Fragmentation of Identity: A Study of Richard Wright's *The Outsider* and *Savage Holiday*

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **Fragmentation of Identity: A Study of Richard Wright's *The Outsider* and *Savage Holiday*** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is a work done by Aarthi T. during the year 2019-2020, and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

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I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled **Fragmentation of Identity: A Study of Richard Wright's *The Outsider* and *Savage Holiday*** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is my original work and that, it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

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PREFACE

The research thesis entitled **Fragmentation of Identity: A Study of Richard Wright's *The Outsider* and *Savage Holiday***. Through the study of Richard Wright's two novels *The Outsider* and *Savage Holiday*, the thesis traces the Harlem Renaissance, the beginning of the Great Depression, the growing American Civil Rights Movement that made powerful impression on Black writers and Black activists who were striving to end segregation and racism to create a new sense of Black Nationalism.

The first chapter **Introduction** gives a view in Harlem Renaissance and African Americans background in general. It deals briefly about Wright's biography and novels. It also gives examples of many Afro-American writers as contemporaries of Richard Wright in the first half of the twentieth century.

Chapter two, **Racial Conflict** explores the racism between black and white segregation. It also demonstrates the savagery stereotypes and pathological thoughts and feelings.

In the third chapter, **Identity Crisis** explores the difficult environment of the protagonists to achieve the real identity. It also shows the modernity and impact of the identity.

The fourth chapter, **Existential Violence** defines human concerns and the individual's need to actualize oneself under social, religious and psychological alienation.

The final chapter sums up all the important aspects dealt in the preceding chapters and affirms the title Fragmentation of Identity: A Study of Richard Wright's *The Outsider* and *Savage Holiday*.

The researcher has meticulously followed the guidelines mentioned by APA Handbook 7th edition for the preparation of the thesis.

Chapter One

Introduction

Harlem Renaissance was viewed primarily as a literary movement centered in Harlem and growing out of the black migration. In 1920, it formed the backdrop to one of America's greatest literary movement. Harlem considered as a heavily black community in New York City that was a magnet for African American writers and artists at the time. Never before in American history had so many black writers came together to share ideas, support one another, and work toward common goals. Through the 1920s and into the 1930s the writers of Harlem Renaissance produced a remarkable array of poems, plays, stories, novels, essays, and more. The renaissance viewed through a broader lens that recognizes it as a national movement which connections to international developments in art and culture. The movement marks the beginning of the modern African American Literature.

By 1920, about one-third of the population of central Harlem was African American, and in the next ten years, that proportion would more than double. In early times the community had become established as a center of African American Culture. The movement became a destination for African Americans of all backgrounds. From unskilled laborers to educated middle-class, they shared common experiences of slavery, emancipation, and racial oppression, as well as determination to forge a new identity as free people. The renaissance had many sources in black culture, primarily of the United States and the Caribbean, and manifested well beyond Harlem.

During 1910 to 1920, African American populations migrated in large numbers from the South to the North, with prominent figures like W.E.B. Du Bois

leading what became as the Great Migration. The Harlem was one of the most popular destinations for these families. This shift resulted in a Black Pride movement with leaders like Du Bois working to ensure that black Americans got the credit they deserved for cultural areas of life. The movement constructed as an epicenter of American culture. It brought notice to the great works of African American art, and inspired and influenced future generations of African American artists and intellectuals. The self-portrait of African American life, identity, and culture that emerged from Harlem transmitted to the world at large.

Alain Locke, a Harvard-educated writer, critic, and teacher who is known as the dean of the Harlem Renaissance, described it as a "spiritual coming of age" in which African Americans transformed "social disillusionment to race pride." Another person perhaps most responsible for the Harlem Renaissance was an African American scholar named Charles S. Johnson, a strong advocate against racism at a time when few blacks felt safe speaking out. He was well placed to bring an African American writing into the broader literary culture. He gave a party to celebrate the publication of a novel by a Harlem writer and editor named Jessie Fauset. Many of the promising young writers in Harlem are invited, but not all the guests were African Americans.

A young writer named Countee Cullen read some of his poetry at the celebration, and he immediately agreed to publish Cullen's work in an upcoming issue. Most of the authors who made their names during the movement was already writing, and some like Fauset, had achieved recognition for their work. Johnson's party brought the movement in to public eye, attracted new writers to Harlem, and helped establish a connection among the literary figures of the black community. The

men and women of the Harlem Renaissance wrote in Hodgepodge of genres and made use of an enormous variety of literary forms and styles.

Cullen was best known for his poetry, Fauset for her novels. Zora Neale Hurston, was trained as a folklorist. Her works include collection of traditional African American tales. Langston Hughes, an exceptionally versatile writer, published poetry, novels, short stories, plays, and nonfiction. While some literary movements in American history have focused on a specific genre, such as drama, poems, or essays, the Harlem Renaissance included all of these and more. The writers of the Renaissance were not at all alike by any means. Though they were all black, they had wildly different experiences, interests, and backgrounds, and sometimes the differences in upbringing were great indeed.

The structure and subjects used by novelists of the Harlem Renaissance differed. Some writers, such as Fauset, wrote largely about well-off and influential blacks in cities like Philadelphia and New York. Others, like Hurston, were more inclined to write about the lives of African Americans in the rural south. Still others, notably McKay, focused their attention on lower-class blacks in urban areas. Despite all the diversity of the Harlem Renaissance, one powerful similarity linked the work of every one of the men and women who were part of the movement. That element was race. Fauset and McKay, Hughes and Larsen—all were viewed as blacks first and writers second. The works of every member of the movement discuss the experience of being black in America.

No two writers approached the theme of race in exactly the same way. Some wrote from a deeply political perspective. Other works emphasized the struggles of African Americans. Sometimes these struggles stemmed from the racism of powerful

whites who saw no need to treat blacks humanly. Still writings of the Harlem Renaissance celebrate blacks and black culture. No writer of the period played up the theme of black pride more than Hurston. Hurston's fiction is full of black characters, which, thou flawed, have great strengths. She tells her black readers again and again, and being African American is something to take pride in not something to be hidden or ashamed of. The emphasis on race, many writers of the Harlem Renaissance looked to African for inspiration and identity.

As Johnson had hoped, the writers of the Harlem Renaissance were read not just by other African Americans, but by whites as well. By the end of 1920s, African American writing had become part of mainstream literature. Even newspapers in virtually all white communities were taking notice of black writers and their talents. The greatest purpose of the Harlem Renaissance, Hughes argued, was for writers to describe the hardships, joys, and dreams of American blacks, and to do so in a way that was honest and true. Author and critic Richard Wright disliked and criticized Hurston's novel Their Eyes Were Watching God, The book, he wrote in a much-quoted review, "carries no theme, no message, no thought."

The movement's diversity was also its greatest strength. It was defined not by art or by style, but by time, geography, and most of all race. It represented an impressive flowering of African American literature. The writers of this movement began drifting apart, both personally and artistically. Few stopped writing altogether. The rest no longer saw themselves as part of a movement. Historians differ about when the movement came to an end. After that Civil Right Movement was started, it led by a new generation of black authors began to take shape. More overtly political than the Harlem Renaissance and more focused on black history and racial pride than

the literature of the nineteenth century, the new movement had roots in the literature of earlier times.

Langston Hughes emphasized his identity as an American. Countee Cullen and Claude McKay claimed tradition English poetry as part of their own heritage. However, in the years following World War II, many black writers downplayed race and racial issues in their writing. Among the most prominent of these was Georgia native Frank Yerby, a writer of historical novels about topics like medieval Europe and classical Greece. For Yerby, this broad thematic focus was a recipe for success. In 1946 his novel, The Foxes of Harrow reached the best sellers list, the first book by African American author. Other writers of the period also worked with non-racial themes.

Ann Petry, an American writer grew up in small Connecticut town populated largely by whites. Though her first novel dealt with a poor black woman in Harlem, her second novel, published in 1947, was set in New England town similar to the one where she grew up. There were a few African American characters and not specifically concerned with those struggles and dreams. Another notable writer Zora Neale Hurston, remembered today for the strength of her black characters and her abiding interest in African American folklore, published a novel named, Seraph on the Suwanee, which featured white characters.

In the early 1950s, there were three important strands of African American literature. The assimilationist strand represented by writers such as Yerby, the deeply political strand represented by Wright, and the mix of two represented by authors such as Baldwin, Brooks, and Ellison. The black writers drew from the themes of authors such as Wright, but they were also influenced by the assimilationist, and race less

ideas of other African American writers. One of the best-known writers James Baldwin, who had criticized racial tone of Wright's work Native Son. However, Baldwin disapproved of Wright's stridency, his fiction known for descriptions of urban blacks and African American life. An excellent example of portrayal is his novel Go Tell It on the Mountain.

Gwendolyn Brooks, a Chicago poet is also an important writer of that period. Like Baldwin, Brooks did not shy away from racial issues. Brooks rarely made race and racism the center of her work. She published her series of poems in 1949, which describes the life of Annie Allen, a young black woman. The poems are much more concerned with Allen's personal growth than with the unfairness of the world around her. Ralph Ellison the most famous writer of this era. He is best known for his novel, which was published in 1952. The novel describes the life of a black man, never identified by name, who believes that he is metaphorically invisible. The novel show the narrator moving form a small town to an all black college and on to New York City, where he looks for work and becomes involved in political activity.

The Civil Rights Movement brought black people of all backgrounds together and gave them a shared experience, a shared goal, and a shared identity. Interest in black folklore and black history boomed, and activists looked past for strength and encouragement. Protesters sang spirituals as they marched for their rights, speakers quoted Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. Du Bois, and earlier black thinkers. Black writers also responded accordingly. Between the late 1950s and the end of the 1960s, black literature became proudly and unreservedly about African Americans and their experience.

Whether celebrating black history, publishing poems of protest, or writing novels of urban black life, the writers of the civil rights era focused on black culture and heritage and demanded rights for themselves and their people. More than ever before African American writers were speaking with one voice. The movement had an impact on the way some veteran black writers thought about their work. The writers, who most clearly reflected the literary themes of the time, were new writers who came of age during the tumultuous years of protest.

Malcolm X added to the writings that spread from the civil rights movement. He was a Muslim whose message appealed particularly to poor urban black men with little education and less hope with much less optimistic. His speeches and writings reflected his image of black America. Some African American writings of the period were less overtly political. Still they echoed the political changes in America by celebrating black life and taking pride in their race. Many writers concentrated on describing the live of the ordinary black people. While racial discrimination was present in most of the works, and black history often played a role as well.

Alex Haley born in Ithaca produced important works both during the civil rights era and afterward. Haley frequently interviewed civil rights leader Malcolm X. Both Haley and Malcolm decided to turn these interviews into a full-length book. The finished product called *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, it was a joint effort from the beginning, and Haley received full credit for his part in the work. It was published in 1965, shortly after Malcolm was assassinated, and was a popular and critical success. In many ways, the writings of the civil rights movement are as different from one another as the works of the Harlem renaissance.

After a decade or two in which African American writers drifted in different directions, the civil right movement unified them again. The political struggles of the time forced black writers to confront the reality that they were black in a society built and run largely by whites. By reinforcing the message of the protest movement, the literature of the civil rights era ultimately helped to change the status of blacks in the American south. The African American authors of the late 1950s and the 1960s differed when it come to style, tone and genre. However, each poet, playwright, and novelist of the period addressed the same basic theme in his or her writing, what it was like to be a black in a white world.

Even as many black writers were moving, further into the main stream to focus on African Americans and their struggles against a white world. One of these authors was Richard Nathaniel Wright. Born in Mississippi in 1908, he was the eldest of two sons of Nathaniel Wright, an illiterate sharecropper, and Ella Wilson, a semiliterate schoolteacher. The family moved to Memphis, Tennessee, because of the boll weevil had ravaged the local cotton industry. Afterward, Nathaniel Wright abandoned them. Ella Wright eked out a living by working as a servant in white households, but after a severe stroke in 1918, she was never able to work again. She and the boys went to live with her parents, Richard and Margaret Wilson, in Jackson, Mississippi.

The family resources were stretched to the limits, and his grandmother, the family matriarch, bitterly resented Richard's independent spirit. After a year, at the Negro Seventh-day Adventist school in Jackson, Wright attended the Jim Hill Primary School and, in eighth grade, the Smith Robertson Elementary School. There he came into contact with the striving black middle class, whose models were people like W.E.B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington. He blossomed and proved as an

outstanding student. In 1925 he was the school valedictorian. In the same year, he had a short story published in *Southern Register*, a local African American weekly. After several months, in November he left behind the hostile atmosphere in his grandmother's house and took the train to Memphis to seek full-time work.

Wright's job opportunities were severely curtailed by the color of is skin. The best he could find was work as a messenger in an optical company. As a black man, Wright was not able to borrow books from the public library, but he persuaded an Irish coworker to lend him his card, and he went to the library, pretending to picking up books for this white man. He took out two books by Mencken. Wright was excited to discover that the iconoclastic Baltimore journalist and literary critic used words like a weapon. He realized he wanted nothing more than to do the same. He was painfully aware that his formal education extended only to the eighth grade, and that famous writer, as well as their subject matter, were invariably white.

Wright left segregated South in November 1927. For the next ten years he lived in Chicago, he was one of 12 million black people who made that journey from the rural South to the industrial North during the Great Migration of 1916-1928, and he describe it as a most traumatic journey of his entire life. His narrative *Twelve Million Black Voices* (1941), accompanied by WPA photographs, movingly conveys the two different worlds. Wright soon landed a job as an unskilled laborer, sorting mail on the night shift at the Chicago Post Office—the best paying job in town for a black man. He brought his mother, brother, and aunt to live with him in Chicago. In the fall of 1933 a white friend from the post office told him about the John Reed Club. a national organization of "proletarian artists and writers" founded by Communists Party. Wright went along and met other aspiring artists and writers—mostly son of Jewish immigrants.

Stimulated by this environment, he began to write poems, several of which were published in Communist magazines. His poem "I Have Seen Black Hands" was printed in the national weekly *The New Masses* in June 1934. Early in 1934, Wright was pressured to join the Communist party. It consciously fought racism and was one of the few places in the United States where blacks and whites mixed on an equal footing, he decided to do so, but from the beginning, there were conflicts. In his spare time, his writing was far more important to him than party work. The party provides crucial support to Wright, both as an artist and as a bulwark against racism in America. He did not leave it until 1944, when he became an outspoken anti-Communist.

Wright feels disgusted that the Community Party put civil rights issues on hold during World War II, at a time when blacks were expected to fight in segregated armed forces. As he explained in his famous essay, "I Tried To Be a Communist", published in the *Atlantic Monthly* in August and September in 1944, while the party claimed to be democratic, it actually took its order from Moscow. President Franklin Roosevelt established the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in May 1935, with the Federal Writers Project as one of its offshoots. Wright had published two short stories and thirteen poems, was signed on to the Illinois Writers Project as a supervisor. He could hardly believe his luck. This was thirty-hour a week job and the U.S. government was paying him to write.

In 1937, Wright moved to New York City. He became a friend and mentor to Ralph Ellison, encouraged by the young James Baldwin, and championed Chester Himes and Gwendolyn Brooks. Wright was briefly the Harlem correspondent for the Communist Party newspaper *The Daily Worker*, before he was transferred to the New York Writers Project. In 1938, his writing career took off when he won a national

competition of WPA writers for his collection of short stories *Uncle Tom Children*, which portrayed the barbarism of black life and lynching in the Jim Crow South. In 1939 a Guggenheim Fellowship allowed Wright to work full time on his novel *Native son* (1940). With its negative depiction of black ghetto life and its hint of interracial sex, the novel was controversial at the time and would remain so for decades to come. Promoted by the Book of the Month Club, thought he judges insisted on deleting nearly all allusions to interracial sexual attraction, the book sold a quarter of a million copies.

Wright became the first best selling African American writer. In 1941, the play *Native Son*, written by Wright and Paul Green and directed by Orson Welles, opened on Broadway to rave reviews. In 1945 Wright's autobiographical narrative *Black Boy*, again promoted by the Book of the Month Club, sold an incredible half million copies. The original manuscript, entitled American Hunger, referring to the spiritual hunger of oppressed American blacks, portrayed Wright's formative years up to beginning of the war, focusing on his experience of racism in both the South and in the North. The judges in Book of the Month Club disliked the unpatriotic title, and finally Wright changed it to Black Boy. The original manuscript was finally published posthumously in 1977 under its original title.

In 1941, Wright married Ellen Poplowitz. Next year they had their daughter Julia. His marriage to the white woman and the taunts that followed them when they walked together around New York and when Ellen went out with Julia reinforced Wright's desire to leave the country. He desperately wanted to expand his horizons and see the world. Encouraged by Gertrude Stein, who lived in Paris and whose work he greatly admired, Wright and his family left for Paris in 1946. Their second daughter Rachel, was born in Paris on 17 January 1949. Wright was thirty-eight and

in his prime when he left for Europe, but that ship voyage across the Atlantic marked a dramatic downturn in his career. For the next fourteen years, he continued to write prolifically, both fiction and nonfiction. In Europe his work were celebrated by the famous existentialists Jean-Paul Sartre and Simon De Beauvoir. He was interviewed frequently and his work was widely translated.

