and both are intelligent, open and real individuals unashamed of their sexual decisions.

Seven Steps Around the Fire : Plight of 'Eunuch'

Dattani's next play in this category is *Seven Steps Around the Fire*. It a famous radio play with 'hijras' as central characters who are denied any right by the centre to execute their dreams and cross the socio-cultural margins to reach out to the world of the majority culture. The social tangles are far too many for these margins to cope with and these are explored at length in this play. A brief note on the origin of the hijras will be in order, before looking at the class-gender-based power implications. There are trans-sexual all over the world, and India is no exception.

Commissioned by the BBC, *Seven Steps Around the Fire* is a famous radio play broadcasted with the name *Seven Circles Around the Fire*. In this play, the playwright uses an uncommon genre — whodunit — to investigate certain themes that once again focus on the 'invisible' zones of social conduct. This time, the 'third' gender is the centre point of the play. It encompasses the community of eunuchs and highlights some issues related with their existence in Indian scenario.

The play is radio play that is word-intensive and works within significant sound scapes necessary for being broadcast. Uma, who is perusing research in Sociology, is a Ph.D. scholar. She is the wife of the superintendent of police Suresh Rao and the talented daughter of a vice-chancellor. Her topic of research is related with the community of eunuchs and for this, she is following up the murder of a beautiful eunuch, Kamala. Uma is being escorted by Constable Munswamy who is assigned this duty by his boss so that he may keep her in the clear in her careful investigation into the crime. The main points of the play are determined to dubious ground that are not really very much recorded, given the marks of disgrace connected to them — henceforth making Uma's scholastic exercise praiseworthy while being sensitively humane. This is, in a real sense, a dead zone in numerous senses of the term for males as well as females. Dattani's main concern, in this play, is the mutual relationship of these grey zones which is referred as homosexuality.

The action of the play begins after a huge interruption and Uma is seen in the police headquarters. She is there, in pursuit of her research, to record the interview of Anarkali, a hijra who is levelled as an accused in the murder of Kamala, the head Hijra. Munswamy is profoundly delighted at Uma's reference to Anarkali as 'she', himself inclining toward the neuter 'it'. So from the second line of the play, the writer has promptly gone into inquiries about gender assignations. Marginalized even in crime, the community Uma focuses upon and tries to investigate has grown around itself thick and impenetrable walls of incomprehensible myths and superstition so that it may survive in its isolation. Like Munswamy brings attention to, it would be 'less complex' and 'decent' for Uma to contemplate 'standard' crime.

Munswamy mischievously misguides Anarkali and her cellmates about Uma's position. "Do you know who this madamis? She is the daughter-in-law of the Deputy Commissioner and the wife of our Superintendent" (Dattani 16-17). Deftly problematising the segments of personality for a woman in a given male-centric environment, Dattani sets this in opposition to Anarkali's response whose own neutral ground has instructed her to be careful about these very segments. She is immediately on her guard and inaccessible — spitting venom and abuse, and in the process laying bare a number of unpalatable truths. Then she changes tactics and decides to use the operating power situation to her own benefit by manipulating Uma to obtain her freedom, money (and even cigarettes!):

ANARKALI. You are the daughter-in-law of the DCP and you ask me what you can do to save your sister?

UMA. Look, I am here to gather some information for my thesis.

ANARKALI. Then say that. Don't pretend to be my sister. (Dattani 24)

Anarkali, the 'Hijra' accused for the murder of Champa, the head hijra are symbols of the equivocal spaces they involve in terms of their speculated sexuality. Like Anarkali, Uma Rao straddles many worlds and plays many roles simultaneously. She is a woman, academic, sleuth, daughter and wife all in one. In fact, it is difficult to accord primacy to any one of these roles as she pluckily goes about her self-imposed academic task of 'studying' a particular marginalized community. Availing all the resources and 'connections' at her disposal, she uses the positions of her husband and her father-in-law, both custodians and enforcers of law and order and that of her dad, as far as scholarly and money related support. The dialogues at night between her husband and her suggest a conjugal intimacy that she is willingly party to; however, these are blended with references to the eunuchs that nonetheless, propose distractions at difference to her part in husband's bed. She has no compunctions about her clandestine and eccentric strategies that leave Munswami in a furore, following her from the 'invisible' places where the eunuchs dwell, to the blessed gateways of the local minister.

Thirty Days in September : Plight of Incest

Another play by Dattani mirrors the saga of misery and helplessness associated with the unfortunate victims of child abuse as brought to fore in *Thirty Days in September*. The play unfolds the painful ordeal, the guilt feeling and the string of dismal events which bedevil the life of the abused. These silent sufferers find a catharsis only through self-expression invariably denied to them by the society for a long time. The play unravels, bit by bit, the pathetic odyssey of a young girl and her mother who take refuge in a silence that speaks for their untold suffering. These plays prick us with certain questions as have been silently raised by the dramatist.

This is also Dattani's shortest full-length play, using little subplot. The play is, intensely focused on Mala, sexually molested by her uncle as a child and her relationship with her mother. The plot, however, is rooted in this very milieu, the familial system that betrays the individual in a child — who will carry the scars into adulthood, and never trust it again. Mahesh Dattani is of the opinion that *Thirty Days in September* is one of his most serious plays so far as it is not in line with his usual pattern. Dattani spent a few days with about eight survivors of child sexual abuse and listened to their experiences. After a gap of few years, he returned to that essential material and began dealing with the play keeping a safe distance by being objective without any involvement. Given the seriousness of the problem that it addresses, a malaise that can at no level be taken lightly, Dattani tackles it with raw emotion and the stark realities are dramatized vividly.

The dialogue is terser and pregnant with raw emotion barely held on leash. The audience is quite literally dragged into facing the molester and made to confront him; it is given no choice. The action is introduced unmistakably and undiluted, as Dattani 'voyaged' with the character without analysis and let her portray her own story, as in an exposed fashion as could reasonably be expected

Notably, Dattani sets his milieu in the upper middle class, despite the general perception about the prevalence of child abuse predominantly in the working classes, choosing this setting because he did not want them to shrug off child sexual abuse as something that did not happen to people like them.

So, in his plays, under this category, Dattani is predominantly wrestling with the question of marginalized community in the mainstream dominated Indian society. The plays ironically imply that there can be no 'Final Solutions' to the ever-growing physical and psychological wedge between these communities in India. In so doing, Dattani is, in fact, persuading us to try to find some 'Final Solution' to the ever-present threat of a clash where the marginalized community is often at the receiving end of the odium and hatred of the majority.

Conclusion :

To conclude, Indian morality, cruel and repressive, is stunting like the “Bonsai” crushes the marginalized gender. Most of Dattani's plays give an inside story and an insight into the plight of the marginalized gender in contemporary Indian context. These plays arrive at a conclusion that the only solution to become a part of the mainstream society seems to be to negate reality and take a recourse to camouflaging the identity to be able to become socio-culturally acceptable and conventional. In a sense, he has recurrently used subjects that touch upon the zones of experience that the 'normal' middle class society would rather sweep under the carpet and happily imagine did not exist.

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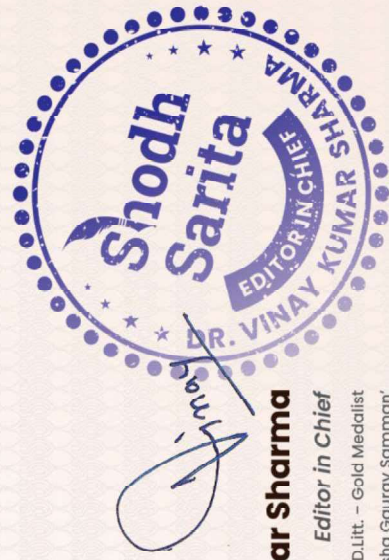
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**AN EXPRESSION TO REPRESSION : UN-SHADOWING FEMALE SEXUALITY
IN GIRISH KARNAD'S SELECT PLAYS**  Dr. Neelam Bhardwaj***ABSTRACT**

The present paper treads forward to unveil a unique outlet for female primal desires in man-woman relationships after marriage as deliberated in Girish Karnad's three absorbing yet fearless plays i.e. *Nagamandala*, *Hayavadana* and *The Fire and the Rain*. The paper not just explores one of the many facets of female sexual expressions but also seeks to normalise the grotesque reception of queer relations by the society. This vitality of sex is also illustrated by the modern thinkers like Sigmund Freud who also maintain that all human activity is governed by sexual instinct. He is of the opinion that the sexual nature—Libido, is the most essential intuition in man. In line with tradition and influence of Freud, the feeling of love and sex finds frequent reference in Karnad.

Keywords : Gender, Sexuality, Marriage, Family, Man-Woman Relationship.

Literature (especially social play) analyses the problems or impediments which hinder the process of change. For proper individual relation, Plato, in ancient Greek world, suggested that in a community (Polis) the investigation should begin with man. Today, medical science, psychology and sociology explore human mind and behaviour to perfect man's consciousness and behaviour with a perfect social order. The literary work or a discourse is an expression of feelings and ideas based on the analysis of society. A play in different character analyses various aspects of a social event, individual contractions in the mind of an individual, a protagonist in family or society or of power relations. Rationalism has a limited scope because mind or feeling does not have a universal quality in a society. For observing a scene or person, different persons do not react in the same manner. The reactions, mental or emotional, are sometimes poles apart. Cultural atmosphere also affects human behaviour. In a play, a writer needs a thorough study of culture and psychology of his character. For him, human feelings and passions are of supreme importance.

Modern plays are experimental and avant-gardes and consider 'tradition' or old concepts as useless and so must be thrown to winds. The social order should be rebuilt on post-modern principles. The postmodern theories talk of multiple perspectives and multiple approaches to a situation. It is believed that no reality exists in isolation and all realities are equally valuable. Every old concept, even if it is scientific, religious, philosophical, social or political, is questionable and can be re-established on the new grounds of knowledge. Freedom of expression is observed in the postmodern world and the same can be observed explicitly or implicitly in the norms of gender and sexuality. Identity itself has been questioned on the grounds of individual differences and plurality of perspectives. The concept of individualism reinforces the idea of the postmodern identity where it considers every human being to be different and unique in itself. Individual desires, preferences, expectations, experiences and contexts of performance cannot be categorized into watertight compartments and hence there can be no linear

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explanation to the concept of identity or even sexuality.

Gender and sexuality are two interlinked concepts in which if gender refers to being male or female and performing respective roles in life, sexuality refers to the sexual inclination and sexual practices. If gender is performative, according to Judith Butler, sexuality is also performative. The concept of sexuality is also equally multi-dimensional like that of gender. Sexual identity has been contested among different theories at different times. But one does not perceive the same behaviour in everyone as everyone does not feel in the same way as the systems expect from him/her. If there are different types of human beings, there would be different sexual identities also. The norms may categorise individuals into male-female, masculine-feminine, and man-wife and so on, but this classification cannot divide all human beings into definite gender/sexual roles.

Love and sexuality form the core issue in the plays of Girish Karnad, one of the most influential and prolific dramatists in Indian Writing in English. Drawing subject matter from folk tales, myths and legends, he employs them in such a way that they acquire the status of the stories of human heart. In background of Indian tradition and culture, the sexual urge i.e. 'Kama' is awarded special importance like Eros by the Greek and Cupid by the Latin playwrights.

Sexuality in *Nagamandala* comes to the fore through Naga which is so much celebrated in Indian tradition and mythology, and becomes a party to the love-triangle in the play. Rani, the main character, is married to Appanna. Their marriage remains un-solmenised as there is no physical union between the two. She develops intimacy with him in no time as if she were already waiting for someone to come to her rescue. She tries to please her husband in every possible way but fails to win him for her nights. Again the next time when she is bolted, it downpours continuously for seven days and seven evenings and the ocean floods the city.

Now, Naga appears to Rani like a bridegroom with an adornment of another body at first night in the shape of Appanna, Rani's feminine-self is out with joy but she doesn't know how to express it. She simply stands dazed leaning against the wall. She gets so ecstatic that she

supplies him food in the wee hours of night. Such dedication on her part impresses Naga. He laughs and promises to visit her every night. She also responds shyly and feels the warmth of love in the swing of his arms. Feeling intoxicated with sexual insomnia, Rani falls asleep as if she has enough of it. In one of Naga's visits, he inquires how Rani liked his advances of previous night. Rani feels emotional and expresses her earnestness when she asks about the reason of his teasing her. She also exclaims that she is now tired of being alone and requests him to return again in the evening for her sake.

Rani is so modest that she cannot curtail her desire and surrenders her to him. This sexual surrender infuses a new courage in Rani and she boldly instructs Naga to go away from there as she is no longer willing to have words with him. She also warns Naga not to speak ill of her parents. Naga consoles and tells her that sex is the inherent desire of every living being and they are also a part in the scheme of things made by God. He makes sex universal when he says that sex is everywhere on this earth. Even the frogs, turtles, foxes, vulgar, ants, rattlers, sharks, swallows—even the geese—all are bound with the laws of nature and have sex according to their ways. It cools and comforts Rani and thereafter she never likes to part with him. As he is about to depart, she rushes to him and engulfs him in her arms. Perhaps she wants to laugh aloud but she doesn't. Then she asks Kurudavva to come again. From this, it is evident that the sexual experience with Naga has actually delighted her.

Rani has ample proof to feel that the person who visits her at night is not actually her husband, but she does not want to be suspicious and spoil her nights when her husband ignores her and remains unable to satisfy her physically and emotionally. Whenever there is a doubt about Naga's identity, she has no desire to confirm it. Willingly, she seems to suspend her disbelief. Looking for ointment to apply to the wounds of Naga, she opens up the mirror-box and in the mirror finds a cobra in place of Appanna, she takes no pains to confirm it by just seeing into the mirror again. He also says that the dead dog was not an ordinary hound and it has cornered a cheetah once. "It must have sensed the Cobra. It must have given a fight.

Didn't you hear at night?" (Karnad 48), asks he. At this, she shakes her head in disbelief. She overlooks the detail of the incident. In the morning, she sees the bits of snake-skin in the mongoose's teeth but she does not doubt it either. After this incident, Naga stops turning up to Rani for a fortnight. When he reappears after a gap of fifteen days, his wounds are not completely healed. She applies ointment and nurses his wounds but she never questions him about it as she feels that the house looks like a house in the real sense in his company and his love sets every fiber in her ablaze. She feels elated over her inner growth. She feels so self-confident that she is not terrified of anything now. If anything, in the world, scares her that is nothing but the idea of losing her night-life which she never wants to part with. She wants to enjoy every moment and does not need any days to come or days after. She needs only the night to last forever. She never wishes to leave him. Rather, she wants to be tuned in to her heart and keep him down and embrace him in her arms like a child. The mother in Rani consoles Naga in the manner a mother consoles her child under distress.

