~Editor's Note~

Dear Readers & Contributors,

Welcome to the January 2025 issue of IJELLS.

From a poetic twist to science to the exploration of myth. From Dystopian understanding of the word to the hopeful. From desperation to health and well-being. From Classics to Modernity. From India to Saudi. From the school to across the vast Human Knowledge. These ranges sum up the array of writings in January 2025 issue.

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

International Journal of English: Literature, Language and Skills — IJELLS extends its service into publishing books. We have started the enterprise IJELLS Publishing, a platform where we help authors self-publish their work. Check out our webpage to learn more: https://www.ijells.com/ijells-publishing/.

Happy Reading and Happy Sharing!

Dr Mrudula Lakkaraju
Editor

Editors

Dr Mrudula Lakkaraju,
Department of English, Osmania University,
Hyderabad, Telangana, India

Dr Thirunavukkarasu Karunakaran
English Language Teaching Centre,
University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka

Dr Isam M Shihada
Al Aqsa University,
Gaza strip

~Contents~

~Creative Writing in English ~

My Eluding Moon
Manjula Bhanoori & Subba Rao Chitiprolu
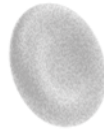
Seeking your heart
My life drifts—
Seldom glad, Often sad

How many petals embrace
To form a marigold, tender?
How many feathers gather
To birth a goldcrest, bright?
But, oh my golden moon!
How many smiles meld
To shape you, this petite?

As you glint and lustre, so you dim and darken
On the time's circular stage, dancing all your life

As I gaze on you
My mind wanders in wonder—
Why were we born?
When did life begin?
What unseen particles whirl in atoms?
Why atoms unite into molecules?
How many molecules merge to bring you forth?

And oh glowing tiny cell
When did that life force
Kindle your core
Once inert, now vivid?
Years ago, you were here
And years hence, you will remain—
In my breath, in my blood, coursing through

Through the seed of life, through the womb
Through the zygote, through the embryo
You flow ceaselessly, generations through

My feet twirl, my fingers play
My eyes weep, and my heart beats—
All for you, and because of you
Joy and pain, love and hate,

Courage and fear, hope and despair—
Are they not the ripples stirred by you
Echoing through all my layers?
Is not my every action and pause
But a rhythm of your quiet swirling?
Would this world beam so gaily
Without the grace of your elegant shades?
Eyeing the secrets of life in your depths
I plod closer, yet you recede farther—
Into dark, mystic clouds

Does a day pass, or a night
My mind not sketching you on its canvas—
Longing to paint your portrait in full!

"Chase me," you whisper
Like a mirage ahead
Oases greet me along the path
But you slip away farther
How bitter, how sweet
How wrenching, how soothing—
This journey of questing for you!
In elation, or in sorrow
In hunger's pangs, or in laughter's blooms
Have I ever escaped your spell?

You are no foe
Yet my armies pursue you
You tarry within my domain
Yet I cannot reign you
You swim in my mind's lake
Yet my nets fail to capture you

Oh my moon! I breeze, I flow
I yearn, I burn, I quench, I starve—
For your descent from celestial heights
Heeding my fervent call
At last, you arrived in a delicate vessel—
A bride in her palanquin of glass!

As you ease under the lens in my lab
Oh my pulsing, teeny speck—
I fall in love with you anew
Yet you linger, eluding me
And so I live, chasing you

Book Review of Vivek H Murthy's *Together*
S Mohanraj
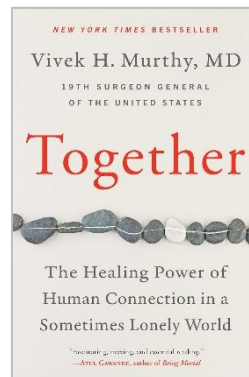
Vivek H Murthy, (2020). *Together.* London: Profile Books - Welcome Collection.

When I saw this book on the shelves of a library, the first thing that struck me was the author's name. I knew him as my friend's son, who had earned a place for himself as an able doctor to rise to the level of a Surgeon General in the United States.

This attraction soon led me to a bit of apprehension. The questions I had in my mind were - a book written by a doctor would obviously deal with medicine and therapeutic strategies. Can I really understand it? Will it be an easy to read book? And finally, should I read it? Keeping my apprehensions aside, I pulled out the book, and went through the blurb. The blurb held some promise (all blurbs do it), and I borrowed the book and walked back home.

On reaching home, I rifled through some pages and found the book not only readable, but very interesting. The book deals with loneliness as a malady which every human being suffers from at some stage in life. We often ignore it (cope with it) and move forward without giving a thought to investigate the reasons for our loneliness. This book (which is in fact a good thesis) helps us look at the various causes of loneliness and helps us examine ourselves and fight loneliness intelligently. Reading the book has a therapeutic impact on the readers.

Now let us get to take a closer look at the book. The book is a multidisciplinary study on loneliness – it discusses sociology, psychology, teacher education, parenting, management at the micro level and a handbook of counselling for nurses, students and parents. In short it is a book that talks more about life skills one should necessarily possess to lead a happy life. This is best captured in an epigraph to a chapter by Oprah Winfrey in the book:

> *Lots of people want to ride with you in a limo, but what you want is someone who will take the bus with you when the limo breaks down.*

(Page 97)

The book is written in the form of anecdotes. Each anecdote (some of these spill over to more than one chapter) is a good case study and hence can be used as a textbook for counsellors. (The only lacuna I see is that each case study is descriptive and not problematic with a task appended to it.)

The book is divided into two major sections – Making Sense of Loneliness and Building a More Connected Life. The two complement each other in providing diagnosis and remedy. Each of the sections has five and three chapters respectively.

How does the book develop? The author has spent sufficient time with the reader to help him (her) understand what loneliness is. He quotes Ami and says: 'Loneliness occurs when our social experience fails to meet our social expectations' (page 60). A simple definition with far reaching implications and acts as a hypothesis to the entire discussion in the book. By nature, most of us are ambitious and hence meet with disappointment often driving us to a corner seeking loneliness.

How did Dr. Murthy get interested in this subject? As a doctor, when he was examining his patients he found one topic recurring 'Loneliness ran like a dark thread through many of the more obvious issues that people brought to my attention, like addiction, violence, anxiety, and depression' (page xv). If this was a common cause of many ailments, this was worth studying. He goes further to identify different types of loneliness. He identifies three major categories of loneliness – Intimate or emotional loneliness, Relational or social loneliness; and Collective loneliness or hungering for networking with the community (page 8). Having defined loneliness, he distinguishes it from 'solitude' which is a state of peaceful aloneness or voluntary isolation.

He illustrates the three types of loneliness with a large number of instances from real life in the form of anecdotes which have been gathered from different parts of the world – the United States, Africa, Asia, Europe and Australia. Each anecdote is both interesting and helps one reflect on one's own life style and correct it if possible. Each anecdote brings out an aspect of human behaviour – why do people take to drinking, or why do some people binge on food, or why does one become a workaholic? These questions often bother us, and the one answer to most of these questions is 'Loneliness'.

There can be degrees of variation in the intensity of loneliness one feels and this depends on the strength of mind. In discussing this, he delves deep into social neurosciences. He says this is our own making in the modern world. Our ancestors had a very systematic apportioning of the time at their disposal – one third time working; one third time socialising with their kids and one third time sleeping (page 31). They never felt lonely, but with the invention of modern gadgets, our time is spent differently, e.g. ability to kill an animal from a distance (using a gun) rather than chasing it and clubbing it which required working together.

A major change in life style is the family structure that has led to loneliness. We have grown up in large joint families and now moved to living in small nuclear families. This is a vast change that induces loneliness and to illustrate this point he takes examples from India and Ethiopia. Is it possible to go back to the joint family system? Japanese have a system called *moai* practised in Okinawa – parents bring infants of similar age together in groups of five, as if they were siblings. . . they grow up together and rely on one another, continuing as adults they meet daily or weekly. Today's *moai's* still help one another financially when needed, but the "common purpose" now has more to do with companionship and advice (page 77). Let their tribe increase.

Growing old is a given thing, and we cannot wish it away. With age, retirement needs to be accepted. People who are in active services like the police or the army find it very difficult to cope with retirement and so do others. A solution to this would be to help such people get involved in some work. This point has been well illustrated – people can take up a hobby like painting, music, or reading. Similarly, loneliness does not affect the two sexes uniformly, women seem to be more prone to loneliness than men. This is because, 'Girls have a feeling of constant comparison, which exposes them to shame of social failure and increases their risk of loneliness (page 93).

Technology is of course a boon to mankind, but it is not without its drawbacks. It has isolated us, and our social life has taken a beating. What are some of the factors related to technology that cause loneliness and how can we overcome them? I like to quote two paragraphs from the book in this connection:

> **Facilities Technology has provided**: We can enjoy all the conveniences of community without directly interacting with other people. We can have whole meals delivered without setting foot in restaurants that produce them; stream movies online and watch them alone at home instead of in a crowded theater; and order nearly anything imaginable from online shopping sites, never even seeing the messenger who deposits the goods at our door. Many of us also telecommute, interacting with customers and colleagues virtually, *if at all* (emphasis mine). Human connection is being edged out, or at best left to fit in around the edges.

> **Our life style in the pre-technology era**: I remember being jubilant when online grocery delivery services arrived on scene. . .But those grocery store visits were when we met friends in our neighborhood sorting through produce or trying to make sense of baby food options. They were where we got to know the clerks who helped us track down hard-to-find items, where we commiserated with fellow parents over crying children. These seemingly small interactions were an important part of what kept us connected to the larger fabric of our local community. They contributed to our sense of belonging. (Pages 100 – 101)

This point is further substantiated to say living as social beings is a divine design. Take a look at this:

> It took me years to see that, just as concrete draws most of its strength from the water poured on it in the days after it's placed, each of us gains our strength not by virtue of being born but because of the love that is showered upon us in the days, months and years that follow. That love comes through our relationships with everyone around us. (Page 124)

Such care and love that we receive helps in our 'humanization' which is the 'beginning of belonging'. As humans we share the same space and resources given to us by nature, and why not share human resource as well is a question we need to ask ourselves to fight loneliness.

It is one thing to identify (diagnose) the disease (read loneliness) but more important it is to offer solutions to overcome them. That is part of medical ethics and Dr. Murthy precisely does this in the second half of the book. As a preamble to what is to come in the second part of the book, the last chapter of the first part titled 'Unmasking Loneliness' – helps us gain a deeper understanding of the malady.

Loneliness is a malady that leads to developing undesirable life styles – these could be resorting to alcoholism, binging on food, involving in excessive sex or get drowned in work. These activities tend to 'anaesthetize the pain' and are often stopgaps at best. They are not a cure to fight loneliness.

Do I need to say more?

How did Dr. Murthy come to write such a beautiful thesis? The central theme seems to be 'If you live for others, you live a good life.' (This reminds us of the definition of loneliness given by Ami and also the famous African legend - Ubuntu.) Perhaps, he has it in his genes. Look at this passage to understand the point being made:

> From birth to death, we all need a sense of place and people who will help us learn, grow, heal, and serve one another. The bonds that we form through service can not only break the downward spiral of loneliness, but can also provide the cure for trauma. . .
>
> My paternal grandfather embodied this truth. Despite living in bracing poverty in a small village in India and raising six children on his own after my grandmother died from tuberculosis, he still spent time each year travelling from village to village raising money for a youth hostel so that the children of his village would have a place to study. He himself had never even finished elementary school, but he was committed to helping the next generation of his village. . .
>
> Sometimes people would suggest that he had his priorities mixed up. "Your own kids don't even have enough to eat," they'd say, "and you're out there raising money for other people's children. What's wrong with you?"
>
> To which he would simply–powerfully–respond, "Those kids are our kids too."

At the end of this quote, Dr. Murthy says:

> Although my grandfather passed away when I was young, my father often told me this story, and I've taken his gentle but powerful words into my heart. They remain one of the best definition of "connection" I know.

Similar traits were also seen in his parents. His father is a medical practicner and also has an NGO (Scope Foundation) to protect the Earth, and his mother is a great support to her husband. One incident from the author's childhood life illustrates this point vividly:

> I first witnessed such an act in the middle of the night when I was seven years old. I woke up suddenly to find my mother shaking me to get up "Hurry" she said, "we have to get in the car and leave right now."
>
> Half asleep, I piled into the back seat with my sister, and my father started to drive the four of us to a trailer park in Miami. On the way, my parents explained to us that one of their patients, Gordon had just passed away after a long struggle with metastatic cancer. . . Ruth was grieving alone . . .
>
> I will never forget the image of my mother in her traditional Indian sari standing on the steps of the trailer and embracing Ruth as she cried and cried. Their life paths were so different, yet in that moment they were a family. . . the kind that you choose for yourself. (Page 284).

That explains how the author got to write this book with the firm belief '*if you live for others, you live a good life'*.

The second part of the book has three chapters which are in the form of strategies to not only overcome loneliness but also prepare the younger generation to grow in a healthy atmosphere that is inclusive. The three chapters are: Relating Inside out; Circles of Connection and A Family of Families (*vasudhaiva kutumbakam).* Each chapter has the same pattern as the first part (which is diagnostic in nature) and provides ample illustrations in the form of anecdotes. We shall look at a few of these briefly and see what can be inferred from these.

Human being is by nature a lover of adventure and travel. (The early novels in European literature were classified as 'picaresque' or rogue novels. Rogue was a homeless wonderer in search of adventure and life – some of the best examples from this tradition are Gulliver's Travels, Robinson Crusoe, Don Quixote, and Joseph Andrews. This theme recurs in the twentieth century as well with novels like *The Guide, The Alchemist* and other titles.) The travel thirst has not been overcome and this is seen in our space exploration and people aspiring to take a journey to other planets. (We become poignantly aware of this on reading Stephen Hawking's *A Brief History of Time.)* Perhaps this is going to be true sooner than later. But what use is such travel unless we befriend ourselves? Substantiating this view, Dr. Murthy quotes Thomas Merton who says:

> What can we gain by sailing to the moon if we are not able to cross the abyss that separates us from ourselves? This is the most important voyage of discovery, and without it all the rest are not only useless but disastrous. (Page 194)

When we are disconnected from our immediate neighborhood, we do feel lonely and perhaps go into depression. Dr Murthy cites program conducted by Serena, which is called 'space gathering'. Serena was a student herself and conducted this program for other students, many of whom were dealing with loneliness. In this program students are randomly chosen and asked to spend some time with others and engage themselves in 'intentional conversations'. The details of the program are quite interesting, and the net result is, at the end of three hours of sitting together, the strangers are no longer strangers, but a well-connected group. A gathering

like this can have both introverts and extroverts. Extroverts get exhausted by staying alone for a period of time, while the introverts feel exhausted by staying in a large group. Can these two be brought together and allowed to connect in a healthy manner? Space gathering is a step towards achieving this goal, it irons out the differences between the two groups.

We as human beings are also prone to seek attention, and when this is denied we tend to go into isolation or luxuriate ourselves in self-compassion. Is this the right thing to do? Perhaps seeking attention may not be a desired thing, and there are ways to overcome such weaknesses. One proven method is to involve in meditation. The Indian genes that Dr. Murthy carries with him could have prompted him to talk about this. Sure, meditation has its values (now accepted all over the world) and has a curative impact on disturbed souls. Care needs to be taken to practice it the right way, and not to confuse it with solitude. The two are different. Solitude does not require 'a retreat to nature or a vow of silence' (page 207). Solitude can be a good strategy to reflect on oneself.

> The practice of self-reflection can take the form of meditation or prayer, a nature walk, or simply a few minutes of silent contemplation in a park, during our work commute, or before we go to bed at night. (Page 206)

One best way to fight loneliness is to have friends. How do we make friends? "The only way to have a friend is to be one." R Emerson (page 211)

We can have a variety of friends and majorly there are three classes of friends – inner, middle and outer circles. (Reminds me of Prof Kacchru's classification of languages in our environment into three concentric circles with the same labels.) These relate to Intimate, Relational and Collective friendships respectively. Since these terms are self-explanatory, I will not go further into providing illustrations. What needs to be understood is while developing friendship, do we perceive friends belonging to one of these categories and assign roles accordingly. Is there a possibility of movement from one circle to the other? How do we influence such movement? Being aware of these factors helps us stay connected in the society. In this connection, I like to mention one of the experiment the author himself conducted in his office when he was the Surgeon General – 'Inside Scoop'. Here is what can happen in any office:

> At each weekly staff meeting, one team member was asked to share something about themselves through pictures for five minutes. Presenting was an opportunity to share more of our lives and listening was an opportunity to recognize our colleagues in the way they wished to be seen. (Page 228)

How simple and beautiful! There is further elaboration of this experiment and how it helped many people, and this I leave to the readers to discover for themselves.

The last part of the book discusses the value of family life and the mutual support that is sought from each other. In elaborating this aspect, the author cites the case of a mother who brings up her child with a rare genetic disorder – Apert Syndrome. Children with this disorder are born with a deformed skull or an improperly developed skull. Society may not accept them for their

appearance is not normal, but they may have all other skills. (Personally, I have seen a few children with this disorder who are either good singers, are children with exceptional memory or an ability to play with numbers and figures.) But a mother cannot reject such a child. Dr. Murthy cites the example of Lili and her child who is diagnosed with Apert Syndrome.

It is a social responsibility on our part to accept children with physical and other health problems. The world we live in is after all an inclusive place. We need to prepare our children to accept the world in all its variety and this needs good family upbringing. Parents play a major role in this endeavor and need to counsel the children appropriately. The author helpfully provides a checklist of seven points to help the parents' guide their children in this modern digital world. The seven boxes are:

i.   High-quality and age-appropriate face-to-face friendships.
ii.   Extra-curricular activities (These should rightly become co-curricular activities).
iii. Family time (a fast fading entity)
iv.   Shared screen time (an unlikely possibility)
v.   Free time (has become precious)
vi.   School performance
vii. Basic-wellness practices.
       (Pages 258-59)

There can be little to dispute these tenets.

In today's predominantly digital infested world, it is neither desirable nor advisable to wean children from exposing them to digital devices. However, there can be periodic 'digital pacifiers' in the form of sending children to camps where the children can be off their devices and attempt to reconnect with themselves. Often, forcing children to do things they do not like can result in emotional upheavals. Controlling their emotions is an important aspect and to do this RULER acts as a good mnemonic acronym. Let us see what it stands for:

Recognizing emotions (understanding others facial expressions)
Understanding emotions (identifying causes)
Labeling emotions (descriptive vocabulary related to emotions)
Expressing emotions (aptly with different people)
Regulating emotions (controlling them)
(Page 263-64)

A key aspect to community living lies in showing kindness to one another. This point is well illustrated with the example of a boy from a school in Newtown, Connecticut. This young boy of seven years, Daniel Barden would notice a child who is either alone or sad and go to the child and sit with the child talk and perhaps share the meal. Such behaviour in children needs to be noticed and appreciated both by teachers and parents. Similar to Daniel's strategy another program called 'We Dine Together' was initiated by Boca Raton High School in South Florida by Dennis Estimon and his classmates. Dennis and his friends would walk the school grounds at lunch time and find people who were alone. They'd sit and talk to them. (Page 270). This

practice spread to many other schools in the neighborhood. This reminds a reader of an African practice called Ubuntu where community living is illustrated at its best. The principle underlying Ubuntu is *I am what I am because of who we all are.* The author quotes this example elsewhere and brings home the point of cooperative principles that should help make our lives better.

The fact that we should live for one another is most poignantly brought out when the author's daughter Shanti was diagnosed with an infection in her leg which required emergency surgery when she was just a toddler. Though the author and his wife are both doctors, there was little they could do at that moment and rushed to a hospital. It was during a weekend, but the hospital staff rose to the occasion and saved the child. And his mother and mother-in-law living in far off places dashed to look after the child. That is family bonding and this bonding should extend beyond the family to realize the dictum *vasudhaiva kutumbakam.* That is what TOGETHER means.

Feelings of Her, at Her Last Breath
Nikhil Chevula

Feelings of her, at her last breath
What made me different, what made me inferior
Is it my femininity or my body?
Which is the reason for your births on this planet

It made this night dark, not just any night, every night
My dreams shattered in this darkness of this cruel night
At my second home, I felt secured till this morning
And until this evening, till this night, her feeling, not true

In this last breath of my life, my body is covered with blood
And my eyes full of tears, I pray for almighty
That my sorrowful eyes should open and not close
Not just to see the candle rallies for me, or news articles

Not just to see social media activism, but my eyes want to witness
The candles of gender equality, lit in everyone's heart
Instead of news articles, new thoughts of gender sensitization
Not just social media activism, but to witness social activism

Tears in her opened eyes had become lines of my poem

Satan's Kingdom
Dendukuri Vidyanath

What an amorphous picture to behold!
Greenery marred and stolen gold
It is a war of wolves in sheep's coat
Trampling fields and lands remote

Why? Licensed they the bodies own
To smuggle the sedative harvest grown
Legal crime and justices deal
Bidders fix while sellers kneel

Morals wounded, ethics died
Here the land is blood dyed
For luxury, Chastity bartered,
on this planet modernity tattered,

Eerie sights glorify the earth
Fossils left sneering at birth
Seasons resigned hurrying the land
Producing throughout heaps of sand

Flesh hungers for tasty food
Hosts are plenty to serve this blood
Houses filled with animals wild
Forests empty: Dungeons mild

Perilous clouds obscure the Sun
Sleep is long with dreams none
In snug houses bodies rest
Long colonies bedeck the West

Females revile swollen wombs
Brides broody, bare is the groom
Couples discard mutual trust
Off-springs enjoy deep disgust
Gamblers play honest game
Viewers watch glued to same
Poisonous weeds, pollute the soil
Healthy life is a futile toil

Lust is fun and fraud is fashion
Dead are dictums for dollar passion
Prayers unsung and melodies rare
God's abode is a costly fare

Blarney assures affluent life
Be not alarmed this is rife
The world teeming with Saturn's retinue
Theism vanished: Peace is new

Primitive fashions beguile the youth
Opened eyes invisible truth
Vandals brag of laudable skill
Beauties smashed and landmarks nil

False smiles belie the face
Experts even cannot trace
Cold wind shivers the world
Light on leave and dull is fight

Fresh fruits here eat into health
Diseases surrender only to wealth
Air has everything but Oxygen
Bodies rich in deft antigen

God's rival is potent here
With all baseness and pals dear
Flourishing the kingdom with Saturn's pride
Where immortal sinners need not hide
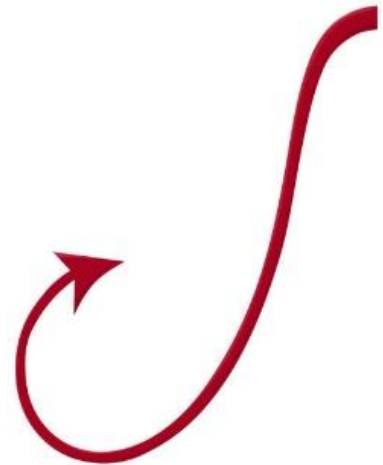
~English Literature~

The New Woman: Women's Resistance in Saudi Movies - An Analysis of *Wadjda* and *The Perfect Candidate*

Syed Ajmal Sameed

Abstract

This paper examines the power of Saudi Arabian cinema to depict resistance to oppression and the constraints placed on women. It seeks to analyse women's defiance against patriarchy. *Wadjda* (2013) and *The Perfect Candidate* (2019) represent unique instances in global cinema, emerging from a country that historically lacked a film industry or distribution framework. The films' realism illustrates the limitations imposed on women's lives in Saudi Arabia while simultaneously embodying optimism for incremental change. I contend that these films underscore the significance of gradual political advancement and can foreshadow such progress.

