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Editor

**Ravinder Kumar**

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## Fair's Fair: A Study of Feminine Affairs in *The God of Small Things*

Ravinder Kumar\*

Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* unfolds with the marvellous interplay of gender, sex and discrimination. Roy's conscious use of language produces new narrative strategies, discloses unheard stories of women, and transforms traditional concepts of gender roles. The manipulation of language empowers the speakers, while failure in voicing causes silence and a lack of control. Roy's employment of Indian English manifests her concern about the female cultural heritage and her challenge the male superiority. Her experiments with *The God of Small Things* make silenced women heard in a double-voiced narrative. Roy also voices concern over the polarity between gender roles, an arbitrary division resulting from language construction. For her characters, the hierarchical gender structure is further complicated by skin colour and skin tone. Drawing upon theories on language and gender, this paper addresses three major topics in *The God of Small Things* (1) Indian Feministic Approach (2) Fair's Fair: The Fair Sex (3) Gender, Sex and Discrimination.

### Indian Feministic Approach

It is a subject of great importance for India that Indian Women's Literature has become a complete discourse in world literature. Indian women have depicted significantly 'self' in their literature by experimenting autobiographical style in writing. Today Indian Women's fiction is dealing with various issues concerning self, sexuality and society. These are focuses of writings such as marginalisation, question of identity, man-woman relationship and all related issues where woman has been a victim of circumstances who left reader in a terrible predicament.

In India, Women have for long been deprived from access to education, equal rights, right to work and freedom to choose. Hence much of women's writings revolve around social injustice and inequality. Women's writing in English has created a place as a subject in academia to look into its social importance. Dreams, desires and politics of gender of women have motivated thinkers to make it a utility to mobilise society on a smooth way. Manu states "No act is to be done according to her own will by a young girl, a young woman, though she is in her own house.

In childhood a girl should be under the will of her father; in her youth under that of her husband; her husband being dead, under the will of her sons. A woman should never enjoy her own will. Though of bad conduct or debauched, a husband must always be worshipped like a god by a good wife." ( Briffault 1952: 147)

### **Indian Feministic Approach in *The God of Small Things***

In *The God of Small Things* the central dramatic event revolves around the mutual attraction of the untouchable Paravan Velutha for the divorced Ammu with two children. Both Ammu and Velutha are overwhelmed by a sense of being abandoned by the society. They fill their beings with one another's presence and make love as much as they can. The idea is tried to be explored through social taboos which are hindrances in the path of 'conventional approach' to the society. The meaning of 'unconventional approach' is to abide by the rules of the society in developing the relationship. The novel is placed under the category of feminist writing because of its depiction of women's plight and close bond in a cast-bound society of Indian cast-system. Woman begins her course of life as a member of an extended family which is a small community in itself as it spans several generations and comprises the patriarch and his younger brothers with their families, married sons and their families, all the unmarried sons and daughters, and widowed or deserted daughters who return to their parental home. All the males born in the family are entitled to the ancestral wealth but the daughters have no share. Chacko says to Ammu on her return back to Ayemenem house: "What's yours is mine and what's mine is also mine" (Roy 1998:57). Trapped in a socio-cultural milieu women suffer inwardly in *The God of Small Things*. Love-marriage fails due to lack of understanding between Ammu and Baba. Selfishness is the basic drawback and the reason is what they are wary of. Ammu in *The God of Small Things* is one such woman who finds in her "RE-LIFE" in own house full of ugliness and indifference. The novel is a stinging satire on the male dominated society. Ammu's divorce made her an outcaste and brought shame to the entire family. These examples are used by Arundhati Roy to show the condition of women in India. Woman seeks love, affection and a reliable man for fulfilling her void spaces. Ammu's relationship with Velutha only worsens matters at home. Roy brings out the essential dilemma and also recapitulates Ammu's inward journey, her reconciliation with her past and an acceptance of her future responsibilities. Feminist literary critics try to explain how power imbalance due to gender in a given culture is reflected in or challenged by literary texts.

### Feminine Affair: *Fair's Fair – The Fair Sex*

Women novelists like Anita Desai Manju Kapoor, Alice Walker, Toni Morrison and Arundhati Roy write women's novels in their different ways. In a recent interview, Arundhati Roy was questioned whether she had any objections to being described as a 'women's novelist'. To quote her reply in her own words: "I need fiction like you need to eat or exercise. At the moment, I don't know how I'll ever be able to make the space to say, I'm writing a book now, and I'm not going to be able to do X or Y. I would love to." (Gopal 2008:1).

In the above quoted words, Roy not only accepts that she writes to express her inner voice but also emphasizes the relevance of this specific 'genre', for women readers particularly. The whole gamut of women's experiences, including female bodily functions, like menstruation, contraception, pregnancy, depression and mothering are beginning to be openly mentioned and explored in women's novels. Toril Moi proposes that we distinguish between the three terms, for clarity. To quote : "Initially, I will suggest that we distinguish 'feminism' as a political position, 'femaleness' as a matter of biology and 'femininity' as a set of culturally defined characteristics." (Moi 1987:204). To all this, the problem of race is an added dimension. Fair skin, blue eyes and red-gold hair signify perfect beauty and superiority. In *The God of Small Things*, Chacko's ex-wife Margaret Kochamma and her blonde daughter Sophie Mol outshine the members of the Ayemenem house. Ammu and her dark-skinned twins are made to feel inferior and out of place in the 'perfect' family gathering. Gender, in Indian patriarchal society, plays a very important role in discriminating between the powerful and the powerless. According to the ideology of male superiority and female inferiority, all men are empowered to exercise 'right' over all women. Though Mammachi belongs to the upper class she has no right whatsoever in her husband's family. She is beaten, ill-treated. "Every night he beat her with a brass flower vase. The beatings weren't new. What was new was only the frequency with which they took place." (Roy 1998:47). Arundhati Roy has aptly remarked as follows : "I grew up very similar circumstance to the children in the book. My mother was a divorcee. I lived on the edge of the community in a very vulnerable fashion. Then, when I was 16, I left home and lived on my own, sort of ... you know it wasn't awful, it was just sort of precarious... living in a squatter's colony in Delhi." (Gopal 2008:1). Arundhati Roy not only attacks patriarchal oppression and claims the submerged voice of women; but she also calls into question the polarity between femininity and masculinity. Roy expresses her concern about gender roles and gender dynamics in her characterization and plot development. In R. W. Connell's words, "It is

not a fixed state. It is becoming, a condition actively under construction.” (Connell 2002:4). Because *The God of Small Things* deals with Indian men and women, dichotomy between males and females cannot be fully responsible for gender conflicts. As Connell rightly puts, gender is “a matter of the social relations within which individuals and groups act”. (Ibid: 9). One factor that essentially contributes to the social relations in the novel is race. “Caste, class and community in contemporary India are significant areas of concern for feminist activism. As in the case of gender, the Indian constitution provides guarantees that seek to balance the rights of religious minorities and historically marginalized caste groups. These include Article 14 that guarantee right to equal protection under the law; Article 15 that forbids discrimination on the basis of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth; Article 25 which guarantees freedom of religion; and Article 29 that guarantees to minorities the right to conserve their culture. (Gangoli 2007:10). As Moore (263:1997) articulates, “For Faulkner’s Indians, caste and class are defined almost exclusively in terms of non-native materials”, Roy expresses: “In the days that followed, Baby Kochamma focused all her fury at her public humiliation on Velutha. She sharpened it like a pencil”. (Roy 1998: 51). Roy also voices concern over the polarity between gender roles, an arbitrary division resulting from language construction. For her characters, the hierarchical structure is further complicated by skin colour and skin tone. Baby Kochamma, like Mammachi, has a double standard in matters regarding sex. What is permitted to man is strictly denied to woman according to her ethics. Obviously, she does not believe in woman’s needs or woman’s rights. That is why she does not comment about the smell of woman Chacko brings to his bedroom but wonders how Ammu can endure the smell of Paravan. As soon as Ammu’s relationship with Velutha is revealed, she locks Ammu and rushes to the Police Station with a false complaint. Eventually it leads to the death of Velutha and the banishment and dispersal of Ammu and her children. She is responsible for ruining the lives of Ammu (who dies at thirty-one), Estha (who becomes speechless at last) and Rahel (who does not find solace in her life). It was the result of her failure in love and she could not tolerate the boldness of Ammu to achieve her love. Baby Kochamma performs the role of ‘Lady Macbeth’ to divert the minds of Mammachi and Chacko, for concocting a false case against Velutha. It is not accepted by an unsuccessful lover to see a ‘flourishing-love’.

### **Gender Discussion in *The God of Small Things***

Before we proceed any further, let us have a look at this figure which is clearly represents the different man-woman relationships in the novel. Man-woman relationship dates back to the

creation or evolution of man. At the initial stage it must have been promiscuously sexual for procreation and enjoyment till man became egregious and started living in groups. The formation of human groups at a later stage must have caused the need and idea of a family. Once the institution of family came into existence, the social code for the family relationships also got formed. So, when the institution of family was there, the various relationships also got their nomenclature. Man-woman relationship in the form of husband-wife, father-daughter, brother-sister, uncle-niece, nephew-aunt, son-mother, cousin-cousin, etc. that brought in the institution of marriage and the systems of monogamy, bigamy, polygamy, monogyny, bigyny, etc. It deserves our attention here that marrying once/twice/many times; or having one/two/many wife/husband is permitted by a society concerned. Presumably no society allows brother-sister or father-daughter marriage. However, cousin-cousin marriage is permissible in some societies but not in the others. Following this society code or rejecting it has always been a dilemma for an individual, which can get expressed in a novel. In Chapter 8 of *The God of Small Things*, Ammu watches —from a distance quietly — Velutha, half-naked, playing with her children-aware of strange emotions forming and rising within her: “She was surprised at the extent of her daughter’s physical ease with him, surprised that her child seemed to have a sub-world that excluded her entirely, tactile world of smiles and laughter that she, her mother, had no part in it. Ammu recognized visually that her thoughts were shot with a delicate purple tinge of envy. She didn’t allow herself to consider who it was that she envied. The man or her own child. Or just their world of hooked fingers and sudden smile.”(Ibid:155). Arundhati Roy’s interior monologue scene remind us of Jane Austen in her use of third person singular rather than the first person singular. This allows her to maintain her authorial control over the narrative. The relationship between Rahel and Estha in contrast to the relationship between Ammu and Chacko is different in nature. For instance 23 years after the event that changed their lives, Rahel and Estha come together as “happy hearts [which] soared like coloured kites in a blue sky”(Ibid:6) and “their was no each, no other”.(Ibid:195). On the other hand, the hatred between Ammu and Chacko exists even when both go through failed marriages. Ammu grudges the masculine liberty that Chacko enjoys and Chacko uses Sophie’s death to turn out Ammu and Estha. The aspect of Estha-Rahel twin relationship is that it makes their other relationships rather tentative. Rahel’s failed marriage with Lary McCasline may be cited as an example. Germaine Greer’s words are pertinent in this context: “If female liberation is to happen, if the reservoir of real female love is to be tapped, this sterile self-deception must be contracted”. (Greer

1971:188). Ammu, the breaker of social taboos is seeking a shelter after a scattered shelter. She left her husband because he was an alcoholic. He even persuaded her to satisfy the sexual desire of Mr. Hollick, his boss, so that his job could be saved. The 'Cost of Living' is the last chapter of *The God of Small Things* and the most controversial. It has stirred up a raging debate on obscenity in her home state of Kerala, because of her description of a sexual encounter between the novel's Syrian Christian protagonist, Ammu, and a Hindu untouchable man, Velutha. Roy has powerfully painted the canvas of Meenanchal River of relationship between Ammu and Velutha: "He stood before her with the river dripping from him. She stayed sitting on the steps, watching him. Her face pale in the moonlight a sudden chill crept over him. His heart hammered. It was all a terrible mistake. He had misunderstood her. The whole thing was a figment of his imagination." (Roy 1998: 45). The novel unfolds with the marvellous interplay of gender, sex and discrimination. Roy's conscious use of language produces new narrative strategies, discloses unheard stories of women, and transforms traditional concepts of gender roles. The mutual consent is a key factor to cross the threshold to achieve a relationship, which is quite natural. The scene reminds of Eve of 'Paradise Lost'. The psychology must have been remained common. Eve ate the forbidden fruit under temptation: "the words are full of irony "So saying, in evil hour, forth reaching to the fruit, she pluck'd, she ate. Earth felt the wound". (Elledge 1997:197). The temptation leads Ammu to taste forbidden Velutha on the banks of Meenanchal, she explains this 'forbiddance' in the words exploding in her head:

"There is no time to lose  
I heard her say  
Cash your dreams before  
They slip away  
Dying all the time  
Lose your and you  
Will lose your mind." (Roy 1998:332)

The coincidences of these words are matched with the present state of the mind of hers. The song had ended. She could not escape herself out of the sexual temptation which was aroused by the song the way Eve was tempted by the serpent for eating the forbidden fruit. The song can be compared with Satan in order to evoke the feelings of Ammu. Temptation is a key factor to motivate and to develop the sexual relationship between man and woman. Temptation is clearly defined in the Oxford Dictionary as "the desire to do or have something that you know

is bad or wrong". It can also be argued that "Domesticity and personal relations have long been a key theme in (Indian) women's fiction...the concern is more often with sexual and family relationships than with areas which are thought to constitute public life." (Weedon 1987:153). Ammu had been all through her adult life, a woman of great strength, and this determination made it possible for her to take the initiative in breaking the love laws even as Velutha hesitated. All through their togetherness they knew that they shared no future and yet they willingly linked 'their fates', 'their future', 'their love', 'their madness', 'their hope', 'and their infinite joy'. (Roy 1998: 14-15). The manipulation of language empowers the speaker, while failure in voicing causes silence and lack of control. Roy's employment of Indian English manifests her concern about the female culture heritage and her challenge to the male superiority. Her experiments with *The God of Small Things* make the silenced women heard in double-voice narrative. For both Ammu and Velutha it was not a temporal fulfilment of desire but the threshold of sublime experience into new and higher realms of mystical and spiritual consequences. It was an initiation into divine mysteries, a kind of sexual oneness as described in '*Sons and Lovers*' : "It was as if he (Paul) and the stats and dark herbage, and Clara were licked up in immense tongue of flame, which rose upwards and upwards." (Lawrence 1999:442). The physical was the sublimation into the spiritual of the two lovers. 'The big things' never mattered, there never was anything much to say. They felt most secure in their limited world though it was the most dangerous place to be in. Roy has bravely and beautifully projected with sufficient intensity Ammu and Velutha's relationship as that of a man and a woman who meet and intensely recognize the other half of themselves. They feel familiar with each other and are immediately able to sense the unalterable fact that they have been – are – and must always be one: their destinies are linked. Roy is in a way questioning society's misplaced morality as to how rules and regulations can be imposed on a powerful and intense emotion such as unconditional love. Although these characters are suitably punished in the course of the novel, they also convey the author's self-decisions, resulting from "a desire both to accept the structure of patriarchal society and to reject". (Sandra and Gubar 1979:78) "He was called Velutha – which means white in Malayalam – because he was so black." (Roy 1998:46)

## Conclusion

The use of highly metaphorical language permits the characters to create their true feelings which govern their actions. The hidden feelings of Ammu and Velutha's relationship is never expressed in words: "Instinctively they stuck to the Small Things. The Big Things ever lurked inside. They knew that there was nowhere for them to go. They had nothing. No future. So they stuck to the Small Things." (Roy 1998:320). Veltutha is also the victim of caste ridden society. He is a low caste, carpenter whose only fault is that he has fallen in love with a high caste woman Ammu. He is a tragic hero who suffers unbearable physical pain. He is dismissed from his services with the family Ayemenem and is taken to the police station and what happens there is a heart-rending scene. "Boot on bone. On teeth. The muffled grunt when a stomach is kicked. The muted crunch of skull on cement. The gurgle of blood on a man's breath when his lung is torn by the jugged end of broken rib." (Ibid:308). The themes like child-abuse, unsociability, discrimination, love-marriage, sexual need, political scenario of late 60's, outcastes are highlighted. All these issues make this novel a centre of attraction. Child-abuse as one of the major problems in the society is raised by Roy through the character, Orangedrink Lemondrink Man, who forces Estha to masturbate him. "The Orangedrink Lemondrink Man's hand closed over Estha's. His thumbnail was long like a woman's. He moved Estha's hand up and down. First slowly. Then fastly." (Ibid: 64). Estha , which is short of Esthappen Yako, is a serious, intelligent, and somewhat nervous child. He is sexually abused by Orangedrink Lemondrink Man at Abhilash Talkies theatre. He never forgets this incident in his life. Man and woman are equally responsible to develop the physical relationship. It is found that Ammu enjoys the company of Velutha and initiates to develop the relationship. It is revealed through the reading that both man and woman want a kind of exploration which leads to physical and emotional satisfaction. It is further stated that real intimacy is only possible to the degree that we can be honest about what we are doing and feeling. Had Baba been honest to Ammu, her fate would have been different. She would have saved the life of Velutha. In the first rush of romance it makes sense for a man to engage in exaggerated praise of a woman's beauty and sexuality. Real intimacy depends on truth. Society plays an important role in making or marring this relationship. Man-woman relationship has been described in different shades and colours. The relation that the society approves of enjoys happiness and longevity whereas the relation established against the laws and wishes of the society gets crushed. Legal, honest, understanding,

fair, and healthy man-woman relationship leads to satisfaction, development and success in life; an illegal, dishonest, unfair and abnormal man-woman relationship results into physical, mental and social ailments.

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## RBINDRANATH TAGORE – THE VISIONARY SAGE OF THE WORLD

Prakash Bhadury\*

**Abstract:** Rabindranath Tagore is a versatile genius of Indian soil whose poetic contribution has no parallel. He is, unlike a plethora literary scholars and artists, a complete artist, not a fragment, committed to the spread of humanity in its totality through his works of a supreme culture in which art and religion merge together. Not a single aspect of life has been a slip from his all encompassing eyes that did not evoke his response and a solution. Vedanta philosophy galore in Tagore's poems and songs for, the Vedas are no book, but eternal source of knowledge. A thin line existed in him between mystics and poets. He meditated upon the man and nature and could verbalize that feeling in ornamental language evoking that latent mystical feeling in whosoever read him and appeal to all of us as some instantaneous strength and spirit. The legacy continues as inexhaustible source of inspiration. Mysticism, for him, is a response of the invisible, yet visible, and expressed the same through poetic language of truth and beauty of a universal instinct, of the existence of a supernatural clad in the natural. Heaven and hell are here and now, not somewhere above. We need an enlightened heart to realize that. The paper explores Tagore not only as a poet of the world but also as a visionary sage who sang for the entire world the songs of humanity, universal love, work as worship and the way to salvation as ends through right means.

The Gitanjali and other volumes of poems and writings reflect Vedanta philosophy. He realized that all the people are to be uplifted to the position of universal brotherhood, each one are to be educated to a higher level for the perfect understanding of both the world of beauty and that of duty, and finally, the world of 'Maya' only to realize the 'Self', the permanent. For him, the world is '*Karmabhumi*', and we are all 'karma yogi' to perform our task with sincerity of purpose. He is truly a man of the whole Earth, a product of the best of both traditional Indian, and modern Western cultures, and a visionary sage of the world upon whom humanity would look forward to in the hour of crisis for ever.