In *Hayavadana*, the relationship of Padmini and Kapila also bears this mark. She is married to Devadatta who has a weak body that never enchants her. So, she looks outside the prison house of marriage. Her sexual liberty is hinted at and it is asserted that love cannot be restricted to a single person. The female chorus in the play assert that there must be some reason why should love adhere to the sap of a solitary body? Soon after getting married with Devadatta, Padmini develops liking for Kapila—the friend of her husband—because her own husband has a small waist like a girl and it looks very pathetic. She is so attracted with the physique of Kapila that she cannot restrain herself when she says: "What an ethereal shape!" (Karnad 95). When Kapila saw Padmini for the first time, he was right to say that Devadatta is no match for her: "Devadatta, my friend. You are a gentle soul. But this one (Padmini) is fast as lightning—and as ...she is not for the likes of you." (Karnad 90).

Even Devadatta confesses the physical superiority of Kapila and justifies her attraction for him. He feels that no woman could resist him and it is nothing strange if Padmini likes him despite being married. Rather he

curse himself for not understanding her physical desire. He puts the blame on Kapila for "begging for a favour." (Karnad 44). Against his wish, she insists on going to the temple of Ujjain with Kapila only because his physical presence fascinates her beyond the proper limit. When Devadatta tries to cancel the trip on the pretext of her pregnancy, she rejects it outright saying "she has a womb of steel" (Karnad 93). She takes pleasure in the company of Kapila during this visit. She does not hesitate to appreciate his muscular body in the presence of Devadatta. Finally, she goes to the temple of Rudra with Kapila leaving her husband behind.

After Devadatta kills himself followed by Kapila in the temple of Kali and their heads mix up, Padmini prefers the body of Kapila (with Devadatta's head). Even before their dispute i.e. who is the actual husband of Padmini, is resolved by the Rishi observing that it is the head that represents the body. After the case is decided by the Rishi, the first thing Padmini admires in the new Devadatta is his body. Looking at his wide chest, she exclaims, "What other canopy do I need?" (Karnad 111). However, the instant they head out in different directions with Kapila, Padmini thinks that it is difficult to leave him alone.

She advises him not to feel gloomy but to wait for her to come back and promises to meet him again. He should cheer up, according to Padmini, as she is going with his body. She replies this as it soothes her too. Soon Devadatta's new body starts turning weak as before, and Padmini begins to long for Kapila again. One day, after getting toys for her son from the fair, she searches out Kapila in the forest. They kill each other and Padmini performs Sati.

In Karnad's *The Fire and the Rain*, we find love and sex dominating the scene discarding social, religious, and caste. The play revolves round two love stories. The first love story is of Arvasu and Nittilai who are teenagers. Arvasu is nineteen years of age while Nittilai is only fourteen. Their immature love is in progress and they are desiring to get hitched. If Rani willingly suspends her disbelief about the identity of Naga because her husband does not satisfy her sexually in *Nagamandala*, Vishakha willingly offers herself to

Yavakri on his second visit to her in *The Fire and the Rain*. Even though she is married, she fails to resist much on seeing her old lover after a long time. She unburdens all her fears the moment he starts kissing her. Vishakha has been abandoned like an object by her husband for a long time i.e. the last fifteen years. She voices her pent-up feelings by narrating her sexual experience to her old lover. She feels much relieved and makes a frank confession of the fact that the married life of one year gave her a great joy as her husband plunged her into a kind of bliss. She did not know that she even breathed. It was a “heaven for her” (Karnad 16). Then on the first day of the second year of her marriage, they started for their search. She narrates her erotic pleasure as mysterious and profound.

The sharing of this erotic experience with Yavakri tells a lot about her suppressed sexuality. About her meeting with Yavakri, Vishakha makes no pretence. When her husband enquires about it, she is not ashamed of anything. “Whatever you heard about Yavakri and me... was no rumour” (Karnad 31), says she. She honestly states that he and Yavakri, so much, resemble each other. She legitimizes her husband's mystery visit to her around evening time and guess that it would be excessively human. Yet, what's going on with being human? What's up with being glad? As Padmini praises Kapila in Devadatta's presence in *Hayavadana*, Vishakha also praises Yavakri in her husband's presence when she says, “At least Yavakri was warm, gentle” (Karnad 31). Finally, her desire to be killed by her husband may be taken as the last resort. She wants an escape from the sexual suffering she has been undergoing.

The symbols used for love and sex in *Nagamandala*, *Hayavadana* and *The Fire and the Rain* are mostly traditional taken from the Hindu mythology. But sometimes Girish Karnad uses new symbols and images that suit the situation. In *Hayavadana*, Padmini's depiction of the moving bullock truck driven by Kapila has solid sexual suggestions. The portrayal of the excursion by the rider becomes purposeful anecdote of the sexual demonstration. Here, the truck driven by the bulls represents the phallus, the bull for the male virility and the street for the female sexual organ. Addressing

Kapila, Padmini says, “The cart...the oxen seem to know exactly where to go—you drove it so gently” (Karnad 95). But about Devadatta, she says, “Devadatta took me in the cart that was soon after our marriage... so we started—only two of us, me and Davadatta” (Karnad 96). Again “The yellow on the petal, here—that thin saffron line like the parting of you're here—That— here near the stem a row of black dots” (Karnad 9). Padmini calls it good for a simile. In addition, she is called Lotus, which not only represents the beauty but also the female generative organ. The Linga or the sacred phallus in the Hindu mythology is also depicted as resting on or surrounded by Lotus petals symbolizing the unity between the male and the female as the secret of life in the universe. The snake in *Nagamandala* is a symbol also taken from the Hindu mythology. It can be viewed as phallic symbol. It is through the king cobra that Rani meets her sexual urge and ultimately gets pregnant. The snake or the cobra, according to Hindu mythology, is the symbol of sexuality: “It is associated with sexuality because of its phallic shape.” (Karnad88). Sex is constantly seen as toxic by the general public yet it is satisfying to the person. Snake or Naga is given its due respected spot in Hindu folklore as they are related with the Creation and Procreation, Propagation and Plentitude. The word 'Naga' itself results from two fold negatives (Na+ aga) and alludes to that which isn't 'fixed' or 'which moves'. To one who satisfies them, the supplications will be responded in due order regarding fruitfulness, petitions will be respected for same conveyances. At the end of the play, Rani permits the cobra to enter into her hair. Here, it becomes the phallic symbol as “This hair is the symbol of my wedded bliss”, says she (Karnad 64). Like the cobra, the arrow turns into the phallic image in *The Fire and The Rain*. The sexually starving Vishakha wants to be killed by the arrow of her husband. She asks him to pierce her with the arrow before leaving her all alone.

Thus, we can say that the institution of marriage and family are no bars for Girish Karnad's female characters as they solely believe in gratifying their inner urges. The playwright aims to subvert the established order of religion and social dogma that restrict human freedom and, thus, love and sexuality, the chief

components of human behaviour, remain natural concern for his characters. In all the three plays discussed above i.e. *Hayavadana*, *Nagamandala* and *The Fire and the Rain*, love and sex emerges as a core issue. Incidentally, in all the three plays, married life is nothing but a prison house for the female protagonists and they have to love someone outside marriage in order to feel themselves complete.

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ਮਈ-ਜੂਨ 2021

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ਐਡਵਾਂਸ ਇੰਸਟੀਚਿਊਟ ਆਫ ਸੋਸ਼ਲ ਸਾਇੰਸਜ਼
ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਅਨੰਦਪੁਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਪੰਜਾਬ

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FROM PAPER TO SCREEN: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON SCREEN ADAPTATIONS FROM LITERATURE WITH REFERENCE TO THE *GUIDE*, *TRAIN TO PAKISTAN* AND *PINJAR*

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Abstract

Man, being socially hungry creature, is always on a ride to know more information, what others are doing, how they are enacting and why? These questions make us rely on literature made available to us, films inspired by the literature and everything that portrays the culture only to walk along with the society updated and informed. In order to cater a huge audience, film makers from all over the world have adopted literature writings for movie making. The key purpose of these screen adaptations lies in giving visual appeal to the black and white words of the author's writings. Because filmmakers have to consider the taste of audience, the demand of the present time and target audience as per the place and country, it forces the script to be changed from the original novel to make the authenticity of both the medium.

This study is based on three Bollywood movies i.e. 'Guide', 'Train to Pakistan' and 'Pinjar' which have been inspired by R.K. Narayan's *The Guide*, Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* and Amrita Pritam's *Pinjar*. The research methodology will be content analysis that how writer's experience with words can make movie audience fall for it through the adaptations.

Keywords: Screen Adaptations, Bollywood Film maker, Content analysis, Audience, Novels.

Introduction

Literature has been a way of artistic expression for centuries now. Writers have told tales about gods and goddesses, heroes and their valiant victories, historical epics, romantic tragedies, comic incidents, legendary episodes, and much more. Cinema is by far doing the same thing for quite a few years now. One major strong point in cinema, which is absent in literature, is the advantage of visually showing the whole picture on the screen that helps the audience connect with the moment more closely. What writers of

these literatures are blessed with are the Indian Film directors, who have time and again found their interests within the enlightening or hard hitting and petrifying truths enclosed within the well-researched and knitted content. Films in India often reflect politics, culture, poverty, corruption, patriarchy and over and all disposes the very essence of our culture. Inspired by novels or literature that embraced the culturist value, directors have triumphed the action of putting life into the meaningful framed words. If literature has an impact on culture, so does a Film based upon it; to a greater extent. Indian Films like 'Hyderabad Blues' by Kukunoor, 'Salaam Bombay' by Meera Nair, 'Choker Bali' by Rituparno Ghosh, 'Devdas' by Bhansali, 'Water', one of the trilogy by Deepa Mehta and 'Slumdog Millionaire' by Danny Boyle portrays the life and its situation of Indian society.

For a long time, there has existed an interrelationship and mutual influence between literature and other forms of artistic expressions. This has resulted in painting and music based on works of fiction, drama and poetry, as well as literary works emulating pictorial styles and musical structures. The creative exchange between literature and film was initiated in the last decade of the 19th Century. Initially, film was most related to photography and painting. With the passage of the time, many changes have been made in the film industry. As scientific development advances, many new techniques have been adopted in the film making process. With the help of camera, sound and animation, film has become very interesting and audience catching. In the ancient time, people were fond of watching dramas and with the advent of film industry; the interest of watching drama has changed into watching films. There is a grand and interesting history of the origin and development of Indian film industry, i.e. Bollywood.

Cinema and Literature are two distinct but equally extraordinary works of art. Where literature was a popular form of expression during the 18th and 19th century, cinema has taken its place by the 20th century onwards. There has been a changing trend in the representation of Indian films through the years. The way movies were made in the 1950s is completely different from the way it is done in the twenty first century. Most movies generally like to deliver what the audience desired, and thus the main reason for the shift in the theme and plot of movies would be the shift in the mind-set of the people watching it. Furthermore, there are restricted readers for different genres and subject of novel and literature respectively. But film making satisfies the hunger of a large heterogeneous audience with the element of 'entertainment'. The idea of screen adaptations dates back years ago when people had limited options for entertainment and recreational activities. Being the largest film producing nation, Indians never fall behind in lacking stories or concept for the films. Apart from trying our creative talent on

comedy, fiction, romance, action, horror or thriller, we have always relied upon literature in search for virtuous stories; while every film genre has an Indian social connection for sure which is a reflection of the culture. Though book worms often argue and are unhappy of the adoptions saying, "never judge a book by the Film", there are majority who loves these book stories turned into life within the frames. The time consumption of adapting is huge because primarily the literature is some or the other way related to the culture and keeping the same tone, connecting with the audience interest a writer/director has to adapt the reflection of the society as a secondary significant task; it becomes more complex if the genre is historical. Examples of Satyajit Ray, Mrinal Sen, Ritwik Ghatak, and Shyam Benegal who have had flawlessly transformed many novel words to screen dialogues is inspiring.

Films Based on Literature

There are many films based on literature. At the time of adaptation, many changes have been made to make the films interesting and eye catching. Numerous films have been made from literature. Some of the Films adapted from Indian literature are: 'Pinjar' - One of the most appreciated works of Amrita Pritam, *Pinjar* is a story set in India's partition. On a screen version, with the same name in 2003 the story defines hardships faced by the rural Indian women who were restricted with society laws.'Shatranj Ke Khiladi' - Directed and adapted by Satyajit Ray in 1977, the film is inspired by a book story with the same name by Munshi Premchand revolving around struggle for Independence and dissolution of the princely states. 'Saawariya' - A story inspired by Fyodor Dostoevsky's short story 'White Nights', is adapted by Sanjay Leela Bhansali in 2007.

There are many such Bollywood films which take inspiration from the novels, just like 'Ramleela' by Sanjay Leela Bhansali was inspired by William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Chetan Bhagat's *Two States* adaption into the same name film was the complete reflection of the society and its fight against the losing the love to caste. People tend to relate more when the book/story/concept is transformed into a film.

. Films like 'Jane Eyre', 'Les Misérables', 'The Great Gatsby', 'Wuthering Heights', 'Anna Karenina', 'The Importance of Being Earnest', 'Pride and Prejudice', 'Moby Dick', 'Guide', 'Omkaara' 'Parineeta', '3 Idiots', 'Kai Po Che', 'The Blue Umbrella', 'Tere Mere Sapne', 'Pinjar', 'Namesake', '2 State's', 'Train to Pakistan', 'Tamas' etc are based on literature. Sometimes it may happen that literature is more interesting than films and sometime films are more interesting than original text.

Results and Discussions

As far as title of the paper is concerned, this paper discusses in detail R.K. Narayan's *The Guide*, Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* and Amrita Pritam's novel *Pinjar* respectively.