Key Words: Saudi Cinema, Culture, Patriarchy, Oppression, Resistance, Defiance

Introduction

Among the all the Arab-Islamic nations, Saudi Arabia is thought to have the most conservative culture. Saudi Arabia has a long history of severely restricting women, but in recent years, the Kingdom has made significant progress. Saudi women have gained lot of freedoms in recent years, including the removal of the driving restriction, the ability to travel and study overseas without a male guardian's consent, the elimination of gender segregation in restaurants, and the approval to enter sports stadiums and theatres. For native Saudis, the opening of the country's movie theatres was an entirely new experience. As part of modernisation, Saudi Arabia reopened theatres in April 2018 for the first time in almost forty years.

Shesha and Yusuf observe that, "similar to the launch of cinemas for Arab-speaking audiences in Egypt, Saudi Arabia's film sector emerged in the early 1930s" (248), indicating that the country's film industry differs from that of other Middle Eastern nations. Furthermore, international employees of the largest oil business in the kingdom, the California Arab Standard Oil business (Aramco), were given access to the first movie screenings in Saudi Arabia (Alardawi et al. 123). Shesha and Yusuf (2021) claim that the documentary on King Abdulaziz bin Abdulrahman Al Saud's attendance at the first oil drill's launch was one of several produced by Aramco that had cultural value (248). Furthermore, Sakr noted that King Faisal was of the opinion that movies were foreign and that movie theatres brought men and women together in one location (217). Cinemas have been prohibited in Saudi Arabia for about 35 years due to the country's conservative culture. It has been indicated that, Saudi Arabia has allowed cinemas to open for the first time in thirty-five years as it continues a push to overhaul its society and image after decades of hard-line rule. The initiation of the 2030 vision of Prince Mohamed bin

Salman, established in 2016, enabled the authorities to take first step towards re-opening cinemas, in particular by establishing the General Authority for Entertainment, an organization tasked with the general enhancement of the entertainment industry (Albardawi & Jones 123). Through various digital platforms, the subsequent rise in Saudi cinema has promoted Saudi cultural norms and values. There are currently very few prior studies looking at the Saudi audience, especially when it comes to films made by women, since filmmaking in Saudi Arabia had been ceased.

In the past, women's issues were rarely addressed in Saudi broadcasts and shows, which were dominated by men. Nonetheless, prominent Saudi women and men from powerful families have made important contributions to the film industry. Most famously, Saudi filmmaker Shahad Ameen directed the 2019 film *Scales*. Gigi Hozimah is a Saudi author and film director who lives in the United States. Among her most striking films are *That Abandoned Place* and *He Belongs to Us*. Nagya Al Rabiea is a well-known actress and filmmaker from Saudi Arabia. She has appeared in over a hundred TV shows and motion pictures. Maha Al-Saati is a female filmmaker from Saudi Arabia. Al-Saati's style leans towards genre, fantasy, and experimental filmmaking, using satire while being inspired by American culture. Saudi actress and director Reem Al Habib is another woman who recalls the struggles that the cast and crew faced while filming the 2012 web series *Takki* in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

A noteworthy instance of a Saudi Arabian woman filmmaker is Haifaa Al Mansour. She is well known for making films that examine women's issues in light of Saudi culture and customs. *A Perfect Candidate* and *Wajdja*, two of her well-known pieces, have received critical acclaim on a global scale. *Women Without Shadows*, a short film about the secret lives of Arab women and *Only Way Out*, were awarded accolades in the Netherlands and the United Arab Emirates. It performed at seventeen festivals around the world. A young Saudi girl who desires a bike and the freedom to ride it is the subject of *Wadjda*. A female doctor who chooses to run for municipal office is the focus in the movie *The Perfect Candidate*. In a conservative society, the movie *The Perfect Candidate* is a powerful and poignant film about women empowerment. Notwithstanding the prejudice of her patriarchal Saudi society, the protagonist is presented as a strong, upbeat woman who is resilient, obstinate, and unwilling to give up easily.

Resistance in *Wadjda*

Wadjda is the first Saudi Arabian feature film to be entirely filmed in the country and the first to be directed by a woman. The narrative centres on ten-year-old Wadjda, who aspires to own a bicycle so that she can compete her friend Abdullah in races. When all the naive-looking girls sing their hearts out, the title character of Wadjda stands out from the throng with her careless singing, which immediately convinces us. Her shoes, which stand out from the other girls' school shoes, further demonstrate her disobedience. The free-spirited Wadjda lives in a society where women's lives are centred on men's desire and attention. Indeed, Wadjda is a film about resistance and rejecting power.

Despite the fact that girls are not allowed to ride bicycles, she persists—possibly naively—despite the impossibility of her desire. She doesn't want to give in. In her society, women are not allowed to do any of these things. Nevertheless, Wadjda competes in a Qur'an

reciting contest in the hopes of winning cash so she can purchase one. After foolishly disclosing her intention to purchase a bicycle, she is refused her reward money even though she won. Wadjda's mother ultimately purchases it for her. Instead, she purchases the bicycle for her daughter with the money she had saved for a frock. A bold and imaginative young woman who quietly turns into a rebellious nonconformist, like majority of children worldwide, she aspires to ride a bicycle. Western audiences found it hard to understand why Islamic society views girls as insulting for simply riding a bike. The bike represents her independence from social norms and female obligations, which she feels she must follow in order to accomplish her objective. According to Sullivan, feminism and modernity are both "vehicles" that generate 'a series of tensions' between 'ideological systems and the clumsy challenges of real life.' (216) Wadjda's bicycle thus turns into an apparent source of stress as it defies limitations and pursues transformation. This is supported by Al-Mansour and Thompson, who describe the bicycle as 'a metaphor for freedom of movement that does not exist for women and girls in Saudi Arabia' (10).

When her similarly young schoolmate gets "married off" to a twenty-year-old guy, Wadjda, a preteen girl growing up in a traditional, religious community, deals with the issue of arranged child marriages without explicitly criticising the custom. The western readers may see the young girl's dependence "for her well-being and 'fulfilment' on institutions" such as marriage, and her transition from woman, or in this case girl, into wife, as an "end to her independent identity," here Wadjda's character seems to camouflage this issue with complacency (Haskell 22). Furthermore, the difference between her classmate, a young girl who flawlessly recites the Quran in order to please her husband, and Wadjda, a less serious and troublemaker whose main objective is to obtain a bike to race her friend, speaks for itself. The two girls live in the same restrictive society, but one of them gently conveys a subversive message by simply not conforming to the norms expected of a girl her age without mocking the decisions made by another woman. Wadjda is a character who is constantly subversive, which sets her apart from her own mother, who has to learn to be both conscious of and critical of her limited position. Although Wadjda's mother is a prime example of a victimised female character, through her love and acceptance of her daughter, she gains agency and learns to relinquish her wifely responsibilities and domestic role. Her mother merely refused to get her a bike since riding a bike is frowned upon in Saudi Arabian society. As a young girl in Saudi Arabia, Wadjda struggles with intersecting identities, which are depicted in this film. Throughout the film, Wadjda attempts to speak up for herself but is silenced, illustrating how Saudi women are subalterns and voiceless. The idea that women should be seen rather than heard is also frequently brought up.

Some of the unpleasant realities Saudi women face have come to light, such as the ban on women driving or interacting with men, the taboos against women smiling or chatting in public, and the idea that riding a bicycle might harm their virginity. The title character and the women in Wadjda, in particular, are not shown as completely helpless victims, but rather as ambitious, striving, and having some agency despite the limitations placed upon them. Even if she is occasionally instructed to act in a particular manner, Wadjda refuses to allow the traditions and practices of her nation define who she is. This is where the role of girl empowerment comes in. Wadjda, the main character, demonstrates female agency by not wearing black shoes and not always completely covering her hair with the hijab. Although the

western narratives are quick to link hijabs to oppression, in reality hijabs can symbolize both gender expression and spirituality.

Wadjda's assertiveness and (unintentional) defiance are symbolised by her pursuit of her bike. Additionally, it serves as a vehicle for others to express their opinions about women's roles in Saudi society: her mother first forbids her from riding a bike, and her headmistress is critical and contemptuous of the idea. The only one who offers to give her his bike is the little kid who lives next door and has a crush on her. The predominance of patriarchy, which aims to stifle a woman's autonomy, has not yet corrupted youth's innocence.

Wadjda questions several long-standing sexist social practices prevalent in the kingdom. Al-Mansour was able to highlight gender inequality without coming across as argumentative by selecting a young protagonist. In addition to being a masterfully directed and acted picture, *Wadjda* illuminates the harsh realities that totalitarian regimes place on women, beginning in childhood.

Resistance in *The Perfect Candidate*

The Perfect Candidate is yet another movie which portrays a strong and decisive female protagonist. In the drama, a young woman doctor makes a contentious bid for municipal elections while her father is away, travelling the nation with the Saudi National Band, which was outlawed due to a decree that forbade public musical performances. It centres on a powerful lady who demands support from other women while taking main stage.

Maryam is a skilled physician who, every day, must deal with the expectations of a male-dominated profession despite her shown aptitude. Though progress is slower and the restrictions placed on women are more difficult to overlook, this gender gap is by no means exclusive to Saudi Arabian businesses. The fact that her widowed father, Abdulaziz, is a musician, a career that is still viewed negatively by some in their society and as anti-Islamic by conservative groups does not assist her case either. Although Maryam is frequently questioned by her patients and disparaged by her colleagues, her ambition is unabated, which only serves to highlight her incredible fortitude. The statement that "people can't succeed if their chief is a woman" will shock us the most. It's difficult to keep your breath during these heated exchanges, especially when her responses are as succinct and well-spoken as you would anticipate. She certainly doesn't mince words, and fear doesn't seem to be part of her vocabulary.

It is Maryam's courage and determination to succeed that leads her to the airport, ready to board a plane to a conference in Dubai with hopes of gaining a position at a hospital in Riyadh. She might be young, but that only serves to fuel her bravery, and when she notices an influential speaker from the conference in the check-in line next to her, she wastes no time introducing herself and expressing her interest in the role. If you want something, you have to fight for it, and it's obvious from the very beginning of the film that Maryam is not one to let an opportunity pass her by. It is disheartening to observe that she is nonetheless constrained by a largely patriarchal society in spite of her fiercely independent attitude and solid credentials. According to Fatima Mernissi, because older women were not considered sexual beings in traditional Islam, ladies were urged to go out with an older lady or a male family member (84).

Another unforeseen opportunity in the form of a town council election arises when she is unable to obtain the necessary permission to travel since her father is on tour. Some people, like Maryam, seize the opportunity to make a difference, while others are said to have greatness pushed upon them.

Maryam is off to a great start in her election campaign, but she soon encounters the same familiar resistance, which she must overcome, just like she has every time faced it. It is just not an option to give up. Maryam's opposition is intellectual; she wants to alter her society's patriarchal systems. Scott lists a number of subtle resistance strategies, such as ideological resistance, which aims to subvert prevailing justice and equitable systems by redefining or altering them (84). Maryam, as a woman could connect easily with other women around her, so she should have an advantage over her opponent but she recognises that there is still a long way to go before any kind of equality is achieved when many are prevented from voting or decide not to do so out of fear or doubt.

The Perfect Candidate is about minor victories. Maryam swiftly transforms what began as a campaign to repair the dirt road in front of her clinic into something much more. It encourages the desire to clear the path for women to recognize their potential and use their newly gained freedoms to advance constructive change. Although she sometimes has to put in a little more effort to get where she wants to go, Maryam's goal is to disrupt rather than destroy, and she maintains a strong respect for the culture that has shaped her community's identity throughout. Her perseverance is rewarded, and the little but unexpected affirmations she gets along the way serve as evidence that things are going in the right direction. The final scene of the film shows Maryam driving her car on a paved road.

Conclusion

In Haifaa Al-Mansour's films, the female identity is placed against the influence of contemporary culture and a patriarchal society with misinterpretation of religious mandates. Wadjda makes the audience conscious of the ways in which women are physically constrained and protected. Both of the main characters are determined to challenge the current quo and are not merely passive individuals. By fighting for their rights, the female protagonists have challenged the stereotype of Saudi women as being submissive or docile. These characters were created by Al Mansour to challenge social norms. The patriarchal structure and prevailing masculine mindset in these films have been criticised by Haifaa Al-Mansour. In this way, the female Saudi filmmaker has shown her characters as independent individuals who can fight for change by defying all expectations.

Bibliography

Alardawi, Merfat, et al. "The Representation of Women in Saudi Film: The Case of Amra and The Second Marriage". Asian Social Science, vol. 19, no.6, 2023, pp.123-135.
Al-Mansour, H. and Nam-Thompson. "Anatomy: of a Saudi Female Filmmaker". *World Policy Journal*, vol. 31 no.1, 2014, pp. 10 – 15.
Lamia, Shesha & Nadia, Yousuf. "The Socio-economic Potential of the Emerging Film

Industry in Saudi Arabia". *European Journal of Sustainable Development*, vol.10, no. 1, 2021, pp. 239-256. ResearchGate, doi: 10.14207/ejsd.2021.v10n1p239.

Mernissi, Fatima. 1975. *Beyond the Veil: Male-Female Dynamics in a Modern Muslim Society*. Schenkman Publishing Company, 1975.

Sakr, N. "Placing political economy in relation to cultural studies: Reflections on the case of cinema in Saudi Arabia". *Arab Cultural Studies: Mapping the Field*, edited by T. Sabry. IB Tauris, 2011, pp. 214-233.

Sullivan, Z. T. "Eluding the Feminist, Overthrowing the Modern? Transformations in Twentieth-Century Iran". *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East*, edited by Abu-Lughod. Princeton University Press, 1998, pp. 215 – 242. Scott, James. C. *Domination and the arts of resistance*: *Hidden transcripts*. Yale University Press, 1990.

Thornham, Sue and Molly Haskell. "The Woman's Film." *Feminist Film Theory: a Reader*, New York University Press, 2009, pp. 20-30.

The Universal Hero: A Monomythical Study of Shiva in Tripathi's Trilogy

B Bindu Madhavi

Abstract

Myths are symbolic representations of the innermost aspects of life and the spiritual underpinnings of the religions. Numerous mythological stories depict the journey of self, both inwardly and outwardly. Myths preserve that journey of the ultimate destiny of every individual which reveals timeless truth. Mythologies of different cultures speak about the hero's journey both inwardly and outwardly which leads to spiritual growth. The hero departs from this world and goes through the wilderness of the unconscious and returns to the society of being strong and self-aware in spirit. This research paper describes the set of concepts known as "The Hero's Journey" drawn from the depth of psychology of Carl G. Jung and the mythic studies of Joseph Campbell. It tries to relate those ideas to contemporary storytelling which evolves from our innermost selves and our most distant past. Joseph Campbell described the hero's journey as monomyth in his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949). Hero's Journey is a handbook of life that gives instructions on the art of being human. It is not an invention but an observation. It recognizes a set of principles that govern the conduct of life and the world of storytelling. This research paper deals about how monomyth, most widely known as the underlying plot structure, is incorporated into Amish Tripathi's *Shiva Trilogy* mythological – historical – adventure – fiction from the first half of the twenty-first century.

Keywords: Monomyth, Archetype, Departure, Initiation, Return

In *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Joseph Campbell defines the monomyth as that single ''consciously controlled'' pattern most widely exhibited in the world's folk tales, myths, and religious fables'' (255 – 56). Its morphology is, in broad outline, that of the quest. The hero is called to an adventure, crosses the threshold to an unknown world to endure tests and trials, and usually returns with a boon that benefits his fellows (36 – 38). Already abstracted from numerous mythological sources, the monomyth has again been replicated many times over since (as well as prior to) its articulation by Campbell in 1949. This research paper deals with how monomyth, most widely known as the underlying plot structure, was incorporated into Amish Tripathi's *Shiva Trilogy* mythological – historical – adventure – fiction from the first half of the twenty-first century.

     Amish Tripathi's *Shiva Trilogy*—comprising *The Immortals of Meluha*, *The Secret of Nagas*, and *The Oath of Vayuputras*—is structured around the monomyth, emphasizing its pivotal death-and-rebirth motif. Protagonist Shiva undergoes symbolic deaths and rebirths, navigating the hero's journey through the trilogy's three phases: *The Immortals of Meluha* portrays the "Departure," as Shiva embarks on a quest to identify evil. *The Secret of Nagas* depicts the "Initiation," where he uncovers the source of evil. *The Oath of Vayuputras* concludes with the "Return," as Shiva destroys evil and saves mankind. Throughout, Shiva wrestles with choices between good and evil, ultimately discovering that truth and evil are

complex. Guided by the secretive Vasudevs, he confronts the evil disguised as good, becoming Mahadev, the god of gods, and restoring balance to the world.

While agreeing with Carl Jung that "the changes rung on the simple scale of the monomyth defy description" (Campbell 246), Joseph Campbell provides a detailed anatomy of the archetypal hero and outlines incidents likely to occur at each stage of their journey. The hero, born of a virgin or special birth (Campbell 297–314), may be exiled, orphaned, or in search of their father and often triumph over pretenders as the true heir (Campbell 318–34). Possessing exceptional gifts, the hero inhabits a world with symbolic deficiencies (Campbell 37), fears no death, and seeks to make the world spiritually significant and humankind comprehensible to itself (Campbell 388).

If a warrior, the hero transforms the status quo (Campbell 334–41); as a lover, triumph may be symbolized by a woman, and achieving the impossible leads to the bridal bed (Campbell 342–45). A ruler's search for the father connects him to the invisible unknown, returning as a lawgiver (Campbell 345–49). As a world-redeemer, the hero learns oneness with the father (Campbell 349–54). As a saint or mystic, they transcend life and myth, entering realms beyond forms (Campbell 354–55).

The adventure's "Departure stage" includes up to five incidents: receiving a "call to adventure" through a blunder revealing an unknown world or a herald's appearance; refusing the call; receiving supernatural aid; crossing a magical threshold into a sphere of rebirth; and being swallowed in "the belly of the whale," symbolizing death and resurrection, often through an underground journey akin to a descent into hell (Campbell 36). The "Initiation stage" involves up to six incidents: tests and trials, including assimilation of the hero's shadow or unsuspected self; meeting and potentially marrying a mother-goddess; encountering a temptress; atonement with the father; apotheosis; and acquiring a boon (Campbell 36). The "Return stage" contains up to six incidents: refusal to return; magical flight from the unknown world; rescue from outside the unknown world; recrossing the threshold; attaining the power to cross it freely; and realizing the hero is the vehicle of the cosmic cycle of change (Campbell 37).

The Hero's Journey framework applies to all stories, not just those featuring physical action and adventure. Every protagonist embarks on a journey, whether it leads to external challenges or internal growth. The stages of this journey often emerge naturally, but understanding them helps identify storytelling challenges and improve narrative structure. Christopher Vogler, in *The Writer's Journey*, condensed Campbell's 17 stages into 12 key stages. These 12 stages can be observed in Amish Tripathi's *Shiva Trilogy*, with Shiva's experiences serving as a powerful illustration of this heroic journey.

Through this quest the hero finds their authentic selves, the more humans benefit and then become aware of their connectedness to the world and the need to be an integral part of it. Since every individual is unique, no one but the individual can really know his or her uniqueness and pursue self-discovery via a quest. In *Myths to Live By,* Campbell asserts: "What we know today, if we know anything, is that every individual is unique and that the laws of his life will not be those of any other on earth" (Campbell 243). The inner self has the answers, as Sigmund Freud and Jung demonstrate with the concept of the unconscious, individual or collective. Consequently, more need to journey to self-discovery to contribute to a world starving for direction and vision.

Amish Tripathi's *Shiva Trilogy* reimagines the story of Shiva, a Hindu God symbolizing the destroyer of evil. The series is based on the idea that Gods were once humans whose deeds elevated them to divinity. Set in Meluha, the ancient Indus Valley Civilization, the trilogy incorporates the Suryavanshi and Chandravanshi royal lineages. *The Immortals of Meluha* introduces Shiva, a Tibetan chieftain leading his tribe, the Gunas, near Mansarovar Lake over 4,000 years ago. Battling frequent attacks by the Pakratis, Shiva embarks on a journey to discover his destiny. Heroes symbolize personal transformation, reflecting life's natural stages, as outlined in the Hero's Journey.

The 'Ordinary World' of Shiva begins with his life as a Tibetan chieftain, battling the Pakratis to protect his tribe, the Gunas, near Mansarovar Lake. The arrival of an invitation from King Daksha of Meluha—a near-perfect empire following Lord Ram's dharmic way—ushers in change. After another Pakrati attack, leaving many Gunas dead, Shiva accepts Daksha's offer to immigrate for his tribe's safety. Upon arrival in Meluha, they are treated by Ayurvati, the Chief of Medicine, when they fall ill. Shiva, unaffected, is revealed as the Neelkanth, their prophesied savior, due to his blue throat (Amish 26). Initially, Shiva 'Refuses the Call', doubting the legend of the Neelkanth. When asked to move to Devagiri, he angrily demands answers about the prophecy (Amish 26). Despite reassurances from Bhadra about their tribe's safety, Shiva remains skeptical even after being welcomed by King Daksha and his court.

At this point, Shiva meets his 'Mentor', Brihaspati, the Chief Inventor of Meluha, who explains the empire's crisis: the Saraswati River is drying up, and the Chandravanshis, allied with the Nagas, are launching attacks. During an expedition to Mount Mandar, Shiva learns that Somras, a potion made from Saraswati's waters, caused his blue throat and is the secret to the Meluhans' long lives (Amish 139). Brihaspati, a believer in science, advises Shiva to face challenges rather than rely on prophecy. Shiva's journey is further guided by Gopal, Chief of the Vasudev pandits, who reveals Neelkanth's purpose in combating "evil." Another mentor, Sati, Shiva's wife, supports him emotionally and physically, sacrificing her life for him.