Wright regarded as an important American writer and public intellectual. However, in the United States he was largely ignored. Few American have heard of the titles he wrote after he left the United States, that are *The Outsider* (1953), *Savage Holiday* (1954), *Black Power* (1954), *The Color Curtain* (1956), *Pagan Spain* (1957), *White Man, Listen*! (1957), *The Long Dream* (1958), *Eight Men* (1961) and *Haiku: This Other World* (1998). Wright's exile writing had the same power, the same emotional persuasiveness. His nonfiction, a mixture of travel essay, memoir, biographical sketch, and political commentary was in many ways ahead of its time. His world opened up considerably after he left the United States. In 1949-1945, he spent almost a year in Argentina, where he played Bigger Thomas in their movie *Native Son.*

In 1953, he visited the Gold Coast, a trip he chronicled in *Black Power*. In 1955, he attended the Bandung Conference in Indonesia, an experience he recalled in The *Color Curtain*. He spent time exploring life in Franco's Spain for the book *Pagan Spain* (1957), and he gave lectures that were collected in *White Man, Listen!* (1958). American critics refer Wright's last fourteen years as his "exile" years. Wright did not lose his power in the 1950s, what changed were the historical circumstances in which he has writing.

Wright died in Paris at the age of fifty-two. His death certificate gives a heart attack as the cause, but the circumstances of his premature death have always around it suspicion, especially as it is known that the U.S. State Department watched him closely, throughout the 1950s. He was the first African American to enter mainstream American Literature. A prominent figure in African American literature, he pushed back the horizons for black writers, expanding their possible subject matter. He is an uncomfortable writer. He challenges, he tells painful truths, and he is a disturber of the peace. He was never interested in pleasing readers. Wright wanted his words to be weapons.

Wright's style of writing were most directly influenced by the mode of representation familiarly known as naturalism, one that took as its premise the fundamental role of environment in shaping destiny or fate. His works call to mind the work of great writers in this tradition, including Stephen Crane, Sinclair Lewis, Theodore Dreiser, which among extra-literary influence, the school of sociology associated with Robert Park and his colleagues at the University of Chicago. Wright himself acknowledged his indebtedness to the authors of Black metropolis.

Uncle Tom's Children (1938) is a first book and collection of four short stories and novellas by Wright. All of the stories deal with the violent side of racism in the southern United States. The collection were expanded to six stories in 1940, which are now the first and final pieces were added with the inclusion of "Bright and Morning Star" and an essay at the beginning about growing up under Jim Crow laws in southwest Mississippi. The novella was notable for bringing black life to the forefront of American letters and criticism. Set in South, the book shines an unflinching light on the lives of black people in the post slavery era, exploring their resistance to white

racism and oppression. The book's title derived from Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, anti-slavery novel published in 1852.

Wright's first novel, *Native Son* (1940), a brutally honest depiction of black, urban, ghetto life, was an immediate success. The story's protagonist, or main character, represents all the fear, rage, rebellion, spiritual hunger and the undisciplined drive to satisfy it, that social psychologists were just beginning to recognize as common elements in the personality of the poor people of all races. Set in Chicago in the 1930s, Wright's powerful novel is an unsparing reflection on the poverty and feelings of hopelessness experienced by people in inner cities across the country and of what it means to be black in America. Right from the start, Bigger Thomas had been headed for jail. It could have been assault or petty larceny by chance; it was for murder and rape. The novel tells the story of this young black man caught in downward spiral moment of panic.

Black Boy (1945) is a classic of American autobiography, a subtly crafted narrative of Richard Wright's journey from innocence to experience in the Jim Crow South that remains a seminal work in our history about what it meant to be a man, black, and southern in America. Wright as a narrator maintains an adult voice throughout the story. Wright criticizes black culture for not providing a strong foundation for its race, but place hope in the idea that African Americans with overcome and defeat racism. He is able to depict being a black male in an oppressive society by selecting Symbolic moment from his own life, drawing insights from his own personal experience. The novel also met some opposition, not only because of its violent depictions of the south but also because of its depth analysis of communism.

In 1958 novel *The Long Dream* is a story of the trials and tribulations, the naive dreaming and the rude awakening protagonist Fishbelly Tucker, black native in Mississippi. The novel traces the progress of the hero's physical, mental, and moral growth from the age of six to eighteen. Moreover, between those two birthdays, the hero is made to witness enough humiliation, debaucheries, brutality, and tragic deaths to crush him completely, drive him insane, or educate him. This book is a colossal disappointment while compared to other novels. The plot is naively contrived with unconvincing motivation. The novel proves that Wright has been away too long. Severing his cruel intimacy with the American environment, he has cut the emotional umbilical cord through which his art was fed, and all that remains for it to feed on is the memory, fading, of righteous love and anger.

Eight Men (1961) is a collection comprised of five short stories, two radio dramas, and one essay. Each of the selections chosen for representation is endowed with a legacy of difficulty. It comprises of eight stories that focuses on a black man at violent odds with a white world, reflecting Wright's views about racism in our society and his fascination with what he called "the struggle of the individual in America". These poignant, gripping stories will captivate all those who love Wright's better-known novels.

Lawd Today (1963) is a novel written before *Native Son*. It is the story of one day in the life of Jake Jackson, a Negro post office clerk in Chicago. The story is cyclical, opening and closing in the Jackson apartment with conflict between husband and wife. The story is divided into three sections of descending length. Jake is a contemptible person. He treats his wife brutally and indulges his appetites with outrageous selfishness. He is portrayed as improvident, gullible, superstitious, lazy. Although hatred of white discrimination is bred in the bones, he has no sense of social

solidarity. The novel seems to as an apprentice work, and Wright soon learned to handle externals more adroitly.

Wright's *A Father's Law* in a six-week period near the end of his life. He never finished the novel and never managed to correct the typescript. However, his daughter Julia Wright, now his literary executor, was with him while he wrote in a remote farm house in the French country side. She was written an introduction that explains how the book came to be written and why she believes it is an important addition to the Wright corpus. It comes from his guts and ends at the hero's "breaking point". The novel explores many themes favored by Wright like guilt and innocence, the difficult relationship between the generations, the difficulty of being a black policeman and father, the difficulty of being both those things and suspecting that your own things and suspecting that your own son is the murderer. It intertwines astonishingly modern themes for a novel written in 1960.

The Outsider (1953) is Wright's second installment novel, a story of epic proportions, a complex master narrative to show American racism in raw and ugly terms. It was the kind of racism that kind and knew experienced, a racism from which most black people of his own time could not escape, and it remained the central element in his fiction. It appeared during the height of McCarthyism in the United States and the advent of the Cold War in Europe, two events which had a significant bearing on its initial reception. There is also a prophetic note in Wright's construction of the criminal mind as intelligent, introspective, and transformative.

Cross Damon, the hero of *The Outsider*, is a Chicago Negro, unhappily married, menaced by the pregnant mistress, and deeply in debt. Caught in a subway accident, he plants his identification papers on a badly mangled corpse and, having

chosen a new personality for him, devotes the reminders of his life to concealing who he really is. This involves a flight to New York, joining the Communist party, and several murders. After that, he runs away from everything –himself, his life, his society, that is, except violence. The story comes to life only when Damon is meditating or performing some act of violence.

Wright's status as outsider is shown not only by his crimes and by his subsequent harassment by the police and the Communist party, but also by his shifting identity and all the different names he uses. Damon does not see himself as an outside because of the color of his skin but for deeper, more personal reasons. He is struggling to find his identity as a man, not as an African American man. he also lost his belief in everything else. Wright clearly portrays Damon as an Outsider because of his color and his crimes, but also because his lack of faith in any ideology. Wright describes the African American struggle as one inherently in opposition to Society's constructs and violence and anger as a direct result of an upbringing rooted in racial oppression.

Savage Holiday (1954) Wright's third novel featured a majority white cast and took place on the moneyed streets of Upper East Side Manhattan. The violence, accidental and deliberate murder, nudity and other sexual form of exhibitionism, frightened and desperate people caught in extreme situations and existential hells appear in all Wright's novels and stories. But there is one significant difference in *Savage Holiday*. This is not a story about the black race, the protagonist Erskine Fowler is a white man. Wright wanted to publish under the pseudonym so no one would know the author was black. The novel is the most damaging evidence of the psychosexual in Wright's fiction and perhaps the greatest exposure of Wright's own personality.

Wright delved deep into the fall of doomed insurance executive Erskine Fowler, a morose character whose self-pitting persona Fowler's pampered life spiraled out of the control the night of his retirement party as he began to access the nothingness of his life. The title came out of the predicament of the rich, religious and self righteous executive Fowler. When forced to retire from Longevity Insurance after thirty years of loyal service, he does not view at as a new freedom, but as a jail sentence. The book opened at Fowler's farewell party where the forty-three year sat listening to flattering speeches about his decades of service while simultaneously recalling a brutal meeting he had with is bosses. Without family, real friends or hobbies, Fowler has no idea what he is going to do with the rest of his days.

After years of Fowler bringing hope and security to others through his role at Longevity Insurance, now he has brought death and misery. Perhaps more disturbing was when, hours, Fowler began courting Tony's mother Mabel in an effort to distract from his role in boy's death. Yet instead of being comforting presence to a woman who just lost her child, he becomes a disruptive force. Coming on strong his feelings were a continuous seesaw between guilt and arrogance, desire and distain. The narrative textures of *Savage Holiday* were inspired by various sources. The novel was ignored by the literary community in America, where there was no single review written. The novel praised by French, but American critics seemed dismayed that Wright took pride in crossing genre lines.

Many of Wright's works failed to satisfy the rigid standards of the New Criticism, but his evolution as a writer has interested readers throughout the world. The importance of his works comes not from his technique and style, but from the impact his ideas and attitudes have had on American life. Wright is seen as a seminal figure in the black revolution that followed his earliest novels. As his vision of the

world extended beyond the U.S., his quest for solutions expanded to include the politics and economics of emerging third world nations. Wright's development was marked by an ability to respond to the currents of the social and intellectual history of his time. His most significant contribution, however, was his desire to accurately portray blacks to white readers, thereby destroying the white myth of the patient, humorous, subservient black man.

The main aim of this research is to describe the sociological and humanistic approach to substantiate the predicaments of the blacks in the white dominant American Society. The researcher aims to understand the experiences of slavery, emancipation and racial oppression, as well as determination to forge a new identity as free people. It also explains the full picture of bad condition by portraying the social, political and economic situations through Richard Wright's *The Outsider* and *Savage Holiday*.

Chapter Two

Racial Conflict

> The Negro writer who seeks to function within his race as a purposeful agent has a serious responsibility. In order to do justice to his subject matter, in order to depict Negro life in all its manifold and intricate relationships, a deep, informed and complex consciousness is necessary; a consciousness which draws for its strength upon the fluid lore of a great people and moulds this lore with the concepts that move and direct the forces of history today. (Gayle 320-321)

The race war is on because the 'whites' exalt 'whiteness' as the mark of superiority and negroes are constrained to take exaggerated pride in the contrasting fact of 'blackness'. Thus, 'color' becomes a category of culture and Negro writers are driven into a cultural Black Belt. Because of being segregated, the Negro finds it difficult to reach the plane of the universal. This is perhaps the basic reason for the limitations of the Negro literature in the United States. The 'race psychosis' obliterates considering the problems of humanity objectively and everything is viewed through the 'colored' lens of the racial problem. The price of cultural alienation is racial identification since they are judged as a race rather than as individuals. As Americans, they will ally themselves unreservedly with their own people. Therefore, they know what it means to be a Negro in white American and they protest with all their force of their being against the myth of innate racial inferiority.

Black and White segregation is declining consistently in most metropolitan areas and cities. Despite these pervasive patterns, many changes in individual areas are negligible. Thirty years after the Civil Rights era, the United States remains a

residentially segregated society in which Blacks and Whites inhabit different neighborhood of vastly different quality. African American people have had to cross many obstacles to get their standing in the present world. In the beginning, it was the selling of black people into slavery. Then, they endured slavery itself, being treated like animals. Black writers would constantly have to distinguish between black people, as white Americans saw them as a moral problem.

At the same time, black writers would have to wrestle with the ramifications of white American stereotypes that so strongly affected the lives of black people as a group. Black thinkers would have to articulate the concepts of their own culture, even as there was resistance to that articulation from within as well as from without. Only then, they could begin to draw inspiration and materials from the forms of their own culture that lay embedded in the rich oral and musical tradition of the folk. One of the important concepts they would have to articulate would be the images of female and male within the community of the black folk even as these images were being assaulted by the dominant society.

Yet another devastating impact of racism on the blacks is beyond question in every aspect of life. The behavioral manifestations and racism span a spectrum from subtle to extreme. The genesis of racism resides in the institution of black slavery, myths, and stereotypes regarding African and African American and pathological thoughts and feelings of European American that use pro-white, anti-black projective mechanisms. "Racism is a reflection of personal and collective anxieties lodged deep in the hearts and minds of white Americans" (30). Wright had a natural instinct of presenting his native picture through his remarkable works. He suffered poverty, hunger, racism and violence and those experiences later became the central themes of his work.

Wright had asserted that Negro writing assumed two general aspects. First, it became a sort of conspicuous of achievement. Secondly, it became the voice of the educated Negro pleading with white America for justice. Wright advocated for the New Negro writer was that he writes for the Negro masses, shaping their lives and bringing consciousness for these masses towards new goals. Wright makes abundantly clear that the most intimate interactions involving friends, family members, lovers and African Americans are largely influenced by the pervasive impact of race. Wright keenly felt that all his fiction reveals interracial social relations, in both North and South where race is an omnipresent factor.

Wright's works express a realistic and brutal portrayal of white society's oppression of African Americans. Wright's early and persisting radical estrangement from American culture, black or white, together with his exposure to Marxism and the techniques of naturalism in American fiction, enabled him to isolate and depict some of the harshest truths about the consequences of slavery, segregation and racism in America and the truth that often evaded in more genteel approaches to literature. The most frequent mood in his early life is tension, if not the tension arising from direct contact with whites, or at least the tension resulting from the pressures brought to bear on African Americans stemming from the racial climate. Wright attempted to understand the difficulties of African Americans in a context broader than the legacy of race in the United States.

For America's most famous black author of the mid-twentieth century, this was a personal as well as a literary ambition. As a philosophy devoted to the individual confronting an absurd and alienating world, existentialism seemed to offer a key intellectual foundation for the plight of African Americans as well as a means of understanding the self-divisions induced by modernity. With their shared focus on the

individual's search for freedom, Wright's *The Outsider* and *Savage Holiday* seek to universalize the split consciousness on race and he perceived as central to the human condition. Being the first truly existentialist work in American literature. The *Outsider* is considered to be "a novel that did not deal primarily with the question of what it means to be a Negro, but rather with the broader question of what it means to be a modern man in twentieth- century, Western, industrialized society" (388). When the novel came out, Wright observed that it was

> The first literary effort of mine projected out of a heart preoccupied with no ideological burden save that of rendering an account of reality as it strikes my sensibilities and imagination. . . . My hero could have been of any race. . . . I have tried to render my sense of our contemporary living as I see it and feel it. (577)

In *The Outsider*, the black male protagonist Cross Damon's real problem may not be his racial identity, but he lives under the similar conditions of other urban blacks. Although Wright's main concern in this novel lies in an exploration of what freedom means to the individual regardless of race or that the protagonist could be, have any race Damon is indeed black. Damon aspires to an existential truth that moves beyond loyalty or affiliation to any specific racial, religious, or social group, he be nevertheless subject to the constraints and dangers of being a black man. Cross remains bound to the structures of a deeply racial society. The inescapably racial nature of Cross's experiences undermines Wright's intention to create in Cross as a black man whose problems and approach to the world are somehow race less.

Wright abandons the familiar racial plot of his earlier works, and hence "violates the conventions of racial protest writing by expressing fantasies that do not involve the focus on racial oppression typically found in canonical black novels" (7).

In a country where sub personhood is associated with race, and where being black connotes a history of racial oppression, Damon's refusal to think of himself as a member of a race seems to bring about a highly political discourse. If race makes a difference in inter subjective relations in a country where gender and race are fundamental aspects of identity, then the evasion of the race issue or the assertion of racelessness transforms *The Outsider* into a "race novel" with deep political implications.

Damon is a psychological and spiritual outsider from the conventional morality. He is considered as an aesthetic identity as a novel of ideas. Damon himself sees his race as irrelevant to his "decisive life struggle",

> His consciousness of the color of his skin had played no role in it. militating against racial consciousness in him were the general circumstances of his upbringing which had shield him from the more barbaric forms of white racism; also the insistent claims of his own inner life had made him too concerned with himself to cast his lot wholeheartedly with negroes in terms of racial struggle. Practically he has with them, but emotionally he was not with of them. He felt keenly their sufferings and would have battled desperately for any Negro trapped in a racial conflict, but his character had been so shaped that his decisive life struggle was a personal fight for the realization of himself. (195)

Damon regards his race as relevant to his abandonment of his family and his past: "There was no racial tone to his reactions; he was just a man, any man who had an opportunity to flee and had seized upon it" (109). He was also under constraints of race but from all socially imposed limitations. He kills four people, causes his beloved

Eva to commit suicide, effectively renounces his three sons, and abandons his mother, wife, and underage lover. While blackness shapes all of his interactions with others from his casually racist employer to his Chicago drinking buddies to the Communists he meets in New York. He also seeks definition through philosophical ideas and his desire to escape the mundane demands of his life.