**Introduction:** Yeats was ecstatic reading the translations of the ‘Gitanjali’. He later wrote the introduction to Gitanjali when it was published in September 1912 and thereafter, both the poetry and the man were an instant sensation in the entire world. His spiritual presence was awesome. His words evoked great beauty. Nobody had ever read anything like it. A glimpse of the mysticism and sentimental beauty of Indian culture were revealed to the West for the first time (Chatterjee). He was the first non-westerner to be honored with Nobel Prize. Overnight he was famous and began world lecture -tours promoting inter-cultural harmony and understanding around the world. In 1915 he was knighted by the British King George V. A century has glided by since his Nobel Prize yet his multidisciplinary creative works seems to make his presence felt as if he is still writing for the present day to enliven the world as a large society trapped in vices and darkness. He is a bridge between religious India, and modern scientific West for, he is not only a poet and philosopher but also he had a good grasp of modern sciences like physics, chemistry and statistics. The father of Indian statistics, Prasant Chandra Mhalanavis, was his very good friend and admirer who often discussed on issues of science and its spread in India with the master. He was well able to hold his own argument on the newly emerged theory of relativity, quantum mechanics and chaos in a debate with Einstein in 1930. His meetings and tape recorded conversations with his contemporaries such as Albert Einstein and H.G. Wells, stand as cultural landmarks, and show the brilliance of this master of the masters who belonged not only to India but to the entire world. He exemplified the ideals important to us of Goodness, Meaningful Work, and World Culture. His point of view is non-sectarian; and the writings show the diverse cultures of Indian subcontinent and the world at large. He has dealt with all the issues concerning human beings and the society and attempted to reflect the hidden recesses of human heart letting the individual to fill the vacuum from within with the help of his music of all-encompassing love, cutting across the boundaries of narrow domestic walls. His ‘song-offerings’ is no religion, yet it can be called a new religious cult that binds music and words curiously balancing the both as the classics popularly known as ‘Rabindra -Sangeet’. He was the first to combine the Oriental and the occidental, ancient and modern, and an epitome of ‘Vasudhaiva kutumbakam’. His world view of love through music is of universal relevance. He practiced karma Yoga as his practical religion, reverted to old scriptures and the Vedas reflecting it in a new form and turned out as principles personified.

**World view:** Tagore was an advocate of inter-civilisational alliance. His vision was to make the East and West converge by a common thread of mutual sharing and caring in matters of science and religion. The same was also the mission of Swami Vivekananda who preached five years in America and Britain and Tagore, in fact, accomplished the unfulfilled task of the greatest ‘sannyasy.’ He was no doubt furious with the British cruelty and oppression in India during the colonial period, and felt that the West was often immersed in commercialism, political expediency, war-madness and “moral cannibalism” (Dutta: 193), and was unduly full of contempt for the East; yet he never gave up hope for a possible union of the East and West, in which the East and the West would be partners in a creative engagement, no discriminations whatsoever. He stated in a letter to Charles Andrews that he believes in the true meeting of the East and the West. (Dutta: 172). In a letter to Foss Westcott, Tagore further wrote, “Believe me, nothing would give me greater happiness than to see the people of the West and the East march in a common crusade against all that robs the human spirit of its significance” (Dutta: 197). Tagore believed that another world is possible by seeking to create constructive alternatives of thought, actions and institutions, and by bringing a measure of peace and justice and hope to the world. Tagore imagined of a commonwealth of nations in which no nation (or race) would deprive another of its rightful place in the world. The world probably failed to understand his message during his Nobel Prize in 1913, and soon after began the Great War followed by still the greater one—the WW-II.

After humanity was excruciatingly gorged with the blood in violent circumstances of the great wars, witnessed nuclear holocaust, moral degeneration, and loss of faith in existing systems of religion or in any belief system in the twentieth century, many had thought that human race would listen to and follow its great souls like Tagore; and the likes, and sanity would return to the world<sup>7</sup>. But that did not happen. Terror struck again and again the world has still been suffering colossal disasters. Such destructive events have all been undertaken in the name of nation-state. Had Tagore been alive physically in the present moment, he could not have borne to witness such gross inhumanity, and might be his divine presence could have changed the minds of the many into right thinking instruments to shape the politics a better system of governance with equanimity and equal share. Tagore had sung the song already: “We are all kings in the kingdom of our King, or else, why should we set our allegiance to him? (My translation).

In his short story, “Purification,” he exposes the absurdity of Gandhi’s *Satyagraha* movement and the hypocrisy of the Indian nationalists by showing how selfish and superficial the nationalists were in their quest for freedom; they were fervently opposed to the British oppression, but oppressed the poor as well as the untouchables themselves. His hope was that if India could establish equanimity between the various races and religious groups, through a basis of social co-operation and regeneration of the spirit, then she could hold herself as a model of unity for the rest of the world. Freedom struggle during the first half of 20<sup>th</sup> century was in its full swim but it was not a cohesive movement, for people were divided with their divergent ideologies, and sectarian loyalties. The endeavor was indispensable, yet the aberration in it, he seemed, would bring more bondage than freedom and the history bears the truth of his visionary speculations quite visibly and we still continue to suffer the brunt of that history. Tagore emphasizes racial and religious unity persistently in his writings. In a beautiful hymn to India, entitled *Bharat Tirtha* (“The Indian Pilgrimage”), he urges all Indians to unite across race, class and religion, shedding their differences, to fulfill the noble destiny of their homeland, standing above petty politics and narrow bounds of egotism:

Come, O Aryans, come, non-Aryans, Hindus and Mussulmans—  
Come today, O Englishmen ...Join hands with all—  
Come, O Downtrodden, let the burden  
Of every insult be forever dispelled.  
Make haste and come to Mother’s coronation, the vessel auspicious  
Is yet to be filled  
With sacred water sanctified by the touch of all  
By the shore of the sea of Bharata’s Great Humanity! (Qtd. in Quayum).

The way Tagore himself was brought under the servants admonition and a small circle drawn out around him in his childhood which was not meant to be crossed; the national boundary was in the same way was an arbitrary “circle” for him that circumscribed his wish to be one with the rest of mankind. He would not accept such thorny hedges of exclusion or the labels and divisions that stood on the way to the formation of a larger human community. He said that if nationalism is something imaginary, humanity has to readjust their imagination by being more inclusive and encyclopedic, or by extending the horizon of their mind’s eye, so that the fellowship of the species does not stop at a geographical border, like commodities. He affirms that man will have to make another great moral adjustment which will comprehend the whole world of people and not merely the fractional groups of nationality. Both India and Bangladesh have adopted his

songs as their national anthem due to the completeness of the visionary artist, philosopher and poet with which he embodied the entire subcontinent, nay the world. His very name is emblematic of a conflict of the East and the West symbolized as 'Rabindranath' and 'Tagore', and truly it is justified as he is the mark of unity of the entire world "Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls...the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habits" (Gitanjali-xxxv).

**Arts, Rationalism & Mysticism:** He had an open mind and a sense of wonder and awe about life and universe. He never had any dogmatic notion on any issue. He never took any decisive stand on any political issue, as he was intuitively aware that there are various shades to an issue and that the truth lies somewhere in between or elsewhere. That is the hallmark of a philosopher. His writings like, *Sadhana*, *the Religion of Man*, and other essays projected a view of life directing its roots to the Vedas and arranging the petals accommodating the diverse mosaic. Ancient Indian legends like *the Ramayana*, *the Mahabharata*, *the Puranas*, and *the Jatakas*, etc. were reproduced with new subjective turn and rational spirit as the old wisdom in new myth of the world. His playlets like *Karna and Kunti*, *Chitra*, and *Chandalika* give us new metaphors and symbols expressing the exact mood and temperament of the dramatis personae.

There is interior monologue of the characters to lay bare the unspoken thoughts and intuitive turns of the speakers. The writings in general engage us primarily to the matters of enlightened morality that allows no theft in the chambers of thought. His theme of universal love is a means to an end of discovering one's own Self in its complete power and glory in which both the good and evil are not binary opposites, neither one negates the other. Evils, for him, is a sort of '*hamartia*' in the spiritual development, a necessary ingredients of imperfection in a form of ignorance awaiting to be radiated with the glory of good, moving simultaneously in a rhythm in so far as the progression of life and death as re-composition and decomposition continues till the goal, the infinity is awakened. His dramatic literature, especially the poetic drama is a miracle of literary history and reflects the concern of this myriad minded man of ceaseless creative energy sustaining the world while balancing the mundane and the aesthetics, heaven and earth, nationalism and internationalism, and centre and periphery. Rationalism is best exemplified in *Gora* that speaks of Indian renaissance via the root of Bengal the main force of which is rationalism. Higher education liberates a man, and *Gora* displays that mark of higher education through his higher degree of rationalism. A renaissance for the nation is this vital force of rational outlook that alone can liberate the whole nation and human race.

He was some sort of mystic. There is a thin line between mystics and poets. We all have an instinctual feeling of the unknown, un-seeable, mystical feeling. Some have the urge and the time to devote lot of time meditating on it. Those who can verbalize that feeling in ornamental language appeal to all of us as it evokes that latent mystical feeling among us. Thus they become famous mystics. Not that they have discovered or invented any new reality or truth. Mysticism is a way (through poetic language) of evoking and accentuating a universal instinct of the existence of a transcendental world. But language, being a closed system with a finite set of vocabulary, can never express any truth about objective reality, which is a continuum, an infinite set. That's why Tagore's mention the Infinite and the merging of the self with infinite does not mean anything like a Derridian narrative. But it evoked a sympathetic mystical response from many. Art, for him, is the self expression of the God's infinite power expressed in some limit of an individual and it attempts to reach the 'purnata'-the perfection. His mysticism is the self expression of this realization of Gods omniscient potential.

**Karma yoga:** God has created this wonderful universe; nothing is imperfect here. Tagore does his work without any attachment of name or fame and contributed to His creation. He admitted that the translation of 'Gitanjali' and the concomitant fame in the west was uncalled for, for, his task was not to earn any petty name or fame, nor to have any cognizance of fear, or death, but to spread the fragrance of humanity silently without any ones notice just the way god or the nature performs its task so silently, yet so powerfully. Tagore's post office or originally '*Dak Ghar*' is explained variously, but the small boy, Amal, indicates Tagore himself in the childhood who had miles to go on the path of 'Karma yoga', the post office symbolizing the intercourse of daily life and the boy sensed the goal of 'Moksha' (liberation) from the heavenly king from this transit home. Tagore, having performed his unselfish task throughout questioned, "Where is the end to this interminable chain of work?" He sings at the fag end of his life why God welcomes him again and again once he has finished his task in this world, but he takes up the task smilingly, still.

Here, comes the perfection of his karma yoga inasmuch as he does it without any motive for the fruit of his work. Work for the welfare of the many, not for one's own body and mind. This is again the essence of the Gita what Sri Krishna asked Arjuna to perform. According to Swami Vivekananda the oppression of the lower classes, despising the masses by higher classes and making them object of hatred brought gross slavery to India and the result is that the west

looks upon Indians with the same contempt (Vivekananda 4: 173). Tagore understood it well and encouraged everyone to be perfect, not expecting his own deliverance in renunciation but embracing a thousand bonds of delight. He celebrated the tasks of wage earners, encouraged the menial laborers as the only movers of the world and its civilization. He was a committed hero in his work; it's a *tapasya* that intensified his altruistic feeling and actuated to unselfish work. Thus, the pursuit of work carried him to the last fruition of tapasya, mainly the purification of heart which leads to the realization of the supreme power-the Self or Atman. History of any nation is the annals of rise and fall. It always falls to rise again with renewed vigour and huge wave of change. Rabindranath, the symbol of sun -god, stands on the crest of the wave manifesting and radiating him upon the nation toward rise and the wave still continues. He swerved not an inch from his mission. He, like all other prophets of the world, could see the truth direct and hence, reasoned not. Upon that great sun each one of us is eying through a different glass and coming to look upon him as a sun of single or multicolored fractured object, not the whole. But his life has been a blessing to the world as deficiency and deformity continues to be a bound up principle as part of nature or whatsoever it might be termed though, and the light and inertia is again its concomitant blessings that come from a rare gem like a sage of his calling. He is a practical demonstration to the world of a principle, love for humanity and universalism. A lot of heat and dust still continues in this 21<sup>st</sup> century on the issues of cosmopolitanism, universalism, Diaspora and transculturation etc. But we have failed to grasp the essence of what they actually mean to us under the pungent spell of utilitarianism, for we missed the link of a single word, which is love for humanity and Tagore needs to be re-visited again and again for perfect understanding of this simple yet gigantic word.

**Vedanta philosophy:** Tagore was a soul who since the time of composing the Gitanjali was realizing the oneness of his soul with the eternity. What Swami Vivekananda once commented about Max Muller exactly befits Tagore to speak of him in exactitude, "Where others lose themselves in the desert of dry details, he has struck the well-spring of life. Indeed his heart-beats have caught the rhythm of Upanishad-know the Atman alone, and leave off all other talks" (Vivekananda 4: 279). His very birth of a saintly parents and the land of India are gifts of the teaching of Upanishad. His learning and philosophy have led him higher and higher to the realization of the Spirit. The purpose of all knowledge is freedom, hence, his free soul kept singing the glory of God; the music percolates and remains on the earth for on and all to inspire, illumine, and lead to higher knowledge. Rabindranath believes in the Joy of existence. He

accepts the Unity of all things, the *Advaita*. According to him, the super-personal God is in rapport with individual God. The part is but his reflection. The part cannot defeat the ends of the whole by the accentuation of itself. We find here, that Tagore holds the humanistic thesis that the goal of the world or cosmos is human and that its realization is a possibility only when the individuals act consciously towards the fullest exemplification of the Universal Man. This inner realization or consciousness of Man is essentially the recognition of oneself. Ultimate knowledge is really a synthesis, a synthesis of thought and action. This knowledge will lead not to the abstract impersonality of knowledge and reality but to the concrete personality of reality. Reality is a synthesis, a whole that ought to be apprehended as a Whole – not merely as nature, nor merely as spirit but as a unity comprising both the subjective and the objective. Man as a psycho-physical being is the sum total of this dualism of the subjective and the objective. Human being needs to subordinate its individuality to the whole; or else, it perishes. Civilization is the continual discovery of the transcendental Humanity or God. All men therefore should try to live for Man, for it is His Joy that the world reveals. Herein, lies the significance of the parts and having realized finite experience only we go beyond the finitude, and investigate the purpose for which the parts stands. It is only the artist who sees the All and the One, and understands the goal of human existence. Without the vision of the All, we are certain to sink down, and civilization would become nothing other than selfish enterprise. The Artist is the real Seer; he has seen beyond the temporal and the fragmentary. The Poets and the Artists alone can save the world, for theirs is the Vision of Beauty, Truth and Bliss. They alone can plan the future with sympathy and true Love. Aparthib Chaterjee remarks:

“The poetic words of Tagore are just expressions of his subjective metaphysical feelings, not of any objective reality. Human being is part of nature and both are imperfect as the reflection of the reality, but imperfection is not a negation of perfection; finitude is not contradictory to infinity; they are but completeness manifested in parts, infinity revealed within limits”(Reflection on Tagore).

This concept is closer to the ‘Vaishnavism’ which teaches that the finites were created by the infinite out of its own coil of spontaneous joy and all encompassing loves. Both are real, not illusory. This again has parallel to Buddhist philosophy that takes into account of the visible world of matter and the forces acting upon them. Tagore believes the principle of ‘Vishistadvaita’ (qualified monism) philosophy of Ramanuja against the unqualified monism or

‘Advaitabad’ of Sankaracharya. For Tagore, soul and the world are as real as the infinite power or the God which is also called the cosmic view of the Vedanta. Hence, when he sings the beauty of nature or man, he finds the same expression of God reflected in them. His life of action, selfless work we have inherited and has since been helping humanity irrespective of his race, creed, or clime, and “when the play time is over”, he remains with us in the “perfect pearl of the formless” (Gitanjali-C).

**Conclusion:** God has created this wonderful universe; nothing is imperfect here. Tagore does his work without any attachment of name or fame and contributed to His creation. He admitted that the translation of ‘Gitanjali’ and the concomitant fame in the west was uncalled for, for, his task was not to earn any petty name or fame, nor to have any cognizance of fear, or death, but to spread the fragrance of humanity silently without any ones notice just the way god or the nature performs its task so silently, yet so powerfully. He explained people in simple words, the word of music, the highest ideals of the Vedas or Vedanta by making an atavistic journey to the sacred scriptures. An intimacy and nearness like the umbilical chord is always felt to that of the Cosmic Person and his poetry has a ‘hymn-like quality in praise of that Cosmic Person’,<sup>1</sup> who is the creator of all the myriad forms and novelties of creation. The sages of India have breathed the idea of vision of God and scriptures have all these noted down. A person raised to the same height only can realize that and an objective correlative capable of evoking such feelings may be formed in a varying degree dependent upon the degree of perception. The Absolute is both visible and non visible and he celebrated the visibility as something present in every aspect of creation. We are born believers of personal religion. We understand all theories, principles when it comes to us through a materialized form and person. Tagore’s life- full of action, his world tour, establishment of Shantiniketan for universal education and above all his artistic genius show that he is a messenger and he found and formed his mission, swerving not an inch from that mission. No prophet, according to Vivekananda, ‘reasoned out what they taught’ (4:122); for they saw the truth eternal, beauty fathomless; in Keatsean terms it is truth beauty, beauty truth, and in Eastern terms it is *Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram*. Tagore had a direct strength of vision, not ratiocination of reason. There was no darkness, all illumination and he was not content alone; he sang for the humanity: Oh! My heart is filled and eyes washed with all encompassing light, and the same fills the world! (My translation) .Thus, Tagore stands as principle personified in the form of a visionary sage of India and the world.

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## EDITH WHARTON AND HER NEW ENGLAND---- A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO **ETHAN FROME**

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It was as the historian of New York society of the nineties that Edith Wharton achieved her eminence as a novelist. She herself said, "It was a field yet to be exploited by any other novelist who were following the traditions and conventions and had been tacitly regarded as unassailable." (Leavis 73) She became a social critic and historian. In fact she struck all the areas till in the end she included in her works the rustic and urban life and also the life designed by the newly developed industries. This made her more than a historian ----- a serious novelist. At the same time she was a social critic with extraordinary acute farsightedness.

**Ethan Frome**, which was published in 1911, is considered to be an important novel in the sense that it is the very powerful of the locale and social aspects of New England life. The novel was published at a time when American literature was full of optimism, cheerfulness and gentility. It was a time when the writers who were critical of their contemporary culture stressed upon the serious aspects of life and they equated the smiling aspect with falsehood, the grimmer with truth. Blake Nevius rightly places the novel in the main tradition of Edith Wharton's fiction because " it has a value, independent of its subject and technique, in helping us to define that tradition." ( Nevius 130) But at the same time, **Ethan Frome** can not be considered as a sport and it remains a minor classic. Alfred Kazin has linked it to **The House of Mirth** as he points out that it is a powerful demonstration of the spiritual value of failure but at the same time it must be said that Edith Wharton , like Melville , has tried to invest her uncompromising material with a tragic dignity of its own.