Shiva crosses the 'Threshold' when he meets Sati, a Vikarma (untouchable). Despite initial rejection, Shiva courts her, challenges the unjust Vikarma law, and marries her with Daksha's approval. The joy is short-lived as Mount Mandar is attacked, resulting in Brihaspati's apparent death and evidence of Naga involvement. Enraged, Shiva declares war on the Chandravanshis. After a fierce battle, the Chandravanshi king reveals their belief that the Neelkanth would save them from the Suryavanshis. Confused, Shiva visits Ayodhya and learns from a priest about karma and the choices shaping one's destiny. Determined to uncover the true nature of evil, Shiva begins his quest, marking the conclusion of the 'Departure Phase' in *The Immortals of Meluha*.

Now comes the most challenging phase of the hero's journey, initiation, which involves dealing with the dark side of life to find self-awareness and achieve peace of mind. The first stage is the road of trials, which means wrestling with one's demons. This phase of the journey challenges the adventurer's deepest-held beliefs and most cherished notions of life. Once across the First Threshold, the hero naturally encounters new challenges and Tests, makes Allies and Enemies, and begins to learn the rules of the Special World. The 'Initiation Phase' begins in *The Secret of Nagas*, where Shiva faces trials that challenge his beliefs, forcing him to wrestle with internal and external conflicts. The story opens with Shiva rushing to save his wife, Sati, from a Naga who is believed to have killed his friend Brahaspati. Although the Naga escapes,

he leaves behind coins traced to King Chandraketu of Branga. Shiva consults with Sati's father, Daksha, and King Dilipa of Ayodhya, deciding to investigate further. He travels to Kashi with allies, including Parvateshwar, Nandi, Ayurvati, and Bhagirath.

In Kashi, Parvateshwar is gravely injured in a riot involving the Branga community, but the Branga leader, Divodas, heals him with a rare medicine. Ayurvati reveals that the medicine's ingredients are found only in Panchavati, the Naga capital. Divodas explains that Branga allies with the Nagas to combat a deadly plague, and Shiva resolves to help by traveling to Branga, but special ships are needed for the journey, requiring months to build. Meanwhile, Sati remains in Kashi, helping defend villagers from lion attacks. During a battle, two Nagas arrive to assist her: Kali, her twin sister, and Ganesha, her firstborn son, both disowned by Daksha due to their deformities. Kali was born with two extra arms, and Ganesha's face resembles an elephant's. Daksha had falsely told Sati that Ganesha died at birth. Sati reconciles with Kali and Ganesha, bringing them to Kashi to wait for Shiva's return.

The hero comes at last to the edge of a dangerous place, sometimes deep underground, where the object of the quest is hidden. Often it's the headquarters of the hero's greatest enemy, the most dangerous spot in the Special World, the 'Inmost Cave'. In Branga, Shiva learns that the recipe for the plague medicine is known only to Parashurama, a reclusive bandit. After defeating him, Shiva discovers that Parashurama is a Vasudev scholar who recognizes Shiva as the Neelkanth. In remorse, Parashurama aids Shiva by providing the recipe and joins him on his return to Kashi. There, Shiva meets Kali and Ganesha but initially harbors anger toward Ganesha, recalling his past actions, including an attack on Sati. However, when Ganesha heroically saves Shiva's son, Kartikeya, during a lion attack, Shiva forgives him. Together, Shiva and Sati confront Daksha, who admits to past crimes, including murdering Sati's first husband and abandoning Kali and Ganesha. Disgusted, Sati severs ties with her father.

The 'Ordeal' in myths signifies the death of the ego. The hero is now fully part of the cosmos, dead to the old, limited vision of things and reborn into a new consciousness of connections. The old boundaries of the Self have been transcended or annihilated. Shiva begins his journey to Panchavati, guided by Kali. On their way, they are ambushed by ships armed with Divya Astras, powerful weapons forbidden by Lord Rudra. Suspecting Daksha's involvement, Shiva escapes and safely reaches Panchavati. Kali leads him to a school in the Naga capital, where she believes their greatest secret lies. This marks the completion of the *Initiation* phase, as Shiva moves closer to uncovering the truth.

In *The Oath of Vayuputras*, the final phase of the hero's journey, Shiva begins his 'Return' by uncovering the devastating truth about the Somras from Brahaspati in Panchavati. He learns that the Somras have caused the Saraswati River to dry up, polluted Branga, and led to deformities in Naga babies. Resolving to end its production, Shiva travels to Ujjain, where Gopal, the Vasudev chief, reveals the role of the Vayuputra council in training him as the Neelkanth through his uncle Manobhu. Declaring a holy war on Meluha, Shiva mobilizes his allies from Branga, Kashi, and the Nagas to confront the Somras' defenders, including Parvateshwar and Maharishi Bhrigu. While Shiva plans to use the Pashupatiastra to compel peace, Daksha plots to assassinate him. In a tragic turn, Sati uncovers Daksha's treachery during a supposed peace conference and valiantly fights assassins, but loses her life.

Shiva, devastated by Sati's death, unleashes the Pashupatiastra, destroying Devagiri and the Somras manufacturing facilities. The Somras' end is ensured by altering the Yamuna

River's course, which permanently dries the Saraswati. Shiva retires to Mount Kailash, mourning Sati but leaving behind a legacy of wisdom and peace. 'Resurrection' occurs as Kartik, Ganesh, and Kali gain renown as deities for their heroism, while Bhrigu records his knowledge in the *Bhrigu Samhita*. Sati's memory is immortalized as Goddess Shakti, and her ashes are spread across India, forming the sacred 'Shakti Peetha's. The journey concludes with Shiva's transformation into the Mahadev, who destroyed evil to preserve balance, bringing back the 'Elixir' of wisdom and peace to the world. he beauty of the Hero's Journey lies in its timeless ability to map the transformative path of becoming fully human. As readers journey through its trials, joys, and revelations, they encounter universal archetypes—Shadows, Mentors, Tricksters—that resonate deeply within the shared unconscious. The Hero's Journey transcends the boundaries of time, space, and even death, drawing its power from universal truths and concerns.

The *Shiva Trilogy* masterfully weaves this monomyth, connecting readers to India's mythical past and achieving remarkable commercial success. Amish Tripathi's profound narrative explores themes of transcendence and transformation, anchored by Shiva's journey to becoming a Mahadev: "A man becomes a Mahadev when he fights for good… forged in the heat of battle when he wages a war to destroy evil." More than a historical adventure, the *Shiva Trilogy* is a metaphysical masterpiece. Its intricate layers of meaning mirror the monomyth's depth, offering a profound exploration of death, rebirth, and enlightenment, making it both universally appealing and eternally relevant.

References

Campbell, Joseph. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces,* 2nd ed. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1949. Print. Bollingen Series XVII.

—. *The Inner Reaches of Outer Space: Metaphor as Myth and as Religion.* Novato: New World Library, 1986. Print.

—. *The Mythic Dimension: Selected Essays 1959-1987.* Ed. Antony Van Couvering. Novato: New World Library, 1997. Print.

—. *Myths to Live by.* New York: Penguin Compass, 1972. Print.

Jung, Carl. G. *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious.* 1959. Trans. R. F. C. Hull. 2nd ed. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1968. Print. Bollingen Series XX.

Tripathi, Amish. *The Immortals of Meluha.* New Delhi: Westland ltd, 2010. Print

—. *The Secret of the Nagas.* New Delhi: Westland ltd, 2012. Print

—. *The Oath of the Vayuputras.* New Delhi: Westland ltd, 2013. Print

Power, Body and Resistance in Kerala's Domestic Sphere - A Foucauldian Reading of KR Meera's Short Story "Ave Maria"

Gibin G Varghese & CN Vidhya Lakshmi

Abstract

This paper examines the short story "Ave Maria" from the collection "Yellow is the Colour of Longing" written by K R Meera through a Foucauldian theoretical framework, analysing how power relations and bio-political control manifest within the domestic sphere in Kerala. This study, which draws on Foucault's ideas of bio-power, disciplinary mechanisms, and technologies of the self, shows how the domestic space becomes a pivotal location where several types of power interact and affect bodies, resulting in both opportunities for resistance and enslavement. The study illustrates how diverse forms of counter-conduct, disciplinary measures, and monitoring mechanisms arise inside domestic relationships while relating to larger social networks of power and knowledge.

Keywords: Ave Maria, Foucault, Bio-Power, Disciplinary Mechanisms, Domestic Sphere, Power Relations

Introduction

Power represents a multifaceted phenomenon that has captured the attention of theoreticians and political scientists throughout history. While it defies a singular, comprehensive definition, power can be fundamentally understood as the capacity to shape, guide, or determine how others behave and act. This force operates through various channels and mechanisms, manifesting in both obvious and subtle ways across human relationships and social structures. "Ave Maria" a short story written by Indian Author K R Meera in her short story collection "Yellow is the Colour of Longing" discusses the life of eighty-nine-year-old Maria whose personal world has been deeply scarred by her husband's political engagements. The narrative unveils how domestic spheres, particularly family members, become collateral damage in the cycles of state-sanctioned violence. It presents a narrative where domestic violence emerges as a critical site of power relations and disciplinary practices in Kerala's social landscape. Through the characters of Mariakutty and Immanuel, the text illustrates what Foucault terms the "micro-physics of power" which means power comes from below and how power operates not just through large institutions but through intimate, everyday interactions and bodily practices. The story's setting in Kerala, with its complex interplay of traditional, religious, and modern governance systems, provides a rich context for examining what Foucault describes as the "multiplicity of force relations" - indicates that in our social interactions, we will encounter a wide variety of force connections that overlap and intersect.

Analysis

The story is mainly set in a small house called Chorakkod, the house of Sixty-five-year-old Anna, Sixty-four-year-old Mary, poor paralytic fifty-nine-year-old Lourdes and the central figures Immanuel and Mariakutty. The opening scenes of the story echoes the threatening voice of alcoholic Immanuel. "DIRTY WHORE! Come out, Mariakutty, comrade Mariakutty, soviet Mariakutty, socialist Mariakutty, republic Mariakutty, Chinese Mariakutty, YOU WON'T SEE ANOTHER SUNRISE!" (Meera 18). The domestic sphere becomes what Foucault calls a "field of power relations" where multiple forms of control converge on the body. The story depicts Immanuel's violent control over Mariakutty what Foucault describes as the "political technology of the body" – how power relations have a direct hold upon the body, marking it, training it, and subjecting it to various forms of discipline. Each epithet ("comrade", "soviet", "socialist") represents a different regime of truth attempting to discipline and control Mariakutty's body. This aligns with Foucault's assertion in *The History of Sexuality* that power relations operate not just through repression but through the production of subjects and identities.

The elderly body of Mariakutty catered for the needs of Immanuel despite all these violent struggles, burying all her frailty to the ground. Immanuel exercises his act of violence over Mariakutty till he tires. "Kicking, hitting, throwing, Immanuel would tire" (Meera 19). In the next half of the story, the readers also witness:

> Mariakutty would then slowly raise herself up, along the wall. Come out carefully, measuring the floor with her weak eyes. A bit of lime pickle in her broken-edged tin plate. Or a washed green chilly. Sliding the plate close to Immanuel's feet, Mariakutty would sit on the floor, leaning against the wall, silent. (Meera 19-20)

This instance can be analysed by the Foucauldian idea of 'repressive and normalizing power.' Repressive power forces an individual to do what he/she doesn't want to do on the other hand normalizing power makes an individual do what he/she has to do anyway. It turns an individual who automatically on their own will do what society wishes them to do. Here Mariakutty is normalized to serve Immanuel amidst all the conflicts. Her mind is in a way conditioned to all the savagery and becomes submissive to the power exerted both physically and mentally.

The domestic space in "Ave Maria" functions as what Foucault would term a "panoptic apparatus"- a space where surveillance becomes internalised and self-regulation becomes automatic. The architectural evolution described in the text demonstrates the material manifestation of this surveillance "Stare at the dark, thinking of the concrete houses sprouting up in the fields or of the battery factory where the communist pacha weeds thrived" (Meera 20). The shift from traditional spaces to "concrete houses" represents the modernisation of surveillance mechanisms, creating new forms of visibility and control. The battery factory serves as what Foucault would term a "disciplinary institution," extending industrial forms of discipline into domestic space. The story's treatment of darkness and visibility also aligns with Foucault's analysis of the relationship between power and visibility. The act of "staring at the

dark" becomes a metaphor for the internalisation of surveillance – even in darkness, the mechanism of control continues to operate through self-regulation.

Foucault's idea of the "political technology of the body"- the ways in which individuals are trained to work upon themselves to become certain kinds of subjects, demonstrates the construction of Mariakutty's gender identity through various practices and rituals:

> Got her a new blouse stitched out of heavy-white mulmul. Took her to church to marry. Taught her to cook chilly-and-tapioca. To fry beef with pepper. To reap. To winnow. To be tickled, and to laugh. To play at tiffs and to fret. To give birth to chubby little ones every year. (Meera 21)

This passage reveals the multiple techniques through which feminine subjectivity is constructed. Bodily practices, religious rituals, domestic skills, and emotional training are very much visible in this section. These practices through which Mariakutty is expected to transform herself into what Foucault describes "docile body" – an individual conforms to societal norms and expectations.

The story also demonstrates the state power which can be interpreted through Foucault's concept of "governmentality" which he simply meant "the conduct of conduct" – an activity meant to control the conduct of people. Foucault argues that since the 18th century, the government has undergone a process of rationalization by actively intervening in the lives of populations. The challenges related to population, including aspects such as health, birth and death rates, and life expectancy, are addressed through effective population management strategies. The instances of the state violence are evident in this story:

> The night the policemen bit the dust at Sooranad. The beginning of the flight. Five tiny kids. Three small bundles… There's a reward on Chorakkadan's head. A thousand rupees. A cool thousand. (Meera 22)

This is the night in which everything drastically changes for the Chorakkadan's family. The whole family started their flight with the obstinate mind-set of resist, resist, resist. They try to temporarily settle down in many places with the fire still blazing in their hearts. During the night of the arrest of Chorakkadan reveals the brutality and barbarism of the state power in the story:

> Only the police came. Six or seven, can't remember right. The blouse got torn off. The mundu flew off… The police came in turns. Handcuffed her, and then raped. (Meera 24)

The police brutalities the readers come across in this story are ruthless. They threw the infant Lourdes to the floor making her paralysed for the rest of her life. They exercised their sovereign power to assault a woman, a wife, a mother. This beastly act of sovereign power which Foucault explains that for the past three centuries, sovereign power has transformed from "take life or let live" to "foster life or disallow it to the point of death," otherwise known as bio-power (Allen). Foucault describes this new mechanism of power:

> Working to incite, reinforce, control, monitor, optimize, and organize the forces under it: a power bent on generating forces, making them grow, and ordering them, rather than one dedicated to impeding them, making them submit, or destroying them. (Allen)

This destruction of life is very much evident in these sections of the story which is not only the physical violations Mariakutty encountered but the memories that haunt her for the whole lifetime. "The wife of the jailed comrade is pregnant. That's socialist pregnancy. Communist pregnancy. Just wait, the kid's going to born with a hammer and a sickle" (Meera 25). Mariakutty has to face all this abuse and taunts for the abnormality of some others. Even the life of Immanuel, the poor life on that violent night, was crushed into bits and pieces, confronting all the violent torture and bullying in his life. Death remains present in bio-politics but is reframed as the opposite face of life's demand. Death emerges as the inverse response to life's essential command. As bio-politics emphasises life's continuance, death manifests as its perpetual darker parallel. The compulsion to maintain life inherently positions death as its inevitable shadow. This notion is exhibited in the story through how the sovereign power destroys the harmony of a family and the lives of many individuals in a way suffocating them between the binary oppositions of life and death.

Foucault explains, "Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power" ("Concepts of Power and Resistance"). The prayer "Ave Maria" and the slogan 'Inquilab Zindabad' which means victory to the revolution can be interpreted as a resistance the Chorakkadan family has created. In the story, Mariakutty uses the chant 'Ingila Sindaba' in many scenarios as a mantra to shield herself and her family from the negativism of society. Amidst all the pessimistic results of life, the power of the slogan is the only ray of hope for Mariakutty. Additionally, she heaves herself using the slogan, which gives her the impression that she is raising a flag of revolution. The last sections of the story are engrossing "Pushing the last green chilly in the white tin plate his feet" (Meera 28). This line indicates the hopelessness and reiterating nature of her life. Furthermore, the author connects the life of Mariakutty to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. "At the door of the vault, some Maria alone will wait, weeping for the man she loved" (Meera 28). The story's closing line suggests the continuing suffering of Mariakutty and many other women in the society. However, there is a resurrection following the crucifixion, the author also highlights the potential for a revolution following all of the hardships.

Conclusion

"Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere" (Mambrol). Foucault articulates the idea that power is not concentrated in a single source, such as a state or a ruler, but is diffused throughout all levels of society. Through a Foucauldian lens, the short story "Ave Maria" reveals the complex operations of power within domestic space. The story demonstrates how bio-power operates through multiple mechanisms: disciplinary practices, surveillance, and various forms of resistance. The analysis reveals domestic violence not as merely personal aggression but as part of broader networks of

power relations that operate on bodies, spaces and subjectivities. This reading demonstrates the relevance of Foucauldian concepts for understanding how power operates in intimate spaces and how resistance emerges within these same power relations.

References

Allen, Paige. "What Is Necropolitics?" *Perlego*, 7 June 2023, www.perlego.com/knowledge/ study-guides/what-is-necropolitics/. Accessed 26 Dec. 2024.

Christensen, Gerd. "Three Concepts of Power: Foucault, Bourdieu, and Habermas." *Power and Education*, vol. 16, no. 2, 3 July 2023, pp. 182–195, https://doi.org/10.1177/ 17577438231187129."Concepts of Power and Resistance." *UKEssays.Com*, UK Essays, 26 Apr. 2018, www.ukessays.com/essays/anthropology/resistance-to-power.php. Accessed 29 Dec. 2024.

Demetriou, Olga. "Counter-Conduct and the Everyday: Anthropological Engagements with Philosophy." *Global Society*, vol. 30, no. 2, 10 Mar. 2016, pp. 218–237, https://doi.org/10.1080/13600826.2015.1133568.

"Foucault's Governmentality: Summary Notes." *Sociology Group*, 8 Dec. 2017, www.sociologygroup.com/governmentality-michel-foucault/. Accessed 27 Dec. 2024.

Mambrol, Nasrullah. "Foucault's Concept of Power." *Literary Theory and Criticism*, 5 April 2016, literariness.org/2016/04/05/foucaults-concept-of-power.

Meera, K R. "Ave Maria." *Yellow Is the Colour of Longing*. Translated by J Devika, Penguin Books Limited, 2016, pp. 15–28.

Odysseos, Louiza, et al. "Interrogating Michel Foucault's Counter-Conduct: Theorising the Subjects and Practices of Resistance in Global Politics." *Global Society*, vol. 30, no. 2, 4 Mar. 2016, pp. 151–156, https://doi.org/10.1080/13600826.2016.1144568.

Portschy, Jürgen. "Times of Power, Knowledge and Critique in the Work of Foucault." *Time & Society*, vol. 29, no. 2, 3 May 2020, pp. 392–419, https://doi.org/10.1177 /0961463X20911786.

"What Is Panoptic Surveillance? Michel Foucault and Jeremy Bentham." *Sociology Group*, 22 June 2019, www.sociologygroup.com/panoptic-surveillance-meaning/. Accessed 27 Dec. 2024.

Predicament of Animals in Human Societies - Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book* and George Orwell's *Animal Farm*

Jayshree Singh & Priyanka Solanki

Abstract

Both the authors Rudyard Kipling and George Orwell through the medium of language, form and aesthetic sense give to the readers a set of dominant power relations in society and they have shown how the agents through their mode of action compete for legitimacy and authority and it is through their manner of writing they have analyzed the 'gaze' that sorts the trajectories, strategies of the internal and external stimuli and draws a brilliant analytical parallel picture of cultural, social and hegemonic origin and influence by way of totalitarianism, imperialism, capitalism and materialism. *The Jungle Book* (1894) a novel and *Animal Farm (1945)* a novella have been the pieces of literary cannon in terms of Animal Fables Genre that allegorically state imply the existing political and social conditions of the contemporary times signifying predicament of human society living in degraded degrees of exploitation and enslavement. They epitomize 'the deepest tensions, social conflicts, rituals, taboos and myths of humanity's struggle to come to terms with its physical environment 'through the bewildering, skeptical world of fictional' (Orwell, xii).) animal fables in order to transform and restructure society. The two illustrations from both the fables well described the sarcasm and the reality which is unconsciously followed to delineate that indeed man is a social animal but the animals are indispensable to these social animals, hence the animals and the social animals myth is a continual "structure of feeling" (Barucha, 54)

Keywords: Gaze, Trajectories, Internal and External Structures, Predicament, Social-Political, Cultural Environment

Introduction

George Orwell and Rudyard Kipling have used the narrative strategy to metaphorically express emerging political, economic and social, cultural de facto ideas. Their strength lies in their light treatment of the situation through a parable in which animal characters represent the human skin attitude to the circumstances that they are circumscribed to by the prevalent system of the government and the society. The society that separates culture with material social life that cannot undergo with the process of integration and commitment, there remains only amorality and decadence. When there is differentiation in the feelings naturally the class structure of the society is also disintegrated and cannot conform to the ethos of humanity and its music of compassion and oneness. Till date both the writers have been able to generate empathy and insight for emancipation from men's activities that jeopardized the halcyon world by way of 'commodity culture and a manipulation of desire.'[1]   The writings signify that:

> 'the general mode of production and the literary mode of production, a general
> ideology, an aesthetic ideology and an authorial ideology. All these interact in

complex ways to deconstruct the marginalized moments and material interests.'[2] These books are transformative narratives because they enable readers' speculations as regards historical, social, political realities and they conjoined fragmented consciousness of the readers to change their petty perceptions and gaze towards those responses, tensions, context and experience have been neglected on grounds of physical, psychological and moral level.