Cross Damon represents Wright's most extended exploration of what it means to be an "outsider," a kind of social exile linked to blackness, but not limited by it. Wright emphasizes that the turning point of Cross's life—his decision to fake his death and flee the responsibilities of his life is existential, not racial "there was no racial tone to his reactions; he was just a man, any man who had had an opportunity to flee and had seized upon it" (109). Damon escapes all of his mounting family problems and personal responsibilities after he survives a train crash. He seizes this moment to free himself from the demands of his estranged wife, his underage lover, and his disappointed mother, thus embarking on a search for men like himself. On a train bound for New York, Damon encounters Ely Houston, the city's district attorney and the first of a series of "outsiders" men whose marginal position and enlightened perspective are not derived from their racial identities.

Damon's longing for other outsiders like him does not preclude racial solidarity, but, more important, it represents a desire for the company of people who share his alienation from socially defined values and expectations. Wright effectively denotes the double consciousness as an existential awareness of the always-masculine confrontation with alienating social forces. Despite his whiteness, Cross's double vision and outsider perspective is familiar to Houston, who explains,

> When I was a child, I hated myself, cursed my ill-fortune; but now I'd not want to give up what my peculiar situation has taught me about

> life. This damned hump has given me more psychological knowledge than all the books I read at the university. My deformity made me free: it put me outside and made me feel as an outsider. It wasn't pleasant, hell, no. At first I felt inferior. But now I have to struggle with myself to keep from feeling superior to the people I meet. (169)

Both Houston and Damon understand civilization as no more than fragile protection against the destructive impulses of human nature. However, rather than bemoan the emptiness of social life, they relish the superiority of recognizing the truth behind society's absurd conventions and the primal drives of human consciousness. Like Houston, Damon understands "outsiderness" as a condition to be preserved, even embraced, because it safeguards individual freedom and exposes civilization's facade. It locates authority not in social institutions but in individuals courageous enough to understand and seize such power. As Damon explains, these brave outsiders confront the terrors within,

> If you've a notion of what man's heart is, wouldn't you say that maybe the whole effort of man on earth to build a civilization is simply man's frantic and frightened attempt to hide himself from himself? That there is a part of man that man wants to reject? That man wants to keep from knowing what he is? That he wants to protect himself from seeing that he is something awful? . . . But man's heart, his spirit is the deadliest thing in creation. Are not all cultures and civilizations just screens which men have used to divide themselves, to put between that part of themselves which they are afraid of and that part of themselves which they wish, in their deep timidity, to try to preserve? Are not all man's efforts at order an attempt to still man's fear of himself? (171-172)

Damon understands culture and civilization as means to repress the truth of human nature. Importantly, this is not a recognition limited to a single racial group. Houston, as a hunchback and a law enforcement official familiar with the depths of human violence, shares Cross's cynical perspective on culture's ultimate function. The marginal status of outsiders of all racial backgrounds provides them with the superior vision Houston describes and an increased awareness that civilization is no more than a charade. Neither Cross nor Houston pursues the conversation further, leaving off further discussion of how it might be possible to balance the superior double vision of the outsider with a nondestructive end. Cross so fully embraces his outsiderness that he commits murder, shuns his family, and as Houston tells him, "you made your own law" (571).

Damon's extreme version of outsiderness, there is no morality, no sanctity in family, religion or community. It represents a complete break from social life. Cross soon discovers that their version of outsiderness is dangerous because it depends on the suppression of individual liberty. After a black train worker is exiled from the Communist Party for failing to follow the orders of his superior, Hilton, Damon realizes that he is only being used to foment a grievance Gil has against Herndon, his racist landlord. Damon identifies closely with members of the Party's leadership, recognizing in them a common desire for power and freedom, "this Hilton knew his country as only a man who had lived in it but not of it could know it. He was a man who, like Houston, like Gil, was an outsider and was free in what he apprehended" (331).

Later Damon seems to find meaningful communion with Eva, an abstract artist who was duped into marrying Gil. Cross muses, "he knew that Eva, too, had been forced to live as an outsider; she, too, in a different sort of way, was on his side"

(350). Eva is different from the other outsiders Cross encounters because she is female. As a woman, Eva seems not to threaten his need for power. Rather, she willingly yields to his authority, doting on him both before and after her husband's death. If love is the answer to Damon's misguided search for freedom, there remain unsettled concerns about how race operates in this redemptive project and between these problematic characters. Although the interracial dynamic between Cross and Eva is an indication of how Wright resists racial boundaries, their short-lived affair demonstrates significant problems regarding the ways race impacts their relationship. Eva recognizes Damon as an outsider, but she understands his identity as being derived primarily from his blackness. Even as Cross finds new meaning in his feelings for Eva, he perceives the impossibility of any true union between them:

> He recalled that Eva had not responded to him as he really was; his life had somehow represented for her something which she had yearned to embrace . . . A dizzy terror came over him. Were we really that much alone in this life? Were all human hearts encased in this irredeemable isolation and we only had the satisfaction of fooling ourselves that we were together? (446)

The racial dynamics between cross and Eva, Cross returns to his original existential despair. Despite their love, he is alone. When Cross finally confesses his crimes to his lover, she commits suicide. With the truth of his violent nature finally revealed, she proves unable to love him. While Eva stands horrified before him, Damon recognizes the futility of trying to make her understand, "I can't explain it! You have to *feel* it! You have to *live* it! It has to be in your blood before it can become real to you . . . I feel like I am talking to you from another world" (532). Cross's reference to blood suggests that there is some essential difference between them that

prevents Eva from understanding what he has done. Although a difference in blood has historically been equated with race, Houston's comprehension of Cross's crimes implies that what most separates the two lovers is gender. Presumably, as a woman, Eva is unable to experience the depths of Damon's violence and vision.

Unlike Eva, Houston knows about all of Damon's crimes, yet he does not reject him. Instead, he listens to his deathbed confession, understanding in full, "Damon, you were an outsider" (584). Cross's final words about the importance of connection suggest a distinctly homo social connection. He states, "I wish I had some way to give the meaning of my life to others . . . To make a bridge from man to man . . . Man is all we've got" (585). Cross's final lines imply that only bonds between men can withstand the revelation of humanity's true nature. Only Houston has the strength to bear witness to Cross's crimes. This moment of intimacy acts as the one hopeful scene in an otherwise violent and brutal text. Damon finds in Houston an understanding confidante.

Damon's racial identity, that which makes him a black American, is not built on a shared language of history and experience but, on the contrary, represents a burden. As he abandons his racial identity by refusing to inhabit the cultural territories of race, he negates the respect for individuality due to race and color that determines the racialized difference. The lack of preferentiality to blackness enables to contribute how Damon refuses to have racialized thinking that has long forced African Americans into social invisibility.

Savage Holiday a third novel which represents a key development in Wright's exploration of race. The novel affirms that both black and white men are susceptible to murderous or savage impulses. It came under severe criticism because the novel was feeble in handling the issues it claimed to portray. The keynote address of the

criticism, however, was the presence of a white protagonist. Yoshinobu Hakutani believes that the reason why *Savage Holiday* has not been so popular among the literary critics is Wright's "exclusive treatment of white characters and his concern with nonracial matters" (15). Claudia Tate also observes that the critics regarded Wright's switch from black to white characters as "peculiar, if not problematic" (1998). In an interview on *Savage Holiday*, Wright supported Hakutani's claims to the extent that it was indeed an exclusive treatment of whites in the United States, not exclusive enough though to provide a space of concern that would include the colored citizens as well:

> Having left America and having been living for some time in France, I have become concerned about the historical roots and the emotional problems of western whites which make them aggressive toward colored peoples. . . . I was looking for explanations of the psychological reactions of whites. . . . In this novel, I have attempted to deal with what I consider as the most important problem white people have to face: their moral dilemma. (167)

Erskine Fowler, who is forced to retire from his job after working for Longevity Life Insurance Company for 30 years. Erskine is quite successful in the insurance agency profession, in sniffing out the fishy testimonials of the insurance holders. Yet, his position, on which Erskine prides himself, is taken away after the manager decides to make room for his son, keen on taking over Erskine's job. Fowler, however, takes his forced retirement hard as the company means everything to him, standing in for his family, his friends, his past and future, basically, for his very reason to exist. After his discharge, Fowler finds himself in the abyss of freedom, not knowing what to do with himself and with the spare time on his hands. He is

economically sound though as he receives a considerable amount of compensation after leaving the job.

As Erskine struggles with his new freedom from work and social structure, he focuses in particular on the judgment of Minnie, "his colored maid." Anticipating her arrival on Monday, he admits "he'd hate her to see him at loose ends, pacing to and fro" (35). Here the power of the gaze is vested in Minnie as Erskine feels he must perform his authority in front of her. Without the defining structures provided by his work as an insurance agent, Erskine is incomplete, metaphorically naked. Just as Morrison argues that whiteness depends on an abject black other, Erskine's concerns demonstrate how his identity is derived from racialized notions of work. However, because he harbors his own dark impulses, he seeks not a black other but a white ideal to give him purpose and definition. In fearing that Minnie will see the savagery that truly defines him, Erskine exposes the fragility of his identity.

Minnie may recognize that his whiteness is not an inherent form of power but rather is dependent on his Inclusion in certain institutions. Stripped bare of the external signs of social status, Erskine is not white that he is instead horrifyingly naked. Although Erskine vests Minnie with the authority of the gaze, importantly, she does not have his ability to discern his guilt, the talent that distinguishes Erskine as an insurance agent. She is effectively duped by his performance, suggesting that unlike her employer she is truly innocent. Departing from the color based associations of the Africans presence, Wright portrays Minnie in sharp contrast to Erskine. She does not seem to harbor his guilt nor engage in the kind of social charade that he performs. After Tony death, Erskine finds himself soothed by Minnie's presence.

> Erskine was somewhat calmed by Minnie's naturalness. Why worry about some foolish woman's phoning when Minnie accepted Tony's

> death in so normal a manner. Erskine didn't believe that servants were quite human, but he felt that having them around brought one some standing; one could always depend upon them for simple, human reactions. (140)

By not specifically naming Minnie as black in this passage, Erskine sidesteps the issue of race, as does Wright. To make Erskine an obvious racist would too easily define his secret savagery and thus detract from his existential crisis. Instead, Erskine's comments imply that class is a greater determinant of social identity than race. By clinging to a class rather than racial difference here, Erskine also seeks to emphasize the material advantages of his social status. If race, as Wright suggests in the novel, is no more than a charade, Erskine can at least rely on his greater wealth to differentiate himself from others. The conspicuously absent reference to Minnie's blackness in this passage emphasizes the difficulty of attempting to separate whiteness from its tangible effects.

Erskine's speculation that servants were not quite human demonstrates a belief in persistent distinctions of social status. These distinctions are paradoxical for though Minnie is not quite human, she is also marked by her "naturalness". Erskine's contradictory assessment of Minnie reflects the necessarily vexed representation of the Africans presence, the excess of signification that Morrison associates with figures made to accommodate the needs of whiteness. Although Minnie is not "quite human," she can be depended on to produce simple, human reactions. This tension exposes Erskine's desperation as he confronts the dissolution of his own identity. He must maintain a divide between himself and his servant in order to confirm his superiority. Minnie's unquestioning acceptance of how Tony died reinforces his authority even as it imposes an implicit challenge to his own apparent "naturalness" since he does not

share Minnie's response to the tragedy. Erskine adjusts his perspective of Minnie so that she always seems to support the power of his whiteness.

When Minnie asks if she should make Mabel breakfast the day after Tony's death, Erskine immediately calls his neighbor, "avidly appropriating her suggestion" (141). Erskine goes so far as to adopt Minnie's speech in order to further the charade of his manufactured and ultimately derivative identity. The affirming division that Erskine observes between himself and Minnie is sharply reversed in his tragic encounter with Tony. Erskine first awakens to the sound of the boy playing by himself on the adjoining balcony. Tony calls out, "Awhoo! Awhoo! Awhoo! The Indians are coming!" (38), and when Erskine finally encounters the boy, he is "clad n a cowboy's outfit, standing atop his electric hobbyhorse" (52).

However, while Tony is the lone white warrior, Erskine is the dark savage, naked and dangerous. Terrified by Erskine's brutish form, Tony falls backward off the railing and plunges to his death. The text makes clear that Erskine's nudity is to blame for Tony's shocked fear,

> . . . finally the reality of it came to him clearly: Tony had been so frightened of his wet, hairy body, of his distorted, sweating face, of his brutal rushing to the balcony that he had lost his balance, had tilted on the railing, and had plummeted . . . His skull tightened as he pictured, in spite of himself, Tony's little smashed and bloody body lying on the concrete pavement below, perhaps quivering still . . . (54–55)

Tony dies once he is exposed to Erskine's true nature—the tangle of hair and uncontainable physicality that clothes normally hides. Naked before the boy, Erskine is not white but savage. Tony sees Erskine shorn of the regimented safety of social conventions, the necessary cage of whiteness, and the result is so horrifying, so

dissonant, that he can only find escape in death. In assessing the astounding sequence of events leading to Tony's death, Erskine decides that,

> It was imperative to separate two distinct sets of facts: his running half-crazed and naked upon that balcony was one thing; his seeing Tony fall and his inability to save him was another thing. And his consciousness protested violently the putting of the two of them in any way together for, when associated in his feelings, these compounded events swamped him with a sense of guilt that was deeper than that contained in the accident which his panic had brought about. (60)

Despite Erskine's insistence on separating his nudity from his failure to prevent Tony's death, the abiding guilt he feels demonstrates the truth of their necessary union. Naked, without the symbols of status and privilege conferred on his place in society, Erskine is impotent, unable to help Tony. It is also important to note that Erskine is at his most terrifying apart from his home or work environments, for as George Lipsitz reminds in, "race is produced by space" (5). Unmoored from the locations that confirm his material foundation in whiteness, Erskine is pure savage. His power is vested entirely in signifiers that can be removed or from which he can be removed. These signs prove to be no more than ornamentation on his fundamentally ineffectual body. Tony's fall enacts the disarming revelation of society's racial attitude. Moreover, the latent guilt that Erskine feels following Tony's death attests to his awareness of the dark savagery that has always been a part of him. The boy's fall only highlights the violent impulses he has long harbored.

Erskine recognizes that he has not actually committed a crime. Although he caused Tony's death, he did not kill him. However, Erskine remains silent because his sense of guilt exceeds what has actually transpired. He observes that, "he knew that

even now, if he told Mrs. Blake or the police how utterly blameless he'd been, he'd still feel guilty" (80). Moreover, to recount what happened would require him to confess that he had been naked. He fears that others would then conclude that "he had been up to something 'perverse'" (74). They might read beyond his ostensible innocence, for as Erskine notes,

> these days everybody was talking about "complexes" and the "unconscious" and a man called Freud (which always reminded him of fraud!) was making people believe that the most fantastic things could happen to people's feelings. Why, they'd say that he'd gone *deliberately* onto that balcony like that, nude. (61)

Erskine's obsessive relationship with his newspaper is an object that highlights his tenuous claim on social propriety. His frustrated attempts to control the master narrative of his own racial and gender privilege manifest in his theft of Mabel's newspaper and the filthy smearing of his own. The newspaper acts as a potent symbol of the ordered world Erskine desires, the objectifying gaze that should belong to him but is at last levied back at him when he loses all ability to narrate his murder of Mabel. Erskine is interrupted by the call of his paperboy, asking to be paid his dues. About to return to the shower, Erskine remembers that two weeks before, his Sunday paper had been stolen. Tony, poised atop the electric hobby-horse, opened his mouth to scream and then, slowly—it seemed to Erskine's imagination when he thought of it afterwards that the child had been floating in air— little Tony fell backwards and uttered one word:

> "Naaaaaw . . . !"
>
> The child went backwards, toward the void yawning beyond the edge of the balcony, his left hand lashing out, clutching for something to

> grab hold of, to hold onto, and his right hand still gripping the toy pistol. Erskine sensed that Tony was trying to seize hold of the top iron railing and for a split second the child was poised there. (53)

Following Tony's death, Erskine scrambles back into his apartment and waits to be alerted of the tragedy along with the rest of his neighbors. As they emerge into the hallway, Erskine relates only the news he has heard from others. His indifferent response sharply contrasts with the cries of Mrs. Fenley and even Mr. Fenley's stunned reaction. While Erskine cannot mimic the emotional outbursts of others, he quickly apes Fenley's physical behavior: "Erskine saw Fenley stoop and gather up the bulk of his Sunday paper and at once Erskine did the same" (66). Again Erskine uses the newspaper as a means of integrating himself into normative behavior patterns. When the policeman questions Erskine, he replies, "I was taking in my paper when I heard Mrs. Blake scream" (72). Erskine relies on his newspaper as a kind of alibi, hiding behind the routine of collecting it just as previously he used it to conceal his nudity.

After everyone on the floor is alerted to the news of Tony's death, Erskine watches Mabel leave to attend to her son's body. He then finds himself alone in the hallway, hugging his bundle of Sunday papers. Suddenly he was afraid to enter his apartment. He dreaded being alone now. When supported by the presence of others, everything had seemed natural in his actual telling had a normal aspect. The image of Erskine clutching his newspaper, the ultimate cause of the ensuing catastrophe, suggests his dangerous attachment to the prevailing narrative of normal social behavior. He uses the newspaper to cover himself when he is naked in the hallway and he uses it again here as the last barrier to confronting his utter isolation from

others. Although he is alone in the hallway, Erskine identifies his ultimate separation from others as occurring once he enters his apartment.