Edith wharton was brought up among the best people of New York who had the tradition of a mercantile middle class. This class had its values in upholding two standards of importance in any community---one of good manners and education and the other in business affairs and that of scrupulous probity. This society had lot of leisure with them and was satisfied with the moderate wealth they had. It was completely English in culture and had frequent trips abroad even while keeping themselves away from the English court and society. During her growth Edith Wharton witnessed this society disintegrating and its values succumbing to spiritual anemia. With her quick intelligence, she became aware of the changes from the outside that

could only be felt at the time by an insider and she tried to fix all that in her novels. The environment of her childhood and the traditions of her family provided her with a position to survey all these changes in the society.

Ethan Frome is a frame story being related by an engineer who obtains this story in pieces during his enforced stay in Starkfield village. "I had the story bit by bit from various people----" (Wharton 3), is the opening line of the novel. In this famous novella we find a situation , which is different from that in her major works only in superficial manner. **Ethan Frome** is a story of three characters namely Ethan, Zeena and Mattie, entangled in a grim dilemma. Wharton weaves the theme of the vanity of self - sacrifice with the primary theme of the limits of individual responsibility. It was an age when political impulse was driven underground and the dangerous ideal of free enterprise became the living motto of the period. The unprecedented rise in business activities leading to unheeding social hedonism was the cause of worry and "it suffered the comeuppance of a society which fails to invigilate its economics, adjust to human interest, and question its illusions."(Bradbury and Palmer 12)The note of despair arising from the contemplation of the useless sacrifices serves as a trigger to imagination of the characters and their selfish and passionnal bent of mind is always held in check by the puritanical assertion of the responsibility. For Ethan, as for many of Edith Wharton protagonists like Eliza Bunner, Charlotte Lovell, Newland Archer, Kate Clephane, Martin Boyne and Nova Manford who face the same alternatives, the inherited sense of duty is very strong and sure to be victorious but the conquest leaves a sense of futility as is entailed by self sacrifice.

Their moral transactions as such preclude to satisfactory balancing of accounts. Ethan's useful even heroic possibilities are very carefully drawn in his characterization. He had desired to become an engineer and for that purpose he even got some technical training also. " Four or five years earlier he had taken a year's course at a technological college at Worcester, and dabbled in the laboratory with a friendly professor of physics; and the image supplied by that experience still cropped up at unexpected moments, through the totally different associations of thought in which he had since been living."(27) This is one side of his character and the other which made Edith Wharton predisposed to treat his character with sympathy was:

He had always been more sensitive than the people around him to the appeal of natural beauty. His unfinished studies had given form to his sensibility and even in his happiest moments field and

sky spoke to him with a deep and powerful persuasion.(33)

Moreover, he was kind, social, generous with impressive physical appearance. "Even then he was most striking figure in Starkfield, though he was but ruin of man " (3) And all this made Edith Wharton to invest this rather uncompromising human material with a tragic dignity. Ethan Frome had looked and acted thus ever since the crashing of his sled twenty four years ago. Ethan, who was a young man with intellectual aspirations, had to leave his engineering studies due to the death of his father and he came back to his village to look after his farm and saw mill. His mother became queer(13) after the death of his father. His cousin Zenobia Perice, Known as Zeena, came over to them from the next valley to help in nursing Ethan's mother through her last illness. After the death of his mother Ethan marries Zeena to overcome his loneliness though she is seven years senior to him. Zeena turns out to be a shrew and she develops hypochondria. She seems to live only to be ill. "Ethan and his wife Zenobia seem old at time of events in the story; we learn with some surprise that they are, respectively twenty eight and thirty four."(13) This early coming of old age to them may be attributed to Zeena's illness and Ethan's continuous encounter with suffering in his life." Sickness and trouble: that is what Ethan had his plate full up with ever since the very first helping."(13)

The couple takes a hapless girl, Mattie, a distant relative of Zeena, to help in the household and look after Zeena as was recommended by one of her several doctors." Mattie Silver came from Stamford and when she entered the Frome's household to act as her cousin Zeena's aid it was thought best, as she came without pay, not to let her feel too sharp a contrast between the life she had left and the isolation of a Starkfield farm."(32) Mattie is the girl who takes up the job of an unpaid servant, who can be abused with virtual impunity. With the frailness of Mattie, Zeena gets more than ample opportunity for such an abuse. Mattie and Ethan develop mutual attraction though innocently. Both of them are beaten down by Zeena's harshness and pretended ill health. Their happiness consists of inarticulate flashes of rapport. Zeena discovers this, plans to send Mattie away and resolves to take a hired girl instead. Zeena declares that she had given job to Mattie for one year so she was no more her responsibility. She is ordered to leave the very next day, as her already hired replacement is to arrive. Zeena arranges for the handyman to take Mattie to the railway station but Ethan declares angrily that he would drive her to station and he does so.

It is on the last drive that rapport between Ethan and Mattie ceases to be primarily in articulate as it now becomes a mutual passion. Confused motions of rebellion stormed in him." He was too young, too strong, too full of sap of living to submit too easily to the destruction of his hopes."(130)The hopelessness of their love is borne in on them more strongly than ever before. But the only way they can do that is in death. They try to commit suicide but are unsuccessful. Mattie is the one who actually proposes suicide. They take off in the sled flying down the slope. Though injured they survive. At the time of the fictive narrator's visit to Starkfield, they have been living at least twenty four years after the smash up. Ethan is crippled while Mattie is bedridden for life in intense pain. From a cheerful girl, Mattie turns into a querulous woman depending on Zeena's care. Ethan, though crippled, still carries on the business of eking out a dull life from his farm.

It is a measure of Wharton's powerful writing that we are shocked by the apparent changes in Ethan, Mattie and Zeena, for even as we are shocked we are to accept. There is , in **Ethan Frome** an image of life-in-death, of hell-on-earth, which cannot be easily forgotten: the crippled Ethan and Zeena, his wife, and Mattie, the once charming girl he had loved, " Mattie was, before the accident; I never knew a sweeter nature"(179), now bed ridden and querulous with pain, all living out their death in the kitchen of the desolate Frome farm ----- a perpetuity of suffering memorializes a moment of passion. Mrs. Hale's words in the novel explain this situation very well, when she says:

-----And I say if she ha' died, Ethan might ha' lived; and the way they are now, I don't see  
there's much difference

between the Frome's up at the farm and the Frome's down in the grave yard; 'cept that down they  
're all quiet, and the

women have got to hold their tongue.(181)

The final lingering note of the story is one of despair arising from the contemplation of spiritual waste. So emphatic is it that it drowns out the conventional notion of the value of suffering and defeat. Ethan himself sounds it just before his last, abortive effort to escape his destiny:

Other possibilities had been in him, possibilities sacrificed one by one, to Zeena's narrow-mindedness and ignorance.

And what good had come of it? She was a hundred times bitterer and more discontented than when he had married her;

the one pleasure left in her was to inflict pain on him. All the healthy instincts of self defense

rose up in him against such  
waste ----- (131)

Certain propriety controls the literary representation of human suffering. According to it the representation of pain may not be gratuitous as it were; it should not be an end in itself. Human suffering is self- indulgence and it may be a cruelty if it is represented in naked manner or is contemplated. Despite differences in the soil and economic status of the characters, the same theme runs under the surface as in other writings of Wharton.

Ethan Frome is the character closest to the source of ideas that determine the ethical judgement of Edith Wharton. **Ethan Frome** represents a part of the mind of New Englanders and this portion is still dominated by Puritanism and its ideas too have not been weakened as is the case with the over populous industrial and commercial centers which have taken their shape in two decades. In the novel, Denis Eady has been shown as the one representing the shift in methods of business. Denis Eady was the son of Michael Eady, the ambitious Irish grocer, whose suppleness and effrontery had given Starkfield its first notion of 'smart' business methods, and whose new brick store testified to the success

of attempt(31)

Many readers of Edith Wharton who have not gone through Edith Wharton's biography associate her with Boston or with New England though it is not wholly on the strength of **Ethan Frome**. Though she was highly influenced by her New York origin and background and her long career abroad, but the view of reality in her novels is governed by the moral order of **Ethan Frome**. There are many thematic concerns and stylistic features in **Ethan Frome**, which have their parallels in other works of Edith Wharton. In one way, **Ethan Frome** is a sequential study of the disintegration of a class, similar to that of Edith Wharton's own elitist aristocracy. At this point the remarks of Canby are quite illuminating. According to him:

In her one important departure from her society and New York - in **Ethan Frome** - Mrs Wharton wrote a striking footnote of her career. For, in this famous story, she turned to another dying class, inhibited and unstrung by different causes, but equally futile, equally doomed ----- the ethical New Englander (Canby 6) **Ethan Frome** lacks the density of the social experiences of other works of Edith Wharton. The power of this novel lies in the fact that it has the quality of a form of literature that illustrates consultations of wisdom and experience. It has the quality of going straight to the heart with the economy, which is a powerful stylistic weapon. As R.W.B.Lewis puts it:

....the treatment of setting and characters both show Edith Wharton in perfect command of the methods of literary

realism; **Ethan Frome** is a classic of the realistic genre. At the sometime, it is Edith Wharton's most effective American

work; her felt affinities with the American literary tradition were never more evident.(Lewis 309)

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## Food and the Caste System

Fewzia Bedjaoui\*

The caste system in India has stratified society both for Hindus and even non- Hindus over thousands of years. Food is strongly related to the mainstay of daily orthodoxy and rituals. Caste division refers to restrictions on eating and drinking. Every caste imposes restrictions on its members with regard to both food and drink and thus each caste group has its own laws which govern the food habit of the included members.

**Key words:** caste, food, Hinduism

Closely related to the social ground of Indian experiences is a rigid religious structure: the caste system (1). The caste system is one feature of Indian society (Griffith, 1966) which ranks society according to occupation with graded discrimination based on birth. There are different theories about the establishment of the caste system which remains rather obscure for strangers to the Indian culture, notably religious, biological and socio-cultural.

The religious theory explains how the Varnas were created but does not explain how the Jats (2) in each Varnas (3) were set up. Purusha, the primeval man, destroyed himself to found a society and thus the different Varnas corresponded to different parts of his body (Ibid: 43). The Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and the Shudras (4) believed to have emerged respectively from his head, arms, thighs and feet.

This is how the caste system is supposed to be in its religious form . But it is much more complex and different from its religious form. The biological theory mentions that all existing animated and inanimate things possess three qualities but in different proportions . *Sattwa* qualities involve wisdom, intelligence, honesty, goodness, while *Rajas* consist in passion and pride. *Tamas* include a lack of creativity and intelligence. Consequently, people with inherent negative or positive qualities occupy different jobs: Brahmins, Vaishyas and Sudras possess Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas qualities respectively.

Since food affects its eater's intelligence, the Brahmins, Vaisias adopt a Sattwic diet which includes fruit, milk, honey, roots and vegetables. As meats are believed to have Tamasic qualities, Sudra communities eat different kinds of meat but not beef. Yet, Kshatrias have Rajasic diet, notably eat deer meat and mutton.

As to the socio-historical theory, it explains the setting up of the Varnas, Jats and the Untouchables. Following it, the traditional caste system developed more than 3000 years ago when Aryan-speaking nomadic communities migrated from the North to India around 1500 B.C... The fair skinned Aryans arrived in India from South Europe and North Asia. When they arrived in India, their main contact was the Dravidians, originating from the Mediterranean and who were the largest community in India; and the Austroloids who possessed Australian features, but they disregarded the other local communities, i.e. the Negrito who have similar physical traits to people of Africa; and the Mongoloid. They conquered northern regions pushing these people southwards and towards the jungles and mountains.

The Aryan priests according to the ancient sacred literature of India, the Manu Smriti or Law of Manu (5) (written before 200 B.C. and A.D. 100) divided society in a basic caste system consisting in four great hereditary social divisions. Locating their own priestly class at the head of this casteist society with the title of earthly gods, i.e .the Brahmins, the fourth of the original castes, the Sudras were born to be the servants of the three other castes. Completely outside the social order and confined to undertaking the most menial and unappealing duties were the Untouchables (6), the Dravidians, the aboriginal inhabitants of India (7).

Thus, the caste system developed out of two main strands of thoughts, i.e. hierarchy and purity (8). Hierarchy is natural in the sense that a hierarchical social structure is part of the divine intention for natural order. As to purity, it is emphasized particularly through the importance of particular rituals.

The caste system has been perpetuated by the Hindu (9) belief in reincarnation, samsara and quality of action Karma. According to these religious beliefs, all members are reincarnated on earth. The first three castes are twice-born, dvija because they have a second spiritual birth (10) when they are invested with the sacred thread. They have a chance to be born into another higher caste but only if they have been obedient to the rules of their caste in their previous life on earth. In this way karma has discouraged individuals to cross caste lines for social relations of any caste.

Since the characteristics of a Hindu caste include rigid hereditary adhesion to the caste into which individuals are born, the practice of endogamy, i.e. marrying only members of the same caste, limitations on the choice of jobs and on personal contacts with individuals of other castes and the submission by each member to a fixed place in society, the caste system could be seen as a powerful mechanism for social control. But it is not confined to Hindus and influenced all strata of Indian society among Muslims, Sikhs and Christians.

The complexities of the caste system have constituted a serious obstacle to social progress in India. Moderation of the caste system was probably felt under British rule beginning from around the seventeenth century to 1947. The British legislators did not agree that punishments should be greater for Untouchables than Brahmins who committed the same offence. However, Untouchables and lower caste Indians enjoyed an improvement of their social standards. With wealth and education, these newly educated middle class people could mingle increasingly since under British colonialism, it was wealth and education which determined a person's social status and not caste. It was no longer mandatory that the son follows the calling of his father. By the end of the Raj (11), a rising strong middle class with a greater sense of Indian nationalism developed allowing men of lower castes to reach high ranks and positions of power closed to them before. (12)

Indeed, alternative attempts towards eradicating unjust social and economic aspects of the caste system have been made through educational and reform movements. The first great leaders in this endeavour were M. Gandhi (1869-1948) (13) and Dr B.R Ambedkar (1891-1956)

(14), particularly to abolish and forbid untouchability. But discrimination and man / woman (15) exploitation remained common. Many Untouchables have converted to Islam, Buddhism and Christianity in the hope of a better life. Besides, the Indian Constitution makes untouchability illegal (1950). But, substantial inequalities: in education, employment, and income based on caste and ethnicity.

Indeed, any individual is willing enough to question and challenge, to some extent, the existing norms. The vital thing is that nobody is born prejudiced, because prejudices are attitudes that one obtains from the surroundings, i.e. home, school, work and very often one cannot justify them with any legitimate thinking. One takes so much for granted, passing them from one generation to the next, accepting customs, values and traditions without questioning or objecting to them,

particularly when they are constructed on a religious basis. Since culture evolves over time, can customs be changed through inter and intra communication?

Notes:

- (1) the term caste is derived from Portuguese *casta* , meaning pure or chaste and denoting family strain, breed or race. It had been used first by 16<sup>th</sup> century Portuguese traders. The Sanskrit word is jati. The Sanskrit word varna denotes a group of jati or the system of caste .
- (2) Jatis form the complex multi-layered present day system .They were exclusive social groups defined by birth , marriage and occupation . For example, the Brahmins have jats (communities) like Gaur, Konkanash, Sarasvat, Cyer ... The outcastes have jats called Mahur, Dhed, Mala, Madiga.
- (3) The term refers to the colour and are the historical division of society into four broad classes.
- (4) The Brahmins or priests included educated people of society. The Kshatriyas involved the warrior or rulers and the aristocrats of the society .The Vaishyas consist in the merchants or artisans and landlords of the society . The Shudras gather the unskilled labourers and servants, the working class of the society. The Untouchables remain too lowly to be within the varna system and work in degrading jobs like cleaning , sewage .
- (5) The legendary lawgiver and father of mankind had laid down the fundamental rules of caste behaviour. A legend says that in the first age , the Krita Yuga , all the peoples of the world belonged to one caste , the Hamsa . But because of the degeneration of mankind , other castes developed during successive ages , i.e. the Ksatriyas , the Vaisyas, the Sudras belonged to the Treta Yuga (2<sup>nd</sup> age) , Dvapara Yuga (3<sup>rd</sup> age) and the Kali Yuga ( the present corrupt age).
- (6) Religiously , anyone who does not belong to the four Varnas is an outcaste and untouchable, to whom were added the Pariahs , people expelled for religious or social sins from the castes into which they had been born .
- (7) In fact, most of the communities that were in India before the arrival of the Aryans were integrated in the Sudra Varna or were made outcastes depending on the professions of these communities. Those who professed non-polluting jobs were integrated in Sudra Varna whereas those who held polluting jobs were made outcastes.

(8) The practice of oral transmission of knowledge due to the absence of a literary medium itself becomes a tradition, recited or chanted rituals .

The Brahamans are very strict about cleanliness. They believe that diseases can also spread through air not only through physical touch . Perhaps, because of this reason the Untouchables are not allowed to touch the high caste communities and to stand at a certain distance from the high castes .

(9) *Hinduism* appeared in English in 1829.

(10) It is central to Hindu faith. Hindus believe that the soul passes through a cycle of successive lives and its next incarnation is always dependent on how the previous life was lived.

(11) Under British rule, the British wanted to rule India efficiently and made lists of Indian communities: the high castes; the lower castes including untouchables ; the Schedule Tribes who reside in the jungles, forests and mountains of India ; the other backward classes involving the Sudras and former Untouchables who converted to other religions.

(12) The Sepoy Mutiny (1857-1859) against British rule in India was not successful, but affected Indian people leading to the creation of a middle class with a strong sense of Indian nationalism.

(13) Mohandas Karamchad Gandhi, named Mahatma , literally *the Great Soul* (1869-1948) was a peace-lover , a preacher of love , brotherhood and unity . He believed deeply in his philosophy of passive – resistance and humility .

(14) He rejected the authority of the Hindu scriptures that gave religious sanction to the system and made Dalits ( the Oppressed , the Children of God) aware of their own identity and culture ; he converted to Buddhism.

(15) The submissive feminine role has more complexity than in the West . A special positive power comes from suffering and action of this sort is regarded as inherently female . Hindu religion perceives the Mother Goddess as the creator of the universe. Sakti means power which is female energy and exists to give power to the male gods in the guise of their female consorts. In her most violent form is Kali , the demon slayer . In her benevolent form, the Goddess is Sati . Kali is not just a violent destroyer but does not destroy the whole world, only evil is destroyed . Kali is a rejuvenating force while Shiva ( husband) is purely destructive .