***The Guide* (Novel) & 'Guide' (Film) - Similarities and Differences**

The Guide is a novel by R.K. Narayan, published in 1958. Like most of Narayan's works the novel is based on Malgudi, the fictional town in South India. The novel describes the transformation of the protagonist, Raju, from a tour guide to a spiritual guide and then one of the greatest holy men of India. The novel brought its author the 1960 Sahitya Akademi Award for English, by the Sahitya Akademi, India's National Academy of Letters. It is a story of a common guide Raju. Raju performs his duty as a railway guide of Malgudi. Rosie is a heroine of the novel who is a dancer marries to a scholar Marco. Marco is an archaeologist who is always busy with his research work and he does not pay attention to his beautiful and pretty wife Rosie. With the course of time she falls in love with Raju. His husband leaves her and she lives with Raju against his orthodox mother. With the help of Raju, Rosie becomes a famous and successful dancer. However apart from the core story of Raju, Rosie and Marco many episodes and incidents like Raju's childhood, Raju's father's shop business, Raju's mother talk with her brother etc. have been developed by Narayan fully. Raju is arrested by the police for his malpractice and on his release from jail he does not return to his village and roams here and there and eventually reaches at another village, by an innocent villager Velan he is misunderstood as a saint. All the villagers worship him like a great saint and they have great faith in him. As a result, he has to make fast for twelve days to please the God of rain and at the end of the novel Raju scarifies and rain falls.

'Guide' is a Hindi romantic film, directed by Vijay Anand. The film was released in 1965. Dev Anand and Waheeda Rehman play as a leading character in the film. A 120-minute U.S. version was written by Pearl S. Buck, and directed and produced by Tad Danielewski. The film was screened at the 2007 Cannes Film Festival, 42 years after its release.

The movie opens with Raju (Dev Anand) being released from jail. Raju was a freelance guide, who earned his living by taking tourists to historic sites. One day, a wealthy and aging archaeologist, Marco (Kishore Sahu) comes to the city with his young wife Rosie (Waheeda Rehman), the daughter of a courtesan. Marco wants to do some research on the caves outside the city and hires Raju as his guide. Marco is very busy with his research meanwhile his wife Rosie wants to visit many historical places with her

husband but he refuses to come with her and orders Raju to show him various historical places. With the passage of time, both Rosie and Raju develop feelings of love, visit many places, and exchange their ideas, thoughts and feelings with each other. One day on returning from her visit, Rosie goes to meet Marco at the cave where he is generally busy with his research work and finds a girl making love with him. She decides to leave her husband and runs in anger. Raju helps her and offers a shelter in her home against his mother's wish. With the course of the time many incidents take place and movie moves ahead. Raju makes her a famous dancer and he sets her schedule of her dance program. He is arrested by the police for his malpractice. Thus, he ruins his life and business both at a time. Due to his good conduct in the jail, his punishment is lessening down and he is released earlier than the decided date. He reaches another village where he is mistaken as a saint by an innocent villager and he tells his entire story. All the villagers believe him a great saint and have great faith in him. He has to make fast for the villagers to please the God of rain. At the end of the film his mother and Rosie both come to meet him and he dies by hoping that rain may fall.

Certain changes have been made by the filmmaker in the film. First of all, the filmmaker changes the background of the story from Malgudi to Rajasthan. He also uses the flashback techniques in the film. Many incidents like Raju's childhood, his father's shop business, Marco's conduct etc. have been eliminated from the film. Romantic songs and scenes are added to make the film interesting. Thus, both film and novel are interesting in their own way.

***Train to Pakistan* (Novel) & 'Train to Pakistan'(Film) - Similarities and Differences**

Train to Pakistan is a novel by Khushwant Singh published in 1956. Originally, it was published as *Mano Majra*, a masterpiece containing perfect narrative sequences, artistically planned plot and characters full of life can be coined as the first major Indian English novel on Partition. As V.A. Shahne opines, "It is a grim story of individuals and communities caught into the vortex of the partition of undivided India into two states in 1947" (Shahne 332).

The novel can be divided into four parts viz. (i) Dacoity, (ii) Kaliyug, (iii) *Mano Majra*, and (iv) Karma. These sub-titles are characteristically Indian.

The novel is set in a small village, *Mano Majra*, of Punjab province on the Indo-Pak border in 1947, where the action and interaction of the characters and events of the novel take place. When the Indian sub-continent was passing through the most turbulent period of its history, the Partition accompanied with migration, civil war communal riots, mass killings, women raped and abducted, children injured and property destroyed, the

tiny village Mano Majra seems to be away from the communal problems and fratricidal conflict. Sikhs and Muslims, equal in number, live like brothers at Mano Majra. The simple and innocent people dwelling here are still unaware of the things happening outside their village.

However, the peaceful life of Mano Majra people is disturbed by Mali and his friends, the dacoits, and their routine chores are churned into bits by an untimely arrival of a train from Pakistan. Mali, a dacoit, with his gang murders a money lender – Lala Ramlal, who refuses to part with his treasury. After committing the crime and before leaving the village, these dacoits throw a few bangles in the house of Jugga, Jaggat Singh. He is a local dacoit, who had served several sentences in the past and was ordered by the local police not to leave his house after sunset. But at the time of Lala Ramlal's murder he was with Nooran, the Muslim weaver's daughter, in the outskirts of Mano Majra. When Nooran and Jugga return to the village, they find people disturbed due to the dacoit and murder.

Hukumchand, the recently transferred divisional commissioner, is staying in the officer's rest house. He is engaged that night in a sensual and sexual affair with a teen aged prostitute Haseena. Soon, disturbed by the gunshots and chaos, he leaves the girl and goes to enquire about the happenings. The police come to Mano Majra the next day to collect the details of the happening. The same day, an educated man Iqbal, who calls himself a socialist, comes to Mano Majra by a train and settles at the Gurudwara. He has been sent there for the political enlightenment of the people. Iqbal, not for once also, reveals his religion. Both Jugga and Iqbal are held by police on the charge of murdering Lala Ramlal. Hukumchand orders serve action to get the truth out from both of them. On the other hand, a little disturbed Mano Majra gets the major attack very soon. The peaceful atmosphere of the village soon sees its end.

The events start moving fast. Dark clouds of fear and distrust start hovering over the Muslims and Sikhs of the village. Brotherhood and unity start giving space to apprehensions and hatred. Muslims evacuate their houses and leave for Chandannagar camp for shelter and to be transported to Pakistan soon later.

The arrival of Sikhs from outside and the news of beastly atrocities on them and their brothers in Pakistan bring the attitude of the people to crisis. The Sikh and Hindu fanatics decide to take revenge upon Muslim for what they had done to Hindus and Sikhs in Pakistan. They plan to blow up the train that was to carry Muslim refugees to Pakistan. Both Nooran with Jugga's child in her womb and Haseena are to go to Pakistan by the same train.

Hukumchand experiences helplessness about the nearby ghastly future. He takes a chance by releasing Jugga and Iqbal. He feels that either of the two would be able to save the train. But Iqbal, like Hukumchand feels helpless and withdraws. Jugga comes to know about Nooran and the plan to blow the train. Nooran was also travelling by the same train. He determines to save her. He goes to the bridge and cuts the rope connecting the explosive material with his 'Kirpan' and lets the train cross the border safely. The intention was just one: to save Nooran's life. In the process, he is shot by the Sikh fanatics. Jugga falls on the railway track and the train to Pakistan runs past his body carrying other people along with Nooran safely to their destined station.

'Train to Pakistan' is a Hindi film released in 1998 and directed by Pamela Rooks. It sets in Mano Majra which is a silent village on the border of India and Pakistan, close to where the railway line crosses the Sutlej River. The film develops around the love affair of small-time dacoit Juggut Singh (Nirmal Pandey), with a local Muslim girl, Nooran (Smriti Mishra). Mano Majra incidentally was the original title of the book upon its release in 1956. The villagers are a mix of Sikhs and Muslims, who live in harmony. The Sikhs own most of the land, and the Muslims work as labourers. During the summer of 1947, when the Partition of India was taking place, the entire country was a hotbed of extremism and intolerance. The Muslims in India moved towards the newly formed Pakistan, and the Hindus and Sikhs in Pakistan migrated to refugee camps in India. One day, a train arrives from Pakistan, which carries bodies of all the travellers who have been butchered while they tried to depart from Pakistan. That is when this quiet village is changed forever. The entire film is based on the original novel. Mohan Agashe played his role as Hukum Chand, Nirmal Pandey as Jaggat Singh, Jagaa, Rajit Kapoor as Iqbal, Smriti Mishra as Nooran, Divya Dutta as the Muslim prostitute girl, Mangal Dhillon as the Sub Inspector in the film.

Singh's novel was thematically quite strong and appealing and to adapt it on a silver screen was a challenging task. And Rooks was not an exception. Neither has Rooks excluded much from the novel, nor has she included anything from any other sources. But she has introduced a few alternatives in the characters belonging to the original work. Rooks, in the screen adaptation has presented Hukumchand, the District Magistrate and Deputy Commissioner reminisce the past of Mano Majra. Unlike Khushwant Singh, Rooks has tried to balance the ghost train and bodies in the river (Sikhs and Hindus massacred by Muslims) by showing Sikh Militants looting the Muslims of Mano Majra. Pamela Rooks has tried her best to render it on the screen. It does depict horror and trauma of the Partition period being faithful to the source text. It is too accurate and thus

upto certain extent helps the less perspective reader to understand the novel and to appreciate it better. It faithfully retains the attributes

***Pinjar* (Novel) & ‘Pinjar’(Film) - Similarities and Differences**

Pinjar is a novel written by Amrita Pritam, recipient of Bhartiya Gyanpith Award. It has been later translated into English entitled as *The Skeleton* by Khushwant Singh. The novel published in 1950, soon after Partition. In 2003, almost after fifty years the novel has been brought on screen by Chankya fame director Chandraprakash Dwivedi. In the words of D. R. More, “Pinjar is remarkable for its poetic presentment of the theme of the exploitation of the weaker sex on the background of the partition tragedy” (More235).

The novel deals with the exploitation of the women by the men. Though the novel has the background of the partition, it differs from other partition novels. In novel, the play of love and hate, the complexities of human mind above all the predicament of the abducted women are depicted the background of the partition-tragedy.

In *The Skeleton*, Amrita Pritam tells us the story of a worn Pooro, who is first abducted and then married by a Muslim boy named Rashida, and her final reconciliation with her fate. She longs to a family of moneylenders of Chatto, a village in the Punjab. She is young and beautiful and her marriage is fixed with young and handsome youth, Ram Chand from Rattoval, neighbouring village. But unfortunately, Rashida, a Muslim boy has his eye on her for a long time, abducts and takes her home and finally marries her. The ill-starred and disappointed Pooro escapes from Rashida's house and goes back to her parents who ask her to back to Rashida. As the parents close their doors upon her, she goes back to Rashida, adjusts herself with him and in the course time gives birth to a child. Now she is given a Muslim name Hamida. Pooro-turned-Hamida, however, finds it very difficult live in the Muslim house.

About this time, the partition fever soars up and all no Muslims have to undergo several trials and tribulations. After partition, turmoil is over; the Indian police and army come to take the abducted Hindu and Sikh girls to their homes. Many women go to India happily but Pooro decides to live with her husband and son in newly created Pakistan. It is on this note of Pooro's reconciliation with the changed circumstances that the novel ends. Thus, in the novel, Amrita Pritam has presented her own experience of partition.

‘Pinjar’ is a Hindi film directed by Chandraprakash Dwivedi and released in 2003. The film is totally based on the English novel *The Skeleton* by Amrita Pritam. Almost all the episodes are taken from the original novel. To make it more interesting, certain cinematographic changes have been made. The film sets during the partition time

i.e. the Hindu-Muslim problems during the partition of India. Urmila Matondkar, Manoj Bajpayee and Sanjay Suri are in the lead roles in the film. Besides critical acclaim, the film also won the National Film Award for Best Feature Film on National Integration.

The novel *Pinjar* is a sad tale of sufferings of Pooro and other females starting from pre-partition period in 1936 followed by abductions of females during Partition of the sub-continent. The film *Pinjar* is about the same sufferings and exploitations of Pooro and other females but at the eve of Partition. Pooro's suffering on the screen start in 1946 and extends up to 1947 where the film ends. Dwivedi does not lengthen Pooro's suffering for eleven long years. He also decreases the number of sufferers as compared to the novel *Pinjar*. There is no reference to Kammo or Tara's characters or their sufferings. The mad woman played by Seema Biswas, the Hindu female refugee whom Pooro helps to reach the Hindu camp and Laajo are the only sufferers shown on the screen. One of the reasons could be that he wishes to focus more on the core events and centralize the major characters, and through access to their psyche, wants his viewers to re-experience the event of partition and the novel too.

Thus, the victims are depicted more as sufferers of communalism during the Partition period. There is a shift in the time period and degree of sorrow and also in the number of the sufferers. This reduction in tragedy helps to balance the audience's capacity of enduring it. Tragedy on the screen does fulfil the function of Catharsis. But too much of tragedy, especially on the screen may dilute the effect and prove melodramatic. The reducing of the time period turns the story purely a Partition film.

Conclusion

Thus, it can be said that Literature and film are the different branches of the same tree. Though both these arts have certain connections and differences, both have a similarity of taking its readers/audience to a different world. Creators of both film and literature are sailing in the same boat. They share a same passion for expressing ideas and emotions and transporting us into different worlds, real and imaginary. Many films are based on the literature and many fictions are also made from the films. Both have their effects on each other. That's why it is true to say that Literature and Bollywood are made for each other. 'Pinjar', 'Train to Pakistan' and 'Guide' are readers and audience catching films and novels. So, literature plays a very important role in every aspect which gives meanings and words to expressions and feelings.

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The logo for the journal 'TOD' is positioned on the right side of the cover. It features the letters 'TOD' in a large, bold, black, sans-serif font. Above the letter 'O', there is a red circle with a white horizontal line through its center. To the right of this circle, a series of smaller red circles of varying sizes are arranged in a curved path, resembling a trail or a decorative element.

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A Theoretical Perspective Of Discourse Analysis: Strengths And Shortcomings

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Abstract:

This paper seeks to view discourse etymologically and then work out its poststructuralist postulation to finally place it in the vicinity of Literary Theory which aims at analysing meaning-practices via studying authors, readers, texts and contexts. Discourse being intrinsically political, it can be viewed as akin to Theory as both tend to unsettle established meanings of texts / contexts while remaining relentlessly self-critical in the process. When we focus on the description of a particular language, we are normally concerned with the accurate representation of reforms and structures used in that language. However, as language users we are capable of more than simply recognizing correct verses incorrect form and structure

Keywords: English language, Theoretical Perspective, Discourse, Power, Strengths, Shortcomings.