Before returning to his apartment, Erskine exchanges his soiled newspaper, damp from his perspiring naked body, with Mabel's fresh one. He assumes that in the tumult of the day, she will not notice the wadded paper he leaves. Erskine's need to have a clean copy reflects his desire to be rid of all traces of his guilt, but it also suggests his latent belief that Mabel deserves a soiled newspaper. A negligent mother who often left Tony alone at night, she soils the normative social practices that Erskine both craves and fails to emulate. However, this seemingly trivial act is one of the key factors that lead to the revelation of Erskine's role in Tony's death.

When Mabel discovers the blood, he is forced to fabricate a weak story about Tony falling off his hobbyhorse. Aware of how implausible this scenario sounds, Erskine becomes afraid that Mabel will tell the police about the bloody newspaper. In order to avoid this possibility, he decides to marry her, ending his long bachelorhood and at last fulfilling the one social expectation that has entirely eluded him. Significantly, the blood-stained newspaper is the key object that leads to Erskine's murder of Mabel. As a black-and-white object smeared red, it acts as a heavy symbol of how members of all races are subject to impulses that can lead to murder.

Erskine is at church when he first considers marrying Mabel and concludes that confessing to the authorities is unnecessary. Instead, he forces himself to believe that Tony's death is best understood as a mandate from God to help Mabel. Erskine approaches Mabel by affirming "the link between whiteness and domination" (133). Erskine becomes the vehicle of God's righteous and benevolent will rather than the cause of a boy's tragic death. He declares to the congregation:

> Christ likewise enjoins you to clasp hands with your neighbor, even your enemy – those who hate us and whom we hate – and lead them into that family where hate is no more, where enemies are transformed into brothers, neighbors! Christ denied His mother and His brothers, but only to make all women His mother and all men His brothers and neighbors. (88)

Tony's relationship to his mother neatly mirrors Erskine's difficult childhood. Because both are sons of absent fathers, the racial ambiguity that adheres to Erskine again surfaces with Tony, who is somewhat marginalized from the more respectable tenants in the apartment building. However, the naked feet are real, and Mrs. Westerman's racialized reference posits Erskine as the imagined "nigger" Mrs. Westerman's assumption that Mabel is lying, along with Erskine's actual responsibility for Tony's death, indicate that the racist image is rooted in white guilt.

Both *The Outsider* and *Savage Holiday* expose the racialized foundation of a raceless ideal. As with white authored texts that aspire to totalizing claims about the human condition, these novels reveal the limits of drawing conclusions about how individuals interact with society. They are studies not of racelessness but of how blackness and whiteness profoundly shape the challenges of male self-assertion. By creating two protagonists one white, one black, who both come to recognize the essential brutality of human nature, Wright demonstrates not the universal truth of savagery but the violence that adheres to male identity and racial segregation.

The next chapter "Identity Crisis" deals with Wright's quest for identity in the growth and development of American society. It also highlights the social condition of black and white people, and their social status, their mental struggle to attain freedom and identity through the two novels *The outsider* and *Savage Holiday*.

Chapter Three

Identity Crisis

Identity is the central element in interpersonal competence and development of a personality. It defines the role of an individual in a society. A person in his search for identity and centralization goes through a series of existential encounters with society and in the end achieves insightful wisdom and learns about the world and its evils. A man's life is a never ending search for identity and centralization. The changing phases of American society have created severe identity crisis in the blacks. Still black Americans live with the memory of slavery and struggle to strike a balance between being a black on the one hand and an American on the other. They strive for emancipation from a more dominant group identity which is all pervasive, but hard to grasp identity which is located in the core of the individual and also in the core of his communal culture.

American society has been outlined, by what one calls 'pluralisation within a consensus', and what another refers to as 'pluralistic integration'. It proposes social identities aimed at a stable polity, viable economy, and proper need for personal freedom combined with social responsibility. But the realities of disorder, and anxieties about potential disorder, have persisted in the communities. Indeed, those twin concerns have contributed to the associate impulse in American life is an impulse which has brought some people together in an effort to restrain or exclude others. Whites managed to reduce the extraordinary diversity of American tribal cultures to a mental image of simply, the Indian, the Negro etc. As a result the blacks in America were on the verge of losing their identity through white American misunderstanding. But these attitudes are changing subtly with the passage of time, in

ways that are instructive for an understanding of the warp and woof of communal experience.

The African American writers confront criminal behaviors through influence on the lives of the African Americans. Often, it is religion that provides them with the strength and bear to their suffering with the hope of deliverance after death. They accept their subjugation as a form of trial, by God to defend them against racism or to mitigate their sense. Also they involved in the quest for their racial and cultural identity as a part of American civilization Identity is a tormenting problem for African American in an oppressor society. The new world in chains of slavery created this problem which has sapped the energies of human beings.

Identity centers all Wright's works and novels, it centers every movement in African American literature and was the core of every ideological attitude and stance of the Negro people. It has assumed different colors and shades of meaning. His all novels presents the social conditions of black people, especially their racial status, poverty, disorganized families, fault education and their mental struggle to attain freedom and identity. The importance of his works comes not from his technique and style, but from the impact his ideas and attitudes have had on American lives. He demonstrated for the first time that a black American writer could indeed be a major writer of international fame and stature. His repute was marked by an ability to respond to the currents of the social and intellectual history of his time. The most significant contribution, however, was his desire to portray accurately blacks to white readers, thereby destroying the white myth of the patient, humorous, subservient 'black man'.

Wright showed American racism in raw and ugly terms which most black people of his own time could not escape and he himself experienced. The protest mood of Wright's writing gave way to the mood of untranquility that reflects the consciousness of his personality. Wright realized that his identity could emerge out of his local and universal experience at the same time. His works and writings gave pride and meaningfulness to the African American people. His quest for identity used his racial motive and impulse as a spur to rediscover his identity in the American and European experience. He emphasized that while he was looking for his own identity, he realized that American was desperately in search of identity as well. His quest for identity in the growth and development of American took another dimension. He quested for the literary medium in order to render the peculiar sensibility and ethos of a new country.

Wright, as one of African American literature writers, is often characterized by the quest for political, social, religious or even "human" identity. In his endeavor to seek a convincing and a strong anchorage, the African American writers explore various avenues for the assertion of a distinct identity involves a process of discovery that assists them in comprehending their community and society better. The understanding reached thereby opens vistas for further exploration of the self. The quest for self-identity is a major theme in the works of Richard Wright. Wright probes deep into sensitive issues in an attempt to come to terms with himself and his milieu. Through the redemptive forces of love and religion, Wright attempts to assert his identity as an individual who yearns for acceptance. Wright's trend as a political philosopher and as a writer of fiction at the same time, Wright emphasized this direction in his interview by William Gardner:

> The break from the U.S. was more than a geographical change. It was a break with my former attitudes as a Negro and a Communist-an attempt to think over and redefine my attitudes and my thinking. I was trying to grapple with the big problem-the problem and meaning of Western civilization as a whole and the relation of Negroes and other minority groups to it. (40)

The Outsider is Wright's first novel reflect his reaction of looking for a new life and achievement of self-identity. It explores identity as a process in all aspects of life. Wright sheds the light not only on his own identity but also on the social, cultural and economic identity for blacks as a part of American society. The plot concentrates on meaning of lives of the people both blacks and whites. The ambitious attempt in it gave a definition of modern man through predicted tensions and philosophy ordains. The novel enacts an idea shaped by man who has a philosophical perspective and overruns the emotions. It's a black man who became involved with a Marxist group. He kills many communists and then murdered himself.

The Outsider represents the crossing between the postwar writing of identity and the philosophical prediction to prove that consciousness materializes. Thus, temptation, lure of power drove Cross away from the righteous religious beliefs. An adventure led Damon to the entrapment death. Damon worked in Chicago as a postal worker and studied philosophy. Moreover, he was a lineated from his wife, threatened by his environment, especially by his girlfriend. All these constrain his struggle to forget the past and to invent a new identity. He introverted and disappeared from his world but sudden facing with one of his friends in the hotel. His seeking for achieving new identity made his to commit another crime to ward off his discovery. He did flee

of New York to a void his severed past. He [illegible] as criminal suspect, as a new form of dread and suspicion.

> The Outsider world had fallen away from him now and he was alone at the center of the world of the laws of his own feelings. He knew where his sense of dread came from, it was from within himself; within the vast and mysterious world was his own and yet unknown. And it was into this strange but familiar world that he was now plunging. he had merely shifted his cares from without to within him, from that which he could deny to that which he could not. Imprisoned he was in a state of consciousness itself; so swamped was he by himself with himself that he could not break forth behind the bars of that self to claim himself. (148-149)

Damon melted with several men especially communist leaders. Therefore, that he found recognition and surpasses on his constrained society through moving beyond the bounds of modern ideology depicting the "individual mob" (564). His murdering resulted from a whim and not for an idea. Damon depicted the vanguard consciousness and freedom that was clear in the confrontation between him and Houston the District Attorney saying: "You went all the way! You have inherited the feelings that only real atheists can have" (564). *The Outsider* offers a melancholic analysis of the modernity through Damon who became ripe for anarchic violence. The only character accepted in Damon's soul was District Attorney Houston:

> Is the mad thing, the irrational thing. Damon, you peeled off layer after laid of illusion and make-believe and stripped yourself down to just simply naked desire and you thought that you had got ten hold of the

> core of reality. . . . It's an illusion, but the most solid one! Desire is what snared you, my boy. You feel that what brooked desire could be killed, what annoyed, could be gotten rid of (565-66)

Damon seeks to confirm his identity. He has got married to Gladys drilling a space of freedom and performed a demonic masculinity to terror her. Thus, this picture of practicing violence against a feminine and race at the same time is to prove his identity as a definition of his humanity on base of self-invention and desire. Cross's marriage to Gladys represents their need since they are on the same boat, they are outcasts: "he hungered for her . . . as a woman of his own color who was longing to conquer the shame imposed upon her by native land because of her social and racial origin" (66).

Damon was the reliable man for Gladys through her response to the world defining her color conscious white gaze domains her world even in his presence and that created his response. Both Gladys and Damon held advantages from each other Gladys expressed her attitude from the white race. She mixed and blend her dependence as a woman with her color consciousness. She also sought for protection against white gaze:

> "Nestling close to him, she mumbled as out of a dream:"
>
> "I hate white people."
>
> "why?" . . .
>
> "Cause they're different from me. I do not like 'em even to look at me. They make me self-conscious, that's why. Ain't that enough?" "If you

say so, baby but, listen, I'm not white – that's what's so nice about it (67-68)

Damon rebels against Gladys domination of his sensual desire, he rejects her color consciousness and her right of reliance as a woman and he proved his presence through violence and sadism. She wants him as a fetish in order to disavow and deny Both Gladys and Damon refrained to be a black woman and black man to become the same. "she simply clung to him and when she spoke at all on general topics it was to have someone to be with when the whole world was white and she was colored" (68) It explores how the decay of values and fragmentation prevail the society as a national result of domination of one race over other. It reflects the economic, social and political effects that made people struggle and resist the oppression of the dominated force.

Damon smoothed away behind his demonic mask and he refused to profess his identity. Therefore, Houston made a distinction of this truth. In his description, the fallen of the value and the absence of social justice considering on famine as an important constrain to enable blacks to prove their identity as the white exploit them. Damon dramatizes African American struggle with modernity forces and ideals through resisting the traditions strongly to create group identity. The oppression and other behaviors of whites made problems for Africans American and caused them dual identity. Stuart Hall argues, "Identity is a matter of becoming as well as of being" (436).

Damon's education relieved many problems through creating his aspiration as American citizen to the American dream. To prove his identity and existence, he became freer economically by borrowing money from time to time. He regards

women as instruments for his physically and emotionally needs. He did not realize satisfactory on relationship with women. As a modern man, Cross's vision is to protect a women's honor. So he regretted for betraying that principle. He defines the relationships with women in the context of humanity. Here, "the identity of both Cross and the society emerged gradually" (125). Darwin T. Turner emphasizes Damon's intellectuality and lacking of emotional analogue,

> There is no such emotional analogue in The Outsider. Strangely, however, Damon's problems night elicit more sympathetic response in 1969 than it did in 1953, for it suggests the current rebellion of affluent youth against a society which offers material comfort but no spiritual satisfaction. (49-50)

Damon struggles against the west deception of modern consciousness, he struggles for identity in an indeterminate world. A meaninglessness life for Damon, he saw that his gun is to be a final as a final solution: "he sprang to the dresser and yanked open a drawer and pulled forth his gun. . . . If the presence from within or without became too great he would use it; his gun would be his final protection against himself" (381). The identity of otherness was trusted upon Damon by West. He described the challenges of his living in between. He expresses the reality of the blacks according to the white's vision. His mistake was the Self-liberation through denying the past. He wanted to separate his life in New York from his experiences in Chicago. This course defaced his real identity and invented disingenuous identity. The yearning for freedom and the social constrains confused Damon enjoying of the individual freedom. The quest for freedom and identity through the escape of the past represented Cross's selfishness.

The Outsider is a reflection of Damon's hybridized identity. As a black man, he struggled in order to discover his own identity. He and other minority groups suffered from the same tragic experience of western imperialism. He did search for individual freedom. Eva and her dominating of Damon made him change his behavior to prove his identity whatsoever the price. The perfect freedom and identity guided by his own personal instincts. These instincts led him to commit such criminal behaviors without taken into his consideration the sense of society.

> That all men were free was the fondest and deepest conviction of his life. And his acting upon this will plan would be but an expression of his perfect freedom. He would do with himself what he would, what he liked. (457)

District Attorney Houston prepares a confrontation meeting between Damon and Gladys and his three sons. Here, Damon rejects to profess his identity. Moreover, Wright explores the vision of mobility of identity because of the contradictions of passing tries. Wright explains how Damon affected by the communist leaders as a kind of obtaining an independence personality. Therefore, Damon tries to be a little god by coveting power for himself only and by his identification with the communist. But cross's way is different since he is black, he deceived and negated his real identity and his behaviors are to horror others. His living mostly in a white world made his homosocial relations as an example of intensely and negatively at the same time.

The novel regarded as a revelation of Damon's unreal nature to endeavor for achieving identity in any mean. His frantic trial as a man eradicate his past and to construct a new form of identity. Damon seems as a victim through his struggle for identity. He became as scapegoat of Houston and the society as well. Damon

emphasize that Houston is not psychological free but he is tainted and corrupted individual. and described him as a universal contagion. His trying to pass away showed the inferiority of the situation for Damon and gave him a kind of returning of an abandonment identity.

The Outsider shows how Cross's behaviors actions made him flee from the real world into his own world, which is his own consciousness. He lost the real meaning of his personality. Each action or behavior by Damon created new obstacles to freedom. Damon's new identity mostly was conditioned by removing others from his way in any means. Wright explains how Damon affected by the communist leaders as a kind of obtaining an independence personality. Therefore, he tries to be a little god by coveting power for himself only and by his identification with the communist. But cross's way is different since he is black; he deceived and negated his real identity and his behaviors are to horror others.

Wright depicts the psychological attitude of Cross when he asked himself and pondered of his nature and abnormal behaviors and actions to prove his own identity. The sultry climate of relations among individuals and this branded of dealing reflects the identity as an outcome. This outcome deforms the real meaning of the identity that Damon and blacks are looking for. Damon represents a metaphysical rebellion, his life is a kind of inexorable struggle to prove his own identity.

Savage Holiday explores out the uncertainties and ambivalences at the heart of whiteness as an unsecure mode of identification which insists on seeing the black male subject solely in terms that pay lip service to its own supremacist view of the self. The aspect of whiteness that he keeps developing and mining in the rest of his corpus, Wright tries to understand and dethrone whiteness by focusing on its object of

denigration, namely the black body and subject. His work represents an intellectual will to unveil whiteness's false allegations by focusing on the impact of its representations and the political reality they create for the black identity

Most of Wright's characters whose fates enact deterministic tragedies that betray the imaginary character of whiteness as an identity, revealing how it rests on a certain positioning of bodies. Erskine Fowler, the protagonist, seeks to dominate and control his environment thanks to a starkly unequal configuration of bodies that grants him the upper hand over his victims. A white middle-class subject, Fowler finds himself suddenly in a difficult bind when his company sends him into early retirement, stripping him of the privileges of whiteness and forcing him into the realm of the other. This shift in status, which is enacted in the opening scene of the novel, and how Fowler copes with it unfold in terms of a peculiar and at times tragic set of body relations which reflect his understanding of himself and his world.

The opening banquet scene which depicts him as the epitome of the American Dream, a hardworking and successful businessmen. Fowler's loss of the privileges that whiteness confers on him takes the form of a protracted and dramatic initiation into savagery, where his understanding of his own body and the bodies of those around him takes shape in light of his new position as Other. Lale Demirturk describes Fowler's predicament in light of this transformation:

> Fowler loses all the social labels producing the solid sense of whiteness–that is, wealth, privilege, comfort and social acceptance. He is no longer positioned within the 'white-skin privilege politics' . . . which produced him as the white middle-class man who likes where he stands. Fowler is driven outside the system of white supremacy in

> being forced into the position of the Other . . . [which] subverts the success myth. (133)

Fowler's failure to realize this shift makes him act according to his former position of centrality sanctioned by whiteness, unaware of his new marginal and peripheral status let alone able to accept it. This contrast between his image of himself as a superior white man and his reality as a marginal Other exposes his deep-seated insecurity which translates into his attempt to live up to his image as a decent, moral and secure white middle-class citizen while being devastated by the anxieties and uncertainties related his status as Other. Fowler finds himself locked out of his apartment naked as he tries to pick up his Sunday newspaper from the doorstep. An unexpected draft shuts the door behind him, leaving him trapped with his nude body and the crippling shame triggered by fear of being seen by his neighbors.