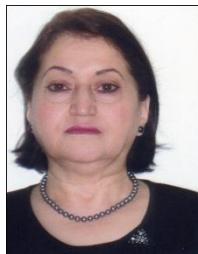
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## **Jesus, The archetype: Between D.H. Lawrence and Gibran K. Gibran**

Azzeddine Bouhassoun\*

Although of different backgrounds, different cultures and nationalities, it is amazing to track some similarities in terms of thought and ideas in D.H. Lawrence's and Gibran K. Gibran's writings. Both of them were brought up by Christian devoted mothers and drunkard fathers. The former novelist was born in Eastwood, Nottinghamshire, England on 11 September 1885 and died of tuberculosis outside his homeland on 02 March 1930 in Vence, France. Whereas, the latter was born on January 6, 1883 in Bisharri, Lebanon, and died of tuberculosis too on April 10, 1931 in New York City, United States. Their Christian faith and their closeness to their mothers will shape their mature life and writings. Their readings and influences range from Jesus of Nazareth to Nietzsche to Sir James W. Frazer to Jung, as the culmination in their rejection of the Christian God. However, they remained and even grew very religious. In this article, we will see how they conceive and develop their vision to Jesus, as a mere archetype of an experience.

**Key words:** religion, myth, archetype, Jesus, Gibran, Lawrence, Frazer, Jung

Both Lawrence and Gibran read C. G. Jung (1875-1961). We know that Gibran portrayed Jung (Bushrui, 22), and they had multiple meetings in New York.(Dahdah, 335) . Jung headed towards developing the collective unconscious as being more important than the sexual libido and its development in the epistemology of the emerging science. In fact, and unlike Freud, he came to believe that libido alone cannot account for the development of personality and then civilization. His theory claims there is simply one cultural pattern in all men's stories and mythologies regardless of the intrinsic variations of these cultures. He categorizes them into archetypes as long as the structure of all these stories is the same. These are a set of images, symbols knit in religions, myths, cultures, art and literature and even dreams. In other words, the psyche is a very religious structure. What is important, regarding Jung in our study is his introduction of the hero archetype, the archetype of the hermaphrodite or the principle of animus or again the masculine aspect in a woman's psyche and anima which is the feminine aspect in man's psyche, the archetype of the mother, and at last he explained the Christ as a symbol of the self. In his chapter entitled 'birth of a Hero', Jung explains how the archetypical image represents at last the human nature. (Jung, 295)

Both authors were interested in the folklore of the Semitic people. Sir James William Frazer (1854–1941) might have been the initiator of such interest. We already know that Lawrence read Frazer's The Golden Bough (1890), and Gibran must have read him too as he suggested the translation of his Folklore in the Old Testament (1919). The book comes into two chapters, the first one 'The Creation Of Man' and the second one 'The Fall of Man', but it is essentially about the uniformity of human religious thought through comparative studies of world mythology and it does not seem far from the theme of the dying reviving God developed in The Golden Bough. Even Jesus is reported to be a relic of the pagan God much like any vegetation deity. The idea might have scandalized the Christian community at the time. But it is essential to remember that the idea behind Frazer's books is that humanity, in her development, has gone through three phases: magic, religion and then science, as the ultimate step for this development. Therefore, man lives some mythical recurring archetypes, and this is the same idea towards which headed Jung in his collective unconscious. The encounter with the traumatic and painful past is also the encounter with the desired one in almost a deviant sexual transgression and taste, and both Lawrence and Gibran take pleasure. Both of them will reconstruct the past and its myths in the lap of the Goddess this time and away from the father's authority. But reconstructing the tree of life with their own personal vision is the deconstruction of the dogmatic bible, and entering the amazing world of the occult and magic. Hence, the strangeness of the initiative: from a positivist approach to religion, to a personal religion in order to end up in the lap of the occult through theosophy and freemasonry. Deriving a sense of the irrational and the mysterious from the past is a return to some sort of infantile behavior. The remembrance of Jesus as an individual memory and a social one is not to proclaim a historical God or his coming Kingdom, but it is more the transformation that the archetype of Jesus might provide them with. His myth was mistakenly taken to a bare symbolism, hardly understood now because, according to them, we go through the same mystical experience of the mystery of life and death that mythical Jesus experienced. It is the experience Christianity abolished for a postponed divine and glory nature of man. Memory goes beyond the pre-Christian era to revive the sacred feeling of 'the eternal self of a man [who] emerges from hell, and at the very instant of extinction becomes a new whole cloven flame of a new bodied man with golden thighs and a face of glory' (Lawrence, 66). Memory is to remind us that the ageless wisdom of mystery religions still survives through Christianity, and that man lives the archetype of primordial events, and many religious facts or events are kept and recorded in the memory of lay men. However, they keep only the symbolic aspect without understanding

the meaning. Jesus's ascension or Persephone's Underworld visit, or Elijah's ascension are all mystical human experiences. Elijah as an archetype, or else Samson smiting the Lion, or David slaying Goliath, or St. George killing the dragon remind us that they represent part of the human nature that man wants to tam. "The dragon is identified with Lucifer and Satan" (Lawrence, 87), but "modern philosophers may call it Libido or Elan Vital" (Lawrence, 91). Both Gibran and Lawrence think of women as healers. The self-regeneration goes through healing and transformation through the female principle of the Self. Both writers seem to raise not only a spiritual, but a philosophical and ontological question about man. Man is sacred and the self is sacred and only a sacred healing and ritual through and with a female can achieve this sacredness. Along with imagination, probably under Blake's influence, the whole universe seems to participate, and the body that receives the healing also receives the transformations of the wakening. The image of mythological Jesus is an archetype of the dying reviving God, and meeting God through death is a rehearsal of the unfolding of the spirit. This unfolding is to be achieved through desire and not agape. Christianity in her rejection of desire seems to hate life, to hate the body and all that is earthly and real. The use of the myth as an archetype shows the eternal battle between good and evil, light and night, and male and female. Gibran's parable 'tyranny' in his The Madman (1918) displays this mythical battle. Even Jesus is the allegory of seasons, and all his miracles are nothing but allegories as well to express the spiritual development of man. Melachi of Babylon, from Jesus Son of Man, (1928) knows that "There are no miracles beyond the seasons, yet you and I do not know all the seasons. And what if a season shall be made manifest in the shape of a man?"(Gibran, 315) Both Gibran and Lawrence were aware of the procession, and that is the reason why they interpreted Christianity on pagan grounds. Jesus is not the Son of God, but rather the Sun of God. The Judeo-Christian tradition seems to betray pagan foundations or perhaps they are a natural evolution of religion. The older religions speak of only one Goddess, the divine mother that many ancient cults called under different names Isis, or Astarte or Mithras and the list of solar deities can go on. For both authors, all these religions respect the renewal of the seasons the way they respect the regeneration of the body and the soul, and the mysticism approached was true to nature and the cosmos. The God of the pagans seems more human to them and more sensual that one can feel. He is a God that dies only to revive again. The grief and joy of rebirth were celebrated and a whole natural system of rituals was placed to welcome and mourn the dying God. Thus, not only

the intellect was satisfied as Christianity required, but all the senses of the believer participated in the ceremonies and the worship.

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**Environment and Eco- Feminism in the Selected Poems by Margaret Atwood****Bhakti Vaisnav\***

Eco-feminism is a movement that equates exploitation of ecology and females. Springing from the main discipline of feminism, it bridges the gap between ecology and feminism. As female body is considered to be a site and the myriad ways in which it is exploited, the same is the case of the earth and nature on the whole. Man as colonizer has tried to prove his sovereignty on the Mother Nature also. Thus, built on the insight of ecology, feminism and socialism, eco-feminism is an ideology which does not sanction oppression based race, class, gender, sexuality and oppression of nature. Ecofeminism, a radical social movement of the 1970s was perhaps the first of its kind that sought to draw a parallel between the suppression of women and that of Nature, by man. The term ‘ecofeminisme’ was introduced by eminent feminist Francoise d’Eaubonne in 1974 to project women’s role in the emergent ecological revolution. Defining ecofeminism is likely to be restrictive and inadequate as it is a multilayered perspective. However, Mary Mellor characterizes it as “. . . a movement that sees a connection between the exploitation and degradation of the natural world, and the subordination and oppression of women.”(Marry 27) In other words, ecofeminism seeks to establish a link between the degradation of nature (naturism) and oppression of women (sexism), which, in a larger context, can be related to the repression of humanity in general (racism, imperialism). Ecofeminism is closely associated with studies of environmental ethics which encourages a feminist analysis of the treatment of both women and Nature at the hands of a society that is predominantly patriarchal.

The web and the quilt are prime metaphors that are central to ecofeminism –. The web of life suggest interconnectedness, reciprocity, mutuality, and other relational values that serve to describe man in relation to his fellow beings, and to the non-human natural world. Feminism derives its environmental dimension from this concept of human beings as relational and ecological selves in a biospherical network of interdependent relationships that question hierarchical oppositions. The ecofeminist quilt is multi-tiered and multilayered, and since it does not impose any design or actual pattern it tends to challenge value-based hierarchies. Ecofeminist

writings seek to theorize the link between human society and its natural surroundings through a feminist and ecological framework. It deals with an understanding of the important connections between the domination of women and Ecofeminists, in short, examine the symbolic,

psychological and ethical patterns of destructive relationships between Nature and human society, and aims to replace it with a life-affirming culture, founded on mutual respect, trust, and dependency. In other words, ecofeminists envision the establishment of a society wherein human beings and Nature exist on an equal footing.

The paper studies her poems before 1975 , published under the title *Selected Poems 1965-1975* and tries to see how issues of environment and ecofeminism are enmeshed in her early works. The poems are remarkable because it speaks of the contemporary world and how a female, Canadian and yet to establish herself poetess responded to the questions on Canadian identity in creative writing, identity of a female writer . At the outset it is important to mention the fact that it is difficult to judge if Atwood wrote her poetry with an agenda to write on ecofeminism but it is also true that it is very much evident in her poems. The fact is the 60s and 70s were the decades during which it was impossible for a conscious and progressive writer like Atwood to be ignorant of the intellectual debates and the ideologies that prevailed in the contemporary world. Thus, the zeitgeist of the world gets reflected in her poems of this period. Margaret Atwood has been a committed environmentalist and feminist from the beginning of her career as a writer. Her father was an entomologist and she spent eight months every year in forest with her father and family. Thus, environment has been an integral part of her perception of the world since childhood. Her experiences at the forest have also shown her the fierce side of nature too. The Canadian landscape is not so congenial for humans and more so in the forest where the nature is unpredictable and unknown. Thus, she does not create a romantic – escapist image of nature ; in her poetry nature is shown in both benign and wrathful. Again it is important to note that she has often mentioned in her interviews that her works during that period are not necessarily informed by the contemporary feminist discourse. The society she grew up in , was facing similar problems like war, recession, colonization and parallel advancement of science and technology , as the rest of the west faced did. Therefore, her response to the position of woman and poetic expressions reveal feminist concerns. The given structure of gender roles was a big hurdle she herself had to overcome during her early career as a writer. She describes the way society perceived women writers in the following words:

“ She wasn’t up on the current dirt about female writers, and did not know that these stern and dedicated creatures were supposed to forgo all of that, in favour of warped virginity or seedy loose living, or suicide- suffering of one kind or another.” (Atwood: 2003, 15)

Therefore, her writings capture various shades of contemporary life seen through a woman's eye. Her works traverse through past and present often touches upon the future. This sets her work within the framework of ecofeminism that often relates gender roles with the ancient times. It also uncovers the link of human history that has suppressed the female for ages. Thus, the myths and allusions to past in her works also represent one of the feminist techniques of questioning and reclaiming past of and for woman.

Much celebrated *This is a Photograph of Me* sets the tone and announces Atwood's agenda in the collection. Here the poems are structured around two worlds: 1) one in which reality is obscured and made distant by romantic / mythic images and 2) the other conveys the facts of matter. The tension between these two world is enriched by the imagery of Canadian landscape. Atwood constantly examines human settlement against the wilderness surrounding it and society against the savagery from which it arose. For her, these oppositions are some of the defining principles of Canadian literature. She tries to capture the harsh nature that is part of Canadian life. They also become metaphor for the divisions within the human personality. Society, civilization, and culture represent the rational, contained side of humanity, while the wild forest represents the very opposite: the irrational, primeval, and carnal impulses that exist in every living being. In *The Animals in That Country*, Atwood dramatizes the civilized urge to ignore the wilderness lurking just over the horizon: in "Progressive Insanities of a Pioneer," she captures this theme with particular vividness: "In the darkness the fields / defend themselves with fences / in vain: / everything / is getting in."(Atwood: 1976, 61)

In *She considers evading him* the womanhood gets compressed over ages and gets united with other species. The protagonist identifies and relates herself with woman of primitive time, vegetation and termite. The infinite potential to grow and give birth unites her with the rest. Here, the potential for giving birth becomes central point and asserts its capacity to create . Thus, it puts the female on a higher rung giving her more power and thus, subverts the power politics. Malashri Lal gives a similar opinion when she says,

" Body and nature have been patriarchy's' shadow ' easily projected onto common who thought her biological rhythms and her domestic milleu is easily seen to be 'close to nature'...Man's enterprise in subduing female nature to his mechanistic and technological domination over the earth's original environment. The exploitative realtion between man and woman, and man and nature is equated."(Lal, 212)

The allegory works at two levels in Circe/ Mud Poems, one based on Circe, and one on Mud. The first is the relation between men and women: the permanence of male-female bonding among humans in general and in our society in particular, the fulfillment of desires, the sources of power for each gender, the blocks between them, the reasons for the self-involvement and distrust. On the other allegorical level, we read the history of the domination of the earth by humans, its resistance, its source of power and attraction, its occasional submission, the significance of humans acquiring the earth's power; again, this level has a general meaning, and a specific one for Canada in its historical confrontation with the wilderness and its present attitude to natural resources. Some of the poems , in this group are prosaic and argumentative. Within this formal structure is contained apparent chaos, a great variety of line lengths and stanza forms, including prose poems . Thus , the form also subverts the epic tradition that celebrates hero centric version of the myth.

On the first level this poetry demonstrate the way Circe lures Ulysses by giving things to him and how he cleverly takes him without falling into her trap. Metaphorically it stands for the give and take that happens between man and woman / man and nature. The land, the female is ready to give away everything. It comes almost naturally to her to give away what she owns; her desire to share everything that she has is very strong. A stereotypical norm that is ingrained in female psyche for ages. To give , for her is not to oblige or not claim. It is also not a bargain . The sentiment is to share and feel united . But for the other it is not so. It adds to his desire of having it more. The agony and the anguish of this endless desire of owning controlling what she has is voiced in the following lines:

“ This is mine, this island, you can have

The rocks, the plants

That spread themselves flat over

The thin soil, I renounce them.

You can have this water,

this flesh, I abdicate,

I watch you, you claim

Without noticing it,

You know how to take.”(Atwood : 1976, 209)

The mud is essentially pliant and silent. It also symbolises the silence and transformations expected of woman in society. She is expected to be a mute object for pleasure. The earth is also seen as an object full of possibilities for being exploited at man’s will. She renders a story of a man who constructed a woman out of mud with the help of another man on a remote island. Both of them loved her and she in turn loved both of them equally. Thus, the attitude of man is expressed in the way woman is constructed as a site on which they had their will.” His love for her was perfect, he could say anything to her”(Atwood, 214) shows his utilitarian and megalomaniac approach towards woman/ the earth. In the story the men feel that no woman equaled Is the mud woman. Pained by this expectation from her, the persona asks :Is this what would you like me to be, this mud woman?(Atwood : 1976, 214)

The enchantress with her exotic island and the earth converge into each other in these poems. The feeling of loathsomeness and seething anger is a recurring theme in the poems. Man as a colonizer , has explored woman’s body . Woman as a land and man as a cartographer and colonizer tracing female body is an image in one poem here.

So now you trace me  
like a country’s boundary

.....  
And I am fixed, stuck  
Down on the outspread map  
Of this room, of your mind’s continent.”

Towards the end of these poems, Atwood vindicates Circe and allows her to speak for herself. The myth till date describes her role as negative and celebrates the hero. She is always shown as the one who laid entrapment. Here , she defies the age old blame on her and sole responsibility of the entrapment. Ulysses was not naïve nor ignorant. She says,”

“You had a chance to read up on the place before you came:

Even allowing for distortion, you knew what you were

getting into. And you weren’t invited, just lured.” ( Atwood : 1976, 207)

These poems again deal with continuous and strenuous tension that exists between man and woman/nature. To conclude, we can say, Atwood sees feminism and environmental concerns as an intertwined issue that is prevailing in our society. As a committed environmentalist and feminist voice of Canadian Literature not only shows male exploitation of nature –woman but also shows how ironically, nature and woman, sometimes the situation upside down and becomes the real source of power. The acute tension of this nature versus man, man versus woman, colonizer versus colonized and multitude of the manifestation of power and experiences are captured by the poet with precision . By subverting power politics and sometimes by just representation she jolts the readers. She shows the reaction of woman/nature,,the manifestation of the anguish ,the hidden power and highlights the potential of destruction that female/ the nature carries. Probably , the threats hinted b her then are manifesting themselves through various phenomena due to climate change.By posing questions on ecofeminism 40 years back she wanted human beings to realize what harm they were causing to females and ecology , perhaps that's why she said" See for yourself"

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## Towards a Definition of Cultural Industries and Illustrations from Anglophone Africa

Fadia Bedjaoui\*

### Abstract

This article deals, to some extent, with a tentative definition and enlarged explanation of a key concept, notably "cultural industries" on the one hand. On the other hand, it tries to locate the existence, initiative or/and promotion of these cultural industries in the English speaking countries of Africa, being fundamental repositories of distinct cultures.

**Key words:** Anglophone Africa, cultural industries, government

Although the definition of the concept "cultural industries" is quite fluid, the latter are linked closely to all creativity, cultural knowledge and intellectual property to produce products and services with both social and cultural significance. They, therefore, have a potential for wealth and income generation through the exploitation of cultural property and production of knowledge products and services, both traditional and contemporary. Thus, the 'classical' cultural industries include: broadcast media, film, publishing, music, recording, design, architecture, new media; and the "traditional arts", visual arts, arts and crafts, theatre, musical theatre, concerts and performances, literature, museums and galleries. Such interdependent definitions are closer to the work undertaken by the Welsh writer and critic of cultural sociology: Henry Raymond Williams (1981, 209). The term "cultural industries" is almost used interchangeably with the concept of "creative industries". Assuming that the concept of "cultural industries" refers to industries whose inspiration comes from heritage, traditional knowledge and artistic elements of creativity, the concept of 'creative industries' focuses on the individual and his own creativity, innovation, skill and talent in the exploitation of intellectual property. This reminds us of two key points: cultural value and commercial value. This shift towards the cultural consumption and making money is of course linked to a more general process. Cultural industries are very competitive at the local and global levels, but all countries have their own particular competence, based on their history, culture and environment. And it is a role that the State/government should play in supporting art and culture, because as for language, culture is essential for communication and is the carrier of identity values.

Probably, we can now distinguish better the term cultural industries; this term was used for the first time by two theorists of the Frankfurt School who were interested in power and the consequences of the cultural industry on the company to make a distinction with the term of mass culture: Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, and translated from the German *Kulturindustrie*.