Rudyard writes in the chapter – "Mowgli's Brothers" that:

> The Law of the Jungle, which never orders anything except without a reason, forbids every beast to eat man except when he is killing to show his children how to kill, and then he must hunt outside the hunting –grounds of his pack or tribe. The real reason for this is that man-killing means, sooner or later, the arrival of white men on elephants, with guns, and hundreds of brown men with gongs and rockets and torches. Then everybody in the jungle suffers. The reason the beasts give among themselves is that Man is the weakest and most defenseless of all living things, and it is unsportsmanlike to touch him. They say too- and it true-that man-eaters become mangy, and loose their teeth. (JB, 5)

The above lines clearly demarcate differences between two classes, only they messed up when there is counter-attack. Indeed, any being whosoever suffers, retaliates, but retaliation in case of subordinate beings is repressed because they do not know their strength due to their low image and low self-perception. Or sometimes the retaliation becomes regression as we find in another description given by Rudyard Kipling. Bagheera narrating his resilience against mankind to Mowgli:

> There is no one in the jungle that knows that I, Bagheera, carry that mark-the mark of the collar; and yet, Little Brother, I was born among men, and it was among men that my mother died-in the cages of the King's Palace at Oodeypore. It was because of this that I paid the price for thee at the Council when thou wast a little naked cub. Yes, I too was born among men. I had never seen the jungle. They fed me behind bars from an iron pan till one night I felt that I was Bagheera-the Panther-and no man's plaything, and I broke the silly lock with one blow of my paw and came away; and because I had learned the ways of men, I became more terrible in the jungle than Shere Khan…"(JB, 15)

In the beginning of the book we find Rudyard seem to portray the world of animals and their dislike for the wise men and their attitude to be free from the fear of men's world, but the narration of the author refers to the white men's threatening presence that always seem to disturb the peace and happy life of the animal world. They are always threatened to be subjugated, tamed, commercially used or exploited during war times. The strength of the mankind, their guns, their power to control the wild animals, their sharp knives are the wild images of fear and suppression. So when Mowgli enters as naked skin, bald headed infant known as man's cub became symbol of vengeance for the sinister tiger Shere khan, who always

frightened his foster wolf father and mother of hunting him as its prey. Finally, the day arrives when Mowgli mature into a man in place of man's cub and he has to take leave of the Little Brothers of the jungle. In this part we find Mowgli finding his identity among animals, as they reared him; he speaks to sinister Shere Khan when he tried to make the aging wolf Akela his prey:

> I see that ye are dogs. I go from you to my people-if they be my own people. The jungle is shut to me, and I must forget your talk and your companionship; but I will be more merciful than ye are. Because I was all but your brother in blood, I promise that when I am a man among men I will not betray ye to men as ye have betrayed me.(JB, 21)

Then it is found that Rudyard has carried little boy Mowgli to Indian city with the help of monkeys. The narrative style of Rudyard changes from general to individual perception. The author pictures the world through Mowgli. His ideology, his thought process about the place can be visualized through the central character of the book. To Mowgli, just as to white men, the animals were savage and wild like primitive tribes or natives wherever the colonies were set by white men for the sake of their materialistic gains. Mowgli always tried to sort out the disputes among animals through these words- "*We be of one blood, ye and I*" (JB, 42). The same spirit we find among the white colonizers for the primitives whenever they were in superstitious troubles or under petty disputes. It is apt to quote the words of a critic regarding the meaning of the transformative narratives that at the surface level of the text project a story, but underneath there is subtexts which implicitly suggest the hidden mind, expression of the contemporary situation which the author might not dared speak openly yet he leaves the scope for open-ended context and its meaning. The contemporary writer is part of this larger narrative both at conscious and unconscious levels. Elaborating upon the complexity of the narrative Paul Cobley points out

> as soon as we start to look more closely at this phenomenon, it is evident that the apparently natural impulse of storytelling or story listening (or reading) is far from simple. Even the most 'simple' of stories is embedded in a network of relations that are sometimes astounding in their complexity' [4]

Rudyard seems to analyse the state of Indian society from his eye, but it is Mowgli who watches and expresses his concern in the book and how as an alien among the mankind he prepares himself to adjust with them. One of the situation through which Mowgli goes sets the frame of Rudyard Kipling's own fancies as regards adjustments with Indians. He writes empathetically;

> For three months after that night Mowgli hardly ever left the village gate, he was so busy learning the ways and customs of men. First he had to wear a cloth round him, which annoyed him horribly; and then he had to learn about money, which he did not see the use. Then the little children in the village made him very angry. Luckily, the Law of the Jungle had taught him to keep his temper, for in the jungle, life and food depend on keeping your temper; but when they

made fun of him he would not play games or fly kites, or because he mispronounced some word, only the knowledge that it was unsportsmanlike to kill naked cubs kept him from picking them up and breaking them in two. He did not know his own strength in the least. In the jungle he was weak compared with the beasts, but in the village, people said that he was as strong as a bull. He certainly had no notion of what fear was, for when the village priest told him that the god in the temple would be angry with him if he ate the priest's mangoes, he picked up the image, brought it over to priest's house and asked the priest to make the god angry and he would be angry to fight him. It was a horrible scandal, but the priest hushed it up, and Messua's husband paid much good silver to comfort the god. And Mowgli had not the faintest idea of the difference that caste makes between man and man. (JB, 54)

If we study Rudyard's personal life it is as Joseph Conrad said about it – "the contact with primitive nature and primitive man brings sudden and profound trouble into the heart".[5] The little heart of Rudyard floats in fantasies when he first time came across as a child the primitive, religious and frenetic Indians. Then later when he returns from England after seven years back to India, his life like Mowgli seemed to him juggling between native whites' culture and his feeling of intimacy with Indian-ness. Therefore, Anglo-Indian life and society on one hand taught him to live with alien society while on the other hand his visionary mind could not stop him to see the societies and their impact on each other, their pros and cons, and his observations as an outsider proved him to be analytical and sometimes exotic romancer. One of the critics writes about him:

> His imperial fiber sees Indian impressions in three ways – (1) tales of native life, curious glimpses of customs and superstitions. (2) Then the social, Anglo-Indian episode, the study of administrative and military types – wonderful rattling, riding ladies who at Shimla and more desperate stations look out for husbands and lovers. (3) Devoted wholly to the common soldier.[6]

Thus his novel *The Jungle Books* progresses from the simple exploration of the animal world that depicts his intellectual imaginative capacity to determine the difference between animals and the men and then gradually it pictures the human world of Indian society where animals and men have their own metaphysics and anthropological identity that means the fear is for being hunted vice-versa. Then Rudyard's intellectual vision expands to paradoxes – for example the Great War that Rikki-tikki-tavi (a mongoose) fought single-handed, through the bathrooms of the big bungalow in Segowlee cantonment. In this chapter we find that mongoose as pet of an Englishman saved life of his son Teddy, his wife from the cobras, snakes etc., and keeping off all snakes outside their garden walls. This chapter suggests that how a primitive animal pays off the debt to his master who shelters him and loves him as his pet. This chapter very humorously draws the great war between the mongoose and the cobra snakes.

Nagiana saw that she had lost her chance of killing Teddy, and the egg lay between Rikki-tikki's paws. "Give me the egg, Rikki-tikki. Give me the last of my eggs, and I will go away and never come back,' she said, lowering her hood. Yes, you will go away, and you will never come back; for you will go to the rubbish –heap with Nag. Fight, widow! The big man has gone for his gun! Fight !"… "It is all over", he said. 'The widow will come out again." And the red ants that live between the grass stems heard him, and began to troop down one after another to see if he had spoken the truth"… As Rikki-tikki went up the path, he heard his (a bird called as coppersmith) "attention" notes like a tiny dinner-gong; and then the steady" Ding-dong-tock! Nag is dead-dong! Nagiana is dead! Ding-dong-tock!" That set all the birds in the garden singing, and the frogs croaking; for Nag and Nagiana used to eat frogs as well as little birds.
When Rikki got to the house, Teddy and Teddy's mother she looked very white still, for she had been fainting) and Teddy's father came out and almost cried over him; and that night he ate all that was given him till he could eat no more, and went to bed on Teddy's shoulder, where Teddy's mother saw him when she came to look late at night. (JB, 106)

Rudyard reminds us of the famous *Panchtantra fables* mongoose, the loyal animal to the master who saves his child's life by staking his own life. If we do the re-reading of this part of the text it reveals the master and subordinate relationship based on self- effacing and altruistic attitude among them. Their submission does nowhere indicate subordinate –master relationship, rather there is mutual coordination as per the capacity. Symbolically this event suggests that the British men and women did find that affinity among the natives of the Indian lands, which led them to transform their aggression into affection and understanding.

But in the chapter 'Servants of the Queen' Rudyard seemed to imply the rule of British Raj in India that was mainly assisted by the natives who are allegorically referred to as troopers-horses, battery mule, gun-bullocks, gun-elephants and commissariat camels. He directly states that these animals (camels, elephants, horses, bullocks and mules) are as wise as men in one of the conversations taken place between the Central Asian Chief of the British Raj and the native officer:

They obey, as the men do. Mule, horse, elephant, or bullock, he obeys his driver, and the driver his sergeant, and the sergeant his lieutenant, and the lieutenant his captain and captain his major, and major his colonel, and the colonel his brigadier commanding three regiments, and the brigadier the general, who obeys the Viceroy, who is the servant of the Empress. Thus it is done. (JB, 144)

Here the above two references from the Jungle Books present the dichotomy between imperialism versus culture elaboration; labour exploitation versus transindividuation and marginalization versus collective consciousness. These all ideological attitudes go hand in hand to carry on the process of existence of the white men and natives during the British Raj. Hence Rudyard's narrative discourse is dialectic; he has tried to link two opposite things with his intellect and has dissolved

mythic tale into a world literature narrative that insists on multiple voices in constant tension and enables to deconstruct the hazards of homogenization and hegemony'[7]

In this reference Rudyard Kipling has composed a song in the chapter 'Toomai of the Elephants' to express the feelings of animals that suffered on account of the Imperialists' policy of non-interference in the production market which for the sake of economy do not look after the interest of the labourers but harass them until their greed and grime does not get fulfilled. He writes:

> I will remember what I was. I am sick of rope and chain.
> I will remember my old strength and all my forest affairs.
> I will not sell my back to man for a bundle of sugar cane:
> I will go out to my own kind, and the wood-folk in their lairs.
> I will go out until the day, until the morning break-
> Out to the winds' untainted kiss, the waters' clean caress-
> I will forget my ankle-ring and snap my picket-stake.
> I will revisit my lost loves, and playmates masterless! (JB, 110)

Rudyard explains that: 'Elephants are very strictly preserved by the Indian Government. There is one whole department which does nothing else but hunt them, and catch them, and break them in, and send them up and down the country as they are needed for work'(JB, 111).Thus we see the internal passive resistance among the animals for men's ruthless, malignant designs to commercially use the animals. We also observe that animals' rebel against men which is implied more in the form of regression and suppression; they are afraid of the knives and guns, chains and rope, false gorges through which they are trapped and caught. The writer created Mowgli as the persona who metaphorically stands for the author's voice and author's ideology as regards the policies of imperialism, colonialism, laissez-faire, capitalism and industrialization. He meant through this book that subordinates become self-conscious of their strength and weaknesses in front of Homo sapiens and recognize their homogenized pattern of their culture and try to imitate the hegemonic make-up. This ambivalence map their identity and awareness. Antonio Gramsci, a modern Marxist who influenced literary theory in 1971 said in this context:

> Dominant classes maintain their position not only through acts of coercion but also through symbolic action which renews and recreates the social order. Hegemony is the nexus of material and ideological instruments through which the dominant classes maintain their power. Hegemony thus mediates between the ruling ideas and subjects. The hegemony of the ruling/dominant class is maintained through coercion and consent. The material sphere is a "structure" that is allied with a superstructure of ideas. These ideas are institutionalized in the civil society: the law courts, the bureaucracy, the religious and educational systems. The coercive apparatus is the state with its army and police

apparatuses. A more subtle form if control is to employ intellectuals to naturalise the present" (oppressive order).[8]

Thus we find through the eyes of Mowgli how animals are men's enemies or vice versa. How men try to use animals for their greed and grime. How men try to create comfort zone through the use of animals. Animals were equivalent to bonded labourers. That is use and throw, but no responsibility of their health and old age. The first fight of survival started between men and animals, although both in the very initial stages of the species formation did know each other, did not cross each other areas as narrated by Tha, the Hathi of the jungle. It was the first of the tigers, who was deputed as judge and protector forgot the law of the jungle and jumped upon a buck and broke his neck and to escape the stare of Tha and other animals, he in fear ran into the forest of the Northern areas, but the first smell of blood confused all and even the tiger. Then there was rumour that a hairless one called FEAR has entered the jungle and lives in caves. The tiger returned to save animals, but finally in the fight the tiger got killed and its hide began to be used as the man's cub dress. In this way the fear in the form of hairless one crept into the jungle. The man, as per the Law of the Jungle earlier not to be killed, it was considered as shameful, but when man came across a kill and the First of the Tigers above it, the man also learnt the art of killing more intelligently than animals, as we are told in the lesson 'How Fear Came':

> So it came about that the First of the Tigers taught the Hairless One to kill-and ye know what harm that has since done to all our peoples- through the noose, and the pitfall, and the hidden trap, and the flying stick, pointed stick and the stinging fly that comes out of white smoke (Hathi meant the rifle), and the Red Flower that drives us into the open. Yet for one night in the year the Hairless One fears the Tiger, as Tha promised, and never has the Tiger given him cause to be less afraid. Where he finds him, there he kills him, remembering how the First of the Tigers was made ashamed. For the rest, fear walks up and down the Jungle by day and by night." (JB, 164)

In whole of this chapter Mowgli is the listener, so sometimes he is the inquisitive being, who like the author judges the relationship between one culture and the other or he is the part of the animal community yet an outsider because he is the man's cub, he is going to be a man in future although brought by the mother wolf among the pack of wolves who always warns him of the sinister intentions of the Tiger Shere Khan.

Similarly, George Orwell's book *Animal Farm: A Fairy Story* but yet the most important work of fictional political satire, written in twentieth century Britain, published in the post-war world. It was the book intended to show the pathetic condition of those who were the victims of capitalism and dominance of private leadership in the production process where the exploitation was at the discretion of the powerful people who owned the business and profit i.e. laissez faire. It was a satirical portrayal of those leaders who tried to fire the unrest for socialism but they themselves were trying to be in limelight and perpetuity through this cause and not effectively and devotedly taking up the cause of common masses welfare. It becomes all the more meaningful when the same masses get alert against the individualistic ideology of

their leaders and when the radical improvement through revolution is achieved, then they throw their own leaders because after that they do not want to be oppressed by them further. The book conveys us the message to end totalitarianism for the sake of their leaders, gods and history. It stands with political and moral intelligence towards egalitarian or proletarian revolution.

The book *Animal Farm* starts with the aggression against Mr. Jones the owner of the farm. His image symbolizes Facist totalitarianism whose dominance, oppression and malignity towards his subordinates i.e. towards animals became unbearable and they under the leadership of Old Major, Snowball and Napoleon (the three pigs – most intelligent among animal species) get Mr. Jones overthrown and takes the control of animal farm and that later comes to be called as Animal Farm in place of Manor Farm. Here Old Major stands for Churchill (the prime minister of Britain) and Stalin for Napoleon (the leader of socialist revolution in Moscow), while Snowball is Atlee (the leader of Labour Party in the British Parliament). And Mr. Jones represents Germans who during the World War Second were predominantly raiding the whole Europe and even reached to Russia. One fascist threatened the socialist state of Russia. It was Napoleon (the pig) who is given credit in the animal farm to achieve success in the first struggle of animals in the battle of Cowshed. And Snowball is deceitfully held back or chased away due to his fair-minded social welfare-state liberal ideas although it was because of his intelligence that the battle was won. The farm is located in the British Landscape depicting the wretched condition of animals are the resource capital of production output whether at the time of the rule of Mr. Jones or when Napoleon takes the reign of Animal Farm. The Old Major who is replica of Mr. Churchill, do unites alike the old pig his countrymen against the capitalist mode of life and try to imbibe among them the knowledge of their importance in the production-output and integrate their strength to oppose the Germans power and he was supported in this cause by Napoleon and Snowball. How come Napoleon (the pig) or Stalin (the Russian Revolutionist) got the position of perpetuators is significant here, because to defeat German invasion that is fascists was a difficult task and so the socialist' process of integration was a counter – pedagogy to oppose Germans.

The novel *Animal Farm* is the post-world war book that refers to:

> The coming of the atomic age had brought a new sense of terror and annihilation into the world. The price of the Fascist totalitarianism of the previous two decades was becoming all too clear. Much of Europe lay in waste, and from the physical and moral ruins came the evidence of the Nazi extermination camps, in which so many millions had died. At the Potsdam conference in July, where Truman, the new American president, faced Stalin with Churchill and Attlee, the wartime alliance was already becoming untied, and America's atomic domination accelerated this process. The century of modern mass revolutions, and the drive inside them toward totalitarianism, was already turning sour on itself, and in these circumstances a new moral reckoning seemed necessary".[9]

We can find how discriminately and disgracefully their dignity was ignored in the two extracted passages during the time of their leaders whose pedagogies of the totalitarian process poured poverty, pain, despair and self-humiliation and reflections of imperialism and capitalism in

fascist regime as well as in socialist voices of revolutions still manipulated slave-master relationship in the superstructure of society that consists of education, economy and cultural manifestations. The parallel embedded meaning is explicable in the passage derived from the book *Animal Farm* that delineate the conditions of the animals on one hand, simultaneously the allegory depicts the condition of slaves and labourers who work in industries and factories owned by capitalists:

> 'Man is the only creature that consumes without producing. He does not give milk, he does not lay eggs, he is too weak to pull the plough, he cannot run fast enough to catch rabbits. Yet he is lord of all the animals. He sets them to work, he gives back to them the bare minimum that will prevent them from starving, and rest he keeps for himself. Our labour tills the soil, our dung fertilizes it, and yet there is not one of us that owns more than this bare skin. You cows that I see before me. How many thousands of gallons of milk have you given during this last year? And what has happened to that milk which should have been breeding up sturdy calves? Every drop of it has gone down the throats of our enemies. And you hens, how many eggs have you laid in this last year, and how many of those eggs ever hatched into chickens/ The rest have all gone to market to bridge in money for Jones and his men. And you, Clover, where are those four foals you bore, who should have been the support and pleasure of your old age? Each was sold at a year old-you will never see one of them again. In return for your four confinements and all your labour in the fields, what have you ever had except your bare rations and a stall? (AF, 4)

These were the conditions that the economic system of the contemporary times levied upon the workers in the production market and manufacture. Even when the workers realized politically their rights, they were unprepared with their own pedagogy to organize and work themselves with the aim of equality and equity. Their self – capacity subjected them to be supervised by those amongst themselves who were more efficient, brainy, fast and play manoeuvres to exercise their control. Hence just as in capitalism the dominance of civilized, oppositional power structure discards rising new classes and try to suppress all human possibilities, similarly in socialism social institutions and organizations cast their social consciousness as regards social production but modes of production yet display capitalist mode, hence social labour and production signifies cultural production and class struggle and disparity even though there is "relative autonomy."[10] To illustrate this, another passage from the same book is sufficed to explain the imposition of the repressed strategy: The book *Animal Farm* reveals the brutality of Napoleon who deceitfully sacks Snowball on the charge of treason and his pack of hounds chased him out of the Animal Farm after the victory of animals in the Battle of Cowshed from the men. In this battle Snowball skillfully showed his acumen to counter men's attack with the help of his aides. Napoleon his contemporary competitor kept always the animals misguided about Snowball's activities and his suspicion nature became synonymous with slaughter to hack those who try to support Snowball.

> The four pigs waited, trembling, with guilt written on every line of their countenances. Napoleon now called upon them to confess their crimes. They were the same four pigs as had protested when napoleon abolished the Sunday Meetings. Without any further prompting they confessed that they had been secretly in touch with Snowball ever since his expulsion, that they had collaborated with him in destroying the windmill, and they had entered into an agreement with him to hand over Animal Farm to Mr. Frederick. They added that Snowball had privately admitted to them that he had been Jone's secret agent for years past. When they had finished their confession, the dogs promptly tore their throats out, and in a terrible voice Napoleon demanded whether any other animal had anything to confess. The three hens who had been the ringleaders in the attempted rebellion over the eggs now came forward and stated that Snowball had appeared to them in a dream and incited them to disobey Napoleon's orders. They, too, were slaughtered… (AF, 54)

The author George Orwell as one of the Marxist critics

> 'have tried to discover the synchrony of structure, thus enabling a deciphering of the outline of an informing structure of social consciousness in the aesthetics of the text itself…This means that a text in saying one thing, reveals other possibilities which it is ideologically prohibited from realizing. Thus the absences or silences in a text tie it to the history from which it is produced……[11]

There is a depiction of a historical reality of fascist regime and the failings of socialist revolution under Stalin is worked upon by the author to convey the effect of the real. Here we find tradition of story genre that has taken its form of a cultural production aesthetically to convey the reality at two levels i.e. one at political unconsciousness against powerful political force and secondly social discourses against literary boundaries. Thus Orwell implicitly expresses the discourse on the relationship between man and the material that thrives on unequal relations of labour:

> As Clover looked down the hill side her eyes filled with tears. If she could have spoken her thoughts, it would have been to say that this was not what they had aimed at when they had set themselves years ago to work for the overthrow of the human race. These scenes of terror and slaughter were not what they had looked forward to on that night when old Major first stirred them to rebellion. If she herself had any picture of the future, it had been of a society of animals set free from hunger and the whip, all equal, each working according to his capacity, the strong protecting the weak, as she had protected the lost brood of ducklings with her foreleg on the night of Major's speech…and when you had to watch your comrades torn to pieces after confessing to shocking crimes. There was no thought of rebellion or disobedience in her mind….Whatever happened she would remain faithful, work hard, carry out the orders that were given to her, and accept the leadership of napoleon. But still it was not for this

that she and all the other animals had hoped and toiled. It was not for this that they had built the windmill and faced the bullets of Jone's gun.' (AF, 55)

Both the authors redress the bone of contention allegorically between humans and animals. They envisioned the same consciousness in the class struggle, race struggle and in the structure of existential feelings whosoever class, race the being belongs. These authors have questioned 'the fundamental human structure of the individual; it cannot be an obstacle to his freedom, existence and does not nihilate its being.'[12]

Conclusion

The two British authors are of completely different ages. Rudyard Kipling was an Indian in heart although of British origin in British Raj Indian Government during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century when British imperialism was at its zenith in India. While George Orwell, a native of Britain during the twentieth century, was concerned with the so called 'capitalism –in-decay'. The investigation becomes interesting because both of them have taken the animal fable genre to narrate the structure and the condition of the society or of the world where there is hegemonic influence of certain class over the 'other'. Both the authors describe the animal world parable to depict existential reality i.e. survival of the fittest and might is right. This symbolically refers to the two conditions. One is the political unconscious state of the repressed beings whose regression is seen in their actions against each other malignantly whereas other is the values and norms of the materialistic society that has victimized their existence and has made them objects of production in place of equal social and economic share. This objective utility whether of animals by man or of men by man or of subordinates by the dominant class has been delineated aesthetically and with real poignant truth by both the authors in their respective writings. The relevance of these books till date has not subsided due to their portrayal of animal characters which seem to speak in human skin their sufferings. These books suggest a kind of apathy for those who in order to succeed in economic gains thrive on exploitation, treachery, corruption, violence and greed in place of restoring love, loyalty and wisdom in their relationships with the fellow beings.