The wealthy New York insurance executive, whose expulsion from the Company strips him of the prerogatives of whiteness, undertakes his first step into Otherness as a disgraceful body experience: "Erskine screamed, his body shaking with rage, shame, despair, and a sickness which he could not name" (50). With no clothes on and using the Sunday edition of the *New York Times* to cover himself, Fowler's nakedness highlights his animal and savage nature. The association between nakedness and visibility on the one hand and Fowler's loss of the markers of whiteness on the other is also made clear a little earlier. Before being locked out of the apartment he takes a shower to start his day when he has this glimpse of his body:

> "He stripped off his pajamas and loomed naked, his chest covered with a matting of black hair . . . his legs rendered spiderlike by their

> hirsute coating. Tufts of black hair protruded even from under his arms. Nude, Erskine looked anything but proud or Christian. (40-41)

Fowler displays an unwillingness to accept his nudity and deal with his visibility, holding on tenaciously to the white center of privilege which used to define him as invisible. This disavowal of his body, of the difference embedded in him, is indicative of the splitting, ambivalence and anxiety that determine both his self-image and his social relations and condemn him to a life of appearance over reality. In the above scene, the image of the spider captures the divide separating the different polarities of body and soul, appearance and reality and self and Other governing his Manichean world. Like a spider, he desperately attempts to cast his moral net on those around him, to act white, while denying his true savage and animal nature. Fowler, who becomes in the words of Michel Fabre in The Unfinished, "an animal trapped by human convention" (377), stands as a symbol for the myth of whiteness which is able to champion the values of decency and civilization only by demonizing the Other as a bestial body devoid of reason and humanity.

Fowler denies his status as an Other, this does not mean that it goes way. Rather he is haunted by the savage body of the Other he tries to suppress. Caught in a devastating grip of fear in case someone discovers him nude. Fowler rushes into a terrified ride in the elevator, using the emergency stop button to prevent the other tenants from getting in. The image of Fowler in his up-and-down ride in the elevator presents him like a scared beast locked in a cage. Fowler's story is one of a literal and metaphorical lynching of his Others. And those Others, whom he associates with his body and tries to banish as sources of shame and disgrace, are none other than his next-door neighbor, Mabel Blake and her son, Tony. He locked with the two in a

deadly body contest that is destructive and tragic, leading to accidental death in the case of Tony and deliberate murder in the case of his mother.

Fowler entertains a paternalistic relationship of domination with Tony and his mother. Towards each he holds an ambivalent attitude of fascination and repulsion, an attitude typical of whiteness's stereotypical construction of the Other. He nurtures a sympathy towards them that spurs him to act as if he is responsible for them and at the same time feels threatened by both to the point of causing the death of Tony and putting an end to the life of Mabel. He identifies with Tony's feeling of neglect by his mother, being himself a victim of an uncaring mother, and associates Tony with his past which he had tried to suppress on the other. Fowler discovers that Tony is referring to sexual intercourse and that he is listening to a reenactment of his own bitter story with all its long-suppressed demons. Fowler's father dies when he was three, leaving him to a careless mother who "has deprived him of maternal affection, twisting his drive to love at an early age" (130). Fowler's identity between his avowed white self and the disavowed Others who sustain it, controls Fowler's relation to Tony even before the climactic moment of the latter's death.

Fowler uses his freedom to conceal his role in the murder of Tony and to force Mabel into believing that she is responsible for the death of her son because she did not take care of him. Instead of coming to terms with his guilt about causing the death of Tony by avowing it to his mother, he chooses to keep his mask of respectability, presenting himself as a savior instead of victimizer and Mabel as a symbol of criminality and sin instead of a single working mother and poor war-widow. Fowler, the patriarch, falls back on religion to hide his crime and enforce his moral superiority over Mabel whose individuality is eclipsed by the generality of the stereotype of women as sinful beings:

> Again his emotions became religious . . . He must somehow redeem what happened to Tony! . . . In redeeming Tony, he'd be redeeming himself. How neatly the double motives fitted! He'd help to purge the world of such darkness . . . How right he'd been in refusing to accept blame for Tony's death; it hadn't been his fault at all. Only an ignorantly lustful woman could spin such spider webs of evil to snare men and innocent children! As he walked he told himself with the staunchest conviction of his life: 'That Mrs. Blake's the guilty one'. (105)

Fowler's position of superiority as a male patriarch and a domineering figure hinges, on a moral rationalization that convinces him of his good intentions in spite of his guilt-ridden conscience and on controlling Mabel as well. This position of power is secured through defining Mabel, fixing as well as framing and eventually negating her as a subject through a stereotypical misrepresentation of her body and sexuality. Reading whiteness from the standpoint of its Others shows that Fowler's social status and power determine his image of Mabel and his ability to impose it as a legitimate representation of her subjectivity. Yet, his power is sustained thanks to the false stereotypical knowledge about the female Other which the ideology of whiteness puts at his disposal. His plan to marry her speaks for this fear of the Other as an alien force of chaos that threatens the familiar world of the self. Fowler's marriage proposal is intended to save Mabel from a life of adultery by offering her the ordered and stable family life so dear to him.

Fowler's marriage looks like an entrepreneurial endeavor is animated by his utilitarian and business-like will to dominate and make use of Mabel. The third-person omniscient narrator defines the goal behind Fowler's decision to marry Mabel:

"She'd obey him! She was simple; and, above all, he'd be the boss; he'd dominate her completely" (134). From a patriarch to a businessman and then to a missionary, Fowler associates the success of his grand narrative of marriage with the three pillars of his own and white society's story. These three pillars serve to guarantee Mabel's subservience to Fowler who set on a deadly marriage plan leading to a brutal murder instead of wedlock. He assumes the role of the missionary to redeem Mabel from her licentious life. Like Mabel, Fowler's mother, seen through a series of flashbacks and recollections, is pictured as a monstrous presence he refuses to recognize and tries hard to confine to his unconscious. She stands for the shameful past he wants to keep hidden from his consciousness, even though it keeps resurging, adamantly jeopardizing the security of the subject he has become and threatening to tear asunder the world he diligently strove to make.

Fowler's daydreams and dreams while he is asleep, shaking his grasp on reality and bracketing the viability of a world of whiteness he has created out of hard work at the company and religious faith. Jan Mohamed's significant comment that "Mabel Blake is, predictably, also a mirror image of Fowler's mother" (216) draws attention to parallels between Fowler's split self, between his past and present, his conscious and unconscious identities and his real avowed world and dream-like hidden world. It shows that these dualities which make up his world are held together by the subjection of women as Others to the violence and domination of white patriarchy. For Fowler's symbolic matricide and his fear of his past are expressions of his shame about his mother's sexuality.

Fatherless at three, the little Fowler blames his feeling of being neglected on his mother's promiscuity, for which she was imprisoned. She died shortly after coming out of prison but her memory and the memory of her promiscuous life leave

indelible scars on Fowler. He remembers her as impure and a prostitute, and just as he tries to control Mabel's sexuality through a civilizing mission, which casts her in the savage terms of the stereotype, he attempts in the same derogatory and dehumanizing manner to control the memory of his mother's sexuality by shutting her off from his consciousness. Fowler performs yet another symbolic murder of his mother when he takes revenge on her by breaking a doll's head against a brick. At the end of the novel, he finds out that the recollection of this act of revenge was not a reality but one more dream from his past:

> He'd never 'killed' the doll, really! That memory was but the recalling of a shameful daydream of revenge which he had pushed out of his mind! It was what he had angrily daydreamed one day when he'd been playing games with Gladys and her dolls; they'd been coloring paper with colored pencils and he'd drawn the image of a dead, broken doll and he had imagined Gladys telling on him and his mother branding him as bad … He'd pictured vividly to himself what he'd wanted to do to his mother for having gone off and left that night when he'd been ill. (220)

Fowler's imprisonment in the narrative of whiteness and its effacement of the Other blinds him from seeing the true nature of his victims as poor widows who are marginalized and crushed by the requirements of survival in a white patriarchal order. His strict moral code and its attendant supremacist masculinity restrict his ability to see women as other than objects he can manipulate and control. Fowler's purported high moral standing condemns him to murder the Other, literally and metaphorically. His fantasies of women's sensuality and beauty, in the case of Mabel and his mother, arrest the image of the Other, casting it into the fixity of the stereotype, annihilating

the true image of the Other and rendering accurate knowledge of it impossible. Fowler's reduction of the identity of his female Others to their bodies, which he indicts and associates with sin and adultery, is to preserve his own identity as a white and a savior set on a divine mission to restore morality by redeeming and civilizing its enemies.

This form of death, enacted as a stereotyping of women as promiscuous and immoral, is bound to lead to actual death and the complete demolition of existence. Just as he has sacrificed his mother symbolically and Tony accidentally, he premeditatedly and cold-bloodedly stabs Mabel dead in an act which Demirturk reads as an expression of savagery: "For the first time in his life he has acted out his savage impulses that had long been repressed by the social signifiers of civilization" (135). A coincidence that he ends up a beast devouring Mabel as his Other the same way he is pictured in the balcony scene at the beginning of the novel, where he figures as "a huge beast clutching for something to devour" (52), her son Tony.

This paradoxical self-image starts to have tragic consequences when Fowler sets out to create surrogate Others upon whom he can inscribe his fears about his body and sexuality. Not able to recognize his embodiment, he goes on to treat the female characters in his life as bodies, intent on pleasure and sin, who have, therefore, to be redeemed to the realm of soul and spirit. This view of whiteness which sees Fowler sent behind bars after committing three murders, two actual and one symbolic, takes another no less tragic twist when Wright shifts his attention to analyzing whiteness from the perspective and position of the black subject. As the following section of this chapter will demonstrate, Wright's scholarly interest in understanding whiteness focuses on its relation to the black body, underlining the ways in which black male

subjects are reduced to mere bodies and denied the human qualities of soul, intellect and morality that qualify them to be equal to whites.

The Outsider explored the difficulty environment of the protagonists to achieve real identity. The protagonists in these novels exposed the issue of identity crisis as a universal issue not only as an Americans or black issue. The characters in these novel embodied how it is difficult to achieve identity under such circumstances, starting from the Pre-World War I till the post of the Second World War II. Wright, through these novels, confirms the issue of the identity as a problem forever not only in the past or in the present time. These novels showed to what extant modernity played a role to reform the life of the people and its impact on the identity on both levels either individual or collective.

The next chapter "Existential Violence" deals with the existential thought and action that affirm humanity and dignity against white racism, oppression and violence. It also discusses the earlier conflict between individual freedom and insistence in the philosophical beliefs which alienated in own society.

Chapter Four

Existential Violence

The experience of being "Black" in the context of Western modernity is distinctly an existential experience that engages ontological and teleological inquiries of identity and belonging. Such concerns have existential significance when radicalized through states of being, such as agency, dread, anguish, despair, identity, nihilism, nothingness, freedom, alienation, and suffering. An African American existentialism's abiding concerns with the definition of humanity as well as with the individual's need to actualize oneself under conditions of social, religious, and psychological alienation. This existentialism is as much a legacy as it is a philosophical and literary tradition. The legacy of existentialist thought in African American literature is prevalent and present in various literary traditions.

The significance of existentialist thought in African-American literature is its framing of African American experiences, writing from an existential context that renders individual experiences meaningful while allowing those personal particularities to be a profound provenance of knowledge. The mid-to-late nineteenth century ushered in concerns for African Americans and their future in the United States that involved emancipation without means of economic survival and national citizenship. As such, an existential project was produced to address questions of identity, essence, and action, which are the locus of African American existential thought. In Sartrean language, it was a project of being and becoming. As such, this existential project generates, redefines, rearticulates, and expands the meaning of its being-in-the-world against the constructs of whiteness and its racist functions and ramifications within modernity.

African American writers understood the social, political, and existential implications of such an underpinning and strove to produce literary works that fundamentally shaped identity and meaning through critical consciousness towards the turn of the nineteenth century. Their works embodied existential thought and action that were necessary to affirm their humanity and dignity against white racism, oppression, dehumanization, and violence.

Wright resolves the earlier conflict between individual freedom, stressing the former and attacking the latter as embodied in the American Communist party. *The Outsider* is an Existentialist novel, which probes the personality of Cross Damon not only as a Black man in quest for identity but also as an Existential hero. The novel celebrates Wright's philosophical journey into the complex nature of human existence with particular reference to the life a Black man whose insistence on his philosophical beliefs has alienated him from his own society. Cross Damon's attempt to extricate self from this dreadful existence of senseless criminality only brings him frustration and despair in his life. It makes him lose his sense of judgment and alienate him from the rational world, thereby leading him to the abyss of darkness and nothingness.

Cross Damon, a young, black intellectual from the South Side of Chicago, is not concerned with the effects of race. Wright by extension goes to considerable lengths to deny race as an issue in the greater philosophical problem of the modern black man. Damon life is in chaos, and he already consumed by self-hate in the novel's early sections. He used to read books voraciously. Damon wants to believe in the principles of Existentialism, but any philosophy in his life at this point is untried, untested. Even in the beginning of the novel, there is a sense that Damon's existential, intellectual projects are failures. His friend asked him why he had spent so much time reading books:

"I was looking for something," Cross said quietly.

"What?" Pink asked.

"I don't know," Cross confessed gloomily. (8)

He is asked why he no longer reads such books:

"Now, honest, Crossy, how come you don't read no more?"

"Aw, be yourself, man" Booker said.

"I am what I am," Cross said. (8-9)

Wright is attempting to create a model black character who is so far advanced of menial racial concerns that he can view the world, without communist help, through a non-racial lens. Damon recalls the drunken day that he ended up in the bed with another woman as his wife returned home. He realizes that his own life is no longer his: "Dating from this period, a wave of self-loathing began to engulf Cross. Each time he realized how much he had lost control of his life, his self-hatred swelled threateningly" (71). Matters get complicated when Damon is involved with a 15-year old girl named Dot, who has lied about her age and is pregnant with his child.

With Damon under a barrage of accusation from his religious minded mother, Dot's doctor informs him that if he is not Dot's husband, he will be accused of the crime of rape. When Gladys finds out what has happened, she finds herself in a position of power and demands that Damon take out all of his insurance money and the maximum salary-advance from the Post Office to give to her. While carrying the money home on the Chicago subway, he is involved in a horrific underground crash. Damon is one of the few unhurt survivors of the crash, but in fleeing the scene he has

to leave behind his jacket which contains his identification. By chance another black man, who dies and is physically mangled in the crash, had sat beside Damon on the train and is mistaken for him when the bodies and Damon's identification are recovered.

Damon is "alone at the center of the world of the laws of his own feelings" (148). He is flight to New York is the first major act that shows him taking active control of his own life. Freedom is something Damon has longed for, and henceforth he will have his opportunity to test it. In the initial fervor of flight, his perspective on himself is changed from hate to love:

> He found that he had been deprived of the will to make decisions, that he had, by his flight, abandoned himself to be tossed and buffeted by the tyranny of daily minutia. Thrust thus back upon himself, his actions were snared in a web of self-love that made the images of his mind assume a hypnotic sway over his body that was more decisive than the food he ate to sustain himself. (149-150)

Damon has been something of an intellectual elitist, looking sown on his family and peers who do not understand the forces of modern existence at the level he does. These changes because of a chance encounter on the train from Chicago to New York. Sitting across from Damon is Ely Houston, the District Attorney of New York City, a hunchback. Houston also an "outsider" by his condition as a hunch back, understands this and evokes W.E.B. Du Bois in telling Damon that:

> Negroes are outsiders. . . . They are going to be self-conscious, they are going to be gifted with a double vision, for, being Negroes, they are going to be both inside and outside of our culture at the same time. . .

> Negroes will develop unique and specially defined psychological types. They will become psychological men (163-164).

However, just as Houston indirectly labels Damon an outsider, so he describes Houston in the same terms: "He was frightened of the hunchback, that outsider who understood too much" (165). Despite Damon suspicions that Houston is somehow aware of the murder he has committed, the two men in agreement that "the whole effort of man on earth to build a civilization" (171). Damon comes to realize that Houston's job of upholding the law in his way deluding himself from what both men recognize – the otherwise natural and existentially permissible lawlessness that is the real order of human existence. Houston says, "My greatest sympathy is for those who feel that they have a right to break the law" (171). Because Houston lives the delusion as District Attorney, Damon also dismisses him as ultimately false, a "little God" who rules over those under him. However, the most severe form of this judgment reserved for the communist party. Thus, when Damon thinks of Communism, he "found as much to hate in it as to admire" (196).