Discourse analysis is a way to explore what language is and how it is used to achieve communicative goals in different context. It gives us a perspective to see language as abstract with a broad sense of meaning in a particular historical, social and political condition. It is focused on body language, utterances, symbol visual images, and other forms of semiosis (signs and symbols). Discourse analysis does not provide us the method of teaching, but it tries to provide ways of describing and understanding how language is used. It is interested in what language ‘does’ or ‘doing’ rather than just the functions it performs and the grammar and lexical forms.

Literally the term ‘discourse’ signifies verbal communication or conversation. Viewed theoretically, it refers to formal treatment of a subject in speech or writing. In linguistics, however, ‘discourse’ stands for a unit of text used by linguists for the analysis of linguistic phenomena that range over more than one sentence. In its archaic implication, ‘discourse’ can be viewed as the ability to reason and also as the process of reasoning. D. Tannen defines discourse thus:

Discourse—language beyond the sentence—is simply language—as it occurs, in any context (including the context of linguistic analysis), in any form (including two made-up sentences in sequence; a tape-recorded conversation, meeting, or interview; a novel or a play). The name for the field “discourse analysis,” then, says nothing more or other than the term “linguistics”: the study of language. (Tannen 5)

The study of ‘discourse’, or ‘discourse analysis’ is concerned with “study of the relationship between language and the context in which it is used.” (McCarthy 5). Discourse analysis, in a way, draws

diverse interpretations from diverse scholars working in different disciplines. For sociolinguistic, it is concerned mainly with structure of social interaction manifested in conversation; for psycholinguistic, it is primarily concerned with the nature of comprehensive of short written texts; for the computational linguistic, it is concerned with producing operational models of text-understanding within highly limited context. A basic motive in the formulation of discourse analysis has been to discover the regularities and constraints at work in units of language larger than the sentence. This has meant to redefine of the goals of linguistic inquiry as formulated by Chomsky. Whereas Chomsky has given priority to a description of our knowledge of the grammaticality of a sentence, work on discourse stress the importance of a description of a communicative competence.

Discourse' derives from Latin 'discurrere' which means 'to run away' in the sense that it "runs from one person to another" (Chambers's Twentieth Century Dictionary). In late 14th century Medieval Latin, it was used as 'discursus' implying conversation or argument. Nevertheless, 'discursus' further underwent change and made its way into Middle English i.e. late 16th century as 'discours' signifying 'process of reasoning.' The American Heritage Dictionary describes discourse as "a verbal expression in speech and writing." It is interpreted as a communication/ an exchange through reasoning to infer/ convey / describe meaning. In Oxford English Dictionary, 'discourse' means to talk, converse, discuss, and speak and also to write at length on a subject. As a noun, it also means 'a talk' or 'a narrative.' The French variant of 'discourse' is 'discours' and carries more or less similar implications. In literary criticism, however, discourse signifies "a formal treatment of a subject" (Collins English Dictionary) as in a dissertation, or a sermon. Viewed thus, discourse may signify a process of discussing, conversing, thinking, disputing, negotiating and questioning a particular issue, or a set of issues from multiple standpoints. In other words:

Discourse might include any modes of utterance as a part of social practice. They are differentiated by their intention. Thus, discourse may be poetry or prose. It may be a poem, a philosophical essay, a political tract, a biblical commentary, a speech on the hustings, a funeral address, a polemic, a dialogue or an exercise 'in deconstructive criticism. It may be any number of things. (Cuddon 249)

According to Justin Johnson, discourse is an institutionalized way of speaking. It indicates not only what we say and how we say it, but also what we do not say. Johnson's thrust on "what we do not say" has a poststructuralist slant as "what we say" tends to remain aprotic and hence insufficient. Nevertheless, one can construe discourse as a mode of interpretation not only of the written word (or sign if one were to view it from structuralist angle) but also of Derridean 'trace' that opens the possibility of 'what could be said' / 'what has not been said'. Johnson further observes that discourse makes available a unified set of words, symbols, and metaphors that help us "construct and communicate a coherent interpretation of reality." (Johnson)

As stated earlier, linguists used the term 'discourse' in a more technical sense to describe any unit of speech which is longer than a sentence. It was Michel Foucault who took the concept of discourse beyond its linguistic formulation thereby applying it to social sciences. For Foucault,

Discourse is a strongly bounded area of social knowledge, a system of statements within which the world can be known. The key feature of this is that the world is not simply there to be talked about, rather, it is through discourse itself that the world is brought into being.

A Theoretical Perspective Of Discourse Analysis: Strengths And Shortcomings

It is also in such a discourse that speakers and hearers, writers and readers come to an understanding about themselves, their relationship to each other and their place in the world (the construction of subjectivity). It is the complex of signs and practices which organises social existence and social reproduction. (Ashcroft 70-71)

Furthermore, what interests Foucault, are the “unspoken rules” that determine the nature of a particular discourse and also control the statements that can/cannot be made within the framework of a discourse. As such, discourse is important “because it joins power and knowledge together. Those people who have power have control of what is known and the way it is known, and those who have such knowledge have power over those who do not” (Ashcroft 63). Taking cue from Foucault, Julian Wolfreys and others in their book *Key Concepts in Literary Theory* define discourse as a “discussion focused on a specific subject.” They describe it “as language practice: that is, language as it is used by various constituencies (the law, medicine, the church, for example) for purposes to do with power relationships between people.” (Wolfreys 33-34)

The French linguist, Emile Benveniste has viewed the shift away from structuralism in terms of a move from ‘language’ to ‘discourse’ in his book *Problems in General Linguistics*. ‘Language’ is speech or writing analysed ‘objectively’ as a chain of signs without a subject. Benveniste describes discourse as “language grasped as utterance, as involving speaking and writing subjects and therefore also, at least potentially, readers and listeners” (quoted in Eagleton 100). For Terry Eagleton, however, discourse cannot have any definite signified but it still has certain assumptions. He interprets discourse as a “network of signifiers able to envelop a whole field of meanings, objects and practices: certain pieces of writing are selected as being more amenable to this discourse than others, and these are what is known as literature or the ‘literary canon’” (Eagleton 175). If we analyze in this light, discourse is a complex network of signifiers selected and employed in a well-thought out manner supposedly to yield a meaning. Nevertheless, the signified, according to Eagleton, may not necessarily be “definite” as then it is Derridean “play” (of signifiers which is endless) that comes into light thereby opening an infinite field of signification (meaning).

Eagleton further observes that “Literary discourse estranges or alienates ordinary speech, but in doing so, paradoxically, brings us into a fuller, more intimate possession of experience” (Eagleton 4). This is because literature is a “non-pragmatic” discourse unlike, say, biology text book: As peculiar language, literature focuses on a way of talking about a person, place or a context. Eagleton observes that “Rather than the reality of what is talked about, it is sometimes taken to indicate that we mean by literature a kind of self-referential language, a language which talks about itself” (Eagleton 7). This self-reflexive dimension of language is important in the field of discourse analysis and becomes crucial the moment it turns self-critical thereby demonstrating the instability of language alongside “unreliability” and “unfinalizability” of any meaning.

As such, it is hard to delimit discourse in a pinpointed manner; it is as slippery as the entire play of signifiers is and therefore attaching any sense of finality to it may result in missing the whole point. Edgar and Sedgwick view discourse from the viewpoints of linguistics and cultural studies and observes that its implications cannot be confined or restricted:

There is no single meaning to the word discourse, even if one takes it in a technical sense. Of course, a ‘discourse’ can mean simply a dialogue between speakers; but it has also come,

within linguistics for instance, to mean the way in which linguistic elements are conjoined so as to constitute a structure of meaning larger than the sum of its parts. A variant, on sense is also, however, present within conceptions of discourse important to cultural studies. Of the various theories that have been put forward, the conceptions of discourse present within the work of Michel Foucault and Jean-Francois Lyotard are relevant to cultural theory. (Edgar and Sedgwick 96)

At this juncture, Saussurean concepts of 'langue and parole' are of use. Ferdinand de Saussure divided language into 'langue' (which is understood as a system that enables people to speak as they do) and 'parole' (as a particular set of produced statements). According to this division, discourse concerns more to 'parole' as it always occurs in time and is internally characterized by successively developing meaningful expressions where the meaning of the latter is affected by the former. But, on the other hand, 'langue' is abstract. To list some additional traits, discourse is always produced by someone who has an identity. Therefore, the identity of the interpreter is equally significant for the proper understanding of the message. On the other hand, 'langue' is impersonal. Furthermore, discourse always happens in either physical / linguistic context whereas 'langue' does not refer to a context. As such, it is only discourse (parole) that may convey the message and 'langue' is its framework.

Foucault, however, analysed theory of discourse / discursive formation in a social contextual manner unlike Barthes and Derrida for whom 'textuality' of a text was paramount. In the context of the contemporary theoretical debates, the, literal / 'common sense' implications discourse is only of limited use as there is excessive thrust on its theoretical dimensions without of course losing sight of praxis.

Michele Barrett's observation vis-a-vis discourses in *The Politics of Truth: from Marx to Foucault*, is extremely relevant. He is of the opinion that Discourses must be embedded within institutions and subjects, regulated with reference to a particular 'regime of truth', and situated within particular assemblages of knowledge and power, yet are open to dispute. Basically They are worried about not only meaning and context but also content and the practices of numerous writers, using multiple sources. They help us to grasp how people decipher and create reality, and to be acquainted with "how what is said fits into a network that has its own history and conditions of existence". (Barrett 126)

They are worried about importance and setting just as substance and the acts of numerous creators, utilizing many, and changed sorts of sources. They help us to see how individuals decipher and make reality, and to know about "how what is said fits into an organization that has its own set of experiences and states of presence". (Barrett 126)

As such, discourse can be observed in the use of spoken, written and signed language (Foucault). Moreover, it is the sum total of ideas, concepts and categorizations that are produced, reproduced, performed, and transformed in a particular set of discursive practices. The context, environment and the conditions within which a defined knowledge is produced, practiced and made accessible to others is very crucial from the viewpoint of discourse. Discourse is not simply the content of what is said or shown; it also includes the conceptual, social, and historical conditions behind the statement/s made. Discourse comprises institutions, rules, values, desires, concepts and everything that could have played a part in the construction of knowledge. Beaugrande mentions seven criteria to ascertain as to whether a text could be viewed as discourse, or not: .

There are seven criteria, which have to be fulfilled to qualify either a written or a spoken text as a discourse. Cohesion means grammatical relationship between parts of sentence essential for its interpretation. Coherence is the order of statements that relates one concept with another to make its sense. Intentionality is the message that has to be conveyed deliberately and consciously to its readers. Acceptability indicates that the communicative product needs to be satisfactory in the manner that the audience approves it. Informativeness means that some new information has to be included in the discourse. Then comes the situationality that means the circumstances in which the remark is made are important. Intertextuality is the reference to the world outside the text or the interpreter's schemata" [*italics mine*]. (Beaugrande 49)

In the light of the above criteria, it can be averred that literature along with all cultural practices comprising films, art forms, fashion, etc. can be studied as discourse as each has language of its own. Since literature is written in language and considered a privileged vehicle of the narrative, the relationship between language and literature can be interpreted in multiple ways. It is fallacious to think that literature uses language only as an instrument of expression and then abandons it. On the contrary, as Barthes observes: "Language never ceases to accompany discourse, holding up to it the mirror of its own structure" (Barthes 11). Thus, fictional (or non-pragmatic) language can easily be brought under the rubric of discourse analysis.

Michel Foucault was relentless and non-compromising in exposing by way of logical analysis the underlying and complex structures of knowledge that were extremely crucial for discursive enquiry of the object by way of constructing knowledge about it and its eventual use/ distribution. Foucault was of the view that knowledge is "constructed, organized, shared and used through particular forms of speech, writing and language—or what is called discourse" (Nayar 35). In this sense, discourse implies varied contexts viz., speech (interaction in a community), representation (literary or any other), knowledge (of diverse kinds representing various disciplines/contexts) and of course understanding (the mode / manner by which knowledge is produced, distributed and redistributed).

In addition to the structures of knowledge, Foucault remained relentlessly engaged with decoding the baffling structures of power that enabled the authorities to dictate their terms in particular ways. Foucault viewed these dictates and systems of monitoring what was right and what was wrong as discourse signifying a "terrain of thought, a system Of knowledge, a particular kind of language that allowed some things to be said and disallowed some others" (Nayar 35), For instance, the priest uses discourse of religion, the physician using discourse of sickness and the psychiatrist using discourse of rationality. For Foucault, such discourses were sites of contestation and scientific enquiry to demonstrate as to how these conditioned peoples' habitual and behavioural reflexes alongside profoundly impacting on their thinking. Power being the epicentre in human life, everything else that comprises being human revolves around it and it is only through discourse (which is the site as well as a strategy) that its structurally layered operation can be decoded.

Discourse is not a monolithic construct; it is rather diversified and divergent. Since it is use of language associated with a particular institution, cultural identity, profession, practice or discipline, each discourse is one of several discourses. For instance, the discourse of the colonizer is different from the discourse of the colonized. Whatever be the nature of discourse (general/particular), it is always

inscribed within relations of power, within the structures and structures of institutions. To sum up, Foucauldian postulation demonstrates that discourse has an object, a language and a powerful figure who represents authority and who employs language to describe / classify the object, and a “corrective mechanism” (Nayar 6) drawing upon the description / classification.

Now that the politics of discourse is sufficiently evident, as discourses by and large about wield power of one sort or the other over the marginalized and disempowered. As a case in point, Edward Said in *Orientalism* underscores two aspects of discourse: a) that the culture of empire in its diverse areas was an integral part of establishing and maintaining colonial control and b) that what creates discourse is set of rules which determines who can speak and what statement will be regarded as valid and what will seem implausible.

As such the subject itself determines what can be said about it. Another important point about discourse is that no arena of knowledge and enquiry, be that historical, literary, scientific or socio-cultural, is “neutral.” It is simply because it is affected, controlled and shaped by the institutions that support it. Colonial discourse enquires into the manner how colonized people were constructed and represented and also as to how their voices were silenced within colonial writing having scant regard for the problems and reality of the natives. In the like fashion, one may deal with the discourses of patriarchy through the representations of the pure/ seductive/ hysterical/ vulnerable woman have been institutionalized in the “uneven structures of marriage, education, religion, the law, history, literature, science and politics” (Nayar36).