Works Cited

Primary Sources

Kipling, Rudyard, *The Jungle Books*, Peacock Books: NewDelhi (2005) Rpt.
Orwell, George, *Animal Farm*, Penguin: England (1989).

Secondary Sources

1. Nayar, K.Pramod, 'Marxism', *Literary Theory Today*, Asia Book Club: New Delhi (2002)132-133.
2. Ibid.,137.

3. Bharucha, E. Nilufer, ed. "Redefining Nation Spaces", *World Literature- Contemporary Postcolonial and Post-Imperial Literatures,* Prestige Publ.: New Delhi (2007) 54.

4. Jain, Jasbir and Supriya Agarwal, eds., *Gender and Narrative*, Rawat Publ.: New Delhi (2002) xiv.

5. Kipling, Rudyard, "Introduction", *Selected Works of Rudyard Kipling Vol.3*, P.F.Collier & Son: New York (1900) 21.

6. Shahne, A. Vasant, *Rudyard Kipling: Activist and Artist*, Southern Illinois University Press: U.S.A. (1993) v.vi.

7. Tompkins, J.M.S. *The Art of Rudyard Kipling,* Metheun: London (1959) iv-v.

8. Nayar, K.Pramod, 124-125.

9. Orwell, George, "Introduction", *Animal Farm*, Penguin: England (1989) xii-xiii.

10. Nayar, K.Pramod, 129.

11. Ibid., 129.

12. Sartre, Jean Paul, "The Desire to be God", *Existentialism and Human Emotions*, The Wisdom Library: New York (1957) 65-66.

13. Orwell, George,xii

Unbroken Traditions: A Study of Cultural Resilience in Esther David's *Book of Rachel*

Gangadhari Manjula

Abstract

The primary aim of this paper is to understand the negotiation of identity in diasporic communities, with a focus on the "Bene Israel" refugees. Literature of diaspora is often explored from the perspective of longing for the native land and culture. However, this paper delves into the other side of the spectrum—where individuals or communities neither find a space to return nor entirely recreate their home in the host land but instead negotiate between the two. It would be limiting to define this expression solely as "creole," as the culture in this space is more complex and layered. This article focuses on Rachel Dandekar from *Book of Rachel* by Indian Jewish author Esther David. Rachel does not create a new culture but steadfastly upholds her native culture while simultaneously adapting to the culture of the host land. "Rachel remembered the LORD by chanting *Deva re Deva*. Humming the Marathi version of *The LORD is my shepherd*" [David, p.8]. This negotiation is not an act of revolt but rather a testament to the resilience of her culture. As Stuart Hall posits, "Cultural identity is not a fixed essence, lying unchanged outside history" (Hall, 1990, p. 223). Rachel's experience exemplifies this dynamic process of identity formation, where adaptation and resilience shape a Indo-Jewish cultural space. By analysing these aspects, this article attempts to understand the Indo-Jewish space particularly how it is articulated in "*Book of Rachel*".

Keywords: Indian Jewish Literature, Cultural resilience, migration, Hostland, Esther David, Book of Rachel.

Introduction

Esther David (b.1945) is the daughter of well-known animal lover, philanthropist and Padmashree Reuben David (1912-1989). She grew up in the midst of animals and birds rescued and adopted by her father along with the intricate Jewish rituals and practice that was a part of her family. Her childhood and her family background moulded her vision of India, her insights into the complex position of her community as well as her own identity as an Indian-Jew. Through the years Esther has achieved honour and recognition as a sculptor, artist, author and art critic. She was awarded the prestigious Sahitya Akademi for English literature in the year 2010. Thematically, her works are varied, dealing with subjects ranging from identity crisis, ambivalence, hybridity, historical and political questions and diaspora.

The Bene Israel community of Jews in India arrived on the west coast of India, in Danda near Alibaug around 175 BCE where they were shipwrecked as they were on their journey sailing away from persecution. It is said that seven men and seven women survived the shipwreck and buried the others on the banks of Danda. Their graves remain a shrine and monument for the memory of the Bene Israel. They were shown hospitality by the natives of

the land, settled on the west coast of India and came to be known as the Shanwar Telis because they took up the occupation of oil pressing but refrained from work on the Jewish Sabbath.

The Bene Israel were one of the few tribes of Israel that arrived in India at different times in history and settled in different regions as they fled from persecution. With the declaration of the establishment of the State of Israel on 14 May 1948 (Declaration of Establishment of the State of Israel, mfa.gov.il) the Jews who had migrated to different parts of the world due to religious persecution were given a call to return to their homeland Israel. Many Jews obeyed the call and made their way back to Israel.

There are three distinct groups of Jews in India that arrived at different periods. They are the Cochin Jews, Baghdadi Jews and the Bene Israel. To quote Shalva Weil "The Largest of India's Jewish communities, though minute by Indian standards is the Bene Israel –literally meaning "Children of Israel"(11). Narration of the Bene Israel Jews and their experience in India has been vividly documented in the writings of Indian-Jewish writer Esther David. Her work is a blend of biography, history and culture foregrounding a hybridized Indian-Jewish ethos. As immigrants the complex relationship of the minority community with the nation is problematized in her fictional and nonfictional works.

Methodology

Holling (2006) who is considered by some to be the father of resilience theory, believes that the concept of resilience provides a new and useful framework of analysis and understanding on how individuals, communities, organisations and ecosystems cope in a changing world facing many uncertainties and challenges. Cultural resilience as a methodological approach involves studying how individuals and communities maintain and adapt their cultural identity, traditions and practices in the face of adversity, change or uncertainty including colonization, migration and social marginalization. It refers to the ability of a culture to withstand and recover from challenges and changes. The capacity of a culture to maintain its identity, values and practices despite internal or external challenges.

Literature Review

Rohini Sharma's paper, titled "Mapping Emotions, Culture and Identity through Food and Memory in Esther David's, *Book of Rachel"* explores the intersection of food, memory, and identity in David's novel. The study analyzes how the protagonist, Rachel, uses food and memory to navigate her Jewish-Indian identity. The author examines the cultural significance of food in shaping Rachel's emotions and identity. It provides insights into the experiences of Jewish-Indian communities in India.

Rajyashree Khushu-Lahiri and Shweta Rao's work, titled, "'What's Cooking?'-Cookery and Creativity in The Mistress of Spices, Serving Crazy with Curry in *Book of Rachel"* explores the intersection of food, culture, and identity in three novels by Esther David. The authors analyzed how cooking and food serve as metaphors for creativity, identity, and cultural belonging. The study examines the ways in which food narratives reflect the complexities of diasporic experiences. The author's analysis highlights the significance of culinary practices in shaping cultural identities.

Pallavi Rastogi's paper, titled "In-between Histories and Stories: Jewish Indian Identities in the Fiction of Esther David " examines the representation of Jewish-Indian identities in Esther David's works *Book of Esther* and *Book of Rachel*. The author analyses how David's works navigate the complexities of Jewish-Indian experiences in India. The article explores the themes of identity, history, and cultural belonging. This study provides insights into the hybrid identities of Jewish-Indian communities.

The paper by Ete, Ms. Doyir, and Sravani Biswas, titled, "Host land and reception in Esther David's *Book of Esther, Book of Rachel and Shalom India Housing Society* explores the themes of host land and reception. It analyses the Jewish-Indian community's experiences of finding belonging in India. The authors employ postcolonial theory and cultural studies to examine cultural negotiations and identity formation. The study provides valuable insights into the experiences of minority communities in India. It highlights the importance of cultural exchange and understanding in promoting inclusivity and diversity.

These are popular perspectives from *Book of Rachel* written by Esther David, which talk about culinary, food and memory, identity and culture. So this paper analyses a new perspective on cultural resilience shown by the protagonist in a host land.

Analysis

Individuals or communities demonstrate cultural adaptability with resilience in a host land in various ways such as cultural practices (clothing and cuisine); Language and communication; social and community networks to survive in the host land. As it helps them to safeguard their identity and to feel secure. In the novel, *Book of Rachel* the protagonist Rachel Dandekar is a Jewish-Indian widow. She is a representation of a Bene Israeli woman who refused to obey the call to return to Israel as she believed that India was the holy land for her. Living alone in Danda, where her ancestors the Jews migrated due to a shipwreck from Israel, their holy land. Rachel was born, grew up and married in Danda to her Cousin Aaron. He was one among the members of the synagogue committee. Synagogue is a place where Jews worship and read The Torah, the holy Book of Jews. It played a significant role in preserving the Jewish religion and culture throughout history. In the novel, *Book of Rachel* there are many instances of how Rachel showed cultural resilience to survive in the host land. It explores the blending of Jewish and Indian cultures, highlighting the ways in which Rachel's family adapts to their Indian surroundings while maintaining their Jewish heritage.

Cultural practices

Cuisine (Food as cultural expression): The novel is structured in the format of a recipe book. The story is divided into chapters, each beginning with a different recipe and an illustration depicting the episode of the story and the meal described. The episodes of the story follow the recipe with notes and comments on the recipe, its ingredients, its variations according to culture, its significance and the customs associated with it. The recipe is not written professionally. It has a homely feel to it as if the woman is conversing with a narratee belonging to a different culture. Each episode of the story connects with the recipe described before it. The story then unfolds itself recipe-by-recipe to tell how a mix of Esther's culinary skills,

hospitability, love for her homeland and belief. Though living in a host land with different cultures Rachel did not forget her traditional food recipes, the way the meals are prepared and as she describes the alternatives used in the Maharashtrian and Jewish cuisine recipes. The use of languages becomes significant for cultural associations. The names of the recipes are not all Jewish or written in their English versions. There are recipes that are given their Marathi names as Sol Kadhi, Peethal, Tandala Chi, Methi Bhaji and Puran Poli; these are basically Maharashtrian recipes. But the very Jewish traditional ceremonial meals made for the Pessach, though given the traditional Jewish names, have the chapter titled in Marathi as "Anashi Dhakacha San". These titles also help elaborate the way in which the Bene Israel nativized themselves in India.

> Every recipe in a Jewish household needs coconut milk as base. According to the dietary law lamb should not be cooked in its mother's milk. So, instead of dairy products coconut milk works as a perfect substitute for milk in Bene Israel cuisine. [David, p.11]

Rachel is seen using alternatives for her traditional Cuisines in a host land.

Clothing: She knew all Maharashtrian customs. So much so that they often introduced her to their relatives as a Konkanastha Brahmin. She is dressed in a Nauvari saree, also known as Kashta saree, is a traditional nine-yard Marathi style saris that is draped in a unique way which gives a very beautiful look.

Language and Communication

> As a rule she spoke in Marathi, the language she has known since her birth .[David, p.4]

Rachel though belonging to Bene Israel Teli, the villagers appreciated that she spoke Marathi just like them with right intonations. She hums Hebrew prayer in Marathi. Whenever there were cyclonic winds which could damage the synagogue Rachel remembered the LORD by chanting *Deva re Deva.* Humming the Marathi version of *The LORD is my shepherd.*

> Rachel swept the floor, singing a bhajan to child Moses floating in a basket on the river Nile. It was a popular Marathi song about the child Krishna. An unknown Jewish poet had changed the name from Krishna to Moses, but the tune was similar to the one sung by Krishna devotees all over Maharashtra. Rachel preferred Marathi bhajans to the complicated Hebrew prayers. She knows their tunes and occasions for which they sang. [David, p.13]

The passage is an example of cultural fusion that existed in Rachel's life. The song she sang cleaning the synagogue, a popular Marathi tune, had been adapted by an unknown Jewish poet to replace Krishna with Moses. This blending of cultural traditions reflects the exchange

between Jewish and Marathi communities. Rachel's use of Marathi bhajan suggests that she adopted the cultural traditions of her surroundings. It provides valuable insight into the lives of Indian Jews, highlighting their unique cultural practices and traditions. The blending of Jewish and Hindu traditions in the song is a testament to the syncretic nature of religious practices in India. Rachel played a key role in protecting Jewish traditions and customs, by assimilating into hostland cultures.

Social and community networks

Social support and network provide emotional support and practical help, enhancing individuals' ability to cope with challenges in host land. Rachel reminisced about her past days with her family, how they celebrated Sabbath and every traditional festival with all their relatives coming from distant places. How gathered at the synagogue to make the Matzo, a traditional Jewish unleavened bread that holds great cultural and religious significance, especially during the holiday of Passover, for the entire community.

> Religiously on Friday afternoons, Rachel opened the ancient lock of the synagogue and oiled it so that it did not rust easily. Then humming a Hebrew prayer In Marathi, she swept the floor, mopped it, wiped the chairs and saw to it that the synagogue was neat and clean. [David, p.5]

Rachel is seen protecting an old, abandoned synagogue, going through many odd circumstances. It was present at the back of her house. As she was living alone, her husband died and children moved back to Israel, she is comforted watching the synagogue. She keeps cleaning the things in the synagogue that one day, Prophet Elijah will help her to win her case against the sale of the land of the old synagogue. Mordecai is one of the members of the synagogue committee. He often came to her as he was Aaron's (Rachel's husband) childhood friend who tried to sell the synagogue. He came with a flower with its mauve and red speckled petals on the parapet saying, 'It is a gift from Mr Chinoy'. He has a farm in Alibaug.

Rachel asked, 'I know you have not come here to discuss flowers, so tell me what is on your mind'. Mordecai spoke in an even tone. Mr Chinoy has offered a very good price for the land around the synagogue. Rachel did not agree to sell the synagogue. She called up her children and explained the issue. Her daughter Zephra came to stay with her to help solve the issue. Her children sent messages to all the bene Israel Jews to create public opinion and raised concern about it. Judah, friend of her elder son Jacob, was a lawyer. He helped them to clear the issue by telling Mr. Chinoy that Mordecai had forged the documents to his name and was trying to sell it.

Though Mordecai tries to threaten her, she stands firm on her decision of not allowing the synagogue to be sold. This shows Rachel's commitment towards her culture and traditions. Synagogue represents several significant aspects of Jewish culture, identity, community, heritage and spirituality. It is a sacred space for Jewish prayer, study, and community gatherings. often serve as community centres, hosting events, classes, and social activities. It symbolises the connection between the Jewish community and God. Synagogues house the

Torah, representing the centrality of Jewish scripture and study. It provides a sense of community and belonging for Jewish individuals and families, the continuity of Jewish tradition and practice. Synagogues symbolize the resilience and perseverance of the Jewish people throughout history.

In the context the synagogue might represent a connection to Rachel's Jewish heritage, her community, and her spiritual identity. Rachel was a devout Jew and decided to protect the synagogue as a relic that was the memory of her people, her ancestors who had taken refuge on the land. She grew up attending the synagogue and was married to Aaron in the same place. Her husband was one among the elders of the synagogue committee. It's the place where her sons were circumcised. She taught her children traditional Jewish practices like greeting 'shalom'.

One day, Rachel's pulse dropped and started to complain of pain in the chest when she saw labourers constructing a wall around the synagogue. They had received orders from Saab to build the wall. Rachel was rushed to the hospital fearing the onset of a heart attack. Later things fall into place with the help of Judah.

> Rachel was listening attentively and knew that it was the handiwork of the prophet Elijah, but did not say anything. [David, p.172]

This shows Rachel's belief in her ancestors and dedication to the synagogue and her efforts at preserving the heritage of the Jewish community in a host land. Rachel took pride in her newfound identity, which made her a part of their lives, not a stranger who belonged to a minority community. This helped her to safeguard her identity and feel secure in a host land. Thus *Book of Rachel* offers a powerful portrayal of cultural resilience, highlighting the ways in which individuals and communities can preserve their cultural heritage, adapt to changing circumstances.

Works cited

Bandelu, A.(2021). A Narrative analysis of Book of Rachel by Esther David as a Narrative of cultural integration. Epitome: International journal of Multidisciplinary research. Vol. 7, Issue 8, page no. 57.

David, E. (2018). Book of Rachel. Penguin: India.

Declaration of Establishment of the state of Israel. www.mfa.gov.il

Ms Doyir Ete, Dr Sravani Biswas "Hostland and Reception in Esther David's Book of Esther, Book of Rachel and Shalom India Housing Society" International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature (IJSELL), vol 5, no.12, 2017, pp. 49-55. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.20431/2347-3134.0511005.

McAslan, Alastair. "The concept of resilience: Understanding its origins, meaning and utility." Adelaide: Torrens Resilience Institute 1 (2010).

Weil, Shalva. "The Bene Israel Indian Jewish family in Transnational Context." Journal of Comparative Family Studies, Jan 2012. DOI 10.2307/41585381

Rohini, Sharma. "Mapping Emotions, Culture and Identity through Food and Memory in Esther David's Book of Rachel." Litinfinite 4.1 (2022): 40-47.

Rastogi, Pallavi. "In-between Histories and Stories: Jewish Indian Identities in the Fiction of
        Esther David." South Asian Review 34.2 (2013): 27-48.
Ete, Ms Doyir, and Sravani Biswas. "Hostland and Reception in Esther David's Book of Esther,
        Book of Rachel and Shalom India Housing Society."
Khushu-Lahiri, Rajyashree, and Shweta Rao. "'What's Cooking?'-Cookery and Creativity in
        The Mistress of Spices, Serving Crazy with Curry and Book of Rachel." Crossings: A
        Journal of English Studies 2.1 (2009): 47-60.

Self-Identity of Women in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*

Rajkumar B Bhairam

Abstract

Kiran Desai is an indisputably leading and the most prominent contemporary Indian novelist in English. She is concerned with the emotions, thoughts and cultural identity of her characters. The Inheritance of Loss addresses the problems faced by her characters. They often face the problem of identity and become frustrated at the end. The Inheritance of Loss shows certain multicultural concerns like diversity, identity, minority, and ethnic rights and post colonialism. Many works by Indian writers in English represent Indian attitude and responses to England, the British rule, the English language and education, decades after the cessation of the British rule in India. These responses bear testimony to the lasting impact of the colonial encounter on Indian society. Society assumes men as superior to women. They are considered as inferior and less intellectual and are made to follow male authorities and ideologies. The patriarchal ideology considers women only as a housewife and men as a leader of social, political and economic authorities. They experience domination, discrimination, oppression, control, insult and violence within family as well as in society. The present paper tries to analyse the interaction of women's experiences and the state of their oppression, suppression and self-determination, with their spatial existence in the novel. It is an attempt to consider Kiran Desai's treatment of the portrayal of women characters subjugating their freedom at the feet of the patriarchal society and their quest of identity in her Man Booker Prize winning novel, The Inheritance of Loss.

Keywords: Patriarchal, Identity, Quest, Feminism, Marginalization, etc.

It is obvious from the experience of the society all over the globe, patriarchal societies promote the male at the expense of the female. Consequently, women have been denied economic, social and cultural equality the world over. They have been actively suppressed and oppressed as well. However, in the 1960s, after about two centuries of struggle, feminism was identified as a movement aimed at achieving social, cultural and economic equality for women. It highlighted how and why women were considered inferior to men and how the treatment meted out to them was justified by the patriarchal establishment. Some books written in the second half of 19th century such as Simon de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949), Mary Ellman's *Thinking about Women* (1968), Kate Millet's *Sexual Politics* (1970), Bell Hooks' *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (1984), Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of Rights of Women* (1972), Elaine Showalter's *The New Feminist Criticism: Essays on Women, Literature and Theory* (1985) etc. were greatly instrumental in promoting this struggle for equality, justice, equal place for women. The patriarchal bias inherent in such a civilization proclaimed that personality traits that are considered superior such as rationality, creativity, self-reliance, a thirst for adventure, are associated with men, while their very opposite and supposedly inferior traits are associated with women. The male has this superior status not only in real life but in works of great literature as well. India, since ancient times, has been no exception to this

marginalization of women. We refer to a woman as weak and helpless, as if a woman has no identity. We still worship her in temples and hold her in awe, but in real life we get her to burn herself at the funeral pyre of her husband in order to be relieved of her responsibility after the death of her husband who is regarded as her master and her god. One who refuses to burn herself leads the miserable life of a widow whose presence and sight is considered inauspicious. All this is possible because a woman herself in patriarchal society has no identity. As an unmarried person she is the property of her father, once married she is owned by her husband and after that the right of ownership is transferred to her son. The Muslims of India do not lag far behind as far as the marginalization of women is concerned. Rules laid down in Islam are interpreted in such a way by the established patriarchal order that the superiority status is given to men. The Muslim woman too, is not permitted to make her own decisions.

The Indian women's struggle for identity, the desire for the assurance of the self has been a long and never ending. The 'self' refers to a person's personality or character that makes the person into the unique individual that he or she happens to be. Many post- colonial Indian English writers have made contribution in literature who have succeeded in carving out a niche for themselves, in becoming the sort of persons they want to be, making their own decisions and living the kind of life they want to live, in spite of pressures from the patriarchal setup. They have brought the opinion of Indian women to the fore by a spurt in their writings. Kamala Das, Kamla Markandaya, Nayantara Sahgal, Anita Desai and Shashi Deshpande are notable examples. Thus, the marginalized woman's struggle can surely be conceived as feminist consciousness. The patriarchal establishment has long assumed that a woman is just a physical entity. If her material needs are taken care of, she feels so fulfilled that she does not think of other things at all. Thought is the prerogative of the male. A number of female characters in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* not only think for themselves but also lead the kind of life that they want to. They make an effort, at different stages of their lives to define themselves. The backdrop of Indo- Nepali insurgency is used by Kiran Desai to test and prove the efficacy of both men and women who live in these troubled times in and around Kalimpong. Set in post-colonial times, moving forward but simultaneously, moving backward in the mind of Jemubhai, the judge, the novel reveals Sai, his grand-daughter, who is a young teenager when the action of the novel takes place and also Jemubhai's wife Nimi who is dead but is revealed to us vividly as Jemubhai re-lives his past at the level of thought. Notable among other characters who are effectively portrayed are Lola and Noni, two sisters of Bengali origin, who are quite self-possessed and emancipated.