Damon feels "constrained by logic to accept Marxism as an intellectual instrument whose absence from the human mind would reduce the picture of the processes of modern industrial society to a meaningless ant heap" (197). Damon wants to believe in ideology. He learns that his own Existentialist belief fail to satisfy him. Although his professes ambivalence to Communism as ideology, he decidedly hates Communists in reality: "Above all, he loathed the Communist attempt to destroy human subjectivity: for him, his subjectivity was the essence of his life" (197). Damon begins to comprehend the complexities of his attempt to live existentially. He begins to see how easily even he may be trapped into bad faith thus becoming the very thing he hates. In Sartean-Existentialist terms, he has accepted the invitation to

move in with a young Communist couple for the wrong reasons. There is duplicity in his actions:

> He had accepted their invitation in bad faith – he was convinced that bad faith of some degree was an indigenous part of living. The daily stifling of one's sense of terror in the face of life, the far-flung conspiracy of pretending that life was tending toward a goal of redemption, the reasonless assumption that one's dreams and desire were realizable – all of these . . . were bad faith. (253)

Damon lectures Eva and her Communist acquaintances on the real nature on the real nature of the ideologies. His most interesting point is simply Communists are not revolutionaries in real sense, as with all members belonging to an ideology, actually seek to take advantage of the emerging condition of modern man. He does not consider the unique situation of the Negro in America. Damon had mused that

> his consciousness of the color of his skin had played no role in. the general circumstances of his upbringing . . . the insistent claims of his own inner life had made him too concerned with himself to cast his lot wholeheartedly with Negroes in terms of racial struggle. Practically he was with them, but emotionally he was not of them. (195)

Houston begin to turn up the truth about Cross's identity and past life of Chicago, bringing in his wife and children to identity him, and the shock sends Eva, now Damon's lover, to commit suicide. In the confrontation with Houston, Damon reaffirms that "the real heart of communism, Mr. Houston, is the will to power" (515). Houston determines correctly that Damon is guilty of all the related murders because only a man completely outside of human society, a man who would not even react

upon hearing that his mother had died, could have so spontaneously murdered men without remorse. Houston lacks evidence, and is satisfied to set Damon free. Damon learned nothing from his university studies, lived in dread while imagining the terror of freedom, then took advantage of the subway wreck actual achieve as existential freedom. He finally realizes that he himself is as guilty as the communists in his need to control and dominate the environments in which he exists. In the end the result of existential life lived is not only joining that which cross hated most, but is the learned equivalent of what Cross obtained from his academic studies in Chicago-nothing.

Wright's concept of existentialism is that he views human action as the result of individual choice and will. The individual's action must be assertive. Cross Damon's existential view is a search for an essence in his meaningless existence. Though he says that man is nothing in particular, his search for love, power, and freedom on earth show that he believes in a meaningful existence.

Savage Holiday, is a novel that portrays the psychosexual aspects, is essentially a connecting link between Richard Wright's earlier and later fiction. In general, Wright's hardships, unpleasantness, and tragic circumstances form the basis of his ideas that become the central themes of his works. But in this novel, he seems to concern himself with the modern psychology and psychoanalysis. Published in 1954, the novel may be construed as the reflection of Wright's own personality. Erskine Fowler is known as A-I executive in the insurance world and as a cracker Jack who always delivers goods. A party was arranged and is hosted at the Jefferson Banquet Salon of one of New York's largest and most luxurious mid-town hotels. The party is attended by wealthy executives, characterized by their fleshy faces, massive bodies, grey and bald heads. Mr. Warren, the President, is the first speaker in praise of Fowler.

> Ah, I remember him years ago-though it seems to my mind's eye that it was but yesterday!- running errands, learning the ropes, figuring the angles, growing up with a growing company, becoming a Mason, a Rotarian, a Sunday School Superintendent, a man of parts . . . What a miracle life is! What a tremendous boon we have been to this man, and what a godsend he has been to us! What a collaboration! What a fulfillment of promise . . . ! (12)

Fowler, upset by emotional outburst, bursts into tears. He makes a speech on demand amid the expressions of his limitations as a speaker. He swallows, blinks, and touches something in his inner coat pocket and gears up for the melancholy business of leave taking. He continues, "Yet I possesses no small degree of pride for, no matter how humble my capacities really were, I did lend a willing hand in building up this our common monument of business" (17). Fowler, after his retirement, is allowed to retain the capacity of a consulting advisor as per the decision of the Board of Directors. Mr. Edward proposes that the honorable proceedings along with the photos need to published in the next issue of Longevity Life and the motion carried unanimously. The party begins and the couples move in a rhythmic dance.

Fowler's running away from the banquet has got another deeper meaning and significance. His fleeing from the banquet place is an attempt to flee from himself. He is filled with a sense of feeling that he has been discarded, scrapped, and outdated. He is no longer needed by the company that he built over the years. He recollects how he knew Longevity Life from A to Z, better than he knows himself. He feels that the bye-law that compels the retirement of an employee who has thirty or more years of service is especially claused for him. Further, when he learns from his secretary that

Warner wants to accommodate his son, Robert Warren, who has just turned twenty-three, he feels outraged. The outrage that stings his ego most is evident in his feeling:

> So it was not only because they thought him inefficient, not because he wasn't liked and respected by everybody, that he was being dumped; it was to make a place for his son that Warren was giving him the air! Robert Warren was going to be married and old man Warren was making Robert the district manager of Manhattan as a wedding present! (23)

Humiliation chokes Fowler when Ricky threatens him that he is fired and kicked out. Fowler realizes that both Warren and Ricky, whom he worshipped for twenty years, hate him now. There is an urge in Fowler to smash the face of Warren but he is incapacitated by their power. To overcome this crisis, again he touches the pencils inside his coat. He feels that insurance is something one just cannot learn from books, no matter how thick and profound they are. He leaves the place and while plodding through the crowd he reveals his dilemma:

> He knew, however that his bitter tirades against his former colleagues were but a crude camouflage covering his real dilemma. What was fundamentally fretting him was that - now that he'd retired and was free-he didn't know what to do with himself. His hated freedom was simply suspending him in a void of anxious ignorance that was riveting his consciousness with self-protective nostalgia upon the familiar atmosphere of the Longevity Life Insurance Company. (31)

Fowler is afraid of the everlasting freedom that he is destined to enjoy. All these days he imprisoned himself in a prison-cage of toil and moil that facilitated him to forget

his dreadful past. The work-culture was an escape for him from the memories of what he was in the past and what crimes he did and what he feared doing. "He was trapped to freedom. How could he again make a foolproof prison of himself for all of his remaining days? What invisible walls could he now erect about his threatening feelings, desires?" (33). He walks brooding and reaches home in the tenth floor of Elmira apartments, located in the upper Seventies of Manhattan. His bedroom has never been dishonoured by the presence of a stray woman of pleasure. His love for Tony, a five year old boy of Mrs. Blake, a brunette war-widow living the next door. and his role as the big father, quite often giving gifts are very significant with regard to the thematic concern of the novel.

Fowler is angry with Mrs. Mabel Blake for leaving her child alone all night when she goes out to work. Like Tony, Fowler too had uncared childhood and this provokes in him a sense of sympathy and love for the boy. Fowler goes to bed. In his dream, he sees that he is walking through a thick forest, full of towering trees and he is making mental calculations regarding the profit he will get if he sells all the trees. Meanwhile, he finds a criminal looking man, chopping one of the trees and yelling at him to run quickly as the tree would fall on him. He is shocked and in no time the tree falls, crushing his head. Truly, this dream is a forecast of the coming events in Fowler's life. Disturbed by the drumbeating sounds of Tony, Fowler wakes up. Thinking of Tony, he catches many images of his mother and his bitter childhood days:

> He had no memory of his father who had died when he was three years old; it was his mother whom he remembered or, rather, the images of the many men who always surrounded her laughing face-men who came and went, some indulgent toward him, some indifferent.

> Gradually, as he'd come to understand what was happening, he'd grown afraid, ashamed. They'd lived down in Atlanta then and the boys in the vacant lots and on the school grounds had flung cold, scornful words at him, and he'd been furious with his mother. Even now he winced with a dull, inner pain as he recalled his dreadful dilemma in trying to decide who deserved more to be killed for having behaved so that the boys on the playground could taunt him; ought the men be killed, or ought his mother be killed . . . ? (38)

Fowler recollects an emotional scene from his childhood. Once when he was ill in bed, his mother was going out with a man. He begged and wept in order to make her remain at home but it was of no avail. Burning with fever, he went to the window and kept yelling until he fell down. Since then, he had remained a quiet child, keeping to himself and ignoring the world. That wounded his sense of pride in what he loved most, his mother. Later, she was considered a public nuisance and arrested, and after her release she died. Fowler never came to know what his mother's offence was, but understood he was filled with hatred for her. Fowler's association with his mother is nothing but a dark, shameful episode of his childhood:

> He'd not wept; he'd just been stunned, surprised, and relieved. He knew that he'd been long waiting to hear that she was no more and, when he heard it, he'd felt so guilty that he'd been ill in bed for a week . . . From that time on he felt that he had something to live down, to overcome. (40)

Coming out of his bitter childhood memories, lifting himself up naked from bed, Fowler wants to collect his Sunday paper in the hallway by springing forward.

But as bad luck would have it, the door behind him is shut and locked in no time. He remembers that it was only last month that he had the lock installed with a new system of steel bolts as a precautionary measure to protect himself from robberies. He is frightened by his nudity in the hallway. He enters the elevator to hide himself and keeps moving up and down to avoid the possible boarders. He wants to enter his room through the window of the bathroom. While doing so, he slips on the concrete and falls against the top railing encircling the balcony. Tony, who is on his electric hobby horse, is so frightened by his naked body and his brutal rushing towards the balcony that he loses his balance and falls off the railing to the ground.

Fowler is haunted by a sense of guilt that he cannot express. Though he is not directly responsible for the death of Tony, the very thought of the boy's death makes him feel guilty, lonely, and abandoned. All through "Anxiety," Fowler's anxious moments are conspicuous. Fowler broods over the deed that caused the concatenation of events. He curses his foolishness in failing to flick the lever on his lock, Mrs. Blake for her unconcern for Tony, and the two young girls waiting at the elevator. He is bothered by one aspect of the accident:

> Why had little Tony been so frightened of him as to lose his balance when he'd come running nude onto the balcony? Tony knew him, admired him; then, why had he gone into such a panic . . . ? It's true that he'd been naked, and, when naked, Erskine knew that he was not a pleasant or poetic sight. (80)

Fowler fails to guess why the sudden sight of him sent Tony reeling. He decides to go to Sunday School and for the first time in ten years, he is late by fifteen minutes to School. There also, he is obsessed with the thoughts of Tony. From there

he goes to Central Park but his recollections of Tony, an emotionally deprived and violated child, continue to haunt him. He is aware of Tony's fear of his mother and the people who come to sleep with her. This once again reminds him of his own unhappy childhood and his mother:

> Brooding, the memory of his own long dead mother returned to him. Yes; he understood Tony. He too recalled watching strange men tramping in and out the house in his childhood, and he felt a surging sense of terror, old, buried, trying to recapture him. He cut the distasteful recollection short by doubling his fists, rising and glaring about, oblivious of his surroundings. He muttered out loud: Women oughtn't to do things like that . . . (104-105)

Mrs. Blake goes to put the clothes on the crumpled copy of the New York Times and finds it stained with blood. Fowler's heart sinks with the recollection of what happened in the hallway. He has been holding the newspapers in his right hand. But after returning from the balcony, without his knowledge, he takes them into his wounded left hand. He exchanges Mabel's papers for his without realizing that his bleeding left palm has left a splotch of blood. Now, it is very hard for him to explain the blood. Anybody who has a glance of his wounded left hand and the stained paper may reconstruct the whole affair. To wash his hands off the bloody affair, he decides to ask Mabel to marry him, an executive's clean cut and practical decision.

Fowler ambushed in his attempt to ambush her. He tossed up between his desire for Mabel and his instant rejection of her because of her loose, vile conduct. One minute he loves her, and hates her the next. He feels enraged when he finds her talking to men on phone. He feels that he is unnecessarily entrusted with the job of

making arrangements for Tony's funeral. He feels nauseated at the thought of her men and their calls. Wright's negative treatment of women and their portrayal in all meanness is most vivid in Savage Holiday. This is evident in the following passages. Fowler considers Mabel a degraded cheap woman:

> "She's unnatural," he muttered to himself. Why were all those men calling her? Evidently, they'd been hoping to come and see her. What's she doing? He felt nauseated. He should be attending to his own affairs and not meddling with this cheap woman. She wasn't worth it . . . (147)

Mabel reveals the reason for her hatred for Tony: "Because it's not in my nature to be a mother" (193), she tells him with stark simplicity. Branding her a prostitute, when Fowler asks her how many men she is in touch with right now, Mabel screams: "So what? Suppose I sleep with every man in this block! What it to you, hunh? What's it to anybody on this dammed earth? It's my body, isn't it?" (159). This stirs his feelings of pain and he implores her to forgive him, once again reposing utmost trust in her. Ironically, there is a reversal of his resolution when he hears Mabel speaking on phone again.

Fowler resolves to forget Mabel's past life and wants to be strict with her. He decides to make his mind known to her at dinner at eight. Stretching upon his bed, Fowler falls asleep and dreams. He finds himself alone in a huge and empty church. He sees a coffin of a dead woman who is lovely and young. A man comes from his left and seeks his permission to open the coffin. There lies the lower half of the woman's body which is nude. Later, by a strange power, the woman's body begins to rot and turn into ashes, melting and finally turning into tar with a stench of

disintegration. He wakes up and recalls his promise of giving a treat to Mabel at eight He dashes to her apartment only to find a note left for him. She declines his invitation as she is very busy with other friends.

However, Fowler fetches her back from Mike's Tavern. He feels uneasy in the company of her friends as they make him the subject of laughter. After his return, he writes a letter to Mabel, putting an end to the mistaken idea. He expresses his wish to remain just a friend but not her life partner. He is happy that he has taken a wise decision of not running after that "plain tart" (186). Fowler is haunted by three mysterious things: Mabel's story of "naked feet dangling in the air," the blood-stained newspaper, and the woman calling him on the phone. He is nonplussed when Mabel enters his apartment and accuses him of irrational behaviour. She finds fault with Fowler for coming to her and offering help unaskedly. He has branded her a whore, bitch, and what not. He has come to her with his love and ultimate marriage proposal. Now he says that it is a mistake and he wants to retreat. All this happens within ten hours. She demands to know why he has behaved like that. Her attack is frontal:

> So what? I'm all upset about Tony and you come to me talking about love, love, love . . . It was Tony I was responsible for, not you . . . I don't know what happened to Tony. I've been pounding my brains to find out what to do about it, and you start pressing me about loving me . . . Do you call that responsibility? (189)

Their mutual confiding in each other leads to a resolve that their love will be a monument to Tony. But it does not last long as its foundation stands on the jealousy of Fowler. He keeps pestering her about her men and their calls. Fowler wants to give an account of the real story that he tried to get his paper and that his door slammed

shut and he was trapped in the hallway and was dodging naked and terrorized through the building and finally rushed to the balcony, but he thinks that he may be considered queer. Washing his hands off the blood, Fowler recalls how his mother used to ask him to look in the mirror to find out how bad he was. He observes that his face remains the same as it was.

He goes to a police station and surrenders himself, displaying the courage that is characteristic of Wright's heroes. The officer asks him whether he knows anything about the son of the woman who was killed accidentally. Fowler replies that he cannot say anything. When the officer demands an explanation, suspecting that he is playing a game, Fowler's hand automatically reaches inside his coat and touches the tip ends of the four coloured pencils.

Savage Holiday, did not receive the kind of attention it deserves. It was rejected by both his agent and his publisher before it was picked up by a paperback house. The American press, which deemed it a minor potboiler and quite atypical of Wright's work, declined to review it. Robert Bone is of the view that the novel was written for pulp market and we should not consider it serious literature. Though other critics feel that the publication of the novel deterred the prosperity of Richard Wright as a successful writer, the novel cannot be dismissed as a minor work.

This novel seems to serve as the wish-fulfillment factor for Richard Wright. Wright's desire to be white is fulfilled through Erskine Fowler, a white. More than the mere characterization, there is a realistic portrayal of the psychosexual aspects. The psychology of Fowler is a study in human psychology. The numerous incidents, involving love-lorn Tony, Fowler identifying himself with Tony, how Fowler, as a

child, longed for maternal care, and how his hatred is compounded by the lewd behaviour of women in general and his mother in particular are really appealing.

Wright's existential vision of life is closely linked with the oppressed, traumatic and precarious aspects of the Afro-American experiences. He achieves universality by concentrating on the specific by dealing with his own experience. He struggled artistically in his literary representation of such a reality, his attempts reveal a great deal about American condition of his time. Thus existential situation, is steeped in fear, and it leads to dread, anger, self-hatred and finally to despair and a sense of meaninglessness.

Chapter Five

Summation

The Harlem Renaissance was a period of U.S. history marked by a burst of creativity within in the African American community in the areas of art, music and literature. Centered within New York City's Harlem, the Harlem Renaissance begin roughly with the end of World War I in 1918 and continued into the mid 1930s. During the era Harlem became an inspiration and a destination point for African American artists from every discipline, especially writers. At the same time, Harlem became known for its smoky jazz and blues clubs, presenting popular African American musical artists to area residents as well as opportunities for adventurous outings among New York City's society crowd. Moving away from the slave narrative tradition, authors began to explore issues that had evolved out of the social consequences of slavery.