Foucault’s discursive approach to unravel the structures of power in all their complexities were followed by Barthes’s divergent views on the text, which for him was a “series of linguistic processes” decoded by the reader. Moreover, it is a site characterized by plurality and remains ever open to other texts in an endless series of “intertextual operations.” Since he pronounced the author dead, the understanding/ interpretations of text remained in the readerly domain getting subjected to an endless meaning-making activity. Derrida also underscored the importance of ‘mobility’ (that too of infinite sort) in the process of signification marked by an infinite “free play” of signifiers. Both, Barthes and Derrida suggested that no text can yield any definitive meaning and that language always operates on a slippery terrain and signifiers being arbitrary, there is hardly any possibility of the final meaning-interpretation. Derridian deconstruction also builds on the ‘unfinalizable’ (and therefore, always ‘deferring’) process of interpretation of meaning/ multiplex sets of meanings as there is the possibility of a different interpretation always. He shows how text can subvert its stated aims/ goals thereby relying on contradictions. Derrida’s emphasis remained on demonstrating how meanings can never have a sense of finality on account of ambivalences inherent therein.

Following the implications of the discourse theories, literary critics have started looking at literature as a form of discourse with its own domain. Roger Webster (*Studying Literary Theory*), for example, shows how literature can be studied afresh in the light of different discourse theories: “By studying a text primarily in terms of its discursive organization instead of the traditional categories such as character, plot and morality, different readings and meanings become available; a new set of textual relations arises in which the historical and ideological operations which take place can be more readily understood. Literary texts can be seen not only as constructions but as important sites of historical debate in which the conflicts and tensions of an age are worked through, either to harmonize and

disguise oppositional tendencies, or in an attempt to alter the established and dominant power structures (Webster 68).

Analysts of discourse must keep several other things in mind. What Deborah Schiffrin says about the principles of spoken aspects of discourse (in her *Approaches to Discourse*) can be fruitfully applied to the analysis of both spoken and written forms. We briefly summarize here the six principles of discourse analysis listed by her :

1. “Analysis of discourse is empirical.” Analysts must be able to explain their data sequentially and distributionally.

“Discourse is not just a sequence of linguistic units.” To understand its coherence requires paying attention to more than form and meaning.

“Linguistic forms and meanings work together with social and cultural meanings.”

2. “The structures, meanings, and actions of everyday spoken discourse are interactively achieved.”

3. “Utterances are produced and interpreted in the local contexts of other utterances.

4. “How something is said, meant, and done. . . is guided by relationships” among (a) speaker’s intentions; (b) strategies for “making intentions recognizable”; (c) meanings and functions of linguistic forms in context; (d) “sequential context of other utterances; (e) kind of discourse (narrative, expository, etc.); (f) “the social context”; and (g) “cultural framework of beliefs and actions”. (Schiffrin 416)

In order to understand and analyse discourse, we must take into account the relationship between structure and function, text and context, and the language of the discourse and the world in which it is placed. All forms of well-written discourse in all disciplines have nearly the same characteristic features, but in literature they constitute the very warp and woof. These are devices like foregrounding, cohesion, and deviation, to mention only three.

By cohesion, we mean the grammatical and lexical relationships between the different elements of a text or discourse. Foregrounding means the use of the linguistic devices in such a way that their use begins to draw attention to itself. Deviation is literally a change away from the expected norms. In art, it is a deliberate attempt to move away from the accepted norms and conventions because compliance with an aesthetic norm is no guarantee of aesthetic value. A prevailing aesthetic norm can be partly or even completely violated in order to create some specific effects. The result is not something inartistic but a reevaluation of the existing norms and the creation of a new one. In poetry, it becomes a virtue like foregrounding if it contributes to the aesthetic effect. In the remaining pages of this paper I will focus on deviation and demonstrate how it works in discourse to create specific effects.

To conclude, we can say that one can aver that discourse is diverse in form as well as operation. The Foucauldian implication of the term equates it with the construction as well as distribution of knowledge thereby systematically analysing the operation of power. Barthes and Derrida shifted the focus to the reading of texts thereby opening vast and infinite arena of interpretations. Derridian deconstructionist mode of textual analysis demonstrated how language “bears within itself the necessity of its own critique” (Lodge and Wood 84). Foucault too, like other poststructuralists, views

discourse as “central human activity” but not as a universal “general text” or a vast sea of signification: “He is interested in the historical dimension of discursive change—what is possible to say will change from one era to another” (Selden et al 188). Derrida described discourse as “a System in which the central signified, the original or transcendental signified, is never absolutely present outside a system of differences. The absence of the transcendental signified extends the domain and the play of signification infinitely” (Lodge and Wood 91). As such, in both Foucauldian as well as Derridian senses, discourse operates within a system (be that knowledge system, political system or text/ s) to understand, analyse, expose and challenge it by strategically employing a particular kind of idiom/ language and simultaneously critiquing itself. At times, discourse may also seek transformation in social realms of reading/ meaning-making thereby enabling a reading practice, a political commitment and a mode of interpretation.

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**THE EROSION OF AMERICAN FAMILY: SEARCH FOR HOME WITHIN
CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN CULTURE IN *DEATH OF A SALESMAN* & *THE
AMERICAN DREAM***

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ABSTRACT

*The American imagination in the present century has kept moving between the two central images of man—one of idealism and despair, and the other of strife and promise. The American playwrights, in particular, have been directly resolved to the depiction of human conflict in terms of man's capacity to control the chaos and the faith that man must somehow be able to guarantee or resuscitate the force of will which can eliminate the chaos and disorder that surround us. The final analysis is that modern American Drama is the symbolic chronicle of the human struggle for — survival and prevalence, for identity and purpose, for meaning and promise. This paper focusses on the decay of the American family, which can readily be seen as a synonym for the non-viability of today's American society. The American family gives the quintessential picture of the whole American culture today. Both Arthur Miller and Edward Albee treat this recurring theme in their plays more fully which marks the next stage of development that culminates in their definitive treatment of the American family in *Death of a Salesman* & *The American Dream*. Couching the problems of America in the metaphor of the breakdown of the American family, *Death of a Salesman* & *The American Dream* make them more accessible and understandable to the audience.*

Keywords: Family, Home, Culture, Dream, Identity, Selfhood, Struggle

Introduction

The general opinion about the 20th century is that it was an age of nightmares, an age of broken values, an age in which man was alienated from all sources and became rootless and disintegrated. Pressures of a standardized and regimented society have forced man to live at different levels of identity resulting in tension which seem to threaten his very entity as a human being. In a megalopolitan civilization, man is continuously suffering from spiritual isolation and it is felt that he has come to the end of his tether. The prominent American dramatists give an idea of their understanding of the human situation within the framework of symbolism and the strategy of selfhood. They also express within this framework their verging degree of commitment to the existence and the fate of man. They describe the helplessness of modern man. They also depict in dramatic terms goals of man and his values and the consequent adjustment of modes of human selfhood.

Arthur Miller and Edward Albee appeared on the literary horizon of America at a time when American people were facing a period of transition, and American Drama and the Theatre of the Absurd were in jeopardy. They carried forward the legacy of American Drama

left behind by the great American dramatists by writing and producing plays which portrayed the existential dilemma of the American people and the pain, frustration, anguish, despair born out of it. Both represented the fear and anxiety of the American society who looked into the changing scenario and future apprehensively. In their hands, American drama found new and wider dimensions and was enriched with new language, techniques and themes. Both Arthur Miller and Edward Albee suggest the possibility of returning to an America that was once strong, held promises and nourished its people. This return, however, is possible only when America's reality is confronted squarely, when the crimes of the past are acknowledged and atoned for and the young can be enlisted to accept their responsibility for the recreation of the Dream.

American dream is one of the finest portraiture of the vapid and emptiness of many as American cultural concepts. The dominance of the American female, her inordinate sexual hunger and selfishness, the emasculation of the male, the appallingly vapid all American boy love of material comfort of the old illusory world to avoid harsh realities, the sense of insecurity in the midst of material abundance; incapacity for genuine emotion the craze for conformity, the much publicized

American love of children and family the myth of optimism and progress all this has been satirically treated with the view to dramatizing the spiritual emptiness of American life. Harold Clurman(1967) opines:

Lest this be misunderstood, it should be added that there are two versions of the American dream. The historical American dream is the promise of a land of freedom with opportunity and equality for all. This dream needs no challenge, only fulfilment. But since the Civil War, and particularly since 1900, the American dream has become distorted to the dream of business success. A distinction must be made even in this: The original premise of the American dream of success popularly represented in the original boy parables of Horatio Alger was that enterprise, courage and hard work were the keys to success. Since the end of the First World War, this too has changed. Instead of the ideals of hard work and courage, there is salesmanship. Salesmanship implies a certain element of fraud: the ability to put over or sell a commodity regardless of its intrinsic usefulness. The goal of salesmanship is to make a deal, to earn a profit—the accumulation of profit being an unquestioned, end in itself. (Clurman,1967,pp. 212-13)

Depicting the search for home within contemporary American culture, Arthur Miller and Edward Albee are no more optimistic about what this culture has to offer. Nevertheless, the plays assert that retracing roots is necessary no matter what the cost of outcome. Concurrent with this interest in home is a shift from the lone individual to people in relationships as a way of exploring possible reintegration and the forging of a community. This task of reshaping the cultural debris is hindered by many forces— internal and external to the individual. The inner conflicting desires of the characters or what may be called the 'obsessional behaviour' of the characters, builds the psychological barrier. The social barrier includes the bankruptcy of the past passed on from father to son, the surrounding social or political environment, the alienation of man from land, the apparent vacuum created by the scraping of old values and the essential claustrophobic nature of the American family. Arthur Miller and Edward Albee bring into

focus the interplay of all these forces and the subsequent plight of American family life.

The family has been called by Freud as the 'germ cell' of civilization. It is the corner-stone of the socialization process of the individual. In fact, family confers status on the individual, that is, it gives him a certain identity. This search for identity is the most extensively explored theme in contemporary American drama. Related to this, is the obsession of the modern American playwrights for the failure of family harmony and its disintegration. As long as the family exists with love, with its ideals and morals, it continues to be a training ground for the young mind. When indifference and personal selfishness sets in, it destroys family life. Parental indifference towards their children results in the disintegration of the family. The American family, today, is in a serious sociological plight.

Home and Family in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*

Home and family life has always been for Miller a major issue. He is concerned with the primal family before and after the economic 'fall' which is to say, before and after external social pressures have disrupted the essential family peace and unity. The family as a primal sociological unit seems to have dominated all Miller's plays. Without giving any direct answers he has presented the conflicts, the relationships and the effects of the family background on the protagonist's lives and character. He has also shown the relationship of the family with the wider social world and the way in which society influences family life and economic security. His major family plays focus on the family in crisis trapped in moments of stress and conflict resulting from present or past actions that threaten to destroy its members' individually or collectively. Miller reveals the utter negativeness of society and history, and yet offers the ultimate human self as the redeemer and transformer, and also the creator of its own social and historical environment. *Death of a Salesman*, to some extent, strikes a balance between the social problem of the shattered myth of success and Willy Loman's sex and family problems. Miller expressed his basic attitude toward the role of

social forces in drama in an address in which he said:

I hope I have made one thing clear... and it is that society, and you cannot even create a truthfully drama psychological entity on the stage until you understand his social relations and their power to make him what he is and to prevent him from being what he is not the fish is in the water and the water is in the fish.(Motrin,1978, p.185)

The play *Death of a Salesman* is really a challenge to the American dream. The play begins with the classical requirement that its protagonist be at a turning-point in his life. The salesman comes home carrying wearily the two battered, black sample cases which are his cross. They are like the two sons he has carried through life; they are a burden we want him to set down with honour, but we sense almost at once that they are to be his coffin. It is obvious from his first words that he has lost command of them just as he has lost control of his sons, control of his car, control of his mind.

Willy Loman is not in the eyes of his sons just a man, but a god in decay. To his first son Biff, Willy was a god who would protect him from all misdemeanour, who could 'fix' even a failure in mathematics; to his sons, Willy Loman was Salesman—Lord of New England. It is this illusion of sexless godhood that is shattered when Biff at seventeen comes to Boston on a surprise mission (to get his father to 'fix' a math failure) and catches Willy with a lusty woman, then breaks down, weeps, and walks out on his father who is on his knees pleading for forgiveness, understanding, and lost godhood. This is the repressed scene of infidelity and smashed authority dramatized in the restaurant. And it is followed immediately by the mother's accusation against her sons for killing their father by their whoring. This is as close to the original battle fought ages ago by man and his sons as has ever been put upon the stage. It is this very thinly and yet very adroitly disguised Oedipal murder which gives the play its peculiar symbolic prehistoric power. It is not only modern man exploited; it is also Neanderthal man raging against the restraint of civilization's dawn.

Every gesture of Willy Loman is visualized as psychoanalytic interpretation woven into reality. For example, near the end of the last act

Willy comes out of the washroom of the restaurant and is found on his knees by a waiter who cannot understand what is beautifully clear to the audience. For the audience has just shared Willy's hallucination of a scene of years ago, in which his son Biff caught him in a hotel room with a woman. Willy hammers at the present on the anvil of the past.

Again, it is the mother fighting savagely for the father as she accuses the sons; it is the mother who sets off the older son's fury. It is she who has faced with the father the agonies of salesmanship, refrigerators, mortgages, life insurance, exhaustion and withering. Her rage at being old and dried-up is implicit as she fights like a she tiger against the sons who have cast off the father for their own sexual philandering. It is thus she who is the protagonist of the external social theme: a society that destroys fatherhood makes primitives (criminals) of its sons.

The play, now, resolves itself powerfully upon its basic and hidden motivation; the guilt of a younger son for his hatred of his elder brother, for Willy Loman is also a younger brother. For again the repeated hallucination of Willy's older brother Ben appears, this time summoning Willy now to come away to new adventure (Death) in. Ben's bragging, nagging refrain: "I was seventeen when I went into the jungle, and when I came out I was twenty-one and rich!"(Miller, 1998, pp.36-37) Here, in the play's final resolution, the entire necessity for the technique of hallucination becomes clear, though in fact it was announced at the very beginning of the play when Willy Loman commented that his elder brother Ben who struck it rich, is dead. Willy Loman, himself a younger brother (low man on a totem pole), was determined in his time to 'lick the system' by the magic of salesmanship and become 'No. 1 Man'—a son with a deep guilty hatred for his older brother.