Due to the sudden demise of her parents in an accident, Sai, who had been studying in a convent school is removed from there and is given shelter by her maternal grandfather Jemubhai, a retired judge who is leading the life of a recluse in Kalimpong. Soon, in the company and influence of Noni and Lola, Sai grows into an emancipated young person. Books too are an early influence on her. She reads enthusiastically and this stimulates her thinking and her imagination

> She found they affected her so much she could often hardly read the accompanying words – the feeling they created was so exquisite, the desire so painful. She remembered her parents, her father's hope of space travel. She studied the photographs taken via satellite of a storm blowing a red cloud off

the sun's surface, felt a terrible desire for the father she did not know, and imagined that she, too, must surely have within her the same urge for something beyond the ordinary.
Cho Oyu and the judge's habits seemed curtailments to her then. (p. 69)

Her teacher Noni is another formative influence on her. Noni tells Sai how, when young, she herself used to dream of becoming an archaeologist but because her parents were old fashioned, they did not understand her desire. And because like Sai, she had been educated in a convent school where she grew up being an introvert and did not have enough self-confidence to take a stand. Noni advises her:

> "Listen to me," Noni told Sai, "If you get a chance in life, take it. Look at me, I should have thought about the future when I was young. Instead, only when it was too late did I realize what I should have done long ago. I used to dream about becoming an archaeologist. I'd go to the British Council and look at the books on King Tutankhamen.... But my parents were not the kind to understand, you know, my father was the old-fashioned type, a man brought up and educated only to give orders.... You must do it on your own, Sai." (p. 69)

Sai begins to think for herself and her thoughts influence her actions. She falls in love with her tutor Gyan and in this relationship behaves in an uninhibited manner. When, partly due to a difference in opinion in connection with celebrating Christmas and partly because of complications in their relationship due to the Gorkha unrest, she and Gyan quarrel and Gyan, looking for an excuse to justify his own rudeness, tells himself that "he was sullied by the romance" because "she gave herself" easily. Keeping in mind Sai's education and class, Gyan should have understood her behaviour which may have been unconventional from the point of view of a person coming from the middle class, but he makes no effort to do so. Sai, on the other hand, though equally upset thinks logically and coherently over the entire issue:

> What on earth was wrong with an excuse for a party? After all, one could then logically continue the argument and make a case against speaking English, as well, or eating a patty at the Hasty Tasty – all matters against which Gyan could hardly defend himself. She spent some time developing her thoughts against his to show up all the cracks. (p. 175)

Her opinions are quite mature and balanced. The maturity of outlook that Sai has at the age of sixteen, Gyan lacks at twenty. Angered by the untruthful and derogatory portrayal of India and a discriminatory attitude towards Indians in the writings of authors of English origin, she thinks and reasons coherently:

> A rush of anger surprised her. It was unwise to read old books; the fury they ignited wasn't old; it was new. If she couldn't get the pompous fart himself, she wanted to search out the descendants of H. Hardless and stab the life out of them. But the child shouldn't be blamed for a father's crime, she tried to reason

with herself, then. But should the child therefore also enjoy the father's illicit gain? (p. 199)

When Sai is deserted by Gyan, she eventually has the courage to go and look for him, confront him in his own neighbourhood and without mincing words tell him what she really thinks of him:

> And how grown-up are you?! Too scared even to come for tuition because you know you've behaved nastily and you're too much of a coward to admit it! You're probably just sitting waiting for your mummy to arrange your marriage. Low-class family, uncultured, arranged-marriage types... they'll find you a silly fool to marry and you'll be delighted all your life to have a dummy. Why not admit it, Gyan? (p. 261)

Orphaned and lonely, her situation is not an easy one, yet she faces it in spite of the anguish that she experiences. Caught right in the middle of an Indo-Nepali insurgency Kalimpong descends into chaos. This experience, along with her failed romance with Gyan helps Sai to grow and understand life better. She becomes conscious of the existence of more than one point of view. Sai also realizes that it is neither possible nor desirable to be so self-centred that one fails to understand and accommodate others:

> Why shouldn't I have …? … How dare.… I deserve…. Her small greedy soul…. Her tantrums and fits…. Her mean tears…. Her crying, enough for all the sadness in the world, was only for herself. Life wasn't single in its purpose... or even in its direction.... The simplicity of what she'd been taught wouldn't hold. Never again could she think there was but one narrative and that this narrative belonged only to herself, that she might create her own tiny happiness and live safely within it. (pp. 322-23)

Lola and Noni are modern women with an independent outlook. They live by themselves in a house called Mon Ami. Both like reading and are fond of discussing the kind of subjects that the educated usually ponder over. On different occasions, both, current topics like the Gorkha unrest and the related one of drawing up of borders, as well as major world religions like Christianity and Islam are discussed in an animated manner. In her conversation with the librarian of the library at the Darjeeling Gymkhana, Noni voices her opinion on the concept of confession and the related one of forgiveness in Christianity after reading Crime and Punishment. She feels it is all biased in favour of the doer of the wrong:

> The whole system seemed to favour, in fact, the criminal over the righteous. You could behave badly, say you were sorry, you would get extra fun and be reinstated in the same position as the one who had done nothing. who now had both to suffer the crime and the difficulty of forgiving, with no goodies in addition at all. And, of course, you would feel freer than ever to sin if you were aware of such a safety net: sorry, sorry, oh so so sorry. (p. 200)

The librarian says that the Hindu system is a better one, since in it, one has to suffer the consequences of one's deeds. But Noni does not agree: "But we, too, have wriggled out! Not in this lifetime, we say, in others, perhaps…." (p. 200). Though, both Lola and Noni are quite broad-minded but out of the two, it is Noni who is more balanced and accommodating, while Lola is more outspoken. When Lola accuses the Nepalis of multiplying very fast and Mrs. Sen compares them at this level with the Muslims, Lola contradicts Mrs. Sen and says that the Muslims in Kalimpong are not multiplying fast. This is a factual statement as far as Kalimpong is concerned. Noni's sense of fairness, however, leads her to defend both the Nepalis and the Muslims:

> Everyone is multiplying. Everywhere. You cannot blame one group over another. (p. 129).

Both the sisters hold fast to their opinions even at the cost of contradicting each other:

> "They have a point," said Noni, "maybe not their whole point, but I'd say half to three-quarters of their point."
> "Nonsense." Lola waved her sister's opinion away. "Those Neps will be after all outsiders now, but especially us Bongs. They've been plotting this a long while. Dream come true. All kind of atrocities will go on – then they can skip merrily over the border to hide in Nepal. Very convenient." (p. 127)

Since the Gorkhas are especially angry with the Bengalis, and Lola and Noni are Bengalis, Lola is very upset. She blames Pandit Nehru, India's first Prime Minister for encouraging the formation of new states. She believes firmly that all terrorists, guerrillas, insurgents, rebels, agitators learn not only their methods and techniques from one another, but are also encouraged by similar movements in different places. She opines that the letter sent by the Gorkhas to the queen of England, Gorbachev and Reagan contained statements that were incorrect:

> You saw that letter they sent to the queen of England? Gorbachev and Reagan? Apartheid, genocide, looking after Pakistan, forgetting us, colonial subjugation, vivisected Nepal.... When did Darjeeling and Kalimpong belong to Nepal? Darjeeling, in fact, was annexed from Sikkim and Kalimpong from Bhutan. (p. 129)

Lola and Noni live the kind of life they want to, unfettered by what others may think or say. Since they are educated and economically independent, this is possible.

Another woman is Mrs. Sen, who is looked down upon by these two sisters because she is not as well educated as them. In spite of her so-called inferior education and position, she often voices her opinions on topics that are being discussed by Lola and Noni. Though her opinions are quite crude yet she is a woman, who in spite of her drawbacks manages to have her own voice. Her daughter Mun Mun of whom Mrs Sen is very proud has managed to get a job with the CNN and lives in America.

Mrs Mistry, Sai's mother, is also a woman who emerges as a person capable of making her own decisions. Jemubhai had greatly neglected his daughter but had sent her to a convent school where she was a boarder. She meets, elopes with and marries a successful young Zoroastrian brought up in an orphanage. Though she is a Hindu but she has no qualms marrying a Zoroastrian. This can be interpreted as a secular and emancipated outlook.

It may appear that all the women in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* are emancipated ones who have managed to hold their own in a male-dominated setup, but this is not so. An important female character that is revealed in the novel is that of Nimi, the wife of Jemubhai. Though she is dead, the reader gets to know of her to a certain extent though the cook's account of her, but largely through Jemubhai's thoughts about her. Desai has described very skillfully that to attain promising career people migrates to Western countries and lose their own identity. Such type of character is Jemubhai Patel, a retired judge who suffers lots in England, oppressed and humiliated there but he always tries to hide "his embarrassment gloved in something called 'keeping up standards.'" (p.119). But the fact is that only for financial support to go abroad, he marries Bela. Their marriage was a negotiation to incur a luxurious dowry. Through the character of Bela, Desai exemplifies the reality of female subjugation. The judge is attracted and fascinated with his young under aged wife in the beginning:

> While the family was out selling the jewels for extra money, he offered her a ride on his father's Hercules cycle. She shook her head…they went faster and faster, between the trees and cows, whizzing through the cow pats.
> Jemubhai turned, caught quick sight of her eyes – oh, no man had eyes like these or looked out on the world this way….
> He pleaded harder. The ground sloped, and as they flew down the incline, their hearts were left behind for an instant, levitating amid green leaves, blue sky" (p. 92)

Bela is only fourteen years old when she marries to Jemubhai and so terrified that she pleads to be spared the wedding night. With the creation of this female character Bela, Desai tries to highlight the Indian tradition of early marriage. Child marriage is very common in India and like a business deal with the bride's family to amass the dowries for groom's family. According to custom, a Hindu bride's in-laws have a right to change her name if they desire to. Before marriage Nimi's name was Bela. It was changed to Nimi by her in-laws. In this way this woman's identity was redefined by her in-laws to suit their fancy. Desai shows the suppression of woman life in which they are not allowed to maintain their identity and dignity, they have no rights of their own existence.

Jemubhai leaves for England for five years to become an ICS officer and leaves her wife Nimi behind and with the progress of time he forgets her. Once Nimi is fascinated by his powder puff and she hides it. When Jemubhai discovers this, he becomes infuriated. He beats her mercilessly and in rage he violently rapes her and spends all his frustration on her. Instead disapproving, his family members proceed to lock them in. He wants to teach her the same humiliation and bitter feelings of loneliness and shame he had learned himself. Jemu's treatment of his wife deteriorates as time continues. He believes that English speaking people are the symbol of the sophisticated class. He does not love his wife only because she is unable

to speak English. Nimi is shown as a traditional wife for whom husband is everything. His misbehaviors become intolerable to her but she does not speak a single word in revolt till her last patience. Jemubhai hates all persons who as Indians as they are not taken as civilized. His hate, fear, misbehaviors, and ill treatment of his wife are the outcome of disintegration of the self under the effect of colonialism. Nimi's life was full of oppression, injustice, deprivation, isolation and alienation; she is completely tied with these. She can't escape far away. Nimi's character is shown with the lens of recollection of her anglophile husband. Another incident which shows the injustice of an Indian wife is that when Jemubhai discovers her footprints on toilet sheet, he lost his temper and his frustration knows no limit:

> – *she was squatting on it, she was squatting on it!* – he could barely contain his outrage took her head and pushed it into the toilet bowl. (p.173)

Such type of maltreatment closed her dream and illusion. He reduces a beautiful young woman to a pitiful caricature of herself with his every cruel misbehavior. Her toiletry and beauty items are discarded and prohibited her to wear traditional Indian jewelry because it does suit his English tastes. As a result of his physical torture and emotional abuse she withdraws into herself. Time goes on and she spoke to none, the servants throw their own leftovers on the table for Nimi to eat, stole anything without fear. Due to the mental stress, she develops pustules on her face, which further irritates her husband. She comes to realize the emptiness of her existence.

> The quieter she was, the louder he shouted, and if she protested, it was worse. She soon realized that whatever she did or didn't do, the outcome was much the same. (p.305)

Matters reach to the extreme point when Nimi accompanies a group of women who are going to welcome Nehru. In those colonial times this action of Nimi though undertaken in ignorance leads to Jemubhai being denied a promotion. He sends her away for good, forgetting among other things that it was his marriage to Nimi and the money that he got as dowry as a result of this marriage that he was able to make ends meet and sail away to England in order to fulfil his and his family's dream of becoming an ICS officer. He abuses and thrashes her. To get rid of her he could not help him thinking to care about her:

> In purest moment he could imagine himself killing her (p. 305).

Finally, she is sent to Gujarat, her paternal home and there she takes the shelter in her uncle's house but there also she is not permitted to live more and his uncle tells her openly:

> You are your husband's responsibility. Go back. Your father gave a dowry when you married – you got your share and it is not for daughters to come claiming anything thereafter. If you made your husband angry, go ask for forgiveness. (p. 306)

By this particular incident Desai shows very skillfully, how after the marriage a woman has no right to live in her parent's house and is learned to face every situation whether good or bad. Sometimes they are not treated as human and their voices are not heard. Nimi suffers double loss, loss of her sanity and loss of her human self in the hand of cruel patriarchal system. When the news he heard that Nimi had caught fire over a stove, "the judge chose to believe it was an accident." (p. 308) After all, "Ashes have no weight, they tell no secrets, they rise too lightly for guilt, too lightly for gravity, they float upward and, thankfully disappear." (p. 308). Jemubhai paid bribes to have Nimi's carnage look like an accident. Death was the last solution and the only relief to Nimi whom the patriarchal society crushed all her life, Nimi's self is submerged under the expectations of her husband, who is her lord and master. One gets an occasional glimpse of it, only to see it thwarted, subjugated, totally crushed, and made into a non-entity by Jemubhai. The way he has sex with her can only be described as rape legitimized. One important reason why Jemubhai takes in an orphaned Sai, his granddaughter, is that he feels it would be sensible to have in the house someone who is unpaid. He does not dislike her because she is westernized and so his cruel self is not activated. Times have also changed but he cannot and hence does not exert his ownership right over her.

Simone De Beauvoir's work explores the oppression of women and the struggle for female autonomy. In *The Second Sex*, De Beauvoir diagnoses "woman" as the "lost sex". De Beauvoir argues that women must sacrifice their authentic selves to become the "inessential other" for men in patriarchal societies. He argues that women must retake their autonomy and reconfigure the meaning of sex difference. In *The Inheritance of Loss*, women are categorized into two groups: the illiterate, rustic class and the educated, urban class. It depicts the journey of women from oppression to liberation across three generations. The novel explores how women in the illiterate, rustic class are subjugated by patriarchal systems. The novel also explores how women in the educated, urban class experience freedom and meaning. Thus, the present paper shows Kiran Desai's female characters' quest for identity breaking the traditional norms of the society. It does not matter that few female characters' life was full of isolation, loneliness, aloofness and depression. But the other characters are presented with vitality and potential.

References

Barry, Peter. *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. Manchester: Manchester University Press. 2006.
Beavoir, Simon de. *The Second Sex*. London: Vintage Books, 2011.
Desai, Kiran. *The Inheritance of Loss*. New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2006. (All citations are from this edition.)
Forster, E.M. *Aspects of the Novel*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers. 2001.

Desire the Main Cause for Sorrow –
A Proven Fact of Buddha in RK Narayan's Novel *The Guide*

Veena Raj Teegala

Abstract

India is intrinsic to rich culture, heritage, values, spiritual quests and interconnectedness of social communities. Many Indian writers spanned a wave in Indian Literature and to mention a few, Rabindranath Tagore, Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, R.K. Narayan, earned worldwide recognition. This paper focuses on the seminal work of R.K. Narayanan 'The guide', one of Narayan's most celebrated works which includes themes like desire for identity, moral decadence, repentance and self-realization. The story begins in a fictional town Malgudi where the protagonist Raju develops intimacy with Rosie which ultimately leads to her estrangement from her husband Marco. RK Narayan, most impressively elucidates the cause for perpetual misery in human life which finds its roots in passion, which has power to annihilate wisdom and totally ignore conscience. The central character Raju tussles over several internal and external conflicts due to his ego-centric, deceitful disposition. Rosie, who is disgusted and dejected as her husband is off-handed with her and scarcely pays any attention to her talent, discovers that concern in Raju in abundance, who is opportunistic. Raju's deceitful nature, Rosie's passion for recognition and Marco's indifference to his wife's talent bring agony in their life. The novel delineates RK Narayan's relentless effort to present the facts before the readers that people with such character are sure to suffer and one can refine oneself through introspective thinking and self-check. This paper accentuates how human follies evaporate happiness in their life. It also presents that an individual will get his comeuppance due to absence of discretion and his utter failure in maintaining emotional balance. It is also an attempt to assess how effectively RK Narayan displays the transformation in course of time due to diverse experiences and self-realization.

Key Words: internal and external conflicts, moral decadence, repentance, self-realization, misery, follies

Introduction

The equipment, with which an individual attains chastity and moral standards, is contemplation on essential values and unbroken practice of introspective thinking. The readers of RK Narayan's works are often enlightened with this philosophy through his exactitude of analysis of the causes, which breed seed to agony, sorrow, dejection and immorality in human life. Further, he is an accomplished ironist, who, with his dexterity exposes gentle humour in an awkward predicament. This is certainly the quality in R.K. Narayan that contrasts him from other writers, that makes the readers smile or chuckle when they read his works

> The barber had asked, "Coming out, I suppose?' Raju rolled his eyes and remained silent. He felt irritated at the question, but did not like to show it with the man holding the knife. (Narayan, 6)

In the novel The Guide, the protagonist Raju and the heroine Rosie are thoroughly disappointed in their life due to their total indifference to their conscience and lack of any solicitude for essential values or ethics for personal life or social approval. What that brought global adulation to the novel The Guide is his laudable focus on Indian traditionalism and significance to cultural values. Marco, being an ardent self-willed researcher persistently belittles his wife about her art as monkey steps. Narayan desires to accentuate the fact that circumstances show a lot of influence on individuals and they are tempted to act in accordance with them. Through the character Raju, the author proves that how one's life ends in misery when being misguided by emotions.

Feminism Vs Womanism

Rosie, having taken birth in a Devadasi family, has a longing for upward mobility. She elevates from socially disapproved temple dancer girl to educated post-graduate lady. She marries Marco with whom she is thoroughly frustrated and disgusted due to his anomalous behavior. Though her intention of marrying Marco is noble, she is rather constrained to orientate her affection towards Raju, who captures her mind by promising solace in her heart-breaking times. She is indubitably ambitious. Her love for dance is intense. Yet, she suppresses her desire and accepts the male domination with silent agony and tribulation. Had Marco imparted his love to her and acknowledged her talent, there would not have been any room for any kind of obsession for dace in her mind, which led to her estrangement from her husband, that has created in her persistent guilt and self-humiliation. Marco defies her invariably for her dance saying it is all monkey steps.

> I sang that song about the lover and his girl on the banks of Jamuna and danced the piece for him. I had not completed the fifth line when he said, Stop, I have seen enough." "Rosie, you must understand this is not art. You have not sufficient training. Leave the thing alone. (Narayan 154).

As a woman of strong cultural beliefs and ethical values, Rosie pleas Marco to forgive her to re-establish her position as a wife but in vain. Her repentance and reassurance of revering the sacred tie between herself and Marco utterly failed to melt his stone-hard heart.

> I found that he would not eat the food I touched. If I lay on bed, he would sleep on floor. So I took to sleeping on the floor. He returned and went about his business without worrying about. But I followed him, day after day, like dog-waiting on his grace. (Narayan, 156)

She does not give up and silently endures the ill-treatment of her husband, understanding his state of mind. She realizes that she has been a sinner for deceiving a husband who has left her with freedom. She is a traditional Indian wife who expects nothing but care and concern from her husband. When Marco is packing his luggage, she says.

> "I'm your wife and I'm with you."
> "But you are not my wife. You are a woman who would go to bed with anyone that flatters your antics"

"I felt too hurt. I thought that Othello was kindlier to Desdemona. But I bore……everything. I had a wild hope that in the end he'd relent, that when we left this place he might change. Once we were back in our home, everything would be all right." (Narayan, 157)

Marco has an excuse for his evasion of responsibility as a husband but is reluctant to forgive his wife for her abandonment of duty as a wife. This is where male domination and female powerlessness are obvious. Lack of resources and dependence make women effete. "Women are considered men's property; their sexuality, fertility and labour are systematically controlled." (Keller 2)

Her ardent thirst for dance is satisfied to the fullest when she finds Raju who inculcates hopes in her where exactly she is ensnared in his hidden lust. She, as a discarded wife for being accused of her infidelity, comes to seek shelter from Raju, who has been a font of tranquillity in times of her sorrow. Her passion for the art gives her rebirth as Nalini and her determination provides her all the strength and courage to confront all the odds that come in her way, and she attains recognition as a traditional dancer by the same society that has once shunned her and rebuffed her admittance for her low birth as a public woman. When Raju finds her taking public in her domain, he is convinced to that no power on earth could impede her growth. With her unflagging will power, she faces the most abominable situations in life created by insolent uncle of Raju but never discontinues her practice to become a perfect dancer.

"Hey, wench!" he cried to Rosie, addressing her in the singular or something even lower than singular. Now stop your music and all those gesticulations and listen to me. Are you of our family? No. Are you of our caste? No. Do we know you? No. Do you belong to this house? No. In that case why are you here? You must clear out by the next train. You must promise to go. We will give you money for your railway ticket." (Narayan.174-175)

She is a multifaceted personality. Her transformation from a temple dancer to a post-graduated woman in Economics, her incessant fight against the so called society and its norms by marrying a person that is prohibited in their clan, her decision to extricate herself from an unhappy marriage with Marco, her silence with her new lover who treats her just like a money making machine and her growth from obscure dancer to reputed traditional dancer well epitomize her feministic attitude. She struggles for freedom and liberation from orthodox culture. She is an embodiment of women empowerment who has successfully converted diffidence into assertiveness. Hers is a journey from tradition to modernity. "Narayan gives us the feel of life itself which is neither all white nor all black but the grey, twilight world of contemporary life quivering hesitatingly between tradition and modernity, East and West inextricably mixed up in the minds of individuals." (O.P. Mathur,90)

Patriarchy in the Novel

In a patriarchal society, a woman is always oppressed. She is expected to be a model of submission and obedience. She is subjected to insufferable criticism and blame if she tries to explore beyond her boundaries. The society will attribute divinity to her only when she obeys her husband's orders. This is widely noticed in the novel when Rosie agrees to the condition of Marco to stop dancing after her marriage with him. Even though Rosie is aware of her talents, she never dares to dream of herself as being a graceful dancer on stage. Though Marco ridicules her art, she endures the pain and continues to live with him. Marco's interest in wall

gazing and producing research articles without paying heed to his wife's likes, fills Rosie's life with disappointment. It is because their interests differ from each other, it became the significant cause for the split in their marriage.