We investigate the term culture, inspired by T.S. Eliot (famous writer and Anglo-American critic) who perceives the term culture, in Towards the Definition of Culture, according to three different meanings: in the direction of development of an individual, of a class or the whole of society while Matthew Arnold (English literary critical and writer of reputation) in Culture and Anarchy (1925), seems to have a more limited interpretation since it concentrates on the first aspect. As to the Convention on the Protection and the Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, it was adopted by the 1982 UNESCO and supplemented/amended in 2005. It underlines the recognition of the importance of creative and cultural industries protected by various agencies and organizations, such as the International Organization of Labour, the World Organization of Intellectual Property.

This reflection is based on an understanding of the specificity of cultural goods and the respective markets and the consequences of the market failure of culture, which also has a considerable economic spin-off (UNESCO, 2005, 5). For example, quality craftsmanship, a resource emerging from creativity, is a real reservoir of jobs in many countries and observance of copyright is an essential condition for the strengthening and development of cultural industries. However, the piracy or counterfeiting reduces the efforts made in this direction. On the other hand, these cultural industries that include music, cinema, audiovisual production and the media as well as crafts and design such as architecture and different visual arts, performing arts, are one of the most dynamic sectors of economic life and world trade. There are already cases of major successes, for example in South Africa, India, Colombia, Venezuela, China, Brazil where the music industry is 4-5% of turnover worldwide; it is also the major theme during summits and ministerial conferences, such as the Conference of the Ministers of Culture of the African Union in Nairobi, Kenya (10-14 December 2005), which has approved an action plan on: "the cultural industries" for the development of Africa.

So, what about the status and prospects of these "cultural industries" in a few English-speaking African countries? Governments in Anglophone Africa are for the promotion of cultural identity. Governments undoubtedly encounter financial difficulties and there are English-speaking

African countries where we recorded certain cultural disappearance if the culture is not a political priority. The countries of Africa where English is the official language or one of the official languages are as follows: South Africa, Botswana, Cameroon, Eritrea, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Uganda, Rwanda, Saint Helena, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somaliland, Southern Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe. In Cameroon, the artists are independent: only 7% of the budget was allocated in 2011 to cultural industries. This country has a lot of very productive artists but lacks of public and political support. In Eritrea the development of arts and cultural industries themselves had been hampered. Music and crafts represent the cultural heritage of the country but though the Ministry of Information and Culture exists, no information was available with regard to budgetary allocations or cultural programs. However, a light support is given to cultural exhibitions, dedicated in large part to the history of the war of liberation. According to statistics in 2013, the Government of Ghana has increased its budget for the development of cultural industries. In 2004, the cultural politics of Ghana recognized the importance of the development of cultural industries as an affirmation of cultural identity, and the contribution of its dynamic force to the economy, social, aesthetic, political and religious life. The government supports also several unions of musicians, film unions, the safeguarding of the cultural heritage through its National Commission of the Home Culture. Liberia is known for its graphic arts (the famous "African mask"). On the other hand, Malawi has an important tradition of literature, the performing arts: the National Dance Troupe, graphic arts. Over the past years, the Government granted increased importance to the integration of culture in sustainable socio-economic field that was finally included in the national strategy of development 2011 - 2016. Malawi actively cooperates with the European Union and its National Commission to UNESCO has contributed largely to the creation of the Coalition for the Cultural Industries of Malawi as a national forum for the strengthening of cultural industries and the development of women's participation to cultural entrepreneurship.

In Nigeria, the film, prominently: "Nollywood" ranks the first, then come music, art, print, fashion, etc. Nollywood turnover figures are \$500 million per year. Yet, the cultural industries of the country suffer from a lack of legislation on the protection of intellectual property.

The Government of Rwanda gives almost no support to the cultural industries of the country. A light support is given to the national dance troupe of Nyanza. According to the official data of the Ministry of Commerce of Rwanda, 420 cultural associations are active in the country, 100000 people are hired in crafts, graphic arts. Music, crafts and dances represent the cultural heritage of the country. In Sierra Leone, there is a decline of the cultural industries. The Government supports almost not cultural sector. The national policy is being developed: the Government is proposing the creation of the National Committee of Culture and the regional cultural centers. Today, in South Africa, social concerns emphasized the development of cultural industries with significant reductions of budget allocated to culture though some art institutions were closed. Recently, the National Initiative of the South Africa rapid growth was launched; it identified the film sector and crafts as being the most profitable for the national economy.

In Zambia, the National Art Council is responsible for the promotion of cultural industries in the country. The Government built cultural villages to support the creative economy. In Lusaka, the cultural village of Kabwata houses approximately 60 people who live and work in making wooden sculptures, handicrafts and souvenirs. In Livingstone the cultural village of Maramba, is an ambitious project for the creation of a performance space to promote cultural products and traditions of Zambia. Cultural villages attract tourists. Visual arts, crafts and design are areas with high potential in Zambia. There are a few galleries in the country, but the creation of an internet art gallery is encouraged to promote the work of local artists. With regard to the audiovisual sector, there are some interesting initiatives. Muvi TV is an example of local production which is 65% of television programs. The National Art Council is responsible for the promotion of cultural industries in the country. Thus, taking into account the enlarged meaning of the term "creative industries" closely related to "cultural industries" (Cunningham 2001, p. 19), one wonders if this point of view of creativity is not also at the heart of the Government, in political and economic debates. If not, then there seems to be a certain inconsistency and incomprehension or even irrationality.

Culture can help meet what policy has separated as well as acceleration and the consolidation of the process of restructuring the economy. On the other hand, cultural action can develop properly on solid material and economic bases and should not be separated from socio-economic reality. A creative, strong and structured economy allows artists to be independent and to create freely. Conversely, the freedom of expression allows free artistic creation, and finally to increase the

audience of artists to build a creative, stable economy and guarantee the artists their rights and status. We must professionalize the status of artist, set up structures, functional, independent and competent management of the rights of artists, supported by ambitious cultural policies and respectful of international conventions. Governments need to ensure artists complete freedom of creation and expression, for that a strong political will is necessary, and states must be assessed by independent bodies.

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## IDENTITY IN A CANADIAN MULTICULTURAL CONTEXT

Sidi Mohammed Farouk BOUADJAJ\*

### Abstract

This is an attempt to find solutions to the issues of identity and belonging that emerge from a multicultural situation. Canada witnessed a harsh sociopolitical struggle to prevent the steady erosion of language, culture and heritage among Canada's francophone and Anglophone communities. With the signing into law of Section 23 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, official bilingualism was recognized and francophone communities acquired the right to educate their children in their own mother tongue, notably French. While official language minority education rights are protected by the Charter and the Official Languages Act, the provision of quality education for minorities remains a challenge in such a multicultural context. I wanted to investigate government language policy in Quebec where there are dominant varieties of languages. Then, I tried to explore the prominent place that the idea of culture has, for the construction of identity and its sub sequential implications for social membership in contemporary multicultural societies, as a whole.

Key words: identity, language, multicultural

### Status of Mother Tongues

The status of mother tongues is particular in Quebec where two official languages are prevailing: French and English. Such a linguistic situation raises the issue of identity construction and belonging. At the educational level, institutions must create an appropriate context where the socio-cultural background can shape the teaching and facilitate the learning process. At the societal level, education must aim at fostering critical and creative thinking skills addressing linguistic and cultural diversity towards the promotion of a common cultural identity embracing intercultural understanding. The educational and multilingual experience of Quebec shows, to some extent, that language and identity are closely related and that intercultural communication is the "raison d'être" of human self-fulfillment. Conflict or cooperation in future inter-ethnic society depends largely on education.

In Canada, there are two groups of official language minority communities: Anglophones in Quebec and Francophones outside of Quebec. While both groups face a number of language challenges, minority Francophones meet particularly difficult issues associated with: a shrinking demographic profile and an aging population; below-average employment rates and above-average unemployment rates, limited access to cultural representations and unfavorable educational opportunities and outcomes. Educational reforms are being undertaken for the improvement of the welfare of the minorities. The government implementation starts from the first phases of education, mainly at the primary school level. But, what is relevant is that such a

challenge has to include all the variants and variables: geographical, political, historical, ethnic, social, religious and Linguistic.

As to its Government, Canada is a federation of ten provinces (Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, and Saskatchewan) and three territories (Northwest Territories, Yukon, and Nunavut). Formally considered a constitutional monarchy, Canada is governed by its own House of Commons. While the governor-general is officially the representative of Queen Elizabeth II, in practice the governor-general acts only on the advice of the Canadian prime minister.

### **Varied Ethnic Population**

The first inhabitants of Canada were native Indian peoples, mainly the Inuit (Eskimo). The Norse explorer Leif Eriksson probably reached the shores of Canada (Labrador or Nova Scotia) in 1000. But, the white man settlement started in 1497, when John Cabot, an Italian in the service of Henry VII of England, reached Newfoundland or Nova Scotia. Canada was taken for France in 1534 by Jacques Cartier. The actual settlement of New France, as it was then called, began in 1604 at Port Royal in what is now Nova Scotia; in 1608, Quebec was founded. France's colonization efforts were not very successful, but French explorers by the end of the 17th century had penetrated beyond the Great Lakes to the Western prairies and south along the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico. Meanwhile, the English Hudson's Bay Company had been established in 1670. Because of the valuable fisheries and fur trade, a conflict developed between the French and English; in 1713, Newfoundland, Hudson Bay, and Nova Scotia (Acadia) were lost to England, during the Seven Years' War (1756–1763).

Having given a panorama of the land and people, it is interesting and attracting to investigate the language issue since language is considered as the first and the most important part of identity. Individuals were therefore viewed "*as occupying particular social identities throughout their lives by virtue of their position in the social structure*" (Bucholtz, 1999, p. 209). The consistency of educational standards is very important to Canadians as they ensure that learners will have only the best quality instruction. Whether they choose to study on the East Coast, the West Coast or anywhere in between, they would not be disappointed as they do not have to speak both English and French to study in Canada. However, they must have to show proficiency in at least one of them, depending on the institution they apply to.

### **Why Canada**

In the late decades Canadian policy towards immigration significantly favored the coming of immigrants from all over the world, but those latter had to fit to some standards fixed by the Canadian government. The first one was that of language and consequently they were to master the French language for the French speaking places and reciprocally English for the remaining part. Then beyond language a high educational level was required. Canada is one of the richest countries in the world; it is a member of the G 8 and G 20. New immigrants expressed

enjoyment to be educated in a French Canadian school that both curiosity and perplexity pushed me to inquire into this new land of hopes.

As far as the Quebec System of Education is concerned, it includes fundamental parameters: The ethnicity is varied and rich comparing to other provinces. A large range of multiculturalism prevails in this province as people from all over the world and of different origins can be found. Quebec displays rather a political motivation to gain its independence from Canada. As the integration process of the newcomers is facilitated when it starts at an early stage of education, the implementation of government legislation occurs first at mainly the primary level. Due to the advantage of children aptitude to acquire languages; because of their brain plasticity, it gives children a superior ability to acquire language, even though "*the older learner is seen to have the advantage in vocabulary expansion.*"(Penfield & Roberts, 1959). I was influenced in my choice because I personally know primary school pupils that are integrated to the local school environment, and wished to investigate into education and integration issues in this part of Canada.

### **Dilemma of the coexistence of French and English**

All this family, social, historical, educational background, urged me to make up my mind and locate my research on Canada. Since Canada had been colonized by the British and the French, it created a sort of duality between the two existing civilizations where each of them tried to reinforce its presence. They focus on their cultural heritage which includes at first their respective languages and culture to preserve their cultural identity, beside the already established native civilization, the Inuit. The dilemma is as follows: how all the existing populations can live together and live without bothering one another in all levels starting from that of education to political and to that of language dominance. So, inevitably it would lead to cultural identity defiance .Thus, what is a Canadian identity? To what extent do educational institutions raise the status of mother tongues, including dialects so as to better learners' academic and psychological aptitudes in a multicultural context? What is a cultural identity in a country where two official languages are prevailing, notably French and English?

At first sight I can provide tentative answers to these fundamental questions. First the policy of language and culture towards educational achievement stipulates that education institutions must create an appropriate context where the socio-cultural background can shape the teaching and facilitate the learning process. Second, one of the main aims of education is to foster critical and creative thinking skills addressing linguistic and cultural diversity towards the promotion of a common cultural identity embracing intercultural understanding.

Active acculturation ensures that students are exposed to elements of the francophone culture by integrating the community into school activities and by engaging students in community life, or in other words by making the family, school and community partners in student learning. Thanks to the full state engagement in such a process, developing self-determination helps students to recognize their linguistic and socio-cultural situation and to become self-motivated to maintain their language and culture. They could meet their need for autonomy by giving them the

opportunity to make their own choices, their desire for competence by allowing them to succeed at relevant tasks, and their choice of belonging by offering them a warm and fulfilling environment. Autochthons, French and British settlers and newcomers from all over the world would live together and blossom out: is it a reality or utopia? Though there is no certain answer to this kind of questioning, it is worth at least wondering and trying to find eventual solutions outside the confines of time.

### **Multiculturalism**

The following quotation shows, to some extent, the inter-relationship and interdependence of language and culture.

“The existence of many languages in the world implies the existence of many cultures. Beyond lists and typologies. The interrelationships among languages and their speakers create interest and tension. So it is with cultures.” (John Edwards, 1994, p.176)

How do they connect, interpenetrate and conflict with one another? In fact, given that closeness between language and culture already discussed before, one can appreciate that to talk about language contact and cultural contact is, very often, to discuss the same issue to some extent. A common example is found, which, in at least some facets of the Canadian language, where language is a suitable and visible attach upon which to hang broader social concerns. Official or *de facto* policies which recognize more than one language are sometimes driven by political necessity and do not always indicate logical convictions about the value of multilingualism. Equally, multicultural adaptations may arise according and through needs rather than from an unconditional desire to exalt diversity.

On the other hand, there exists sentiments encouraging of cultural and linguistic pluralism; sometimes these are strengthened because of modern perceptions that some global “one culture” threatens. With the proclamation of the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* in 1988, for example, Canadian government endorsed such policies for regional and minority languages which clearly put the stress on multiculturalism. Considering that from diversity, they valued unity.

Large issues remain debatable as legislating about cultural diversity means anything more than emigration policies, for example. Furthermore, if there is a broader base nowadays for the protection and maintenance of cultures, particularly those seen to be at risk of assimilation, there are also prevailing fears, perceived not always from natives but from racist provenance of social or ethnic differences.

Many of these matters can be seen transparently in Canada since it is an immigrant receiving country, particularly from varied world states whose origins are multi-ethnic and multicultural. Particularly in Canadian contexts, tensions which obviously exist widely can be amplified. I would go further, however, and mention that, in the arguments surrounding cultural pluralism

and assimilation in the New World, we see matters for very obvious reasons(John Edwards 1994), such as the prevalence and perpetuation of cultural differences.

### **Inseparability of Culture and Language**

It is commonly accepted that language is indeed a part of culture, and that it plays a very important role in it. Some social scientists consider that without language, culture would not be possible. Language simultaneously reflects culture, and is influenced and shaped by it. In the broadest sense, it is also the symbolic representation of a people, since it comprises their historical and cultural backgrounds, as well as their approaches to life and their ways of living and thinking. Brown describes the two as follows:

“A language is a part of a culture and a culture is a part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture.” (Brown, 1994, p. 165)

That quote shares the idea that culture and language are inseparable.

Many linguists explore the relationship between language and culture.

“Language and culture are two symbolic systems. Everything we say in language has meanings, designative or associative, denotative or connotative. Every language form we use has meanings, carries meanings that are not in the same sense because it is associated with culture and culture is more extensive than language.” (Nida, 1998, p. 29 cited in *Wenying Jiang2000*)

Nida holds the view that people of different cultures can refer to different items while using the same language forms. For example, when one says lunch, a Canadian may be referring to hamburger or pizza, but an Algerian man will most probably be referring to a steamed homemade meal. In the same sense speakers are described as actively exploiting linguistic resources available to them in order to project differing identities for different contexts. Such a choice itself represents an act of identity: “*An individual creates for himself the patterns of his linguistic behavior so as to resemble those of the group or groups with which from time to time he wishes to be identified.*” (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, 1985, p.181). They emphasize both the organization of speakers in their ability to handle linguistic resources available to them and the ability to actively scheme different identities through language with various interlocutors.

### **What to do?**

The solution is ambivalent, a mediated position could be recommended: we might encourage innovative trans-culturally dialogues, which struggle to understand what it perceived for pupils and their parents. Forge identities in rapidly changing national, social and cultural contexts. Support parents in their efforts to contribute to their children’s early literacy development or promote assimilation and integration within the host country. In the same sense preserve the rooted culture and identity without denigrating the Canadian one. In addition a least and not last

resolution could be recommended; share mutual respect of traditions, religions, languages and customs with Canadian multicultural pupil population. Issues relevant to language planning in general in Quebec context: what is a Canadian identity, specifically in Quebec? What about mother tongues in the bilateral conflict of the French and English language within education? Does it promote the Canadian value among immigrant pupils? What about their respective culture? Shall they cut the bridge in order to shape a new kind of identity or shall they merge between the rooted one and the new or conferred one?

### Conclusion

Only a minority of pupils could retain their mother tongues and speak both English and French. Linguistic duality remains a challenge. Yet, the Canadian authorities could amend laws not only for the sake of majorities but also for the survival of minorities. The Canadian government is warrant for the civil liberties and blossoming of population, it is not as the other countries since the regional differences are to be taken into consideration. The contact with mother tongues was crucial if they did not want to lose them. Their exclusive home usage was not sufficient to warrant their survival in multilingual provinces. The pupils undergo dilemma. They were lost between their ambivalent attachment toward their mother tongues and the fundamental need of mastering the host country language. The pupils could not denigrate their mother tongues for a new one nor could they underestimate French. They inflict fluctuation of languages within a pluralistic and multiethnic society. They were compelled to fit to the needs of the society and everyday life; French at school, mother tongues at home and with relatives and other languages with friends and also with relatives if the parents were of different origins. The concrete observation was that through time the external environment, outdoor and schools excelled over the internal one which was home.

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## Media and Literature: Two sides of the same coin

Dr. Shammi Nagpal\*

Media and literature are two very important pillars of any society. As pillars both of them need to be equally strong. Looking at and around the World today, one realizes that any society would emerge as a strong one if the two are interrelated. Any form of literature directly influences and vice versa. If media could portray the literature of that society, it would have a more far fetching impact. So I would like to talk about media and literature as interrelated and their effect on society. Research shows that media plays a dominant role influencing the adolescent's perceptions as well as helping them to define their sense of self. Adolescence can be an unsettling and confusing time for young adults. All the changes in their bodies and social relationships force them to question who they are and how they fit into the world around them. This is a period that is marked by severe psychological and emotional stresses, of increased self awareness and concern with social acceptance. Media is a strong influence for constructing meaning in their everyday life. As also claimed by social comparison theory that "People will (at some point in their lives) compare themselves and significant others to people and images whom they perceive to represent realistic goals to attain." (Botta 1999:26). Media explains, defines and shapes the world around us. We don't even realize when we start making the automatic comparisons to those situations that are close to our lives. After making these comparisons, we are motivated to achieve our new found goals. Adolescents are more vulnerable to media images since they haven't reached the stage where they can critically determine and analyze. They are more likely to take all the images portrayed in the media at face value. They start looking to the media to define how they should act and look. "Media consumption gives adolescents a sense of being connected to a larger peer network." (Arnett 1995:524) This is especially true for adolescents in the age group of 13 to 14 years. Granello found that "girls at the age of twelve, seventeen and twenty one looked to the media to help them define social meaning in different ways. All three age groups looked to television programs to help them construct meaning into their lives. Twelve year olds looked to the media to define how their lives will be. They looked at the characters and situations presented on television and believed that if they modeled themselves in the same manner they would be able to achieve the same status and rewards as those characters presented". (Granello 1997:24) Whereas the older ones perceive it differently.