As a salesman, he himself wants to become a hero; he has hallucinations of Ben as a hero, an old salesman as a hero, Biff as a hero—even if he is a football hero. Willy recalls how Ben went into the forest and emerged rich; he remembers how the eighty-four-year-old salesman did his sales job unflinchingly just with the help of the telephone and dominated everybody, including his customers. Willy's

dreams about Biff's career show the intensity of his illusions:

WILLY: Without a penny to his name, three great universities are begging for him, and from there the sky's the limit, because it is not what you do, Ben. It is who you know and the smile on your face! It's contacts, Ben, contacts! (Miller, 1998, p.65)

Thus, Willy unwittingly attaches importance to personality, persuasive power and the ability to outwit others by hook or by crook as being basically necessary for a successful survival in this world.

The hectic activities and the struggle for existence that characterise the present-day life are also not spared when Willy cryptically observes:

BIFF: And it's a measly manner of existence. To get on that subway on the hot mornings in summer. To devote your whole life to keeping stock or making phone calls or selling or buying. To suffer fifty weeks of the year for the sake of a two-week vacation, when all you really desire it to be outdoors with your shirts off. And always to have to get ahead of the next fella. And still—that's how you build a future. (Miller, 1998, pp.10-11)

Thus Willy consciously admits that life consists of only these things, although in points of fact, he also tried to live in this fashion by chasing after illusions all through his existence. It is his inability to get away from the beaten track of existence, an existence that is steeped in false ideals and universal commercialism that has become the main reason for his destruction of hopes. But one of his two sons, Happy, is wiser when he expresses frankly that "everybody around me is so false that I am constantly lowering my ideals" (Miller, 1998, p.120).

The height of pathos is touched in the scene when Linda explains to both of her sons as to how far their father has been suffering in his old age for their sake even by agreeing to work on "straight commission, like a beginner, an unknown of five weeks" (Miller, 1998, p.41). When this touches off a retort from Biff that his father's employers are being 'ungrateful bastards', Linda swiftly silences him by a biting counter thus: "...are they any worse than his sons!" (Miller, 1998, p.41). It is her inability to be patient any more with her sons' irresponsible

and indolent way of life that has forced her to come out with this caustic comment and in this Miller has achieved his sense of tragedy more explicitly.

Although Biff, the elder son of Willy on whom the father has pinned all his hopes and who could not 'find himself' for the last fourteen years for a proper settlement in life, did quarrel with his father often by attacking him mercilessly for having doted on him, he has pathetically clung to his father's essential goodness. His concern for his father and the fondness he displays towards him are eloquently brought to light when his younger brother's girlfriend Miss Forsythe attacks Willy as not being worthy to call himself their father. Biff is instantly provoked and he goes to the defence of Willy thus: "Miss Forsythe, you have just seen a prince walk by. A fine, troubled prince. A hard-working unappreciated prince. A pal, you understand? A good companion. Always for his boys" (Miller, 1998, p.90). In these lines, Miller establishes the abundant affection Willy's sons bear for him, although they could not see eye to eye with him on other matters. It is this affection and love that the sons bear for their father that makes the play tragic in more than one sense as this bond of relationship is based on sincerity tempered by sympathy.

Willy Loman has values that were born out of dreams and his desire to scale spectacular heights on the social ladder by his personal charm and persuasive salesmanship. The fact that the values were hard to maintain especially in a world of combative and conflicting interests had been driving him mad. When ultimately his values of successful career and prosperous life could not be realised, Willy sacrifices his personal life for the failure of his dreams by the act of suicide. His death earns him the sympathy of every member of his family as they demonstrate their concern for Willy in the 'Requiem' scene. Rightly did Biff remark that his father, "had the wrong dreams. All, all wrong" (Miller, 1998, p.111). His 'hubris', his arrogances lay in his thinking that he could reach the top in that society. The tragedy with Willy is that he has become so much part of the system of false values in a materialistic world that he dare not even deign to think of himself as apart from its Willy's

decisive resolve of killing himself is the cumulative effect of his agonies and the setbacks he has suffered by the demolition of his illusions. He achieves dignity in death, as he leaves a sizeable chunk of money to his family out of the insurance he had earlier executed.

In *Death of a Salesman*, Miller's attitude to Willy Loman is ambivalent. He has nothing but pity for Willy, the salesman, who can no longer justify his existence once he loses his ability to sell and whose fate mirrors a world in which the absolute value of the individual human being is believed in only as a secondary value. However, Miller's criticism is reserved for the web of deception and self-deception which Willy has woven round his own life and the lives of his sons, Biff and Happy. Thus for all his foibles, on account of which Willy has become a victim of his delusions that eventually takes his life.

Since his function precludes a normal human relationship, he substitutes an imitation of himself for the real man. He sells his 'personality'. This 'personality' now becomes only a means to an end namely, the consummated sale is a mask worn so long that it soon comes to be mistaken even by the man who wears it, as his real face. But it is only his commercial face with a commercial smile and a commercial aura of the well-liked, smoothly adjusted, oily cog in the machine of the sales apparatus.

Willy Loman never acknowledges or learns the error of his way. To the very end, he is a devout believer in the ideology that destroys him. He believes that life's problems are all solved by making oneself "well-liked" (Miller 34) in the salesman's sense and by a little cash. His wife knows only that he is a good man and that she must continue to love him. His sons, who are his victims, as he has been of the false dream by which he has lived, draw different conclusions from his failure. The younger boy, Happy, believes only that his father was an incompetent, but he does not reject his father's ideal. The older boy, Biff, comes to understand the falsity of his father's ideal and determines to set out on new path guided by a recovery of his true self.

So, the play is a dull picture of a broken-down, loud-mouthed, not too bright or presentable

braggart of a salesman who comes home irritable at his diminishing powers, disappointed in his sons, coddled by his wife who is full of solace but empty of excitement; a worn-out old man jealous of his relative's (next-door) success, and unable to obtain a more sedentary job better suited to his state of impending collapse. The irony of Willy's tragedy is that material wealth is only a mirage. He not only fails to live up to the image of an ideal father, but also never comes anywhere in his goal of immense wealth. At the end of the play, he is in moral and financial ruin, and can only think of suicide, so that his son Biff can have the benefit of the insurance policy. Willy Loman cannot directly identify the opposition. For Willy, the American dream of success is possible but Willy seeks short cuts to success, and having ultimately failed as salesman, gardener, mechanic, husband, father. Willy commits suicide. He too has destroyed himself, his son, and his family through the guilt that economic future in a highly materialistic society inflicts.

Home and Family in Edward Albee's *The American Dream*

Albee's plays highlight man's existential predicament in the modern loveless and hypocritical society where people seem to have surrendered their individuality. *The American Dream* is a one act play by Edward Albee. Through the depiction of relations between the character and their responses to particular situations, conflicts and tensions are seen to emerge. Their living conditions are shown to be so stressful that most of them get alienated from self and the world as is the case with Daddy in *The American Dream*. There is a lack of contact or communication between persons which makes an individual have a feeling of being a stranger among friends, family members and the people at large. Such a state comes only when an individual perceives an absence of meaningful relationships between his status identification his social relationship, his style of life and his work. Anne Paolucci(1972) sums up the relevance of his work in *Edward Albee: A Retrospective and Beyond*:

He dismissed the literal message of the political and social realism of the forties, fifties

and sixties as subject for drama and gave American theatre new content and form portraying our post existential tensions on stage swept bare of standard conventions. (Paolucci, 1972, p.15)

In the play, he attacks:

...the 'assumptions and ideals that shape the American cultural pattern: the success myth, the image of American manhood and womanhood, the ideal of marriage stability and of a happy integrated family.(Choudhuri, 1979,p.140)

The play portrays what is left of the American dream- vis-a-vis their shared household. The American dream is personified by the handsome young man who masks a hollow interior under his perfect exterior. When the play starts, Mommy and Daddy are shown sitting in their living room having small talk about a hat, quibbling with Grandma who is piling, nicely-wrapped boxes on the floor and waiting for them. The decor of the room suggests lack of intimacy of the inmates. The door-bell rings and announces the arrival of Mrs. Barker neither Mommy and Daddy nor Mrs. Barker remember why she is there. This gesture of forgetfulness signifies their lack of interest in the happenings of activities taking place around them.

Mrs Barker represents bye-bye adoption agency from where they had bought 'bumble' but with 'bumble' dead, they want to adopt another child. The door- bell rings for the second time, A young man called the American dream stands in the doorway. He is very handsome and ready to do anything for money. During his conversation with Grandma, he blurts out the truth that he is the identical twin of 'bumble' who was mutilated to death. He laments that beneath his beautiful body, lies the sterility of the soul for he lacks emotions. Both the human body minus soul and the empty picture frame portray betrayal of promise as well as failure of a dream both at political and personal level.

Albee also voices his concern about "the emotional void between husband and wife, parent and child as well as with the problem of the rejection of aged"(Stenz, 1978, p.25). His portrayal of alienation of married partners represents his castigation of the defunct family system of America. Mommy and Daddy have

no equilibrium in their relationship although they are living together under the same roof. In spite of all the years shared there is only "emptiness between them" (Stenz, 1978,p.30). Their marriage has been an act of convenience — a sort of social contract with no emotions involved. Both have entered into it to fulfil own desires; for Mommy it is a key to material comforts for Daddy fulfilment of sexual desires. Both of them live in their own separate illusionary worlds where Mommy's materialism and Daddy's workaholic attitude are not to be shared. Even their conversation is meant to fill the vacuity in their lives and revolve around such petty things as hat and its colour. Their conversation is "as empty and meaningless as the symbolic empty gilt picture frame that hangs over the sofa" (Bigsby, 1967, p.76).

There is lack of essential contact between the two and they are only bearing each other's presence. Through their relationship, Albee attacks the institution of marriage which has lost its significance in the eyes of people.

The root cause of their alienation lies in their unfulfilled dreams. Dreams have always fascinated man because they transport him to a world of ecstasy, fantasy, illusion and hope but when they are not fulfilled it causes anguish, pain and frustration - making life a dull and dreary routine. Both Mommy and Daddy bear this trauma because their dreams have remained unrealized.

Albee focuses on the hollowness, emotional sterility, frustration, anguish of alienation in the life of modern man who is chasing dreams. There is no genuine communication between the characters. Human contract is impossible. "There is total spiritual intellectual status" (Clurman, 1966, p.15).

Grandma plays the role of Albee's mouthpiece in the play and it is through her that he portrays the existential agony of the older generation. In this play, the character of Grandma through her relations with others portray the feelings of rejection and dissatisfaction of the older generation she represents the opposition of generations and old world charm of American humanistic tradition where real values like love, sympathy and concern for each other's welfare was paramount. She is sad by the superficiality of the modern world which has

become mechanized owing to the progress made by science she feels neglected by her own daughter who wants to get rid of her by sending her to a home for the aged. The treatment meted out to her at home gives her a feeling of being unwanted and disrespected woman. She cooks, polishes silver and moves furniture to keep herself busy and to pass her time fruitfully so that old age syndrome may not weigh heavily on her existence.

Grandma's condition reflects the declining phase of American ideal the dreams gone awry. She epitomizes value based existence of American society representing 19th century liberal values in the 20th century. In the dehumanized and alienated environment of the Daddy's household she alone bears the standard of benevolent humanism and essence of dignity associated with man's existence.

Albee calls this play a significant one because through this play the American society's transitional period when people backed by scientific and technical knowledge dared to dream of conquering the whole world. It refers to the ideas of feelings associated with his dream but then dream are illusionary; in this chase man has been left disillusioned, frustrated, anguished and alienated. Entry of young man called the American dream and exit of Grandma occurs simultaneously, former representing hollowness of the American society and later exit of humanistic tradition.

Through the depiction of relations between the character and their responses to particular situations, conflicts and tensions are seen to emerge. Their living conditions are shown to be so stressful that most of them get alienated from self and the world as is the case with Willy in *Death of a Salesman* and Daddy in *The American Dream*. There is a lack of contact or communication between persons which makes an individual have a feeling of being a stranger among friends, family members and the people at large. Such a state comes only when an individual perceives an absence of meaningful relationships between his status identification

his social relationship, his style of life and his work. Many questions start taking shape — who am I? Where do I belong? What is the meaning of my existence? And he sets out to solve the mystery of his existence. Sometimes meaninglessness in life generates a feeling of nothingness which according to Jean-Paul Sartre “lies coiled in the heart of being like a worm” (Kaur, 1988,p.28). Both Willy in *Death of a Salesman* and Daddy in *The American Dream* also encounter a feeling of nothingness. Their repeatedly saying 'I just want to get everything over with' conveys their disillusionment with life.

Conclusion

All of the above discussion shows that Arthur Miller and Edward Albee, however, refuse to mourn at the condition America has come to. Even if one feels they are mourning, more than mourning, they are fighting against this degeneration in the American family life. Miller and Albee's voice is raised primarily to denounce the illusions people nurture as an escape to reality as illusions tend to block the path of communication and become a source of anxiety, despair and pain. But when illusions are broken, the end result is always dramatic and sometimes fatal. So, *Death of a Salesman* depicts the eternal problem of sterility, emotional vacuity and alienation in familial relationships leading to fantasy living while *The American Dream* is about man's preference for superficial values over old cultural values and his race for materialistic ambitions which have converted him into a machine. So, The American Dream of bountiful Eden, the poetic image of the land, seems no longer fulfil able in an industrial, mechanized, computerized and dehumanizing society. For years now the farmlands, like those of Thebes in *Oedipus Rex*, have lain fallow, and the family has lived a monotonous still life from which there seems to be no escape.

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ਸੰਨੀ ਓਬਰਾਏ ਵਿਵੇਕ ਸਦਨ:
ਐਡਵਾਂਸ ਇੰਸਟੀਚਿਊਟ ਆਫ ਸੋਸ਼ਲ ਸਾਇੰਸਜ਼
ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਨੰਦਪੁਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਪੰਜਾਬ

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INDIAN CINEMA : PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN AND WOMEN'S VOICE IN SELECT MOVIES

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Abstract:

Women have a crucial role to play in every sphere of life, be it household, economic contribution, child rearing or societal development. To play these roles effectively women should be conscious of their optimum potential. Women's status in India has greatly improved from being doubly marginalized to being revered for their achievements. The mass media have long been welcomed as the watch dog of society and this tradition bestows upon them the social responsibility to mirror and guide the process of social change. Movies are the most influencing medium by which the audience in all strata of society often get carried away and any interpretation can have tremendous impact on the society.