After his discovery of his wife's affair with Raju, Marco decides to leave her for her life by declaring his departure from her life. When she comes to Raju with her truck, his mother asks, "Who has come with you, Rosie?" "Girls today! How courageous you are! In our days we wouldn't go to the street corner without an escort. And I have been to the market only once in my life, when Raju's father was alive." (Narayan,140). This clearly exhibits the dependence of women and total absence of women exposure in traditional society. She is treated as a household drudge with no adorable qualities except as being an obedient wife. In order to warn Raju, his mother invites her brother, who admonishes Raju of his illegal relation with a dancing girl. The ambiance of patriarchy is found in the family of Raju. It is Raju, who takes decisions in the family after his father's death, not his mother. Raju's mother is a traditional Indian woman who is confined to her family and house and is scared to go out alone whereas Rosie is modern and unafraid to contemplate on the things of her choice.

Though Raju supports Rosie, there is an inclination towards patriarchy in his disposition. He tries to control her taking full authority over her life. He dislikes when she talks to artists. He thinks she is his property. "I resented anyone's wanting to make a direct approach to her. She was my property. This idea was beginning to take root in my mind." (Narayan,195). The duty of cooking and housekeeping is Rosie's business as a woman; never Raju has done this work for her.

Fatalism in the Novel

Raju, Rosie and Marco in the novel act according to their disposition and get comeuppance for their follies by fate. Neither Raju nor Marco tries to mend themselves, but tragically Rosie, who is sweet by nature also undergoes execrable pain due to her unremitting passion for dance. The readers of the novel are reminded of Thomas Hardy's novel, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* when they read how the three main characters in the novel in different ways doom to abundant mental distress as fate enjoys ascendency over their lives.

Rosie

Rosie is certainly not a malefactor when she rebels against the restrictions of her family where education and marriage to a woman are elusive dreams. However, she endeavours to elucidate the inevitability of their role in the life of a woman by becoming a pioneer of the revolution for change in their clan. Her desire to be a house wife tends her to be in consonance with the relinquishment of dancing which is her profession as a temple dancer. But her passion for dance is inexhaustible and it is this passion that brings trouble into her life. She has no moral right to disclaim her husband's deep rooted antipathy to dance as he has disclosed it to her before marriage. Her respect to her husband who has consented to marry a girl from a family that is ostracized from the respectable society seems to be momentary as she derives pleasure from dancing before her guide unbeknown to her husband. She becomes totally blind to the consequences as to where her passion is taking her to and how it would end. Her guide, who has later become her lover, uses her just as an instrument to earn money. Even her dance performances cannot bestow any peace to her. Her realization of her infidelity or her realization

of the benign nature of her husband or her waning interest in dance does not restore her broken marriage or provide reunion with her husband.

Had there been place for 'IF' everything would have been normal in her life. If she had tried for any job with her qualification or continue her life as a house wife giving no scope for any thought for dance or restrict her admirer from advancing in his approach to taint her chastity, her life would have been different. It is indeed baffling to judge whether she is a success or a failure in her life. The ultimate meaning of life is contentment and it is pathetically conspicuous by its absence in Rosie's life.

Raju

Raju has immense popularity as a guide in Malgudi. He is blessed with finesse to impress the tourists with his fine description of the places there. He has wonderful financial acumen that he would quickly suggest the places for tourists within their budge. On hearing the conversation between Marco and Rosie, who come as tourists to Malgudi, during his first meeting with them, he comprehends that their tastes are not alike. He creates an access to Rosie using his admiration for dance as his searing weapon. He promises her to show cobra that can dance to music. Initially it starts with a casual support and later it transforms into physical attachment.

Her entry into his house creates ructions in the family that his efforts to heal the rift between his mother and himself have been futile. His co-habitation with the wife of another man leaves indelible spot on his character. Of course, it is because of his painstaking efforts that Rosie is recognized as a traditional dancer. Despite his poor economic state, he provides every facility to her to thrive in her art. He is left destitute for overspending Rosie's money on his habits and luxuries and committing a crime by forging her signature. His monopoly on Rosie creates chasm between them and his arrest for his crime still lengthens it. He makes Rosie abashed of her stained character when she mentions her husband's kindness and intellectual superiority. His transformation into a sage to fast forcibly which ended in his death is the only cause for readers to commiserate with him.

Had Raju continued as a guide and be content with his occupation or treat Rosie just as a tourist and never interfered with her personal life or limited his liberty just as a platonic love or obeyed his mother and sent Rosie back to Madras or be honest in keeping her accounts, he would have been the happiest soul on earth.

Marco

Marco's decision to marry a girl from a class which is much below his rank to give her a status in reputed society is indeed appreciable. But his intense love for Archaeology fills his mind with a feeling that simple dancing has no value before analytical thinking of brain. His persistent mockery of dance fills Rosie's mind with aversion and this has made her find an access to the man who has polluted her physically.

Had Marco, though generous and genius, justified his marriage by considering his wife's whims or at least believed that marriage is not just a physical relation but a spiritual companionship, he could have led a happy family life. On the contrary, he suffers from eternal inferiority complex for losing a wife who has extra marital relation with a guide. The society sympathizes with him though he has achieved success as a scholar.

Conclusion

The novel The Guide is not just a story of the one whose job is to show the places in Malgudi. It is a guide which teaches essential principles of life. The characters in the novel and their suffering warn us to guard our emotions every now and then. It takes us back to the times of Mahabharata in which the characters created by Rev. Vyasa Maharishi suffer due to their follies and their incapability to mend themselves. It educates the readers that any desire that would fetch us no good but only misery should be given up.

References

Keller, Govind, *Violence Against Women: Perspectives and Strategies in India.* Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla,1992.

Dutta, Nanda, The Women Question: A Study of the Evolution of Women Character in the Novels of R.K. Narayan, March 26,2007

Mathur, O.P. (1993). "The Guide: Study IN Cultural Ambivalence "The Modern Indian English *Fiction* E.D.O. Mathur. New Delhi: Abhinav Publication,89-97.

Narayan, R.K. The Guide. Indian Thought Publication.2007

~English Language Teaching~

Measuring Vocabulary Size: A Corpus Comparison of Grade 6, 7, and 8 English Textbooks of Bangladesh

Md Faisal Haque & Rizwan Ahmed

Abstract

This research delves into the nature of vocabulary in Bangladeshi English language textbooks for grades 6, 7, and 8, exploring the variance in unique word counts among different grade levels and comparing the occurrence of high frequency words. Vocabulary size profoundly influences second language performance, particularly in reading skills, prompting an investigation into textbooks as the primary source of vocabulary learning. High frequency words, constituting a small yet crucial group, significantly contribute to learners' reading proficiency compared to low frequency words. Through extensive analysis of textbook vocabularies across three grades, the study aims to ascertain whether textbooks adequately cover the first 1000, 2000, and 3000 most frequent words in English, potentially enhancing learners' vocabulary acquisition. This inquiry seeks to inform textbook design by evaluating the diversity and alignment of vocabulary usage in Bangladesh's educational material. Employing sophisticated computer applications for corpus analysis, this study involves meticulously examining vocabulary load, word families, and frequency patterns in these textbooks. Findings suggest a notable coverage of high frequency words but a relative scarcity of low frequency vocabulary, emphasizing the need to enrich textbooks with more diverse word families to bolster learners' lexical competence in English.

Keywords: Vocabulary learning, High and low frequency vocabulary, English Textbook of Bangladesh, English language

Introduction

The objective of this research is to compare vocabulary size of English textbooks for grades 5, 6, and 7 in terms of word frequency. Comparing high and low frequency vocabulary in textbooks and in English language can help us understand the limitations of existing textbooks material and will open avenues for improvement. English is critically important as a second language in countries where the colonial legacy of English language teaching exists in the education system (Islam & Hashim, 2019). Bangladesh like its neighbouring India and Pakistan is no exception in this phenomenon as English is taught as a second language in schools in Bangladesh for the last fifty years since independence (Arafat & Mehnaaz, 2020; Rahman & Pandian, 2018; Kachru, 1983; Dove, 1983) and in each grade (from class one to twelve). In Bangladesh, English is taught as a second language considering manifold objectives; textbooks in higher education are mostly available in English, knowing English increases the opportunity for a better employment, and enhances the possibility of communication with the rest of the world (Rahman et al., 2019) as English is also considered as the global lingua Franca for

international communication (Smokotin et al., 2014). In this context, although Bangladesh is largely a monolingual country, people in Bangladesh considers English as a language of international communication (Kirkwood, 2013).

During the learning of a second language like English, the most significant thing is to learn the vocabulary of the language. Performance in second language largely depends on the number of words (vocabulary) the second language speaker knows and use. In this context, the primary source of vocabulary knowledge is the textbook taught in the classroom. Textbook is a major source for learning new vocabularies. These vocabularies can be difficult or easy, in high frequency or in low frequency, can be archaic or modern but research has concluded that vocabulary knowledge can significantly increase the performance of learners in day-to-day life, in examination, and in communication. There could be multiple way of learning new vocabulary for example, using flashcard (digital flashcard and paper based), reading practices, writing practices, and audiobook. Each of these methods influence the learning and retention speed of vocabulary of a learner differently and factors like age, anxiety, motivation, cognitive load, target language, method of teaching, availability of resource, usage of technology, and feedback determine how many words a second language learner will learn, use, retain and integrate at the level of mastery at a given point of time and place. Despite the exponential growth in Bangladesh's technology sector and mobile network coverage, teachers both at primary and tertiary level especially in the rural areas are predominately using traditional teaching methods (like textbooks), avoiding technology-aided teaching pedagogies (Alam et al., 2023; Jamil, 2018). So, the objective of this paper is to understand the nature of vocabulary integration in Bangladeshi English language textbooks at grade 6, 7, and 8.

This investigation into English language textbooks across different grade levels in Bangladesh raises two fundamental questions regarding vocabulary composition. First, it explores whether there is a substantial variance in the number of unique words in textbooks of distinct grade levels. Second, it conducts a comparison between the occurrence of high and low frequency words in English textbooks in Bangladesh. These inquiries into the lexical diversity and alignment with overall language usage patterns in textbooks can contribute to our understanding of language education and textbook design in Bangladesh. Based on the discussion, Two research questions are formulated:

1. Is there a significant difference in the number of unique words among textbooks of each grade levels?
2. How do the occurrences of high frequency words in Bangladeshi English textbooks compare to the frequency distribution of these words within the English language?

Rationale

School Secondary Certificate (SSC), also known as Bangladesh's largest national-level public examination, is completed upon students' completion of grade ten. Questions in this examination are derived from the textbooks of grades 9 and 10, consequently leading to a significant focus on these textbooks in research. However, studying the vocabulary across other grades can enrich understanding of the language development trajectory and cognitive progression across different educational levels, thereby offering a more comprehensive insight

into students' overall linguistic competence beyond specific grade boundaries. This study focuses on analysing three textbooks of grade 6, 7 and 8 which limits the breadth of the corpus used for examination. Moreover, this research overlooks the investigation of mid-frequency vocabulary, thereby presenting an additional limitation in comprehensively assessing the spectrum of vocabulary across the chosen educational materials (see *mid-frequency vocabulary*, Schmitt & Schmitt, 2014).

Literature Review

Why is vocabulary research important? Individual difference in vocabulary size determines the effective use of English as a second language. Exposure to high and low frequency vocabulary at early age via textbook and similar modes (for example, flashcard, glossing etc.) can significantly increase the size of vocabulary of the learner. Primarily vocabulary size help in developing reading skill but eventually it supports other skills of second language like speaking, writing, and listening. Numerous studies have concluded that second language vocabulary and second language reading skill have strong correlation. Quin's (2002) study on 212 second language learners found a strong link between reading and vocabulary knowledge. Leaners 95% to 98% lexical competency over first 3000 high frequency words can increase their reading performance. In this connection, textbook that exposes the first 3000 high frequency words is an ideal for increasing learners writing skill (Hu & Nation, 2000).

The size of a person's vocabulary largely determines what they can do with the language. There exists a correlation between communication and the number of vocabularies a person knows (Nation & Anthony, 2016). Vocabulary becomes an important aspect when we talk about learning and using a second language like English. As a second language, English is used in Bangladesh and each year students from grade one to grade 12 study at least one English textbook. This textbook is the primary source of teaching English and generally the textbook contains exercise, practice, and content for developing all four skills of English language and vocabulary. Research has concluded that Bangladeshi students face challenge in learning and using English vocabulary in appropriate context (Hayat & Bipasha, 2020; Hayat, 2018).

Examining the number of words students learn over specific timeframes and grade levels can provide valuable insights for textbook design and vocabulary placement in study material. Vocabulary can be categorized into high and low frequency words, with the former appearing more frequently in texts and the latter less so. Extensive research has classified words in this manner, with low frequency words often presenting challenges in learning and retention.

This research aims to determine the presence of high and low frequency vocabulary in English textbooks for grades 6, 7 and 8 in Bangladesh. Additionally, it seeks to analyse the chronological development and complexity of vocabulary across these grade levels. These textbooks are provided and produced by the *National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB)* in Bangladesh with the financial support of the Government of Bangladesh. They are also readily available in Bangladesh Ministry of Education's and NCTB (National Curriculum and Textbook Book Board).

Low and High Frequency Vocabulary

In language usage, individuals employ both high and low frequency words during communication and writing. Typically, they begin with a grasp of high frequency words and gradually develop proficiency in low frequency. Acquisition of high frequency words often occurs incidentally, where learners acquire these words while engaging in other activities, such as reading a passage (Youshii & Flaitz, 2002). In contrast, the process of learning low frequency vocabulary is deliberate. According to Nation (2011, p. 9), low frequency words, constituting a small yet crucial group, hold significant importance regardless its application in language. Learners tend to grasp high frequency words quickly due to their frequent appearance in texts, contributing to their consistent exposure within comprehensions. Moreover, learning high frequency vocabulary yields better productive outcomes compared to low frequency vocabulary. Low frequency words, on the other hand, encompass a vast array of words that occur infrequently, often confined to specific subject domains, thus receiving minimal attention in classroom settings (Nation, 2011, p. 9).

Nation (2001, 2006) advocates for different approaches in teaching high and low frequency words. The most effective strategy for mastering low frequency words involves employing relevant learning techniques like using flashcard and glossing. Nation emphasizes that frequent encounters with low frequency words across various mediums heighten the chances of successful learning. However, this necessitates a well-thought-out plan and a solid command of high frequency words within the textbook. It is found in research that commercial textbook covers 95% of first 3000 words (Sun & Dang, 2020; Matsuoka & Hirsh, 2010). Textbook's vocabulary coverage could be limited at times and Macalister and Nation (2019) recommends that language courses should include more high frequency vocabulary in learning content. A textbook that covers 80% words of first 1000 word families, and 70% words of first 2000 word families can be considered as a standard textbook for learning spoken and written English. In vocabulary research, a word family (see 'Word Families: Bauer & Nation, 1993) refers to a group of words that are related or derived from the same base or root word and share a similar form or stem. These words within a family exhibit variation in their prefixes, suffixes, or inflections but maintain a common root, contributing to their interconnected meanings. For instance, the word "act" serves as the base word in the family. Words like "actor," "acting," "action," and "react" are all part of this word family because they derive from the root "act" and possess related meanings or associations. Analysing word families is beneficial in assessing vocabulary coverage or richness within texts or educational materials. Researchers often determine the number of word families present in a text to evaluate the diversity and comprehensiveness of vocabulary usage and to develop systematic approaches to develop teaching methodology (Bauer & Nation, 1993).

In Second Language Learning (SLL), vocabulary acquisition occurs intentionally or incidentally. Deliberate Vocabulary Learning (DVL), is an intentional approach, while passive learning through reading influences incidental vocabulary acquisition (Gu, 2003). Words less frequently encountered in print constitute low frequency vocabulary, exemplified by words like "<transducionalify>." Kennedy (2003) stresses the explicit teaching of high frequency vocabulary, while Nation (2006) advocates deliberate instruction for low frequency words. Nation highlights that the most common word in English, "<the>," holds the first position in

frequency, whereas "<transducionalify>" ranks far lower at 123,567[th] position (refer to Nation, 2001 for details), categorizing it as a low frequency word. Vocabulary retention, denoting the ability to provide the meaning of a learned word after a certain period, encompasses both short-term and long-term retention (Remezanali, 2017). Short-term retention signifies immediate performance in a vocabulary test following instruction, whereas long-term retention involves recalling words after a duration. Research has concluded that high frequency words have higher retention rate compared to low frequency words.

Early research on vocabulary on textbook has mostly focused on the problems and challenges students face during learning new vocabulary. Using a mixed method approach, Hayat and Bipsha's (2020) studied the challenges of learning new vocabulary by higher secondary students' in Bangladesh and found that VLPT (vocabulary learning principles and tasks) has a strong correlation in achieving vocabulary level. In other words, instruction and the role of teacher play the pivotal role in learning vocabulary, but they have detached themselves from commenting on the necessity of textbook. Textbook as a structed framework is critical important in incidental learning of new words (Bergström et al., 2022) and also a source of independent learning (Swales, 1980). Bergström's study has also found that Swedish secondary English textbooks are not structurally designed to teach new vocabulary at each grade because they often recycle words from one grade level to another and most words appear to be known to the student from early grades. Guessing depended incidental learning of vocabulary from textbook can also enrich vocabulary knowledge (Meara, 1994: Nation 2001) compared to vocabulary-focused exercises like learning from flashcard or using dictionary. In this connection, the size of vocabulary of students depends largely on the size of the vocabulary of the textbook.

Each of the textbook studied in current research has more than ten thousand words and students invest at least five hours in a week in reading the textbook. Study on Indian secondary students English vocabulary size has concluded that learners know 2000 words in general (Wero et al., 2021) but no similar study has been conducted in Bangladesh. In Bangladesh, the medium of instruction is Bangla, as a result, exposure to second language words is only limited to English textbooks (Jahan & Jahan, 2011). In addition, one of the objectives of learning new vocabulary is to use them during examination. In case of Bangladeshi students the national level public examination called School Secondary Certificate (SSC) examination is a benchmark to test their vocabulary knowledge though reading and writing skill (Amin & Greenwood, 2018; Sultana, 2018). In this connection, Cobb's (1995) study on the vocabulary size of text and its impact of PET proficiency test found that only a few commercially available textbooks cover potential level of high frequency word in commercially available textbooks and optimally prepare the learners of examination. Commercially available textbooks only cover 70% of words from the first 2000 words frequency list (Eldridge & Neufeld, 2009). Compared to many other countries where textbooks are commercially sold, the government of Bangladesh provide free textbook primary and secondary level student since 2010 (Alamgir, 2022). These free textbooks are not beyond debate surrounding their print quality, biasness in content selection, gender sensitivity and nationalism (Haq & Alam, 2010). The question then is: upon finishing the three books spanning at grades 6, 7, and 8, will the student have encountered the first 1000, 2000, and 3000 most frequency words in English language, potentially enhancing the likelihood of acquiring new vocabulary?

Methodology

The scholarly exploration of textbook analysis for vocabulary research has been established since the 1980s. Within this realm, Meunier and other (2009) has scrupulously compiled a comprehensive compendium of research endeavours specifically focused on vocabulary and textbook analysis, which traces its origins back to 1994 (Meunier & Gouverneur, 2009). In this regard, early studies have used the manual, page-by-page approach, which was time consuming but at present, making textbook corpora (collection of words) and then analysing corpus (single word) using sophisticated computer application (Voyant and RStudio) is more productive and timesaving. Several of these textbook corpora are already available for conducting research for example, the German English as a Foreign Language Textbook Corpus (GEFL TC) (Römer 2004), the British National Corpus, and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (BNC/COCA-2000) (Nation, 2012).

Textbooks generally increase the number of words and level of difficulty as they progress from beginner to advance (Mares, 2003) and current research has also found that the number of words in each mentioned grade is higher in number compared to its previous grade. For the purpose of this research, three comprehensive corpuses are created (corpus_grade6, corpus_grade7, corpus_grade8). A corpus is a list of all vocabulary comprised in textbook and based on the vocabulary load. Vocabulary load refers to the amount, range, or density of vocabulary present within a specific text, educational material, or language learning resource. Vocabulary density refers to the ratio of unique words to the total number of words in a text. It measures how varied and diverse the vocabulary is within a piece of writing (Hsu, 2014; Nasseri & Thompson, 2021). A high vocabulary density indicates that a greater proportion of words used in the text are unique, while a lower vocabulary density suggests more repetition or a limited range of vocabulary.

Vocabulary load assesses the extent of vocabulary usage, the variety of words, and the complexity or diversity of the vocabulary within a given context. Measuring vocabulary load involves determining the number of words, word families, or high frequency words are present in a text or curriculum. Researchers use various methods to assess vocabulary load, such as counting the occurrences of specific words, analysing word families, or evaluating the percentage of high frequency words within a text (Hsu, 2014; Wang et al., 2008). In addition, A readability index is a numerical score that measures the complexity or ease of understanding of a written text. It's calculated based on various linguistic features like sentence length, word length, and syllable count per word. The purpose of readability indices is to estimate the reading difficulty of a piece of writing and determine the level of education or reading ability required to comprehend it easily (Crossley et al., 2023; Fakhfakh, 2015; Izgi & Seker, 2012). For instance, a text with a readability index of 8 might be understood by an average eighth grader in the United States, while a text with a readability index of 15 might be more suited for a college-level reader due to its higher complexity. Overall, readability indices provide a way to gauge the complexity of written content and help writers, educators, and publishers create materials suitable for their intended audience's comprehension level.