Authors addressed the topics racism, poverty, lack of identity and family structure through prose that evoked realism and immediacy. Langston Hughes's Simple Stories addressed poverty. Zora Neale Hurston celebrated African American heritage and culture. Dorothy west wrote about social and financial security. Richard wright wrote powerfully about anger, frustration and violence. Other authors of the Harlem Renaissance include Nella Larsen, Claude Mckay, Wallace Thurman and Jean Toomer. These and other writers produced a wide array of works spanning the full range of human experience and emotion. The Harlem Renaissance helped foster a literary tradition—a literary tradition that continues to influence writers today.

The accomplishments of the civil rights movement and the breakdown of the relationship between white and black social reformers are important legacies of the

Harlem Renaissance. The cultural bridge erected by the [illegible] between Negrotarians and black artists allowed many Africa-American intellectuals to establish independent views on racial equality. The next generation of writers and intellectuals, such as Richard Wright and Ralph Ellison, exposed the racial and economic inequalities in American society often promoted unconsciously by some Negrotarians. Both Negrotarians and African-American intellectuals faced the paradox of white patronage in social reform.

Beginning in the 1950s, the second generation of black artists after the Harlem Renaissance emerged. The second generation of writers and intellectuals, such as James Baldwin and Amiri Baraka magnified the resentment the earlier writers' felt toward Negrotarians. Some African-American writers and intellectuals, out of frustration, took radical steps in breaking—off relations with all Negrotarians. Many of these young black writers looked to Langston Hughes, Wright, and Ellison for guidance and copied their styles.

As the civil rights movement gained momentum, black artists began opposing integration. Baraka wrote that he rejected Martin Luther King's philosophy of non-violence. The transitions taking place in white and black literati relationships deeply affected the African-American artists personal and public lives. Part of the legacy of the Harlem Renaissance's cultural bridge was that it forged a working relationship between white and black social reformers. Throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, while some African-American intellectuals became empowered by criticizing racial inequalities in their poetry and literature, other African-American intellectuals cooperated with white politicians and social reformers in an attempt to eradicate segregation and racism.

During the 1950s and early 1960s blacks leaders and social activists worked with white politicians and social reformers, making great strides in the areas of civil rights. At the beginning of the 1960s, many believed that this decade would hold great hope and promise in the expansion of liberalism's dedication to the welfare state, an end to poverty, and the eradication of racial discrimination in voting, housing, education, and employment. By the mid-1960s, many black civil rights activists had developed a militant attitude and resented white involvement. Previously, interracial non-violent protesting gained many accomplishments in the area of civil rights. By the middle of the 1960s black civil rights activists began asserting their independence from their white supporters. Many African-American intellectuals and social activists called for Black Power.

Similar to Wright and Ellison, the younger generation of African-American intellectuals continued the theme begun by Harlem Renaissance writers like Langston Hughes. The second generation argued that white allies have often furthered white supremacy without the whites involved realizing it. This younger generation resented integration because to them it represented a "one-way street" in which black Americans. A major difficulty in interracial attempts at social reform was that many African-Americans resented integration on white Americans terms. Some black intellectuals questioned the validity of integration and its effects on the African American community.

Richard Nathaniel Wright belonged to a generation of American artists whose work and political views were profoundly influenced by the experience of the Great Depression and the human predicaments of the working-class battles of that era. The life and works of Richard Wright can be divided into five periods. His early childhood and adolescence spread over a period of nineteen years in the White

dominated South. Ten years of self-awareness time in Chicago, where the circumstances turned him to become a revolutionary and leaned towards communists ideologies, which etched him into a professional writer. The third stage was his successful career as a writer for ten years in New York. The later stage of life for ten years, he spent in Paris and finally the last tragic two to three years of self-isolation.

Wright's novels and essays create a deep dent into the heart of the racist society in unflinching and powerful language. Wright's novels give a reflected picture about the origin home of the blacks. The blacks had an unlucky lot right from the beginning. Even the very contours and harbors of their native land conspired against their freedom. The coastline of Africa was long and flat and easy to invade. There were no mountains to serve as natural forts from behind which they could fight and stave off the slave traders. It was mainly the kings of vast rum distilleries who owned the ships that scoured the seven sees in search of these the black bodies.

Wright's writing is distinctive in nature and belongs to a style of southern Gothicism, American naturalism, Afro-American humanism, and World realism. However, on the social front his expressions were profound on his culture and it included the humanistic touch longing for freedom and social justice in free society. He adopted a realistic approach in his writing. He portrayed a black man as an average, subhuman, neglected by the society, uncared and segregated and separated by race, class and caste. He defined and co-related his characters in his novels with the day to day happening during his life. His works are of phenomenal achievement that gave the groundbreaking realistic view of a life of a Black, combining with his upbringing. Even today his works are marveled for the relevance of time and life. Being a self-educated and liberal minded personality, naturally he was attracted

towards the philosophies of Communism which gave him the more needed food for his thoughts.

Wright explained to what extreme the social system became aggressive Wright glorified the colored and beauty of his race. His works and novels were regarded as an instrument to be used in strife against an oppressive society and also whites and blacks. His novels are a witness of the blacks struggle through such stages: Negro, black, colored, Afro American, African-American and African Americans. Wright's novels were regarded as a historical survey of the Blacks dilemma. Wright was always concerned with questions of identity, he gave a unique portrait of struggle specially man's struggle to overcome the race, suppression, degradation as problems of modernity.

Wright's novels represented blacks rejections of the whites norms through their alienated from the established order. Wright's literature is an Avant-garde literature and art as well as challenges norms of the society. Wright's novels and works brought out into the open, among black novels, to change the American culture. His novels forced whites to recognize their selves as oppressors. Not only that, but also made blacks obliged to twig and take notice the cost of their acquiescence as well as to achieve a formidable task to liberate blacks. His works also were tried to liberate American society from such traditions that destroyed its culture. Wright's novels professed that history can be a punishment.

Wright's works shown the society aporias, they showed the irresolvable internal contradictions on the individual level or the logical disjunctions in the whole life. Wright used disjointed structure to reflect the dysfunction of Western society. He addresses the inner thoughts of people and explored also the inner mind of the man.

thus focusing on the state of mind explores Wright's radical rejection of the traditions, cult the new, cult of fragmentation and the static values. Moreover Wright's novels gave a clear picture about split between high and low culture, exposing loss of faith in progress with giving also an optimistic vision.

Wright exposed the racial motif in its proto-type in racism. His novels also depicted the liberal commitment. Most of Wright's works focus the attention on racism as the canker of the modernity. They gave a clear picture of what the blacks suffer in a white society. Wright gave a certain history of the African Americans in America in which they were actively dominated by whites. The blacks were accepted in the American society but not as full citizens.

In *The Outsider* (1953), Wright portrays the social oppression and protest at the same time. The protagonist goes so far as to create a new life as a tool of his struggle to achieve his own identity as a black. He could manipulate others to demonstrate his personality and proved that white society marginalized the black society as well. Wright exposed that white tried to deplete blacks and explained how dangerous is the contradiction in identities. The quest for freedom and identity in *The Outsider* made the protagonist reincarnated. This reincarnation justified such violations to complete his plan. *The Outsider* explored universal concerns through its embody the author's exile and his past in his homeland as well. The novel showed variable experiences in the negro's life and the social consequences of his identities. *The Outsider* draw the attention about the Afro-American traditions. It defines the desire of the protagonist to perform his existential freedom. This novel depicts the legacy of the reconstruction era, racial prejudice, segregation which reflect the material needs and frustration of most African Americans.

Wright's works embody his defining of modernity as a period and a region characterized by the collapse of old myths. His novel, *The Outsider*, which was his first novel in his exile, explored his political expression of both fascism and communism. The novel confers distinction upon modern man and emphasizes the Negro struggle for political freedom and self-identification. According to Wright, his protagonists showed that blacks manage to play a role in a democratic society. He explored not only the naturalistic and race problems but also the metaphysical horror as a negative response of the social nexus and relationships. The protagonist's battle in *The Outsider* is to obtain existential and to express how horrific identities.

Moreover, traditional, artistic and political rebels, participated sometimes in violence instead of establishing identity. Wright finds that society must change into democratic and modern society after all Wars. In most of his novels, he explored and forged a new life of masculine empowerment and engaged with existentialism and psychoanalysis which led him to the central problem of black's identity. *The Outsider* highlights the vital relation between blackness and modernity. In brief, he portrays the uncompleted identity as a result of the deformed humanity.

Wright's another novel *Savage Holiday* was distinguished and characterized with a set of rhetorical features that expressed equivocal emotional meaning. The theme of this novel is the crime of Maternal betrayal which was somehow exaggerated through the fictive lens of the fiction corpus. Wright, in *Savage Holiday*, depicted a latent heterosexual conflict appeased in Freudian allusions and explained sadistic violence toward the women. *Savage Holiday* expressed how the motivation of murderous rage depicted the crime in the African American society. *Savage Holiday* regards as the culmination of fascination with crime for Wright's novels which was represented as a key that recovered the unconscious desire of his narratives. The novel

expressed the matricidal desire and emphasizing on the violence as a compulsive to prove the protagonist.

Wright opened up for Negro writers not only the bitterness of their own lives but other taboos as well-miscegenation, homosexuality, the White- Negro power structure and even the singular freedom a Negro feels in a society that denies him any recognition of his humanity. Wright symbolized in his life and works the themes which would concern a whole new generation of Negro writers, he even supported the course of worldwide racial equality. Richard Wright's novels mark a high point in history of the Negro Novel, not only because it is a work of art in its own right but because it influenced a whole generation. His novels have inspired a host of imitation which may be said to constitute the Wright school of postwar Negro Novels.

Wright's novels discovered the blacks and white mentality and emphasized on their cultural heritage in doing so with each other. Most of his novels involved in the issues those affected the blacks life directly, racism as a product of slavery made blacks society fragmented and generated crimes as a reaction of the black resistance towards the whites practices against blacks. Wright's works are evident of blacks suffering in all aspects life, some of his novels concentrates on domination of the whites not only socially but also in economic sides as a vital told to control blacks activities and marginalized theme in everything.

Wright's novels taught blacks how to work collectively in order to achieve their freedom and identity. They visualized as an answer to those who fight freedom and existence of African American. Wright explored that humanity is not a correlation with whites, his novels expressed to what extent whites degrade blacks. In brief, for blacks, Wright's literary works were a literary portrait that developed from a slave's

consciousness to a free consciousness. He participated effectively to establish the underpinning of the first stage of the Black literature. His novels were a journey from anonymity to identity.

Wright vividly and powerfully delineated the abject state of the blacks in racist regimes. He mainly focused on portraying the unlivable conditions of the blacks in the South and celebrating their determination to continue to live. He focused also on the persistence and tenacity with which they learn to survive. This dissertation explored the phenomenon more theoretically and portrays the blacks revolutionary actions against the racist environment and system. The characters spirit would still continue until they achieve their liberation and creating new world. Wright's works were regarded as a transplant survey of the sociological and psychological impacts on the blacks as a result of the economic, political and social upheavals in the society.

Wright experiences in the South, North and the exile consists a unique literary theory which mixed between the post colonial, Modernism and the post modernism. His novels exposed the inevitable resort for the blacks in order to react on the white's practice that is violence in all its aspects. Wright's novels proved an inevitable quandary of modern life and modernism that is in creating a masculine and fragmented society. At the same time, his novels emphasized that Wright could sympathize with the modern man who transferred into commodity. Wrights novel depicted the lowest level of black's life by expose and criticize the reason for this atmosphere of oppression. Wright's novels made him a spokesperson for oppressor either blacks or whites all over the world.

The domination of the whites made Wright to give a full picture of the bad conditions by portraying the social, political and economic situations. At all events,

according to Wright novels free man is responsible for the irrational actions of the blacks for they are not conscious to control their actions. Wright detailed the individual trends of his protagonist to pursue their identity and freedom within American society. He accused indirectly modernity as one of the factors that formed disrespected environment that would shatter the modern man as a human being. His novels explored the forces beyond control those that lead humans to destruction. The study thus substantiates the title "Fragmentation of Identity: A Study of Richard Wright's The Outsider and Savage Holiday."

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Annexure

EMOTIONAL BREAKDOWN AND RECOVERY TO AN ADULT IN MICHAEL ONDAATJE'S *"THE ENGLISH PATIENT"*

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Michael Ondaatje's The English Patient is a postcolonial novel written in a postmodernist style. It deals with Postcolonialism effects on World War II. End of the World War II, millions of people were died and lost their home. Impacts of war, an Italy became dangerous mode. Because Germans were hide their mines under the grounds and water. The novel explores the flashback techniques, experience of war, postcolonial power dynamics and postmodern self-reflectivity from a multicultural perspective. It has exaggerated the four major characters in the novel are away from their homelands and their experiences are related to their quest of an identity. This paper is to analyses the healing, state of mind, rejecting all connections with war through Hana, a young Canadian nurse and significant figure of the novel who struggles with the identity and matures from an adolescent into an adult. The paper concludes with, how she recovers from an emotional war wounds and how she starts to her new life.

Postcolonialism is based on the impact of colonization on cultures and societies. The term was originally used by historians to describe the period after

colonization. It fascinated the art of migration, globalization and transnationalism. Colonial period witnesses migration due to war, slavery and imperial subjugation. The decolonized people develop the postcolonial identity which has been articulated and celebrated by the postcolonial writers. A major theme of postcolonialism is the aspect of place and displacement. Canada is one among the postcolonial countries. Postcolonial Canadian writing focuses on its problem of space and identity which is connected with Canada's position as a postcolonial country.

Philip Michael Ondaatje, most celebrated Canadian poet and novelist. In many of his works there are both imaginative and political elements. He possesses a hybrid identity. His creative writing is influenced by the aspects of his life such as his migration to England and later to Canada, his journeys across the continents, his alienation, his exile and his individual experiences. Ondaatje focuses on how cross-cultural clashes cause the identity crisis. His award winning novel The English patient is a work of historical fiction set in the hills of Tuscany during the World War II. The novel deals not only with cultures, but they mix real and surreal, fact and fiction also present and past. He takes up similar themes and issues in a more subtle, indirect manner. Throughout the novel, he articulates the concerns of people born in one place and choosing to live elsewhere.

Ondaatje uses the postcolonial theme and technique employed in the novel that explores the ways in the notion of identity crisis that in an aspect of multicultural society. Through the postcolonial perspective, the narrator exposes the compelling narrative of the novel around one woman, Hana, a dynamic character. She was seen as a psychological victim of the war. Her experience in Italy made her more expressive and realistic. Hana is only twenty years old during the war time. She was forces to grow up quickly, and join the army as a nurse. She has been trained at the women's

college hospital in Canada and she had been sent to Europe during the Sicilian invasion. She was devoted to her nursing duties. After the battle of Arezzo, "Hana was surrounded day and night by their wounds. After three full days without rest, she finally lay down on the floor beside a mattress where some lay dead, and slept for twelve hours, closing her eyes against the world around her" (51).

After losing her father, she decided not to get too personal with her patients. Even though she does not know much about the English Patient, she refuses to leave him and decides to make his last month's less painful by infusing him with sufficient doses of morphine while reading to him by his bedside and piecing together his story from the shards of his memories. Having faced many tragedies in the war, Hana was forced to learn not letting her emotions get in the way of her nursing duties. Eventually she found a way to shield herself from the morality that the war rings. She did not want anything to link her death to death. She cut off her hair because she wanted to turn away from all the deaths and the blood she had seen close up while at war. From that day, Hana never looked in a mirror again. Her appearance also reflected her shell-shocked state of mind, as well as her physical exhaustion.

> When she woke, she picked up a scissors out of the porcelain bowl, leaned over and began to cut her hair, not concerned with shape or length, just cutting it away – the irritation of its presence during the previous days still in her mind – when she had bent forward and her hair had been touched blood in a wound. She would have nothing to link her, to death. (52)

Hana became harsh with the patients and herself. She saw soldiers "with just bits of their bodies, falling in love with me for an hour and then dying" (89). After the death of one of her patients, she opened his pack against the rules, took his pair of

tennis shoes and put them on. Although they were too big, she felt comfortable wearing them. This gesture was very symbolical, because by walking in the dead soldiers shoes she was trying to experience what he had experienced. But the fact that his shoes were too big for her symbolized that Hana was not up to it, his war experience. On the other hand, these shoe constantly reminded her of all the dead soldiers whom she had been taking care of during the war and also of the whole period when she was a nurse.

According to Ellis, because of having to watch many dead soldiers, whom she had nursed earlier, Hana was in "her shell shocked state" (Ellis 28). Hana became thinner and her face was tougher and leaner. It was the result of tiredness and hunger. She was angry, when a patient did not want to eat or waited for the soup to cool, which she desired to eat fast.

> She was always hungry and found it a furious exhaustion to feed a patient who couldn't eat or didn't want to, watching the bread crumble away, the soup cool, which she desired to swallow fast. She wanted nothing exotic, just bread, meat. (53)

Hana lost the man she loved in war and had an abortion, but what affected her most was the death of her father in an accident where he was burned beyond recognition and Hana was nowhere near. She never forgave herself for not being there to save him so in order to find atonement she decided to take care of the burned English patient who reminded her of her father, "There was something about him she wanted to learn, grow into and hide in, where she could turn away from being an adult" (54). Found in wreckage of a plane crash, he been burned beyond recognition, his whole body black and even the slightest touch painful to him. "Every four days she washes his black body, beginning at the destroyed feet" (3). She stay in the

bombed-out Tuscany villa with burned patient because it would be for her a place where she would not have to be an adult, she sometimes even played hopscotch, danced or played the piano.