The paper deals with portrayal of women and women's voice in recent cinemas. Though Movies remain male-dominated terrain, in recent years a few women-centric movies are produced and appreciated which portray women as a social member who can shoulder great responsibility with dignity unlike their counterpart from earlier years. The female characters from select movies are analyzed in the light of Standpoint Theory and Gender Empowerment Theory. Standpoint Theory affirms that an individual's own perspectives are shaped by his or her social and political experiences. It is a postmodern method for analyzing inter-subjective discourses. Gender empowerment Theory helps one to assess by figure in go through four criteria; they are socioeconomic development, rising gender egalitarian process, historical legacies and institutional design factors.

Key Words: Women, Hero, Movies, *Mary Kom*, *Dangal*, *Pink*, *Ki and Ka*, *Parched* and *Uda Punjab*.

—I think women are foolish to pretend they are equal to men. They are far superior and always have been. Whatever you give a woman, she will make it greater...she multiplies and enlarges what is given to her | -William Golding

The status of Indian women has seen ups and downs throughout the centuries. The lowtide or nadir was the situation when she was considered a mere child bearing machine and maid to the family. Women had to face double marginalization. Coventy Pat more in his poem—Angel of the House explains the aspects of a perfect woman, which later on went on to become the stereo type. She is a wonderful being who sacrifices her pleasure, leisure and choices for the well being of her family, no matter what they do to her in return. A wonder woman should be anepitome of patience, forbearance and forgiveness. Cinema played an active role in cementing this image. Movies of the earlier times portrayed woman as gentle, mild, submissive and selfless, somebody who never rebels against any injustices done to her. Even the head strong women who play the negative role is also shown to have passions spent and calm down in the course of life.

As the time went on, women gained access to education. She realized her folly and her fight resulted in the raising of various feministic theories around the globe, thereby massemanicipation of women folk. With the first wave of feminism her voice was heard reminding male chauvinist of her existence. With the second wave of feminism she wanted her rightful place in the male dominated world. With the passing of the third wave she came to an enlightened situation from where she understood she needn't compete with men but could express the experience of being a woman. In the recent times women have empowered themselves and achieved a stand where even men revere and respect her. Mass media helps in the dissemination of information. With the advancement of technology, the world has shrunk into a global village. One of the most effective media is cinema. Movies with its audio-video aids captivate audience and leaves everlasting message in the hearts of the audience. Movies can be called agents of change as the primal stereotypes of mild submissive woman is created through movies.

The paper aims to analyse the pattern and themes of portraying women's characteristics through the select movies in the light of Standpoint Theory and Gender Empowerment theory. Theselect movies are *Mary Kom*, *Dangal*, *Pink*, *Ki and Ka*, *Parched* and *Udta Punjab*.

Standpoint theory's concept is that an individual's own perspectives are shaped by his or her social and political experiences. According to this approach, a standpoint is a place from which a person views the world. A standpoint influences how the people adopting it socially construct the world. Michael Ryansays,—The idea of collective standpoint does not imply an essential overarching characteristic but rather a sense of

belonging to a group bounded by a shared experience. Standpoint theory emphasizes the utility of a naturalistic, or everyday experimental, concept of knowing ones standpoint shapes which concepts are intelligible, which claims are heard and understood by whom, which features of the world are perceptually salient, which reasons are understood to be relevant and forceful, and which conclusions credible.

Female empowerment theory focuses on the socioeconomic development, rising gender-egalitarian attitudes that transform economic development into a cultural process of human development, historical legacies stemming from a society's cultural and political traditions and institutional design factors (Alexander and Welzel). The four aspects of gender equality are basic living condition, participation in civic actions, positional empowerment and political representation.

Mary Kom depicts Kom's journey of becoming a boxer to her victory at 2008 world boxing championship in Ningbo. It was directed by Omung Kumar and produced by Sanjay Leela Bansali. The biopic portrays the difficulties which resulted in triumph of the boxing star. Her father asks her to choose between him and boxing, from which she chooses the latter. Narjit Singh coach esher and shewins 2006 Women's World Amateur boxing Championships. She also chooses to make way for matters of the heart, marriage and kids before coming back to winning global recognition again in 2008, 2010 and 2012. She is nicknamed Magnificent Mary She is the renowned example of the multitasking woman who maintains perfect balance between work and family.

Dangal is a 2016 biographical sports drama film directed by Nitesh Tiwari. Mahavir Singh Phogat is an amateur wrestler who trains his daughters Geeta Phogat and Babita Kumari to win Gold and silver medal respectively in Commonwealth Games. The movie initially begins with the father wishing for a male heir who later on realizes the potential of his daughters. In the society where female infanticide is a common, where considering girls as burden is the custom, in that particular society (Haryana), training women in the male dominated field is unique.

Ki and Kais is a romantic film written, directed and produced by R. Balki. The lead contradicts the gender roles placed upon women and men of Indian society. Kia wishes to become a successful business woman whereas Kabir wants to become—house husband. The conflict comes when Kabir gets fame for his interview stating that it doesn't matter if ki(girl) takes up the role of Ka(boy) and ka takes up the role of Ki. In the movie in the cameo role, Jaya Bachan advises Kia that Kabir's decision of breaking the stereotype is

great choice but being wife to such a person is even greater task. The age old taboo is broken through Kabir's character, thus emphasizing gender equality.

Parched is directed by Leena Yadav. The story revolves around four women residents of a desert village of Rajasthan. Rani is a widow who supports her mother-in-law and son Gulab who is rebellious and spoilt. Rani was widowed earlier in life and has led a life of suffering and struggle adhering to the traditions and culture which imposes torture on widows. Gulab, who is violent and wayward, is married to Janki who is a child bride, she tries to avoid marriage by chopping off her hair. Janaki also becomes victim to Gulab's atrocities but later on is relieved from marriage and joins her childhood lover. Lajjo struggles with her alcoholic husband who beats her and calls her Barren woman but in reality her husband is impotent. And Bijli is an erotic woman sort of sex worker. The women join hands to and relieve each other's misery, they are good at embroidery and handicrafts, and they show courage to take a bold step to leave their native village which is rebellious. And finally refuse to subdue to all customs, traditions and patriarchy.

Udta Punjab is an Indian Crime Drama Film directed by Abhishek Chaubey. It is based on drug abuse by youth population of Punjab. The women characters of Bauria, a farm worker also hockey player and Preet Sahni, a doctor-cum-activist, are remarkable. One stands for the victim and other as a savior. Bauria finds a small bundle of drugs, she tries to sell it to earn quick money, but she is trapped. In spite of all her troubles during repeated rape she says—Good days are yet to come. Bauria inspires the pop singer to believe that there is another side to desperation. In fact she is the person who transforms him. She wanted to play Hockey at the national level, but unfortunate events like her father's demise shatters her dreams. She is a bold girl who never complains but welcomes good or bad turns of events cheerfully. Whereas Preet runs rehabilitation centre and tries to create awareness about harms of drugs. She collects evidences of drug trade and hopes that someday the state would be free from drugs. Preet becomes martyr in the process of abolishing drugs from the state. Yet it was her initiative which resulted in the abolition of drug abuse. Preet stands tall as a modern empowered woman who can initiate change.

Pink is a courtroom drama film produced by Aniruddha Roy Chowdhry. The movie revolves around three girls Meenal Arora, Falak Ali and Andrea Tariang, being trapped in false accusations from some rich, politically influential boys, whom an eminent lawyer Deepak Sehgal saves thereby giving a strong social message of being sensible to

women's rights. The closing remarks are, Deepak mentions that his client said NO, which is not a word but a statement and implies a woman's right. NO simply means No and doesn't require further explanation. It can come from anyone, a girlfriend, a sex worker, or even your wife. The film depicts the matter of fact that, in spite of being educated women are not aware of their rights. The movie ends with a poem by Amitabh Bachchan which can be translated as —when character is pure why are you worried? Sinners don't have any right to question you.

The characters in the movie form their standpoint based on the circumstances they live. The characters from the above mentioned movies have fought with the circumstances to win in the struggle. Here are examples of people who have discovered themselves at the crossroad. Proper channelisation of energy with right direction of path makes an effort fruitful and the sense of direction is given by education. The heroines know to differentiate right from wrong and are in a position to alleviate the pain. Geeta and Babita are pushed on to become Wrestlers being inspired by their legend father. Kia, being educated and empowered aspires to become business magnet and adopts road not travelled, Bauria and Preet are brave enough to fight against drug because they have witnessed what drug can do to fellow humans. Rani, Bijli, Lajjo, and Janaki being subjected to male chauvinism, oppressions and are chained to age old customs. Having reached the saturation point they revolt. The characters fight their fears and chains that keep them down, finally breaking bonds. Meenal, Falak and Andrea's story creates an awareness about women's rights.

The trend of Indian cinema is changing and nowadays women centric movies are being produced. The stereotype of woman as a docile creature who suffers in silence is changed to somebody who fights for her rights with dignity. Like Literature even cinema imitates life. The positive trends are the indicators of the positive change in the society. The select movies present the iron willed women who empower themselves and emerge victorious thereby becoming role models for others to follow.

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**ARAVIND ADIGA'S *THE WHITE TIGER*: A SCATHING
SATIRE ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC INEQUALITY IN
POSTCOLONIAL INDIAN SOCIETY**

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Abstract

The modern society is very strange as, here, everyone is engaged in 'rat-race' and wish to taste success 'by hook or by crook'. The people from the lower strata of the society crave for an elevated social status but the hunger of rich people never gets satisfied and they are always in a 'Ye Dil Mange More' mode. As the poor people are not getting their share, the prevailing disgusting situation provoke them to commit heinous crimes. This paper attempts to analyse the Socio-Economic Inequality in Postcolonial Indian Society boldly manifested by Aravind Adiga through his avant-garde novel *The White Tiger*. The author makes several unfeigned assaults on present day politics, religion, economy, education, judiciary, socio-political manoeuvrings, new emergent morality etc., bringing into focus the corrupt dynamics that ensure that the poor remain poor always, weaving them deftly into the thematic texture of the novel.

Keywords: Economic Reforms, Social Inequality, Scathing Satire, Underprivileged, Post Colonialism.

During the post liberalisation period, a feel-good factor has been created in the field of economy that promised economic prosperity to everyone but the fact remains that in this bubble of economic boom, the poor and underprivileged are at the receiving end. Due to rising economic prosperity and crumbling joint family structure, the domestic helpers are much in demand for carrying out various household chores. These include domestic servants, drivers, cooks, security guards, etc. These people closely observe the lavish lifestyle of their rich employers, see their way of spending the money extravagantly, come in

contact with the glamorised world without being a part of it and secretly nurture the wish to be like their employers. Aravind Adiga is filled with indignation at the reckless spending of money by the rich people which, in fact, becomes a disgusting show of their wealth. The unscrupulous politicians and bureaucrats are ready to surrender before those who can fulfil their 'demands'. The crafty and crooked people exploit this situation most. Rich people's such kind of attitude negatively impact the poor and invoke the feeling of rebellion or crime in them. Aravind Adiga is an Indo-Australian writer who shot into international limelight by winning the coveted Man Booker prize for his debut novel *The White Tiger* in 2008. With the winning of this coveted award for his maiden novel, Aravind Adiga has come to rank with many celebrated Booker Prize-winning Indian English novelists as V.S.Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy and Kiran Desai. Adiga is an insider looking penetratingly beneath the so-called glossy veneer that India tries to project abroad and warns the readers about the possible consequences of this inequality through his ground breaking novel *The White Tiger* which realistically portrays the enigma of the postmodern era. He also exposes the corrupt and illegal practices adopted by the rich and the so called successful people, particularly after the economic reforms in India.

The White Tiger is doubtless a nonpareil Indian English novel. As a matter of fact, there is no other Indian English novel that can set beside it in the matters of serious spunky sideswipes on various aspects of contemporary life in India as well as narrative strategy. Brutally realistic, Adiga dishes out in the novel the flipside of the grim contemporary reality pervading India, ripping off the false facade thereon in a remarkably gritty and gutsy manner. The crux of the novel, no doubt, is in the depiction of the social inequality that pervades Indian society. No doubt, the book has been hailed as controversial. The story revolves around two Indias - affluent, corrupt, immoral India and deprived, suffering and degraded India. In an interview with *The Guardian*, Adiga has himself openly declared about the intention of revealing that underside of India, which is often missed in the sheer glitz and glamour of just 5% of the wealthy population. In *The White Tiger*, Adiga has fused the epistolary form of the novel with the dramatic monologue and with the confessional mode of narration. Thus, in the novel, Adiga demonstrates a deft fusion of these disparate narrative modes specifically the epistolary form of the novel with the dramatic monologue and with the confessional mode of narration. Written primarily in the epistolary form, the novel is apparently a collection of eight letters written by an Indian ex-servant called Balram Halwai who recently made it big by committing the murder of his own master Mr. Ashok Sharma to Mr. Wen Jiabao, the Chinese Premier. The book depicts, in a very refreshing manner, Balram's miraculous journey from darkness to light, from rags to riches, from the crippling clause of conservatism to debouching autonomy of urban anonymity. The novel opens with the first letter addressed to Wen Jiabao, the Chinese Premier, when it was announced by All

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India Radio that he would be coming to Bangalore next week on an official visit. Balram tells Mr. Jiabao that :

Our nation, though it has no drinking water, electricity, sewage system, public transportation, sense of hygiene, discipline, courtesy or punctuality, does have entrepreneurs. Thousands and thousands of them. Especially in the field of technology. And these entrepreneurs --we entrepreneurs--have set up all these outsourcing companies that virtually run America now. (TWT, 2008, p 4)

He unhesitatingly advises Mr. Jiabao that:

One fact about India is that you can take almost anything you hear about the country from the prime Minister and turn it upside down and then you will have the truth about that thing. (TWT, 2008, p 15)

He further very spunkily cautions Mr. Jiabao not to take a dip in the Ganga, although the prime minister will urge you to do so. He says:

No! - Mr. Jiabao, I urge you not to dip in the Ganga, unless you want your mouth full of faeces, straw, soggy parts of human bodies, buffalo, carrion, and seven different kinds of industrial acids. (TWT, 2008, p 15)