“Seventeen years olds looked to the media as a way to see how their life could have been given different circumstances whereas twenty one year olds are able to distinguish the difference between their lives and the fantasy lives portrayed on the television shows.”(Ibid: 54) Each form of media plays a different role. All the young people across the universe look to the media not only to develop interpersonal skills but also to define their own place in society. Each form of media can play a different and crucial role in influencing these people. Television happens to be an important tool that makes light of some serious societal issues and at times even distorts them. A new culture of television daily soaps has all women as central characters but they are portrayed only in two lights- as tormentors or as victims. The same T.V culture portrays the men as weak and indecisive ensared all the time by glamorous, decked up women whereas in reality both the genders play an equal role in the good and the bad. The fact is that there is a huge potential for a better and more realistic projection of women. We have to remember that media is no longer a mere reporting device. Today it is one of the most important means of shaping and influencing public opinion. All the negativity that is shown in daily soaps can have a very negative impact on the mindsets of young girls. Both in the west and in our country, media projects women in power as cold-hearted and detached career women. This very often sends a wrong message that a powerful woman has to sacrifice her family, all healthy relationships and even her sanity. Media does not provide enough models for a young girl who aspires to become a scientist or an astronaut or who wants to run a company. Music videos have also been found to have a strong influence on young boys and girls as how they should look and behave. Also added is the fact that in the recent past, sexual content in the media has become more explicit. What is disturbing is that their consequences are not talked about as explicitly thus misleading the young people. Teen magazines also present over-sexualized images and messages. It has been seen that the teen magazines encourage the belief that the ability to achieve successful inter personal interactions occurred through the use of sexualized manipulation and girls are taught that seductive poses, pouts and stances are acceptable and necessary ways to be successful and attain fulfillment.” (Peirce 1990:372) A study also reveals that most of these fashion magazines concentrate on physical beauty thus forcing the young girls to suffer from anorexia and bulimia.

Turning to the other pillar of the society i.e. Literature, let us first look at what exactly its purpose is. It is the written record of thoughts, in a language that gives pleasure and stimulation. Thought is a natural reaction of mind to the presence of internal or external circumstances. The relationship between the age in which it is written and literature is very natural since these

reactions bear the impression of the age. Literature is not only shaped by the society in which it is produced, it also shapes the people who read it. Some of you might not be aware that W.B Yeats, the great Irish born English poet symbolizes the revival of Irish nationalism and culture and that he lived and made his reputation sore not just by writing poetry and plays but by playing a very important role in giving Ireland an identity and also arousing the nationalist spirit and their cultural identity which they had forgotten to be their own. What is disturbing is the fact that the people of our country show little appreciation towards the literature. The literature that mirrors our society could also act as a parameter or a guide or an inspiration. It has given voice to the struggles and victories of our past and could also inspire its people to protect the country from any external threats. We do not come across many people who are in habit of reading books nor do we see people going towards the public libraries unless they are students and want books related to their courses. As a result, our society comes up as one whose literature dies along with its poets or writers. This is a well known fact that a society where literature cannot thrive will soon be engulfed by ignorance. If we want to take any corrective measures, the first will be to encourage the children to read. Another more effective way can be to portray literature through media. Since media has such far reaching effect on the young minds, it would be very beneficial for the society if it picks up certain positive things from literature and puts them across to people in the form of movies or T.V shows. There has been some effort in this direction which needs to be deliberately increased. It started with a Hindi writer, Gulshan Nanda whose romantic stories became very popular in the 60's and 70's and gave several successful Hindi movies like *Sawan ki ghata*, *Pattar ke Sanam*, *Kati Patang*, *Sharmeleen*, *Jheel ke us Paar*, *Jugnu* etc. But these stories were never a part of good Hindi literature. There are some well meaning books from Hindi literature as well as literature from other Indian Languages that have left some impact on audience. Some of them, I would like to share with you. Ruskin Bond's short story *A flight of Pigeons* was made into a very powerful film 'junoon' by shyam Bengal in 1978. This classic film conveyed the turnmoil of sepoy mutiny of 1857 through crazy infatuation of a Pathan for his young Anglo-Indian captive. Then legendary director Satyajit Ray made a film on a story based on Munshi Prem Chand portraying the historical drama set in the turbulent times of last Nawab Wajed Ali Shah of Avadh. Punjabi writer Amrita Pritam's novel *Pinjar* was made into a film in 2003 which depicts a woman's travails in pre-independence India and impact of partition on her small family. Then Sharat Chandra Chatterji's Novella of romance between a spoilt, rich young man and his lovable orphaned neighbor has been the subject of several films in both Bengali and

Hindi, out of which *Parineeta* has been a much talked about film with a message of “ all castes being equal “. A more recent example is Chetan Bhagat’s novel *Five point someone* which was not read by as many people as has been watched when adopted into a film called “Three Idiots”. The social message of putting undue burden on children could not have been delivered, had it not been adapted by the electronic media. Another important way of making literature popular through media is to create writing sites. It was very rightly said once that “The future of the book is the blurb”. It seems to be coming true with so much fiction being produced on twitter. Writing fiction on twitter and distributing the work on social media platforms creates more audience. Some young writers have been doing this and are very happy with the response. Not only do they get more readerships but also have the opportunity to get real-time feedback on their work. There is also the chance for the audience to feel closer to the writer and interact with them. There is a number of writing sites that make it easier for people to come together. In short, if literature and media come together, we can look out for a better society.

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## **Tourism at Brahamsarovar, Kurukshetra – Economic Impacts and Scope**

*Dr.Nirmal Singh\* Dr.Sachin Sharma\*\**

### **Abstract**

This study explores responses of shopkeeper and vendors around brahamsarovar area who have their financial dependents on tourist movements in and around brahasarova. There are around 100 such shopkeepers and vendors in this area. To assess economic impacts of tourism 70 structured questionnaires was filled by researcher and Manova was implemented to find out the results.

### **Introduction**

Brahmasarvara is one of the ancient, holiest and largest men made bathing tank in Asia. Al Beruni mentioned about this holi water tank in his book named “ Kitab-ul- Hind.” Wherein he wrote the tank as “the tank resembles an ocean”. Having seen this gigantic water body 3600by 1500 feet in size Akbar’s court historian Abul Fazl also called it as miniature sea in his book Akbarnama. Brahmasarovara is called the cradle of civilization. It is believed that Lord Brahma the creator of universe conceived the Earth here, That’s why it is associated with Lord Brahma and called Brahmasrovar. As it is located in city of Kurukshetra. Kurukshetra has been the venue of greatest purification ceremonies for Moksha (the Salvation) for pilgrims from the corner of the country since times immemorial.

The matsya purana and Padama Purana an ancient Hindu text tell us that if an individual takes a holi dip the sacred tank of kkr, on the occasion of solar eclipse he attains the merits of a thousand Ashwamedha Yajna. The crowning feature of the holy tank is Shrameshwar mahadev temple . The temple is linked to the outer periphery by a small bridge. Arched enclosures are built for pilgrims. It is also a place for hermit to meditate.

Adjacent to Brahmasarovar lie Jai Ram Vidya peeth, Baba Shrivan Nath ki Haveli, Guru Gorakhs nath temple, Birla mandir, Panorma and Krishna museum etc.

Apart from the historic and religious significance brahamsarovar have emerged as as economic booster for the local who have their small and big business settlements around this area. Pilgrims and tourist from every part of India arrives here and it proves financial significant for these business operators. This economic upgradtion is also contributed by annual festivals like Gita Jayanti and monthly fairs like amavasya, purinma and kumbh.

## Review of literature

M. Alister and G Wall (1982) declared that, till date, researcher on tourism impacts has concentrated upon individual components of each of main impact category. Singh Shalini (1990) how tourism influence on national, regional and local economies; directly and indirectly affecting development processes and tourism as generator of employment and the concept of multiplier. Economically, tourism holds a unique position. A number of articles on economic impacts of tourism have appeared in the past. These articles include a variety of subtopics such as case studies on specific geographic region, country or city (Bryden, J.M., 2003); (Cooper, A. and Wilson, 2002). Vijayanand. S (2012) this article explains and supports the idea that the economic impacts of religious tourism should not be neglected or underestimated. the paper argues that religion and tourism have much in common. In the modern world it is hard to ignore the impression that in most places of pilgrimage the profane impacts of tourism are just as important if not more so than the religious. This paper lends theoretical support to this argument. Pourtaheri Mehdi, et.al; (2012) this research presents an empirical analysis of pilgrimage and religious tourism and the impacts of these types of travel in rural areas in Iran. The paper provides examples of these impacts and transformations in the three rural centres as Tourism Model Villages. The results revealed that pilgrims and religious tourists are strongly influenced in rural areas, but the social aspect of pilgrimage and religious tourism had the largest impacts on rural households.

## Research methodology

The study is dependent mainly on primary data. Primary data is collected through 70 structured questionnaires by following convenient data collection method. On the other hand secondary data is collected in the form of publicity material, books from Kurukshetra development board. Manova was used to judge the impacts of tourism on shopkeepers and vendors on Brahm Sarovar.

## Hypothesis

$H_0$  There are no economic impacts of tourism on bramhamsarvor based shopkeepers and vendors.

$H_1$  There are no economic impacts of tourism on bramhamsarvor based shopkeepers and vendors.

Table: 1- Numbers of respondents

	N	Percentage
Less than three years	26	37.1
More than three years	44	62.9
Total	70	100

As it is shown in table-1 there are total number of 70 respondents, out of these 26 were those shopkeeper/vendors who are running their business in Brahmavar area from less than 3 years, and there were 44 shopkeepers/vendors who are operating their business for more than 3 years.

Table: 2-Mean score of variables

S.NO.	Variables	Longevity	Mean	Std.deviation	N
1.	Tourism has created employment	Less than three years	4.9615	.19612	26
		More than three years	5.0000	.00000	44
		Total	4.9857	.11952	70
2.	Tourism has benefited local economy	Less than three years	3.7692	.76460	26
		More than three years	3.3636	1.05854	44
		Total	3.5143	.97420	70
3.	Tourism has improved language skills	Less than three years	4.9231	.27175	26
		More than three years	4.8864	.32104	44
		Total	4.9000	.30217	70
4.	Tourism has helped to improve shopping facilities	Less than three years	3.9615	.82369	26
		More than three years	4.0455	.88802	44
		Total	4.0143	.85961	70
5.	Demand of traditional art and craft,	Less than three years	4.9615	.19612	26
		More than	4.8409	.42826	44

	entertainment, architecture have been increased due to tourism	three years			
		Total	4.8857	.36287	70
6.	Tourism has brought fast development of general infrastructure	Less than three years	4.7692	.42967	26
		More than three years	4.7500	.43802	44
		Total	4.7571	.43191	70
7.	Tourism at destination have helped to conserve old buildings and heritage	Less than three years	4.1154	.32581	26
		More than three years	4.0227	.73100	44
		Total	4.0571	.61115	70
8.	Public health (sanitation, hygiene) has improved because of tourism	Less than three years	4.6154	.57110	26
		More than three years	4.4318	.66114	44
		Total	4.5000	.63131	70
9	Tourism has helped to improve literacy and education	Less than three years	4.9615	.19612	44
		More than three years	4.9318	.25497	26
		Total	4.9429	.23379	70
10	Tourism improves the demand of traditional art and crafts	Less than three years	3.3846	1.09825	26
		More than three years	3.2045	1.17294	44
		Total	3.2714	1.14108	70
11	Tourism has commercialised local culture	Less than three years	2.4231	.94543	26
		More than three years	2.3182	1.11590	44
		Total	2.3571	1.04999	70
12	Tourism has created inflation	Less than three years	3.8462	.78446	26
		More than three years	3.7500	.78132	44
		Total	3.7857	.77820	70
13	Tourism has increased leisure facilities, amenities	Less than three year	3.9231	.74421	26
		More than three years	4.0455	.37070	44
		Total	4.0000	.53838	70

Table: 3-Manova results

S.No	Variables	TypeIII sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig(p)
1.	Tourism has created employment	.024	1	.024	1.710	.195
	Error	.962	68	.014		
	Corrected Total	.986	69			
2.	Tourism has benefited local economy	2.689	1	2.689	2.911	.093
	Error	62.797	.68	.923		
	Corrected Total	65.486	69			
3.	Tourism has improved language skills	.022	1	.022	.239	.627
	Error	6.278	68	.92		
	Corrected Total	6.300	69			
4.	Tourism has helped to improve shopping facilities	.115	1	.115	.154	.696
	Error	50.871	68	0748		
	Corrected total	50.986	69			
5.	Demand of traditional art and craft, entertainment, architecture have been increased due to tourism	.238	1	.238	1.828	.181
	Error	8.848	68	.130		
	Corrected Total	9.086	69			
6.	Tourism has brought fast development of general infrastructure	.006	1	.006	.032	.859

	Error	12.865	68	.189		
	Corrected total	12.871	69			
7.	Tourism at destination have helped to conserve old buildings and heritage	0140	1	.140	.372	.544
	Error	25.631	68	.377		
	Corrected total	25.771	69			
8.	Public health (sanitaition,hygiene) has improved because of tourism	.551	1	.551	1.390	.243
	Error	26.949	68			
	Corrected total	27.500	69			
9.	Tourism has helped to improve literacy and education	.014	1	.014	.261	.611
	Error	3.757	68	.055		
	Corrected total	3.771	69			
10.	Tourism improves the demand of traditional art and crafts	.530	1	.530	.403	.527
	Error	89.313	68	1.313		
	Corrected total	89.843	69			
11.	Tourism has commercialised local culture	.180	1	.180	.161	.689
	Error	75.892	68	1.116		
	Corrected total	76.071	69			
12.	Tourism has created inflation	.068	1	.068	.045	.832
	Error	41.635	68	.612		
	Corrected total	41.786	69			
13.	Tourism has increased leisure facilities,amenities	.245	1	.245	.842	.362
	Error	19.755	68	.291		
	Corrected total	20.000	69			

As manova is implemented on the responses provided by respondents and above given two tables-2 and 3 shows the results of individual variables.

1. **Tourism has created employment:** As suggested by the results of above tables there is not much mean difference between both the respondents groups and the value obtained by manova is .195 which is more than .05 therefore it is proven that tourism has created employment. The result proves H1.
2. **Tourism has benefited local economy:** though there is mean difference between both respondent groups but .093 values suggests that it is not significant, therefore tourism has benefited local economy too. The result proves H1.
3. **Tourism has improved language skills:** there are almost the same mean values of both group, and the significance value is .627 is higher than .05; suggest that tourism has improved communication skills. The result proves H1.
4. **Tourism has helped to improve shopping facilities,** there is difference between both groups mean value but not that much significant as significance value obtained from manova is .696. The result proves H1.
5. **Demand of traditional art and craft, entertainment, architecture have been increased due to tourism:** Again there is mean difference between both groups but again significance value i.e.181 suggests that this difference is insignificant and Demand of traditional art and craft, entertainment, architecture have been increased due to tourism. The result proves H1.
6. **Tourism has brought fast development of general infrastructure:** There are almost same mean values and significance value obtained by manova .859 which is very high from .05 suggests that there is no difference between both groups opinion about tourism has developed infrastructure at brahamsarovar area. The result proves H1.
7. **Tourism at destination has helped to conserve old buildings and heritage:** there is difference between mean values of both groups but significance and p value i.e. .544 suggest that this difference is insignificant. The result proves H1.
8. **Public health (sanitation, hygiene) has improved because of tourism:** There is good difference between opinions of both groups as the difference of mean values showing, but the p value once again confirmed that this difference is not significant as p value is .243. The result proves H1.

9. **Tourism has helped to improve literacy and education:** there mean difference but p value .611 denies this difference to be significant. The result proves H1.
10. **Tourism improves the demand of traditional art and crafts:** again the mean differences are denied by p value .527. The result proves H1.
11. **Tourism has commercialised local culture:** the p value is .689 does not accept the mean difference of both groups. The result proves H1.
12. **Tourism has created inflation:** again there is mean difference between both groups but non-significant as p value is .832. The result proves H1.
13. **Tourism has increased leisure facilities, amenities:** there is very low difference between both groups mean values and the p value .362 is much higher than .05 also suggesting the agreement of both groups. The result proves H1.

## Findings

As results obtained from table 2 and 3 suggest that there are economic impacts of tourism in on shopkeepers and vendors at Brahmasharovar area. It can be easily judged that there are more positive economic impacts on these shopkeepers than negative one, as inflation can be mentioned as one of the negative impact but it is not only the tourism that contributing to it but many more reasons behind it including changing global economic scenario. On the other hand commercialisation of culture is not that big that as per local sayings, if local culture is used as product in sustainable manner it will not be harmed, one more thing that can be added to it that local culture is exhibited only on some big occasion not like Gita Jayanti and some other religious festivals associated with Brahmasharovar.

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## Exposing the Irony of “Save the Girl Child” Advertisements Using Qualitative Content Analysis

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### Abstract

The declining sex ratio in India is an evident proof of the need for saving the girl child from being the victim of the heinous crimes of female foeticide and female infanticide. Literature is replete with the studies on female foeticide and female infanticide. Several dimensions have been explored as far as the factors responsible for these crimes are concerned but there is a research gap relating insecurity as the major reason for mothers not allowing their daughters to see the light of the day. The advertisements and slogans reflecting the importance of females are abundant. But no research relates a woman's discomfort, insecurity and ill treatment as factors contributing to her unthinkable decision to abort the life brimming within her. The present paper addresses this problem and analyses two print advertisements, issued by Indian Government which appeared on the occasion of National Girl Child's Day but in different years, by using qualitative content analysis as research methodology. It has been found that as of now, girls are saved for being future mothers, for saving the mankind and for the various roles that a woman plays as a daughter, a wife, a mother, etc. It is an irony that her individuality, self-respect, esteem, happiness and comfort are not currently taken into consideration.

**Keywords:** Content Analysis, Irony, Print Advertisements, Save the girl child

### Introduction

Issuing an advertisement to save the girl child on the National Girl Child's Day is not a mundane activity. It requires the creative copywriters to draw the readers' attention not only to check the declining sex ratio but also to didactically present the vitality of the very being of a girl or a woman. The problem of missing girls is on a rise and the aftermath is going to produce even crueler results for the surviving women. If the sex ratio keeps declining at the drastic rate as it currently is, it would make women more prone as victims to crime against them. Literature is replete with studies addressing the problems of declining sex ratio and gruesome practices like female foeticide and female infanticide but there is a research gap since very few studies address the need to make the public aware of the very being of women. It is not the status or identity question (which most of the studies are raising) that the women are facing but the problem is deeper. There is a need to explore insecurity felt by women as a factor contributing to their will/decision to abort the unborn girl child. The objectives of the paper would be:

- 1) Exposing the Irony of “Save the Girl Child” Advertisements

- 2) To explore if the current scenario portrays females as significant in context of others only.
- 3) The basic research question which is to be answered is whether the threats to a girl child's existence in current Indian scenario are the insecurity (offered by the society and psychological pressure) faced by the mother.