Phases of the analysis:

- Step one: Grade 6, 7, and 8 textbooks are downloaded from the NCTB Website
- Step two: Each word is manual inputted in Excel for later use in Voyant and RStudio (v.4.3.2)
- Step three: Tokenization (a process of breaking the words into individual tokens)
- Step four: Removal of stop words (e.g., a, an, the, in); does not add any value in determine the vocabulary size of a text
- Step five: Lemmatization (using only the base word instead of using the different form of words)
- Step six: Eradicate nouns of places, proper noun, and names (for example, Ruhun)
- Step seven: Count the number of unique words in each corpus
- Step eight: Compare the number of unique words in each corpus with one another
- Step nine: Compare the frequency (high) of words in each corpus with first 1000, 2000 and 3000 words of high frequency (using BNC/COCA 2000) (Nation, 2012)
- Step ten: Make links between key words and word families
- Step eleven: Compare words from corpus with first 1000, 2000, and 3000 word family list

Findings

The findings of the study are conclusive. The number of words in corpus of grade 6 textbook is 12810, in grade 7 is 15916, and in grade 8 is 19063 (see Figure 1). There is a 24.25% increase in words from grade 6 to grade 7, 48.82% increase from grade 6 to grade 8 and 19.76% increase from grade 7 to grade 8. In grade 6, 7 and 8, the number of high frequency word is 92%, 87% and 83% respectively. There is decrease in percentage in high frequency word from grade 6 to grade 8. It also indicates that high frequency words are much higher in number than low frequency words. Textbooks generally covers more high frequency vocabulary than low frequency vocabulary (Okamoto, 2015; Sakata, 2019).
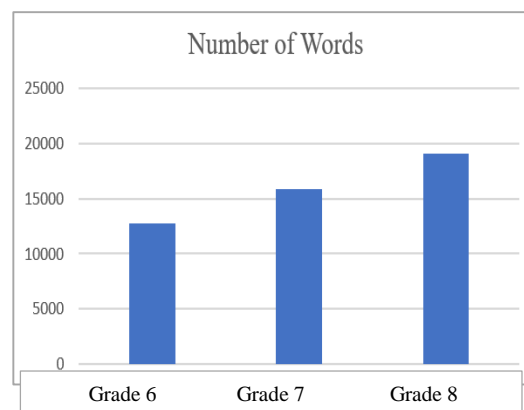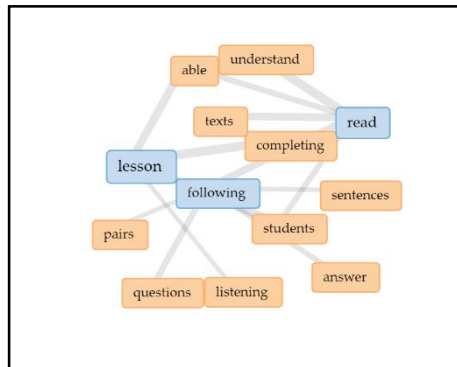

Figure 1: Number of words in Grade 6, 7 and 8 textbooks

A Voyant analysis of frequency count of words shows that grade 6 textbook have 2729 unique words, with a vocabulary density 0.145, readability index 8.35, and most frequent words are
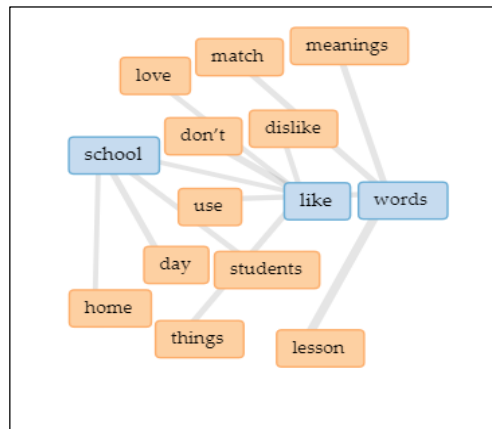
<lesson>, <read>, <follow>, <people>, <words> (see Figure 2) (*See above for vocabulary density and readability index*).

Figure 2: Word link in Grade 6 Textbook

A Voyant analysis of frequency count of words shows that grade 7 textbook have 2762 unique words, with a vocabulary density 0.134, readability index 8.39, and most frequent words are <school>, <like>, <words>, <question>, <read> (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Word link in Grade 7 Textbook

A Voyant analysis of frequency count of words shows that grade 8 textbook have 3182 unique words, with a vocabulary density 0.147, readability index 8.645, and most frequent words are <question>, <words>, <read>, <answer>, <following> (see Figure 4).
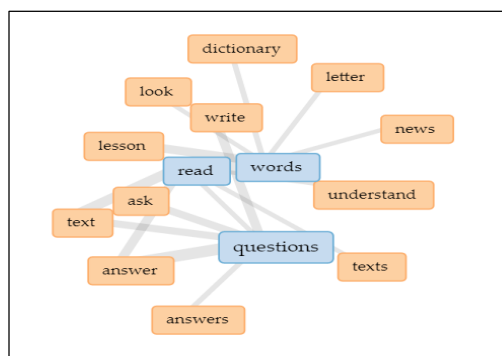
Figure 4: Word link in Grade 8 Textbook

The percentage increase in unique words from Grade 6 to Grade 7 is approximately 1.21%. From Grade 7 to Grade 8, the unique words increased by about 15.21%. Comparatively, the increase in unique words from Grade 6 to Grade 8 is approximately 16.59%.

Grade 6 textbook has 98% coverage of first 1000-word high frequency vocabulary, 95% of first 2000-word high frequency vocabulary and 92% of first 3000-word high frequency vocabulary. Grade 7 textbook has 97% coverage of first 1000-word high frequency vocabulary, 93% of first 2000-word high frequency vocabulary, and 90% of first 3000-word high frequency vocabulary. Grade 8 textbook has 95% coverage of first 1000-word high frequency vocabulary, 95% of first 2000-word high frequency vocabulary, 87% first 3000-word high frequency vocabulary.

Grade 6 textbook has 34% coverage of words from first 1000 word families and 23% coverage of first 2000 word families. Grade 7 textbook has 42% coverage of words from first 1000 word families and 38% coverage of words from first 2000 word families. Grade 8 textbook has 39% coverage of words from first 1000 word families and 32% coverage of words from first 2000 word families. The analysis reveals a prevalence of high frequency words in each textbook. However, it's crucial to note that the presence of these words doesn't necessarily imply full comprehension or familiarity among students. Rather, it signifies a heightened probability of students being exposed to these high frequency words. This exposure might serve as a foundational step toward their acquisition and understanding of these commonly used words. Further investigation is required to assess the depth of comprehension and retention among students regarding these high frequency words. Additionally, exploring the correlation between exposure to high frequency words and students' overall language proficiency may provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of vocabulary acquisition on language skills development.

Discussion

The findings of this study discuss crucial aspects of vocabulary integration within English textbooks for grades 6, 7, and 8 in Bangladesh. Understanding the implications of these findings is fundamental not only for educators but also for policymakers involved in textbook design and educational material development. The discussion revolves around the research questions posed, the literature review, and the broader implications for pedagogical practices and resource utilization in the classroom.

The first research question delved into the variance in unique word counts among different grade levels. The analysis revealed a progressive increase in the number of unique words from grade 6 to grade 8 whereas there is a reduction in the number of high frequency vocabulary from lower grade to higher grade. However, while this increase signifies the broadening of vocabulary exposure, it's crucial to emphasize that the mere presence of these words doesn't ensure full comprehension among students. The second research question focused on the occurrence of high and low frequency words in textbooks. The findings underscored a higher coverage of high frequency words compared to low frequency across all grades. This dominance of high frequency words aligns with existing research highlighting the prevalence and importance of these words in textual comprehension. The study accentuates the pivotal role of textbooks as the primary source of vocabulary learning in classrooms. However,

it's evident that the current textbooks predominantly cover high frequency words, potentially limiting the exposure to diverse vocabulary necessary for comprehensive language proficiency. In this context, teachers have an important role in supplementing vocabulary from varied sources other than textbook.

Unfortunately, textbooks are the only source for teaching vocabulary in Bangladesh and as mentioned earlier, teachers don't use technology-aid pedagogies in classroom. Given the limited coverage of low frequency words, integrating supplementary materials becomes imperative. Educators should explore supplementary books or digital resources that expose students to a broader spectrum of vocabulary, focusing on both high and low frequency words. One of the ways of aiding students for vocabulary teaching is to use technology aided learning tools and digital flashcards for vocabulary learning (Hasan et al., 2022). Teachers can adopt strategic vocabulary instruction methods, emphasizing deliberate learning of low frequency words through targeted exercises or activities so that they use word in sentence production (Hu & Nassaji, 2016). Incorporating word families and contextual learning aids in the classroom can broaden students' lexical competence (Nielsen et al., 2022). The literature review substantiates the study's findings by highlighting the significance of vocabulary size in second language acquisition and its correlation with language skills. The prevalence of high frequency words in textbooks aligns with established research, emphasizing their impact on reading proficiency and overall language competency. A readability index of 8.35 for grade level 6 is globally maintain for the mentioned grade whereas a readability index of 8.64 is considered low for a textbook in grade 8. Textbook readability should gradually increase whereas in the given situation readability has increased only slightly.

Conclusion

This study unveils the predominant presence of high frequency words in English textbooks for grades 6, 7, and 8 in Bangladesh. However, the limited coverage of low frequency words poses challenges to students' comprehensive vocabulary development. Educators, curriculum developers, and policymakers must collaborate to enrich educational materials and pedagogical practices, especially for ensuring a more holistic and effective approach for vocabulary acquisition and language learning in Bangladeshi classrooms, as English language teaching is a major concern in Bangladesh (Rahman et al., 2019). While this study sheds light on the vocabulary integration within textbooks, further research avenues emerge. Investigating the depth of student comprehension regarding high frequency and low frequency vocabulary and their correlation with overall language skills development warrants exploration. Additionally, assessing the effectiveness of supplementary materials or technology-aided vocabulary learning tools on students' vocabulary retention and language proficiency remains an area ripe for investigation. Knowing vocabulary is an indicator in school success and it helps in developing reading and writing skill (Shari et al., 2010). Finding of the current research shows that high frequency words are properly maintained in the textbook of grade 6, 7 and 8 but low frequency words are less compared to the optimal number indication that learners must depend on other sources for learning low frequency vocabulary. A good coverage of first 1000 word families is found, but first 2000 and first 3000 word families are under-represented compared to the optimal level. It is recommended that textbooks put emphasis of including words of 2000

and 3000 word families in the later version of the textbook for developing lexical competency among English language learners in addition teachers should be comfortable with using supplementary material outside textbooks and using technology aided material for vocabulary teaching. Teachers should also measure individual students existing repertoire of vocabulary before using new material for effectively using supplementary material.

References:

Alam, Md. J., Hassan, R., & Ogawa, K. (2023). Digitalization of higher education to achieve sustainability: Investigating students' attitudes toward digitalization in Bangladesh. *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, *5*, 100273. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedro.2023.100273

Alamgir, M. (2022, November 3). *Bangladesh in a race against time to print free textbooks for students*. Asia News Network. https://asianews.network/bangladesh-in-a-race-against-time-to-print-free-textbooks-for-students/

Amin, M., & Greenwood, J. (2018). The examination system in Bangladesh and its impact: On curriculum, students, teachers and society. *Language Testing in Asia*, *8*, 4. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40468-018-0060-9

Arafat, S. M. F., & Mehnaaz, S. R. (2020). History of English Teaching in Bangladesh: From Inception to Present Practice. *International Journal of Science and Business*, *4*(5), 50–56.

Bauer, L., & Nation, P. (1993). Word Families. *International Journal of Lexicography*, *6*(4), 253–279. https://doi.org/10.1093/ijl/6.4.253

Bergström, D., Norberg, C., & Nordlund, M. (2022). Do textbooks support incidental vocabulary learning? – A corpus-based study of Swedish intermediate EFL materials. *Education Inquiry*, *0*(0), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/20004508.2022.2163050

Crossley, S., Heintz, A., Choi, J. S., Batchelor, J., Karimi, M., & Malatinszky, A. (2023). A large-scaled corpus for assessing text readability. *Behavior Research Methods*, *55*(2), 491–507. https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-022-01802-x

Fakhfakh, M. (2015). The readability of international illustration of auditor's report: An advanced reflection on the compromise between normative principles and linguistic requirements. *Journal of Economics, Finance and Administrative Science*, *20*(38), 21–29. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jefas.2015.02.001

Haq, F., & Alam, K. (2010). *Gender Sensitivity in School Textbooks in Bangladesh: A Qualitative Study*.

Hasan, Md. K., Fakih, A.-H., Ibna Seraj, P. M., & Hasmirati. (2022). The effect of technology-assisted language programme on vocabulary learning among EFL students at the tertiary level. *Heliyon*, *8*(8), e10313. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2022.e10313

Hsu, W. (2014). Measuring the vocabulary load of engineering textbooks for EFL undergraduates. *English for Specific Purposes*, *33*, 54–65. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2013.07.001

Hu, H. M., & Nassaji, H. (2016). Effective vocabulary learning tasks: Involvement Load Hypothesis versus Technique Feature Analysis. *System*, *56*, 28–39. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2015.11.001

Islam, M. N., & Hashim, A. (2019). Historical Evolution of English in Bangladesh. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *10*(2), 247. https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1002.05

Izgi, U., & Seker, B. S. (2012). Comparing Different Readability Formulas on the Examples of Science-Technology and Social Science Textbooks. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *46*, 178–182. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.05.089

Jamil, M. G. (2018). Technology-enhanced teacher development in rural Bangladesh: A critical realist evaluation of the context. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, *69*, 1–9. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2018.04.002

Kirkwood, A. (2013). English for communication in Bangladesh: Baseline research to establish the pre-existing environment for the 'English in Action' project. *System*, *41*(3), 866–879. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2013.09.002

Nasseri, M., & Thompson, P. (2021). Lexical density and diversity in dissertation abstracts: Revisiting English L1 vs. L2 text differences. *Assessing Writing*, *47*, 100511. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2020.100511

Nielsen, A.-M. V., Daugaard, H. T., Scavenius, C., & Juul, H. (2022). Combining morphological and contextual strategy instruction to enhance word learning. *International Journal of Educational Research*, *112*, 101920. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2021.101920

Okamoto, M. (2015). Is corpus word frequency a good yardstick for selecting words to teach? Threshold levels for vocabulary selection. *System*, *51*, 1–10. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2015.03.004

Rahman, M. M., Islam, M. S., Karim, A., Chowdhury, T. A., Rahman, M. M., Seraj, P. M. I., & Singh, M. K. M. (2019). English language teaching in Bangladesh today: Issues, outcomes and implications. *Language Testing in Asia*, *9*(1), 9. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40468-019-0085-8

Rahman, M. M., & Pandian, A. (2018). A Critical Investigation of English Language Teaching in Bangladesh: Unfulfilled expectations after two decades of Communicative Language Teaching. *English Today*, *34*(3), 43–49. https://doi.org/10.1017/S026607841700061X

Sakata, N. (2019). Profiling vocabulary for proficiency development: Effects of input and general frequencies on L2 learning. *System*, *87*, 102167. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2019.102167

The Interdisciplinarity of English Across the Human Knowledge

Vamshimohan Ledalla

Abstract

This conceptual study deals with inter disciplinary nature of English language and its role and dominance as a global language of research and various knowledge realms to furtherance of the research and other allied activities. The concept of Interdisciplinarity and its prominence in the multiple disciplines studied and also pros and cons of the English as a medium to propagate the findings are dealt with.

Keywords: Interdisciplinarity, Numero Uno, Dominance, Homogeneity, Ingenious, Compartmentalization, Multidisciplinary, Multilingualism.

Introduction

The English Language has an abundance of potential uses and influences in many disciplines, including the arts, social sciences, humanities, and sciences. This is reflected in its Interdisciplinarity spanning every facet of human knowledge. English serves as an indispensable medium for knowledge creation, sharing, and propagation on a worldwide scale in addition to being a language of communication. This Conceptual Study paper probes into the omnipresent nature of English Language. English Language permeated through the entire gamut of human knowledge. It formulated the mathematical theorems, coined the new terms pertaining to life-sciences, physical sciences, engineering and technology and humanities as well. "In today's global village, information of all kinds is circulating ever faster, and now reaches every corner of the world. Scientific information is no exception. Having a common language to serve as a vehicle for scientific communication and production is therefore a necessity. This is the reason for the extraordinary diffusion of English in all areas of scientific activity; the role of English today is similar to that of Latin in the Middle Ages, a role which lasted until the beginning of the modern era" [1]. "English, the language of international communication, has become increasingly important in various fields, including science. Disciplines such as physics, the cornerstone for many technological advances and cross-disciplinary research, are also not spared from the need for good English proficiency. Students of the physics education study program should be able to access scientific literature, communicate with peers from various countries, and participate in international collaborative projects." [2]

Objective and scope

The main objective of this article is to highlight the multi-disciplinary nature of English by way of conceptual study. This article explains the extent of the English Language in defining, codifying, formulating the concepts pertaining to distinctive disciplines and pros and cons of the English Language and its omnipresent feature.

Milieu

The numero uno place of English language across the world is due to multipronged factors such as British Imperialism, Westernization, Liberalization, Globalization and Digitalization. Now-a- Days English is used in all most all research works pertaining to medical, engineering, physical sciences, life-sciences, material sciences and also in technological innovations. The negative aspects are dominance of English Language, coercive cultural barriers for the knowledge embedded in other languages.

Research problem

This article pinpoints about the Interdisciplinarity of the English Language and how it is effective in connecting the multitudinous disciplines and how the efficacy of its all-encompassing nature is felt everywhere?

Conceptual Basis and Scrutiny

The Concept of the Interdisciplinarity of the English Language means permeation, pervasion, omnipresence and conjunction. English Language publicizes the notions, innovations, imaginations and hypotheses across the globe even by transcending the barriers of regional cultures and native dialects. The major constituents of Interdisciplinarity of English Language:

1. Homogeneity of publication: The supremacy of English in research publications, in formulation of scientific principles and propagation of findings became universal due to Homogeneity of publication.
2. Universal Obtainability: The abundance of words, flood of new words, coining of new words and intercontinental existence of English Language leads to world-wide association and fast spreading of cognitive dimension, sharing the knowledge and thus English is globally acknowledged
3. Expressive Adaptability: The competence of English Language to house and amalgamate classified lingos from innumerable disciplines like Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, History, Economics, Engineering, Medicine, etc., facilitates it to assist as a medium between divergent realms of knowledge.
4. Ingenious Sagacity: The distinctive nature of English Language lies in its ingeniousness, that is to say it discovers or coins or unearths new words that are most apt to the new findings and has future vision and keeps a room for future findings thus displaying its sagaciousness with an affinity towards multilingualism by way of adopting the words related to other languages.

The Role of English

The Interdisciplinarity of English is an observed phenomenon and at the same time inevitable happening. Although the concept of "Interdisciplinarity of English" is generally acknowledged, its ramifications are fraught with ambiguity and interpretation. Some argue that the widespread

use of English reduces the richness of numerous epistemologies and local languages, while others argue that English serves as an encompassing vehicle that allows for greater transnational interaction and information generation. In contrast to technical domains like engineering or medicine, where language largely acts as a neutral tool for communicating empirical findings, English is also a medium for both intellectual discussion and cultural expression. This disparity in roles highlights the need for additional conceptual elucidation, especially with regard to the ways in which language influences the nature and structure of knowledge across a range of disciplines.

Conclusion and Prospects

Summary

The Interdisciplinarity of English and its function in forming and sharing knowledge in a range of academic and professional domains have been examined in this conceptual examination. We have determined that English's adaptability, accessibility, and standardizing function are important elements that promote international communication and idea sharing. But we have also brought attention to important issues like cultural uniformity, linguistic injustice, and the possible compartmentalization of knowledge approaches other than English.

Implications

The results of this study have significant ramifications for the study of culture, language, and knowledge. Scholars can more effectively negotiate the challenging landscape of international academic discourse and support more inclusive and varied forms of knowledge production by comprehending English's interdisciplinary role. Furthermore, this research emphasizes the necessity of critically analysing the ways in which language influences the fundamental framework of multidisciplinary cooperation and intellectual exchange. This article encourages researchers to critically examine how English influences the creation of knowledge in a variety of fields by offering a conceptual framework for comprehending the language's Interdisciplinarity. By highlighting its strengths and weaknesses, this research opens the door for more scholarly investigation into the intricate function of English in the worldwide scientific arena.

Suggestions

Future studies should examine the precise ways that English functions differently in different academic fields and whether it can promote multilingualism in academic settings. The wider ramifications of linguistic supremacy may be further clarified by comparative studies that compare the epistemic effects of English with those of other dominant languages. Furthermore, multidisciplinary research examining the relationship between language, culture, and knowledge creation may provide fresh perspectives on how to improve the inclusivity and equity of international scholarly discourse.

References

Siguan, Miguel. "English and the Language of Science: On the Unity of Language and the Plurality of Languages". *The Dominance of English as a Language of Science: Effects on Other Languages and Language Communities*, edited by Ulrich Ammon, Berlin, New York: De Gruyter Mouton, 2001, pp. 59-70. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110869484.59

Qamariah, Zaitun, and Hadma Yuliani. *Language and Science: The Importance of English Language Learning for Students of the Physics Education Study Program*. IAIN Palangka Raya, 2025.

~Author Profiles~

Dr Manjula Bhanoori is currently professor and Head, Department of Biochemistry at Osmania University. Apart from her teaching and research interests, she has passion for Telugu literature which is reflected in her writings some which are published and won various awards.

Mr Chitiprolu Subbarao, a Chartered Accountant by profession, developed interest in literature due to family background. To his credit, he has 'Akshara Meghalu', a collection of Telugu poems, and 'Abdul Kalam Antarnadam', a translation of Kalam's English poems into Telugu.

Prof S Mohanraj is a language teacher and teacher educator. He has taught at the English and Foreign Languages University for over three decades. Reading is hobby and he dabbles into translating and reviewing books occasionally.

Mr Chevula Nikhil is a research scholar in the Department of English, Osmania University. His area of research covers Marginalised Literature in General and Dalit Literature in specific. He has published two poems and three research articles in different journals.

Dr D Vidyanath is an Assistant professor in Kakatiya institute of technology and science. He has completed his first PhD in History from Kakatiya University in 2011. He is currently pursuing the second PhD in English.

Mr Syed Ajmal Sameed is a Degree Lecturer in Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Backward Classes Welfare Residential Degree College, Nirmal. Currently, he is a research scholar of Osmania University in the English department.

Dr B Bindu Madhavi, Associate Professor at Kallam Haranadha Reddy Institute of Technology, Guntur, earned her PhD from JNTU Hyderabad. She specializes in Indian English fiction and is an accomplished author of poetry and short stories.

Mr Gibin G Varghese is a research scholar at Hindustan University, Chennai, specialising in masculinity studies. He holds a postgraduate degree in English Language and Literature and focuses on gender dynamics in literature.

Dr Jayshree Singh, Associate Professor, Head, Department of English, Bhupal Nobles Post Graduate Girls' College, Udaipur

Ms Priyanka Solanki is a Research Scholar in the Department of English, Bhupal Nobles University Udaipur, Rajasthan

Ms Gangadhari Manjula holds a Master degree from University PG College, Osmania University. She works as an Assistant professor of English (Humanities and sciences) in an Engineering college, Hyderabad. Her area of interest in African American literature.

Dr Rajkumar B Bhairam is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English at Jagat Arts, Commerce & I H Patel Science College, Goregaon, Gondia. He has a Teaching Experience of 27 years at Undergraduate level.

Ms Veena Raj Teegala is an Assistant Professor of English at Kakatiya Institute of Technology and Science, with extensive teaching experience at both UG and PG levels. She has actively contributed to academic research by presenting papers at national and international seminars and conferences.

Mr Md Faisal Haque and Mr Rizwan Ahmed works as Associate Professor and Assistant Professor respectively at the Department of English, Hajee Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University, Bangladesh

Mr Vamshimohan Ledalla works as an English Teacher at ZP high school Wardhannapet. He wrote an Article on NEP and also translated an article from Telugu to English and the both were published.