Thus, on a careful scrutiny, one discerns that in *The White Tiger* the epistolary form gets gradually blurred and shades off into the dramatic monologue and later into the confessional mode of narration—a narrative strategy defiantly resorted to by some postcolonial novelists such as V. S. Naipaul and Salman Rushdie. The novel is a powerful commentary on the startling contrast between India's rise as a global economy post liberalisation and the plight of the marginalised class living in the most inhuman conditions. The narrator and the protagonist of the novel, Balram Halwai, hails from Laxmangarh, a small village in Bihar. His father was a rickshaw-puller. His mother died when he was a small child. He was admitted to a school because his mother desired to educate him. Balram inherits the rebellious streak from his mother whose toes resisted the black mud of the Ganga while her corpse was being cremated as well as from his father who declined to work in the fields for the landlords and preferred instead the independence of a rickshaw-puller. Balram's situation is akin to several thousand other children of the country, who in spite of being intelligent and talented are forced to leave the school at an early age and do some odd jobs to support the family. Balram was a promising child and his teachers admired him greatly. In fact, during a surprise visit of a school inspector in the school, he was the only student in the whole of the school who

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could answer the questions asked by the inspector. Balram appeared to him a sort of child-prodigy. He was so impressed with Balram's talent and attitude that he gave him the nickname 'The White Tiger':

The inspector pointed his cane straight at me, you, young man, are an intelligent, honest, vivacious fellow in this crowd of things and idiots. In any jungle, what is the rarest of animals—the creature that comes along only once in a generation? The school inspector says: The White Tiger. That's what you are, in this jungle. (*TWT*, 2008, p 22)

But alas! such a brilliant boy had to bid adieu to school education quite early and later in life the tag of a school drop-out permanently attached to him. After leaving the school education midway, he does many odd and menial jobs to support the family. So, Schooling remains a brief affair, as Balram is pulled out of school to work in a tea shop to repay the loan his father had taken for the marriage of his aunt. At the tea shop, he crushes coals, wipes tables and serves tea to customers. But Balram wants to do something big and wants to live like a man as his father did. But his father dies miserably of tuberculosis in a Government hospital, unattended. Balram was fully aware of the kind of miserable agonizing life replete with deprivations, disappointments, sorrows and sufferings, insults and humiliations that his father lived as a rickshaw puller. But, however, Balram is sacked from the tea shop because of his habit of eavesdropping on others. He joins a construction company as a child labourer but he also fails there. Gradually his latent business sense awakens. He tries his hands on many other activities which he thinks may help him in earning more money. He even learns driving so as to expand his horizon of working. Mr. Ramdev Thakur, one of the four animals i.e. landlords of the village who control Laxmangarh, appoints him as a chauffeur for his U.S. returned son, Ashok and his daughter-in-law, Pinky Madam. Now Balram is a chauffeur to drive a luxury car of Ashok who is settled in Gurgaon near Delhi. Balram now sees two worlds — one of the rich people who have amassed immense wealth and are wallowing in it and the other of the poor who are struggling to make both ends meet. The disturbing thought that he would never be able to lead a luxurious life like that of his masters engulfs him. It disturbs him and he becomes quite restless. Further, the humiliating experiences at the shopping malls add fuel to the fire of his rebellion or criminal attitude:

He feels degraded as a human being, deprived of basic human rights to enter a shopping mall as he belonged to the poor class. If he walked into the mall someone would say "Hey, that man is a paid driver! What's he doing in here?" There were guards in grey uniforms on every floor

— all of them seemed to be watching me. It was my first taste of the fugitive's life. (*TWT*, 2008, p 152)

Balram reminisces one of the newspaper reports on the malls, in the early days entitled “Is there No space for the Poor in the Malls of new India?” (Adiga, 2008, p 148). The security guards at these shopping malls identified the poor wearing sandals let in only those wearing shoes, while a poor man id sandals was driven out. This made a man in sandals explode “Am I not a human being too?” (Adiga, 2008, p 148). In due course of time, after having watched rampant corruption in all the aspects of Indian life and having been sick of his life as a driver, he did not want to remain throughout his life as a servant and die a miserable death like his father's. Constant pondering over the present situation leads him to a horrible thought and pushes him towards committing a heinous crime. He contemplates killing his master as he feels it the only way left with him to achieve his target, join the bandwagon of the affluent class / society and to be a part of this tinsel world:

His schooling in crime begins with the reading of Murder Weekly as all drivers do to while away their time. Of course, a billion servants are secretly fantasizing about strangling their bosses — and that's why the government of India publishes the magazine and sells it on the streets for just four and a half rupees so that even the poor can buy it. (*TWT*, 2008, p 125)

Since he was doomed to die in the blind alley of a servant's life and there was no one around to help him out, he finally commits the murder of his master Mr. Ashok and loots the bag containing a huge amount of money which was intended to be given to the minister as a bribe. With that money, he rushes to Bangalore and becomes an entrepreneur running a fleet of cars. He names his taxi company “The White Tiger Drivers” which elevates him from rags to riches. This is part of an eternal silent class war that has nowadays assumed a new murderous dimension. Balram does not feel deeply repentant of having committed the murder of his master. He knew that one day he would be hanged. He declares:

I'll never say I made a mistake that night in Delhi when I slit my master's throat. I'll say it was all worthwhile to know, just for a day, just for an hour, just for a minute, what it means not to be a servant. (*TWT*, 2008, pp 320-21)

Balram ends up as a criminal with a remarkable capacity for self-justification. He justifies the murder and loot he committed to rise to the status of an entrepreneur. In a strikingly spunky manner, he remarks:

But isn't it likely that anyone who counts in this world, including our prime minister (including you, Mr. Jiabao), has killed someone or other on their way to the top? Kill enough people and they will put up bronze statues to you near Parliament house in Delhi- but that is glory, and not what I am after. All I wanted was the chance to be a man—and for that, one murder was enough. (*TWT*, 2008, p 318)

Balram does feel contrite enough for the murder of his master:

True, there was the matter of murder—which is a wrong thing to do, no question about it. It has darkened my soul. All the skin whitening creams sold in the markets of India won't clean my hands again. (*TWT*, 2008, p 318)

So, *The White Tiger* boils down to a serious penetrating study, peppered occasionally with dark comedy, of dogged endeavours towards seeking the upward social mobility of the chief protagonist called Balram Halwai aka Munna, aka 'The White Tiger' who is an ambitious person and Adiga portrayed him as an angry young man. He attains the desired success, and metamorphoses into an entrepreneur only after killing his employer. His life becomes synonymous to the lives of some 'new' Indian young men aspiring for success at any cost and are always on their toes to commit any heinous crime for the sake of money without giving a second thought of the consequences. Such young men are desperate to come out of their poverty at the earliest as living in close proximity with the rich people and their hollow but glorified culture aroused in them a feeling to lead a life of abundance. The protagonist of the novel, Balram alias Ashok Sharma is a self-styled "Thinking man/ and an entrepreneur" (*TWT*, 2008, p 3).

In this novel, Balram Halwai switches from identity to identity, from role to role, from place to place. Initially Balram was a servant at a tea shop, then he became a labourer in a construction company where he also failed, then again he became a car driver and ultimately he became an entrepreneur by murdering and robbing his master. After he established himself as an entrepreneur, he concealed his family backdrop and also his personal past. He even changed his name from Balram Halwai to Ashok Sharma which was the name of his own master who was murdered by him. The series of failures undergoes, apart from betraying a sense of frustration, a sense of desperation, strongly underscores his crisis of identity. Thus, Balram is a subaltern who plays a pivotal role relating his own life struggle and escapades with a view to establishing his own identity as well as gaining the status of an entrepreneur. (The novel can also be studied as a bildungsroman treating of Balram's childhood, boyhood, early youth and later youth as well as his passage from

innocence to experience). In the novel, we notice the treatment of promiscuity indulged in by diasporic characters abroad just to identify themselves with the Whites. Balram, during his stay in Delhi, starts visiting floozies. Prompted by a fellow driver, he collects some money to have a sexual relationship with a golden-haired girl from abroad. But during his meeting with that girl, after paying a huge amount of money, he suddenly discovers that this girl was not a foreigner but an Indian who had dyed her hair golden. He feels cheated and he comes out of the hotel. He demands his money back which he does not get. Though this situation is comic, it reveals a postcolonial propensity. In this novel, Adiga has also coined a phrase— ‘dip his beak in her/ him’ When he says, “he liked to dip his beak into their backsides” (*TWT*, 2008, p 25). This phrase is uniquely eloquent, as it refers euphemistically to both homosexual and sexual act. This phrase figures repeatedly in the novel.

Balram represents that class of have-nots which is almost invisible in its sheer ubiquity. Perhaps 90 to 95% of India’s population is teeming with such people, who are there all the time, used as handy crutches by affluent, exploitable people because they have not garnered courage to raise their voice. They accept whatever material terms they are offered, whatever pitiable conditions they are forced to live in because they know that by refusing to accept and compromise, they will be losers. There are thousands like them ready to accept what they refuse. Adiga has hinted at the metaphor of the Rooster Coop in the novel when he says:

Go to Old Delhi...and look at the way they keep chickens there in the market. Hundreds of pale hens and brightly coloured roosters, stuffed tightly into wire-mesh cages...They see the organs of their brothers lying around them. They know they are next. Yet they do not rebel. They do not try to get out of the coop. The very same thing is done with human beings in this country. (*TWT*, 2008, pp 173-74)

So, Adiga has used a powerful trope of ‘rooster coop’ of caged ‘chickens’ and ‘cockroaches’, ever ready to be killed:

The roosters in the coop smell the blood from above. They see the organs of their brothers lying around them. They know they are the next. Yet they do not rebel. They do not try to get out of the coop. (*TWT*, 2008, pp173-174)

But Balram hates the idea of becoming a ‘rooster’ in a ‘coop’, he does not want to present himself before the ‘wolves’ of the modern society as their prey. He is desperate to be on the other side as a member of the ‘eaters’. He does not hesitate to kill his employer. He loots the bag containing money

worth seven lakhs after murdering his master Mr. Ashok. This easy monetary success is based on a philosophy of revenge, ambition and success at any cost. In his new avatar of Mr. Ashok Sharma, an entrepreneur, he assumes himself a part and parcel of the elite class and society. He, even, crosses the limits and starts indulging in all the corrupt practices e.g. bribing and fixing all those who can be of some help to him — right from peon to politicians. He has learnt the art of coping with the nexus of politicians- bureaucrats and power brokers. It is a pity that this nauseating technique has become the part and parcel of achieving success in the changed scenario. In this manner, he becomes the role model for the people like him and he, openly, encourages them to follow his path in order to get easy success in life.

People like Balram are in the vicinity of almost every wealthy Indian, working tirelessly at the beck and call of their masters, undertaking all the menial and time-consuming tasks so that the masters are comfortable. Their work is taken for granted, Hence, this particular class has no identity worth the name.

This novel has elaborated the theme of social disparity which the writer has consciously highlighted through the narrative techniques of drawing a parallel between the two classes. Balram opines:

The rich of Delhi, to survive the winter, keep electrical heaters, or gas heaters, or even burn logs of wood in their fireplaces. When the homeless, or servants like night watchmen, want to keep warm, they burn whatever they find on the ground...The only problem is that while burning it gives off a white smoke that makes your stomach churn. (*TWT*, 2008, p 157)

Thus, the novel powerfully portrays the ever increasing chasm between the rich and the poor that has gripped India post liberalisation. Balram feels himself a victim of this class divide and plans to come out of his wretched situation. He feels that the only way to come out of it is to emulate the ways of rich and successful people of our society. He has seen these people resorting to corrupt practices in order to attain the desired success in life and hence he also thinks it the right way for becoming successful and wealthy in life. In the earlier part of life and even at Gurgaon, Balram has undergone various humiliations because of the socio-economic inequality and social injustice in the society he lived. His employer's inhuman and humiliating treatment aroused anger in him but being helpless and victim of the situation, he never resisted. Once Mukesh, Ashok's brother, loses one Rupee coin in the car. He ordered Balram, "Get down on your knee. Look for it on the floor of the car. I got down on my knees. I snuffed in between the mats like a dog, all in search of that one Rupee" (*TWT*, 2008, p139).

Interestingly enough, it is not that the affluent are totally oblivious of the worth of the services of this class. While talking to his wife Pinky, Ashok points out to his reason for sticking on to India:

The way things are changing in India now this place is going to be like America in ten years. Plus, I like it better here - we've got people to take care of us here - our drivers, our watchman, our masseurs, where in New York will you find someone to bring you tea and sweet biscuits while you're still lying in bed, the way Ram Bahadur does for us? (*TWT*, 2008, p 89)

The saga of Balram's journey from darkness to light has mostly been identified with his desire for material gain. Perhaps it is his desire for identity that underscores his violent streak. The identity-less existence that this class of workers and servants lead could be the cause of sudden eruption of reticent violence in them. Balram represents many such servant killers about whom we often read in newspapers in India. The issue of identity can be applied in the context of Adiga's book to the faceless class of workers in India, represented by Balram. It is not just the craving for material prosperity that propels the cook in *The Inheritance of Loss* to send his son to America. It's not mere the lure of seven lakh rupees that Balram kills his otherwise nice master. It is the craving for identity, which is viciously complicit with wealth and social status.

The sin that Balram commits is unpardonable, the confession that he is making to the Chinese premier is author's narrative technique to unfold the workings of the mind of such criminals in an authentic way. But, one thing is very clear, Adiga's book has definitely made a common affluent Indian aware of the danger of violence lurking around them. This class did need a voice, some attention and Adiga has been more than successful in jolting the complacent wealthy class of Indians out of their stupor.

To sum up, Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* is a remarkably powerful postcolonial novel which treats of the brass-tacks of contemporary India having a perennial appeal. The novel highlights the modern day capitalist Indian society which is fully under the grip of free market and liberal economy in which poor have no place. It is an insightful perceptive projection of the psyche of a subaltern who wanted to live like a normal human being. It powerfully portrays the age-old worries, anxieties and restlessness of the downtrodden. The sub-conscious mind of the rich is not ready to treat marginalised people on par with them. They are conditioned to treat the underprivileged contemptuously and this leads to class struggle. Adiga's novel thus becomes a throbbing study of the deep rooted socio-economic disparity prevalent in the India of liberal economy. The study becomes even more important at the backdrop of economic reforms the country has initiated that .

promised as Herbert Hoover announced to put a chicken in every cooking pot, and a car in every garage

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