### **Literature Review**

A number of studies have been conducted regarding the declining sex ratio particularly in the age group 0-6 (Das Gupta and Bhat, 1997). The findings indicate that India faces a serious problem of "missing girls" and it is mainly due to female foeticide. With the advent of smaller preferred family sizes the problem has increased all the more because a majority of Indian families believe that position of a mother becomes more prominent in a family if she is blessed with a male child.

Zhang's (2001) study contributed to understanding of the Chinese language in advertising and advertising theory in general, and could serve as background for cultural studies, business language, education, mass communication and international marketing. One of the conclusions of the study was that the features of advertising language reflected and reinforced the changes in society, where the individualistic consumer ideologies were competing with the more collective traditional ideology in the public discourse. It was found that advertising language was

Dattamajumdar (2002) dealt with the notions of ambivalence and contradiction in the study of advertising discourse. The findings of the study indicated that advertisements took liberties in modifying the natural order of the language depending upon the product of advertisement and the target group of consumer, and in doing so captured the listener's or reader's attention and enabled them to arrive at certain point of understanding, affecting the reference of the product. This motivated the listeners or readers to reconstruct the linguistic organization that was meaningful to the realm of advertising.

Zhang and Shavitt (2003) did a content analysis of 463 advertisements examined the cultural values modernity, tradition, individualism, and collectivism—promoted in Chinese advertising. Results indicated that both modernity and individualism values predominate in current Chinese advertising. These values were more pervasive in magazine advertisements, which targeted the Chinese X-Generation (aged 18–35 years with high education and income), than in television commercials, which were aimed at the mass market. In contrast, collectivism and tradition values were found to be more pervasive on television than in magazine advertisements. These findings revealed the role of advertising in helping shape new values among the X-Generation, as well as reflecting existing values among the mainstream Chinese

market. In addition, product characteristics (personal use versus shared products) were found to affect the degree of individualism and collectivism values manifested in advertisements.

Dixit (2005) explored the advertising world of India, focusing on the analysis of the award winning Indian print and television advertisements. Content analysis was used as research technique. The results of content analysis defined the characteristics of the award winning print and television advertisements, which range from excessive use of music and humor in television advertisements, to the use of visual memory devices and visual taglines in print advertisements. The study's overall findings suggest specific characteristics which were found to be present in award winning advertisements for example surrealistic visuals and fantastic scenes.

Tania Holtzhausen (2010) investigated the roles portrayed by women in magazine advertisements and television commercials in South Africa. The study identified women as playing many roles in the advertisements – some of them more prevalent than others – like a physical decorative women, product users, career woman, homemaker, mother, mannequin, romantic, sportswomen etc. The study provides insight to advertisers regarding the relevance of female portrayals in advertising. A content analysis of magazine advertising spanning a ten year time period was undertaken for the dual purpose of investigating the prevalence of negative advertising in a print format, and delineating the nature of comparative consumer goods and services magazine advertising. The use of a comparative advertising format was found to be significantly related to the size of the advertisement. Therefore, Content Analysis has been used to explore the various dimensions of print advertisements.

### **Research Methodology**

Keeping in view the current theme and sample, qualitative content analysis was found to be most appropriate research methodology for bringing to light a perspective not so far touched upon. Researchers perform content analysis in order to identify and describe what exists in message systems. They isolate the information that can be used in effects studies. This study will isolate the advertisement appeals as well as the social issue of saving the endangered species of girls. By isolating these variables, this study will contribute information about the messages advertisements are sending out to the consumers of media space.

### **Sample**

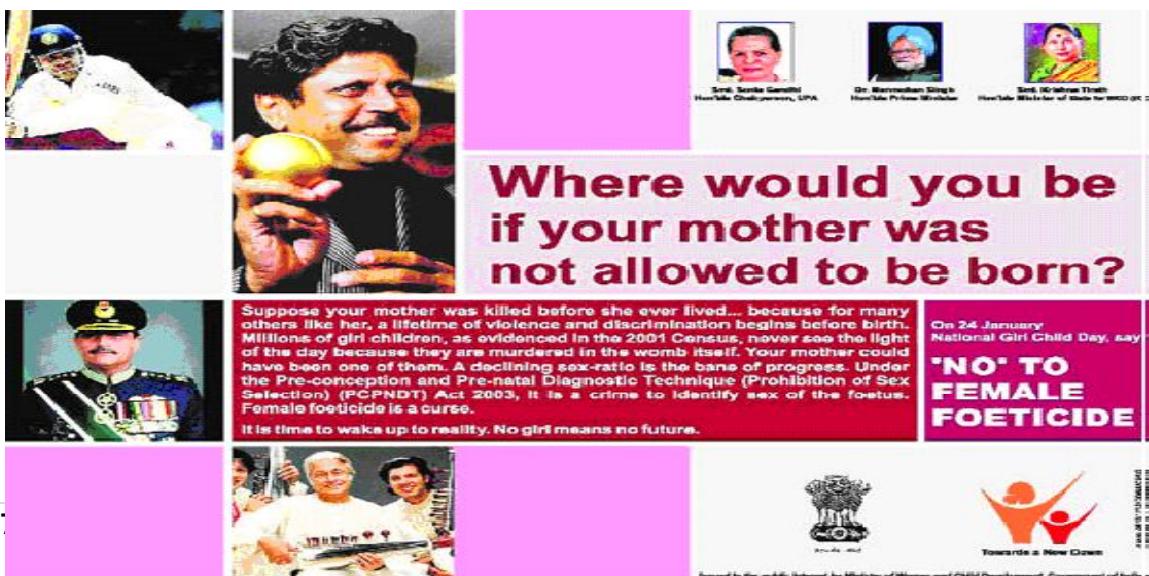
The advertisements and slogans reflecting the importance of females are abundant. But no research relates a woman's discomfort, insecurity and ill treatment as factors contributing to her unthinkable decision to abort the life brimming within her. The present paper addresses this problem and analyses two print

advertisements, issued by Indian Government which appeared on the occasion of National Girl Child's Day but in different years

**Figure 1: Advertisement 1**



**Figure 2: Advertisement 2**



### **Content Analysis of Advertisement 1**

The advertisement connotes that “she” gives life to all ... be it an engineer, a doctor, a pilot so on and so forth. At the end of each branch is a blossoming flower indicating sustenance of life. The advertisement presents woman in relation to somebody else. Though there is a reference in the advertisement to the various professions that she would like to be in but her importance has been broadly brought about through her roles. The advertisement does not speak of the woman who should be allowed to live with self respect not only for the various roles that she has to play but also for her own self. Though the advertisement largely speaks for its cause, a purely structural analysis of the text ignores the right of the girl child to enjoy her life and to live for her own self with self esteem. It does not throw any light on the infancy of a girl. The girl has been projected as a grown up female who has many responsibilities and roles to play. There is no allusion to the child’s world. There is no reference to the innocence of the girl child who suffers in a male-dominated society. Readers hardly notice the implied meaning of such omissions.

The bits and parts of the ad have been carefully constructed to draw an analogy implying the need to take care of those who care for all. Colour scheme is highly suggestive. Green being the colour of fertility, life, productivity is aptly connected with the stance and red here indicates freshness and livelihood as the word „life“ itself occurs in red and the blossoming flowers are also red. The context of the advert is related to the latest demographic trends which indicate that India is fast heading towards a million female foetuses aborted each year. Although foetal sex determination and sex selection is a criminal offence in India, the practice is rampant. Private clinics with ultrasound machines are doing brisk business. Everywhere, people are paying to know the sex of an unborn child and paying even more to abort the female child.

Here an important question which seeks an answer is how women agree to abort the foetus and kill the girl infant? After interviewing a couple of women who had committed female foeticide, it was disclosed that they do not want their daughters to share the same lot. These women had themselves performed many roles which they feel are non-rewarding so they do not want their daughters to share the pressure from family and society. This finding is also supported by Punam and Ryhal (2010).

### **Content Analysis of Advertisement 2**

The second advertisement highlights the pictures of Indian cricketers Virendra Sehwag and Kapil Dev, Pakistani Retd. Air Chief Tanvir Mahmood Ahmed and the great Indian classical musician Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, the sarod maestro. These pictures are meant to signify the great sons who took birth because their mothers were lucky enough to have escaped female foeticide which is the explicit message of the text in the ad. It is also clear from the text that the ad was issued by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Govt. of India on the National Girl Child Day. The National Emblem and the pictures of Hon'ble Chairperson, UPA Smt. Sonia Gandhi, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Smt. Krishna Tirath signify that the ad is of national importance. The dominant images of the so called "great sons" are in complete contrast with the theme of the advert. Smt. Sonia Gandhi and Smt. Krishna Tirath appear in the ad only by virtue of their position. The use of the picture of a Pakistan General in this advertisement was noticed only after its publication and this created some discomfiture and bad publicity for the advertisement!

The relation between the figures who appear in the ad and what the text suggests is highly ambiguous. One gets confused to understand the relation between the two. The advertisement gives no space to "great daughters of the nation" as against the "great sons". No significance has been attached to a girl. The text with the red background which attempts to speak volumes on why female foeticide should be stopped has been given a very little space as compared to the rest of the features of the ad. The ad has become controversial due to the appearance of a Pakistani Air Chief in an ad by Government of India but it is sad that the other loopholes have been ignored so far.

The advert subversively promotes the same damaging messages that were always present within the advertisements. There is a central opposition in the ad which says, "no girl means no future" and projects no daughter but only sons. The ad gives no space to women like Kalpana Chawla, Indira Gandhi, Sania Mirza, Sushmita Sen, or Aishwarya Rai. Unlike the previous ad the figure of a woman is completely missing from this ad. The ad has not been carefully scrutinized. Smt. Krishna Tirath as quoted by the *Tribune* says that the pictures in the ads are not of much importance but it is the message which is of the utmost importance. (*tribuneindia.com* retrieved 23/2/2010). But in the discourse of advertising, images do not only have the role of reinforcing the idea of selling a product, but they also have a role in selling a "worldview, a lifestyle and a value system" (Kellner 1995:127 quoted in Dines). What Smt. Tirath intends to say is still

ambiguous on the grounds that an average reader can hardly make sense of the ad and the ad does not effectively drive home the intended message.

Akin to the previous advertisement, this advertisement is meaningful in the Indian context where a son is preferred to a daughter and people indulge in practices like female foeticide. So the advertisement is an appeal to stop the female foeticide. But the irony in the advertisement is that all the achievers in the advertisement are sons. The female has been projected as a reproduction machine whose survival is significant only if she gives birth to (great) sons. This highlights the Indian psyche which derives from the rules laid down by the Brahmins in the 18th century. According to the Laws of Manu, “A man can leave a barren woman after eight years and one who only gives birth to daughters”.

Though these rules do not apply any more but they still penetrate the psyche of a large majority of Indians. The intended message of the advertisement is that no one can come into existence and hence reach anywhere if there is no mother. Hence, female foeticide should be stopped to check the declining sex ratio. Contrary to this the producers of the ad are reconstructing the discourse of having sons.

It is the need of the hour to change this kind of mental set-up and requires the government to implement more laws which strengthen a woman's position in the society. The advertisement while overtly setting tones for saving the girl child covertly perpetuates the message of a male being more important and fails to show reasons for stopping female infanticide and foeticide.

Again the question of females' status quo and significance comes to light. The women in many homes, irrespective of caste, class, literacy, etc. are silent sufferers at the hands of not only males but also in-laws and society. The social and psychological pressure they face is immense. The discourse of shame and family name are related with them. Besides being ill-treated they are insecure and uncomfortable in the present Indian scenario.

### **Conclusion**

It can be concluded that the qualitative content analysis of the sample print advertisements reveal that in the current Indian scenario girls are saved for being future mothers, for saving the mankind and for the various roles that a woman plays as a daughter, a wife, a mother, etc. It is an irony that her individuality, self-respect, esteem, happiness and comfort are not currently taken into consideration. The women in many homes, irrespective of caste, class, literacy, etc. are silent sufferers at the hands of not only males but also in-laws and society. The social and psychological pressure they face is immense. The discourses of shame and family name are related with them. So they are uncomfortable to breathe freely. That is why

there is preference for male child in India and the advertisements for saving the girl child, promote son preference in disguise.

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## Is this the End for Ghazal . . . ?

By Alpna Saini\*



(Photo courtesy: <http://www.newspakistan.pk>)

Hamnemaanaketaghafulnakarogelein  
 Khaakhojayenge hum tumkokhabar hone tak . . .  
 (You will not be indifferent, I know, but nevertheless,  
 Dead and in the dust I'll be when news of me you obtain.)  
 (Translation by SarvatRahman)

Thus wrote MirzaGhalib in pangs of apprehension and trepidation fearing all will be lost in indifference. Ghazal in India has come to witness a similar fate today. Within a very short span, the musical heritage of Indo-Pak ghazal has seen the loss of its two stalwarts: Jagjit Singh who introduced guitar to the rendition of ghazals and is credited with having popularised them in cinema and popular culture, and Mehdi Hassan- the name synonymous with the classical tradition of the ghazal, the name which makes musicians and music lovers alike touch their ears in veneration. Will ghazal along with its mellifluous harmony, nostalgia and incisiveness be lost forever? The question haunts the ghazal enthusiasts with increasing immediacy in the absence of any successors.

The demise of Mehdi Hassan has reawakened and reinforced the anxiety that had first arisen near the close of 2011, the year that took away half a dozen gems of artistic faculties in India: musicians Bhimsen Joshi, BhupenHazarika, UstadSultan Khan, Asad Ali Khan and Jagjit Singh; artists M.F. Husain, JehangirSabavala and Mario Miranda; theatre persons Badal Sircar and SatyadevDubey; filmmaker Mani Kaul; writer Indira Goswami; photographer GautamRajadhyaksha; actors Shamm Kapoor, NavinNischol and DevAnand. The questiontroubles us: will the new generation of artists be able to carry forward the tradition inaugurated by these exemplary veterans?

Mehdi Hassan took the world of music by storm in the fifties with his thumris on Radio Pakistan. He sustained and enriched the tradition of BeghumAkhtar, UstadBarkat Ali Khan and MukhtarBeghum and engendered in ghazal singing a modernity and simplicity which the youth of the period could identify with and relish. His renditions of Ghalib are still the most popular:

Dil-e-nadantujhehuakyahai,  
 Akhirissdardkidawakyahai

(Oh my naïve heart, what has befallen to you?  
 After all, what is the remedy for this pain?)

(Translation by Ashfaque A Bijapure)

Phirmujhedeeda-e-tar yaadaaya

Dil, jigartashna-e-phariyadaaya

(Again I remember my moist eye  
Again I wish to complain and cry)

(Translation from sulekha.com)

Andhe has lent his voice to FaizAhmedFaiz:

Gulonmein rang bhare, baad-e-naubahaarchale,  
Chalebhiaaokegulshankakaarobaarchale

(How I wish flowers take new colours!  
And the breeze brings fresh winds of change.  
I plead you, come to me now, my love,  
Maybe, if you come, my garden may bloom again)

(Translation from bantwal.blogspot.com)

These compositions have popularised the ghazal greats even in the era of film music which was comparatively shallow and had little profundity.

Tamgha-e-imtiaz, Hilal-e-imtiyaz and the Pride of Performanceindeed charmed the connoisseurs of music with his renditions augmented with his training inDhrupad and Khayal, descending from the sixteen generations ofKalawantfamilyof musicians. His style of singing infused new life into the popularity of ghazal inspiring a host of new generation ghazal singers who mixed contemporary and western instruments to the traditional style of classical ghazal.

As it is, the genre of ghazal which was the privilege of the elite has come to embrace the masses. Jagjit Singh among others like Bhupinder, Hariharan, Ghulam Ali, PankajUdhas and Mohammad Rafi is chiefly responsible for consolidating ghazal's place in the I-pods of the youngsters today. If ghazal has to survive, it must assimilate influences from other genres of music and the poetry must free itself of its elitist linguisticrestraints but at the same time it should not forego its richness, complexity and otherworldliness as Ghalib puts it:

Daam-e harmaujmeinhaihalqah-e sad kaam-e nihang  
Dekheinkyaaguzrehaiqatrepahguhar hone tak

(In the net of each ocean-wave open a hundred dragon mouths,

To be a pearl, a water-drop what ordeals must sustain!)

(Translation by SarvatRahman).



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## Teaching Culture in ESP Context

Rym ALLAL\*

### Abstract

Students for whom English is a second or foreign language are a growing all around the world including Algeria. Over the past decade and because of globalisation, the number of Algerian students needing to improve their English speaking competence has significantly grown especially in the field of business .

ESP learners like any language learners need to be conscious that language is not only part of how we define culture, it also reflects culture. Thus, they have to be aware of the culturally appropriate ways to address people at work, make requests, and agree or disagree with someone. They should know that behaviors and intonation patterns that are appropriate in their own speech community may be perceived differently by members of the target language speech community. They have to understand that, in order for communication to be successful, language use must be associated with other culturally appropriate behavior .

However, one may notice that culture, in an ESP context in Algeria is taught implicitly or not taught at all imbedded in the linguistic forms that students are learning. To make ESP students aware of the cultural features reflected in the language, ESP practitioners can make those cultural features an explicit topic of discussion in relation to the linguistic forms being studied.

Key words : Culture, ESP context, teaching, Second language learning, foreign language learning,

### Introduction

Although central in the field of foreign language teaching (FLL), the relationship between knowledge of a foreign language (FL), and knowledge of the culture from which that language derived seems to be rarely discussed; nevertheless Brown (2000) considers the junction of culture and affect as a valuable feature of the communicative process. According to Brown (2000), culture is very important in the process of second language learning (SLL), he highlights the fact that language and culture are inter-related:

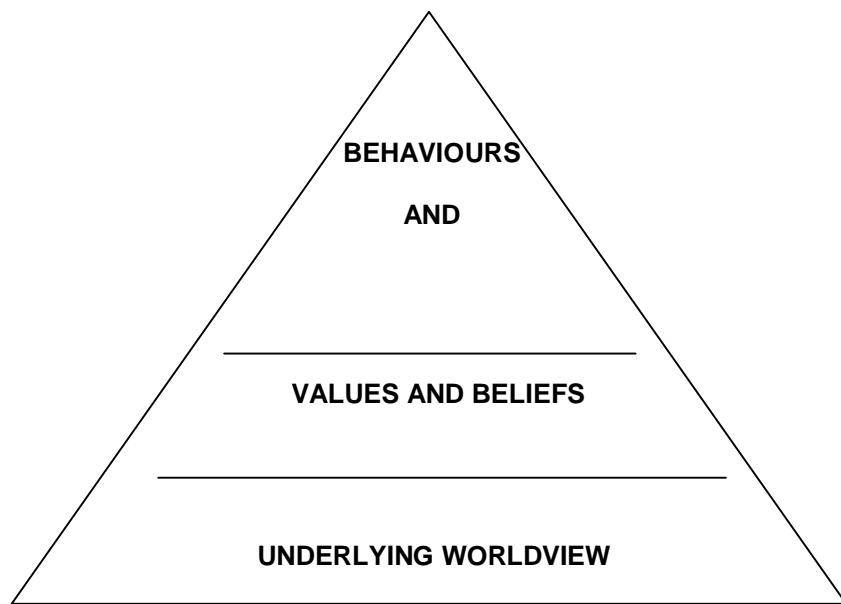
Language is a part of culture, and a culture is a part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture.

(Brown, 2000: 177)

The fact highlighted by Allen (1985: 138) that "The primary reason for second language study in the earlier part of this century (1960s) was access to the great literary masterpieces of civilization" has gone. Brooks (1968) emphasized the significance of culture for language learning as equal to the study of literature. Communication prevailed in SLL as well as FLL along with spoken rather than written language.

During the 1990s, some French researchers like Flewelling (1994); LeBlanc (1990) and LeBlanc & Courtel (1990) promoted the cultural syllabus and its importance was reaffirmed by Stern (1992). The importance of culture in SLL/FLL has improved as our understanding of language and communication has evolved. This reality is reflected in current methods of language learning and teaching, including the Tapestry approach<sup>1</sup> (1) (Scarsella & Oxford, 1992).

As Nemni (1992) makes it clear, there are still some aspects of the teaching approach of culture both in the SLL/FLL class that have not really been clarified. However, studies in the field have moved from merely describing the sociocultural context of the L2/FL (Nostrand, 1966) to speaking of contexts of competence (Berns, 1990). These studies considered second culture acquisition (Robinson, 1991) and aimed at preparing learners for meaningful culture learning (Mantle-Bromley, 1992). They had developed a new philosophy of teaching culture (Oxford, 1994), and teaching and learning language and culture (Byram, Morgan & Colleagues, 1994). The fact that culture teaching and learning is a developing area in applied linguistics is further revealed through the growing list of some publications (including Cargill, 1987, and Harrison, 1990) that deal solely with this aspect of language teaching. According to anthropologists, there are over 164 different definitions attributed to culture (Schneider, 1995: 25). In fact, culture could be seen as an iceberg shared into three main levels (see figure 5). Behaviours and artefacts which represent the tip of this iceberg can be easily observed but they are rooted in a deeper level of values and beliefs held by a certain culture, which in turn reflects its underlying worldview.



<sup>1</sup> The term Tapestry approach is used by Scarsella and Oxford (1992) in a book entitled: The Tapestry of Language Learning: The Individual in the Communicative Classroom. The authors of this book do not focus on language acquisition theory or research but rather on classroom practice, particularly in the adult academic or pre-academic ESL classroom. As an overview, it succeeds admirably, touching on most of the issues that concern active ESL teachers. The authors present a consistent viewpoint throughout, drawing heavily on Vygotsky's Zone of Proximate Development (Vygotsky, 1978) and Canale and Swain's (1980) discussion of communicative language teaching. The authors strongly advocate integrative skills classes and content- based instruction (although the last half of the book treats the traditional skills separately).

**Figure 1:** Three levels of culture.

(Adapted from Schein (1984) as cited in Schneider (1995: 25))

Language and culture are narrowly interrelated. If we were to place language on one of the levels of the pyramid, it would come on the top but its roots go deep into the lower levels. Thus, language reveals the world of its users, such as beliefs in human nature, time, human activity, social relationships, and greetings, forms of address, and space. Language use depends on the cultural background of the user.

It seems to be complicated trying to find an agreed definition of culture because of the increasingly changing societies. This fact is reflected by Kroeber and Kluckhohn's (1954) study who found over three hundred definitions of culture. The various definitions underline the difficulty and scope of the issues involved in communicating and teaching about culture. Nevertheless, the development of culture teaching in SLL/ FLL has led to a current understanding of culture.

Robinson (1988) suggests a symbolic definition of culture. He considers culture as a dynamic "system of symbols and meanings" where "past experience influences meaning, which in turn affects future experience, which in turn affects subsequent meaning, and so on" (Robinson, 1988: 11).

Adaskou et al. (1990: 3-4) define culture on specific level by suggesting four dimensions of culture:

1. Aesthetic Sense includes cinema, literature, music, and media,
2. Sociological Sense includes the organization and nature of family, interpersonal relations, customs, and material conditions.
3. Semantic Sense covers the whole conceptualization system which conditions perceptions and thought processes
4. Pragmatic Sense refers to the background knowledge, social and paralinguistic skills, and language code which are necessary for successful communication.

These aspects of culture provide more substance to the general definition of culture and reflect its various dimensions. These four senses of culture outline the substance of culture teaching in SLL/FLL classes.

### Culture in an ESP Context

The diverse levels and aspects of culture discussed to some extent above show that the understanding of what culture implies in SLL as well as in FLL is varied. In L2 and FL teaching and learning, defining culture is considered as a continuum. This allows stressing various culture scopes at different points, and spotting the main differences that may exist between L2 and FL contexts. For ESP teachers and learners in varied contexts, different aspects of culture may well be more or less important at various levels of language proficiency.

So, learning a FL involves learning about the culture of its native speakers, which is no less relevant in the context of ESP:

.... if a non-native speaker appears to speak fluently (i.e. is grammatically competent) a native speaker is likely to attribute his/her apparent impoliteness or unfriendliness, not to any linguistic deficiency but to boorishness or ill-will.

(Thomas, 1983: 91)

The cultural gap, even small, is sufficient to affect the ESP classroom. Indeed, the learners' cultural background may have an impact on their ability to understand information in the TL (which is, in

this case English). Particular attention could be directed towards cultural differences that are not always contemplated in ESP teaching. This factor needs to be taken into consideration by Algerian ESP practitioners when preparing or adapting authentic materials for teaching purposes.

It seems that even specifically designed didactic materials, which are meant to be used all over the globe, include texts and exercises that transmit realities of the English-speaking countries in various special contexts (e.g.: in the bank, talking in the phone, seminars). However, this could not be perceived as a constraint but rather as a challenge and an opportunity to use the ESP classroom as a space to involve Algerian students in exploring and promoting the culture of the target language, while focusing on their core subject. According to Swiderski (1993) each language classroom could be an experiment in learning culture, accordingly, including cultural learning in such specific areas of ELL could facilitate sociolinguistic and communicative competence of the ESP learners, who will not only learn a specific foreign language, but will also become more aware of their L1 values and attitudes.

So, as to sum up one may argue that promoting the use of intercultural and cross-cultural skills in general English classes as well as ESP classes throughout the Algerian territory has become more than crucial. So it is essential that Algeria ESP practitioners consider more their role as cultural mediators (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996). An ESP practitioner like any other language teacher cannot deny the fact that the relationship between language and culture is deeply rooted and that language is an important means used to keep up this homogeneity stronger.

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## The West African Writer From Post-colonialism to Post-modernism

Abdelkader Nebbou

The term *postmodern* came into the philosophical lexicon with the publication of “The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge”, Jean-François Lyotard's (1984). He sees a text as a combination of two very different language games: that of the philosopher and that of the expert. Where the expert knows what he knows and what he doesn't, the philosopher knows neither, but asks questions. Inventing new codes and reshaping information consists of a large part of a postmodernist's knowledge. Therefore, postmodernism does not suggest an attack upon modernity or a complete departure from it. Rather it is a continuation of modern thinking in another mode.

Many post-modern critiques insist that the meaning and value of an artistic work is informed by various contexts (institutional, linguistic, and historical) in which the work may be made, presented and discussed. There are not only non fixed qualities to define a post-modern work, but there are different contingent elements and external ones to the art work. (Taylor; 2001) Post-modern artists explore the various conditions on which their works depend in their meaning. These conditions might be exterior or interior to the work itself. The reader is provided with a certain degree of explicitness or else he is required to have knowledge of the general features of the language and other faculties of scientific reasoning and common sense that shape our fundamental human nature. The argument among postmodernists and their critics has led to the debate to whether or not postmodernism should be concerned with self-criticism as thought by the Intellectual School of Paris led by Foucault, Deleuze and others since 1960. However Chomsky's view with respect to postmodernism is that the task of a postmodernist must be a clear explanation and understanding of an artwork through a valid argument, and conclusions that are informative, nontrivial and based on more plausible grounds than other competing bases. He believes that science is objective and attempts to prove things as true or false, whereas philosophy provides concepts that enable us to see things differently. According to him, this approach would escape uniformity and would lead to sedimentary as well as de-construction of the significations carried within contemporary literary works. According to Roland Barthes in “From Work to Text” (1989), “the text is plural. Which is simply to say it has several meanings, but that it accomplishes the very plural of meaning: *an irreducible ...plural.*” In an interview Achebe said that instead of his native language he uses a language developed elsewhere, which is English. This affects the way he writes and to some extent his stories, too: “As more and more people are incorporated in this network, they will get different levels of meaning out of the story, depending on what they already know, or what they suspect. These circles go on indefinitely to include, ultimately, the whole world. I have become more aware of this as my books become more widely known.”

It must be noted here that De Sausure's theory of the relationship between the words and their meaning (significant / signifié or content vs. acoustic image) is considered as outdated. The codes used in postmodernist narrative are signs or systems of signs used to articulate a variety of textual or cultural referents. According to David Crystal, the meaning of a word is meant by the person who utters it and is taken to mean something by the person who hears it. Unlike Sausure who insisted that meaning links between two participating characteristics (the objects, ideas, etc on one hand and the language used to refer to on the other hand), postmodernists investigate how codes operate in a world of the immensity of signifiers. In the theory of Barthes, there are different types of codes under which the textual signifiers can be grouped: semic, symbolic, proairetic and cultural. Jean Baudrillard asserted that the ubiquitous representation and com-modification of objects strips signifiers of their specificity, leaving only a conglomeration of codes which self-adjust according to social fashion. The emergence of such pure signs,

signifying without representing, makes Baudillard assert that progressive codification in a consumerist society leads to the disintegration of symbolic exchange “slow death”.

Wole Soyinka remains one of the rare post-colonial writers that the reader can cite as being able to show the essential function of Orature through the exploration of Yoruba mythology and its ritual drama. In *The Interpreters*, Soyinka tries to describe the different traditional artworks such as visual, poetic and artistic devices to show social and political impact on both the character and the audience standing respectively for the particular African individual and his social environment.

In their postmodernism Achebe and Soyinka attempted to free the language used by the West Africans from the remnants of colonization. It is obvious that Post-colonial cultures are inevitably hybridised since it is not possible to create or recreate national or regional cultures wholly independent of their historical link to the European colonial phase. Their discourses involve a new relationship between European ontology and epistemology and the impulse to create or recreate independent local identity dismantling of European codes of the European domination of the rest of the world. They were aware of the European strong hand that ‘continuously twists the African hand especially the one that has learnt to perform what is assigned by the previous master armed with the bible and the sword. The Europeans has never tried to teach the Africans ‘fishing so that they would catch their fish on their own’. He insists on their dependency on him. In other words, imperialism continues to control the economy, politics, and cultures of Africa.

I would be quite satisfied if my novels (especially the ones I set in the past) did no more than teach my readers that their past with all its imperfection was not one long night of savagery from which the first European acting on God’s behalf delivered them.

I think we might be neglecting our proper function if we take anything for granted instead of thinking what exactly is our society, what are its needs, Aspects of Realism in Chinua Achebe’s *A Man of the People* what can I do, what can I contribute; that is what I was trying to get at, and I think we have a very important function … this is only one of the roles of the writer, as a teacher.

This bold leap of language emancipation in African literature was a heavy blow on contemporary narratives and other seemingly nationalistic discourses. Consciously or unconsciously Achebe’s and Soyinka’s new way of writing English invoked notions of continuation of, or descent from the ‘mainstream’, British literature. For example through the character of Mathias who speaks a hybrid language closer to the Creole stage. There is a move from the emotional, absurd narrative and the traditional novel towards an interest not so much in individual character or a coherent narrative but to the belief that a work of art should appeal to all humanity, and be free of any divisive political implications.

Achebe and Soyinka strive to fight the wrongs caused by the colonialist stereotypical descriptions of native populations and cultures. This post-modern narrative tends to write down the history of West Africa with self-assertion in a way never written in the previous literary circles. When talking about Elsie, the Nigerian woman and Elsie, an American business woman who, for Achebe is nothing if compared to a native woman Achebe says: ‘Who tell am say na Elsie be in name? When you see am again make you tell you tell am say im own Elsie na counterfeit. But Odili, you self na waa! How you no even reach Bori finish you done de begin meet another Elsie for party? Make you take am je-je-o.’ (Soyinka: 1970)

In *The Interpreters*, Soyinka is more concerned with the processes of understanding than with the pleasures of artistic finish or narrative unity. He makes use of postmodernism which questions the principle of the authenticity of Yoruba rituals and artworks. The linguistic interpretation of the text leads the reader to the problem of reference of Ferdinand de Saussure’s non-linguistic reality, scepticism in the works of Edward Said’s Orientalism and as taken from Mitchel Foukault: Ethical issues of ancient and modern individual looks on oneself. It is a question of subjectivity that is understood in its

fundamental linguistic meaning, but continues to rub and challenge common usage of this term more problematic than it is necessary.

There is the use of juxtaposition or fragmentation of philosophical ideas, psychoanalytic, historical and even structuralist thoughts. This way of active political and cultural examination of the traditional artworks and the role of the artist in his social surroundings has been known as Postmodernist.

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## Using Literary Texts in ELT: The Far Pavilions

Saleha Guerroudj\*

Authentic materials in language teaching are preferred over created ones because they contain authentic language and reflect real-world uses of language. For many scholars, literature should have a place in the curriculum. It can be useful in developing linguistic knowledge, both on a 'usage' level and on a 'use' level (MacKay, in Brumfit & Carter 1986). It is seen as an ideal vehicle to introduce cultural assumptions which may increase learners' understanding of foreign cultures and may lead to promoting intercultural understanding and mutual respect.

Maley (1989) makes a valuable distinction between the study of literature and the use of literature as a means of language learning. He states that in the study of literature teachers focus on the 'literariness' of the texts ,a literary critical approach that studies plot, characterization, motivation, value, psychology, background....and to achieve this goal successfully, learners should have already attained a level of competence in the language and are familiar with the literary conventions . However, when the purpose is 'the use of literature as a resource for language learning', literature becomes one source among others for promoting language learning. The teachers' primary concern will be to ensure that learners interact with the text and with each other in ways which promote language learning. Literature becomes a resource to teach basic language skills (i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing) and language areas (i.e. vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation). Therefore, in language classrooms the activities are based on the texts which can be adapted to suit learners' level of proficiency.

Clearly, the study of literature makes literature itself the content of a language course, while the use of literature as a resource is seen as one source among other different kinds of texts for promoting interesting language activities.

In teaching English as a foreign language, works of literature can be profitably introduced to learners even at very early stages of instruction. Teachers should help them develop strategies when dealing with authentic language materials. According to Collie and Slater (1990), there are four main reasons that make language teachers use literature in the classroom. Literary texts are regarded as authentic material, cultural enrichment, language enrichment and personal involvement.

Literary texts picture the culture of the writers and can transmit knowledge of that culture to students who read and study it. In order to understand a language, the cultural assumptions contained within that language also have to be understood. In comprehending a literary text, it is not enough to understand the meaning of the words only .Kramsch (1993) states, 'the semantic meanings of verbal signs had to be supplemented by the pragmatic meanings of verbal actions in context.' Thus, students need to understand the meaning of the utterances and at the same time they have to understand what the characters said, how they said it, to whom they said it, and other situational contexts.

As literature and culture are inseparable (Kramsch, 1993), it is quite impossible to learn the language without learning the culture (Valdez, 1986). Valdez says that "one of the major functions of literature is to serve as a medium to transmit the culture of the people who speak the language in which it is written".

If the interdependence of language and culture is accepted, the idea of relevance to learners of the cultural content of literary texts is important and a concern of many teachers .If the learners' understanding of culture is narrow and incomplete when reading a particular literary work, this might make them misinterpret the cultural significance of language used in other texts .Then the task of the teacher would be to train and encourage students in critical awareness of the culture as represented by the literary works they are reading (Lazar,1993).

Damen (1986) calls the cultural awareness the fifth dimension, in contrast to listening, speaking, reading and writing. There is another aspect with many literary texts that represent a culture which students might not be familiar with. This might lead to a difficulty when interpreting or reading the literary text. Marckwardt (1978) proposes explicit culture teaching in language programs through literature. He points out that cultural awareness, sensitivity, and rapprochement are not automatic by-products of foreign language instruction or of exposure to a foreign literature. If they are to be achieved at all, they must be planned for and built into the course of study.

It is also seen that the exploration of the cultural assumptions of a literary text could lead to a greater tolerance of cultural differences (McKay in Brumfit and Carter, 1986). This is regarded by many scholars as an asset in the study of a foreign language because it allows for interpretation than rejection of and resistance to foreign language material. So, literature might teach learners about other cultures and ideologies and that this could lead to greater tolerance which encourages students to be more open. Eaglestone in (Hall, 2005) says that 'the study of literature and language could be an opportunity to understand and encourage an even more open and multicultural society.'

Literary works also help learners to be creative and use their imagination. Literature lessons can lead to public displays of student output through posters of student creations e.g. poems, stories or through performances of plays. So for a variety of linguistic, cultural and personal growth reasons, literary texts can be more motivating than the referential ones often used in classrooms.

McMahon (2002) explains that literary works, especially stories and plays are a laboratory for understanding the thoughts, feelings, characters and acts of human beings. When learners have opportunities to talk about and reflect on characters' situations and actions, they begin to understand different perspectives. Written tasks that require students to take on different roles further reinforce the skill. Thus by reading short stories, students gain familiarity with many features of the written language, including the formation and function of sentences, the variety of possible structures, and different ways of connecting ideas. These features, in turn, broaden and enrich students' own writing skills. They become more creative in their productive skills, begin to appreciate the richness and variety of language they are trying to master, and begin to use some of that potential themselves.

Literature, as an area of knowledge most relevant to human experience can be intentionally used as a conductive domain for literacy learning and language acquisition, and its use may result in the literacy development of the learners involved. Bruner (1986), in this respect, states that 'literature is used as an avenue to literacy and can be a powerful way for English language learners to find richness in their own tales, to use them as a point to contact with others, and to learn to inspect and rework their own stories to make them more understandable to others'.

The fact that language teachers use literary texts does not imply that they are studying literature: rather they are using literary texts to promote language learning. Their aim is to engage learners interactively with the text, with fellow learners, and with the teacher in the performance of tasks involving literary texts. The activities would offer learners ample opportunities to contribute and share their own experiences, perceptions and opinions.

The aim is to accustom learners to working with texts of this kind, to raise their awareness of the 'literariness' of even everyday texts, and to give them the confidence in their own judgment. Along the way they will be exposed to a lot of language and will be encouraged to engage in open discussion about the texts they encounter.

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