Hana's important person was David Caravaggio, her father's friend, a thief who has been tortured and injured during the wartime. He was interested in her very much, but as his niece. Caravaggio knew Hana from her childhood; he had taught her many things, "she realizes everything she knew about the real world she learned on her own or from Caravaggio" (97-8). They had both changed because of war. As he wanted to get her out of her state of exhaustion, they led very long conversations, more often about her childhood or war. Caravaggio was the only connection with Canada. Hana thought that she was taking care also of him as his thumbs were cut off, but he stayed at the villa only to find out who the English patient was.

Her healing of the patient also affected herself, she became more quiet and feminine. In this way, reading books, which was a kind of conversation between Hana and her patient, was also the way to heal them both. Hana healed Almásy also in a psychological way, her attendance reminded him of his lover, Katharine. In that way she also played the role of the beloved goddess:

> The love and pity that Hana evokes from the patient seem to heal him in a psychological way, and perhaps in this action her role in analogous to that of the beloved goddess. In the patient's eyes, she seems at times a stand-in for Katharine. (Fledderus 35)

Hana's love for the patient was the result of her attitude to Patrick, her adoptive father. She was destroyed by the news of her father's death and the impossibility for her to nurse him at the end of his life. Hana saw her father in Almásy, she considered taking care of the unknown burnt patient as if he were her

father. who died of burns, too. At the Villa San Girolamo she was extremely occupied with her patient and books. Reading books was for her the way to forget about the cruelty of the war. "This was the time in her life that she fell upon books as the only door out of her shell. They became half her world" (7). Even if Almásy wanted to encourage her to talk, he asked her to read for him. He told Caravaggio "She was distant from everybody. The only way I could get her to communicate was to ask her to read to me..." (269).

Hana also developed an interest in music. She used to play the piano in the villa. She did not realize that the piano could be mined until the moment "two men slipped through the French doors and placed their guns on the end of the piano and stood in front of her" (67). They explained to her that it was a very popular place for Germans to hide mines. Although the purpose of their entrance to the villa was to check the piano whether there were some hidden bombs or not, but, unexpectedly they stayed there much longer. It was the beginning of Hana's relationship with the young Sikh, Kirpal Singh eventually called as kip. He was a Sikh soldier educated in Britain and became a military engineer.

Hana and Kip come from completely different worlds but are both desperately in need of love and protection after experiencing the war. Even though they try not to show their emotional weakness by building their own separate worlds. they gradually turn to each other letting their guards down and finding comfort after several emotional suffering. Guided by her need and willingness to help others, she helps Kip defuse bomb despite of his objections to her interfacing. An interesting contrast between Hana and Kip was made by their hair. Kip's long hair was a symbol of rejecting all connections with war. Now Hana's new long hair restored. that was a symbol of the beginning of her new life.

Hana probably did not think of as a child but after experiencing many horrors during the war, she sees the world in different way. After losing a father, a lover and a child, she tries to distance herself from the pain and become stronger and resilient. With the help from others in the villa, she restores her faith in life. She entered the war as a child but throughout the time spent in the villa, she has become a determined young woman whose identity is shaped by her reactions to specific circumstances that not everyone faces in life.

Finally Hana longs for her home and writes to her stepmother Clara, her only family member left. This act symbolizes a new beginning in her life and hope can be detected in Hana's word. Another symbol of recovery is her once again long hair which has been restored through time spent in the villa, just like Hana's emotional state. There was a change to begin a new life for Hana.

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NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CONTEMPORARY THEORETICAL POSITIONS IN LITERATURE

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at the One - Day National Conference on ***Contemporary Theoretical Positions in Literature*** *organised by the Research Department of English, Rani Anna Government College for Women, Tirunelveli, held on* ***7th September 2019.***

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RACE, ETHNIC IDENTITY AND MIGRATORY LIFE IN CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE'S *"AMERICANAH"*

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Abstract:

The words race, ethnicity and culture and their various derivatives are all very familiar. These terms are regularly used in everyday speech. Adichie denotes these experiences throughout her award winning novel Americanah. She is not interested in passing judgments, which is what make her a likeable writer. Instead, she shaped the novel through ultimately quite devastating in parts. She is a Nigerian writer. Her writing is infused by descriptive and smart observation of characters and places, which generate laughter at times and provokes thought throughout. She uses Americanah as a tool for cultural remark that view the impact that westernization has on people from African countries.

Keywords: Race, culture, immigrant, ethnicity and westernization.

Adichie's Americanah feels both familiar and complete novel in its directness of addressing issues. It mainly focuses on the African immigrants and racial problems. It also depicts the suffering that African immigrants face in acclimatizing and adjusting to American culture. The novel follows the protagonist Ifemelu, a young Nigerian woman migrates to the United States in order to study. Her story is not about

the fight from a miserable life in Nigeria, but rather about her search for a good life. education and happiness.

Ifemelu, a Nigerian girl migrates to America on a student visa for university education. As a student at Nsukka University, she was interrupted with strikes under Nigerian government impair with corruption. So that she want to pursue her studies in US, by the help of her aunty Uju to get a scholarship to continue her studies. She leaves Nigeria for America with the hope of better education prospects. On the arrival she faces the race, cultural conflicts and ethnic identity in the sense of alienation. She quickly belongs to the under privileged group because of her skin colour and not as wealthy. She is integrated into American culture by adopting certain aspects. She was encounters with racism during her stay in America, something that she never was aware of in Nigeria.

Ifemelu tries to grapple with the situation and tries to be a part of the mainstream society. She strikes a fine balance between the cultures by acknowledge a few features of the American culture which she considers essential to preserving strong characteristics to African culture. Ifemelu's friend Ginika from Nigeria helps introduce Ifemelu to American culture and it racial politics. Ifemelu and Obinze are high school friends whose lives take different turns when fate separates them to different worlds. Obinze also wanted to pursue his studies with Ifemelu. But he doesn't get a visa, so he moved to England.

Like Ifemelu, Obinze also encounters racism in which whites display their superiority making him an unwelcome visitor. The laws catch up with him as an illegal immigrant and thus he opts to return home. Ifemelu as a female immigrant is exposed to economic pressures, which alienate her from herself and others. As an

immigrant to America, she is unable to get employment and with payment of rent overdue, she resorts to a sexual encounter with a white man. Later she ends up in a state of depression because she feels she has not fulfilled her self-expectation as well as her boyfriend Obinze's expectation. After a long struggle she finds a job as a babysitter in a wealthy, liberal white woman named Kimberly who is charitable and friendly but very privileged.

Ifemelu starts dating Kimberly's cousin Curt, a rich, handsome white man. Curt takes Ifemelu on many trips and helps her get a good job and a green card. She feels the pressure of her interracial relationship, cheats on Curt and he breaks up with her and she gets depressed again. She makes her living as a blog writer and so the novel texture is interwoven with blog entries. These entries serve to shape Ifemelu as a self-reflective and observant character who remarks objectively on the people and societal happenings around her. She beautifully sums up her feeling over the racial discrimination she faced in USA is these oft quoted blog post:

> Dear Non-American black, when you make the choice to come to America, you become black. Stop arguing. Stop saying I'm Jamaican or I'm Ghanaian. America doesn't care. So what if you weren't 'black' in your country? You're in America now. We all have our moments of initiation into the Society of former Negroes. (220)

The blog serves double purpose that she is able to convey her emotions without any inhibitions, guide others who are in a similar position by sharing her experiences. Ifemelu exposes the ridiculousness of the concept, which has no meaning apart from that which is assigned to it socially. The blog becomes successful, receiving comments and even donations. Ifelmelu is invited to speak at various events and paid for it. Her racial awareness is the main subject of the blog. The blog

functions as a way of giving direct critique to matters of race. She is able to write a blog, because she is an outsider. The study of writings on female immigrant is of importance for they address the key issues that concerned to women affairs like oppression through racism and also economic exploitation. A certain tension arises between Africans and African Americans. Before the arrival from America, race never existed for her. Ifemelu grows to very conscious of race and make a living by writing issues of the adapted country.

Ifemelu meets Blaine, a professor at Yale and very principled. She starts dating with him. They two start following Barack Obama's presidential candidacy. They have a fight when Ifemelu skips a protest Blaine arranges. They get divided and get back together, but they mostly united by their shared passion for Obama. After a while, she goes restless and decides to quit her blog, break up with Blaine, and move back to Nigeria. At that time, she gets news from her aunty Uju that Dike tried to kill himself. So, she postponed her return and takes care of Dike. Later she moved to Nigeria, and starts working for a Nigerian magazine.

The female immigrant is a result of institutionalized racism. Ifemelu is depressed as her identity is threatened which is an outcome of a social construct that conflictingly opposes and highlights race. Majority of immigrants settled in menial jobs in miserable conditions. Obinze also faced the same issue while he immigrant to England as soon as he send out because of the illegal entry. This leads him into the ethnic identity towards the racial conflicts. Ifemelu is unused to the concept, which is very commentary on the hegemonic functions of an American thought. A woman who doesn't hide that she's quite secure in her own sense of attractiveness and worth. Ifemelu's awareness that while the some white American men might find her intelligent, beautiful. She does not hold back when it comes to the liberal notion of

race. Only wish is that she would have done the same for class relations. Ifemelu still feel disconnected from American life.

Ifemelu in the search of her true essence encounters different factor that encounters the ethnic identity. She remembers that when she is in Nigeria, the issue of race is not a big deal. She remembers her friend Cult who is pretending to understand it but it is for a short time. Eventually, this issue of race is affected their romantic relationship too. The racism and cultural is applied in the daily life of Ifemelu. Brain's sister san admits that Africa is not caring about the race. After thirteen years in US, finally she wants to back to her native. Back in Nigeria, Ifemelu is happy to be back in Nigeria where there is no racial discrimination as compared to America. Later she finds a job for herself. And then she reunites with her first love Obinze though he is married. He asked for divorce from her wife Kosi. But she is rejected the approach. After seven months she agrees to leave. He is at the doorstep of Ifemelu, declaring that he is separating from Kosi and wishes to stay with her.

Ifemelu encounters white privilege about the issue of race. Her identity becomes a hybrid one. She is no longer belongs to Nigeria, or to America. She examines all the issues of and culture through her blog that is foreign to a Nigerian. The racial hierarchy in the Nigerian culture, the light-skinned people and the mixed race are consider more attractive and people use lightening products to make their skin lighter. Ifemelu finds out the race is a much persuasive part of live. She discovers the evil through the ethnic identity and race, she starts considering herself as black because she does not want to adapt to America's complex racial politics. Adichie makes a fine point of what Bhabha states that, "migrants end up in a situation where they do not belong to any place and where they cannot identify with any social group"

Adichie through Ifemelu portrays how African women immigrants and are forced to take a back seat in a foreign land, either because of their blackness and or being a woman. She brings a tension that arises in relationships the cultural backgrounds are one of the first things that are challenged. Racial discrimination is very high in the western nations and there is no space for the black people. The cultural differences are experienced through the alienation. By analyzing the different experiences of the African immigrants the novel exposes how their immigrant status affects then through race as well as culture. Most of the immigrant faced the problem for adapting to the other countries because of the ethnicity and cultural prospects.

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in the National Level Seminar on Recent Trends in Cultural Studies organized by the Department of English (SF) on 18th September 2019.

M. Sheyamala
M. SHEYAMALA
Coordinating Secretary

Dr. A.M. TONY MELWYN
Director

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Spheres of the Migrated Women: A Post-apartheid Feminist Reading of Nadine Gordimer's *The Pickup*

A project submitted to

St. Mary's College (Autonomous)

Thoothukudi

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PREFACE

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled **Spheres of the Migrated Women: A Post-apartheid Feminist Reading of Nadine Gordimer's *The Pickup*** submitted toSt. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to ManonmaniamSundaranar University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is my original work and that, it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

SEPTEMBER 2020

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **Spheres of the Migrated Women: A Post-apartheid Feminist Reading of Nadine Gordimer's *The Pickup*** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, in partial fulfilment of the requirements of ManonmaniamSundaranar University for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is a work done by Abarna M. during the year 2019-2020, and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

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PREFACE

The dissertation entitled **Spheres of the Migrated Women: A Post-apartheid Feminist Reading of Nadine Gordimer's *The Pickup***, examines the feminist aspects of female spheres in post-apartheid South Africa and in the unnamed Arab country from the perspectives of the supposed to be independent woman protagonist. Nadine Gordimer describes converging movement at first when two characters come from opposed society become a couple, and then diverging movement when they grow apart, discovering the extent of their differences. *The Pickup* can be read as an illustration of "deconstruction" of the notion of identity and belonging as evident from Julie's acceptance of the unknown Arab village and its customs as her space and way of belonging rather than liberated abode and self in South Africa.

The thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter **Introduction** throws light on the perception of Literature in general, African Literature, Contemporary writings in the field of South African Literature, Nadine Gordimer and her works.

Chapter two entitled, **Clashes of Cross-cultural Identity** explores the collision between different identities through the love between Julie, a white South African woman and her husband Abdu, a Muslim Arab. Gordimer promotes a global identity beyond the tribe, by taking into account issues of globalization, cross cultural and transracial identities that have changed the identical structure of the New world. Moreover, she demonstrates that the force of identity is pervasive enough to transcend binaries and move freely in and out of spaces.

In the third chapter, **Relocating the Identity** offers a picture of the new South Africa and its usual problems of race, class and bureaucracy, taken from a local to a

global level, but what is different is the shift from post-apartheid Johannesburg to an Arab country and its villages deserts and Muslim people.

The fourth chapter,**Spheres of the Migrated Woman** discuss the aftermath of migration and the physical and emotional experience of leaving home and arriving at and living in a foreign country in the female sphere. It offers a feminist perspective of the female protagonist whose understanding of the world has been shaped by migration.

The final chapter sums up all the important aspects dealt in the preceding chapters.

The researcher has consistently referred to and resorted to the guidelines prescribed by MLA Handbook 7th Edition for the preparation of the thesis.

Chapter One

Introduction

Literature is found in the beginning of all things. It continues to reflect life throughout the ages. It connects human beings and mirrors reality in an artistic profound mode. As long as our world lives, so does literature. Literature is the foundation of humanity's cultures, beliefs and traditions. It serves as a reflection of reality, a product of art and a window to an ideology. Everything that happens within a society can be written, recorded in, and learned from a piece of literature. Whether it is poetry or prose, literature provides insight, knowledge or wisdom and emotion towards the person who partakes in it entirely.

Life is manifested in the form of literature. It is an embodiment of words based on human tragedies, desires and feelings. It cultivates wonders, inspires a generation and feeds information. Even though it is dynamic, endless and multi-dimensional, literature contributes significant purposes to the world we live in.

Literature is present during the era of the ancient world. Even without the invention of words and language, literature was already manifested in the earliest human civilizations. Carvings and paintings on walls inside the caves of stone give evidence about the lives of prehistoric people. They explain their way of life.

Literature in the present generation exists as an expression of art, a source of knowledge and an instrument of entertainment. Books are being read

seriously by readers who crave for information and recreation, by those who are passionate in exploring their imagination. Literature gives voice to the people who want to express their opinion about certain things in life – whether it be in politics, health, religion and the like. Literature is the heart of songs, rhythmic and harmonious pieces that give message and inspiration to people.

Africa has a long and complex literary history. There are many folds and faces to the vibrant culture of Africa, consisting of a mixture of countries with various tribes each with their own unique characteristics. With a mixture of cultures, influences and traditions over centuries, African culture has taken many shades from different parts of the globe, especially Europe. There is something native about the culture that has been untouched by colonisation and modern changes. It can be closely associated with their everyday customs and practices. The people of Africa speak hundreds of languages and dialects.

African culture is as old as the beginning of human evolution on earth. African's cultural history is enriched with unique the tribal life and customs. The African tribal life has always attracted the world to discover the oldest form of culture since human evolution. There are many ethnic groups and tribes in Africa with their own distinct culture, norms and customs. There are different official languages in the continent as there are very few countries where one single language is spoken. The real culture of Africa can be closely associated with their everyday customs and practices.

African Literature is a body of the work that has emerged out of colonial encounter between Africa and Europe. It is one of the best literatures in the world of literature which explores African life. Africa is a continent

which has the greatest literary productivity. It has raised more issues relevant to contemporary situations in Africa like the cultural conflict, the place of tradition in the modern nation, the problems of the administration of modern polity and the place of womenfolk in the new reality. At present, African Literature has a great influence both nationally and internationally. Africans have high merit in literature and they are well known for all genres in literature such as fiction, poetry, drama, the travelogue and autobiography, especially in fiction, poetry and drama they have made very significant literary achievements.

African literature plays a significant part in the 20th century world literature. It is a literature produced by the African nationals living on the African soil reflecting the African native sensibility. The distinctive feature of African Literature is its retention of Africanness despite the continent's cosmopolitan milieu. It consists of a body of work in different languages and various genres from Colonial languages such as French, Portuguese and English.

African Literature was mainly oral until the 20th century. Oral literature is described as orature, traditional literature, folkloric literature, and folklore. Oral literatures have flourished in Africa for many centuries and take a variety of forms including folk tales, myths, epics, funeral dirges, praise poems and proverbs. Epics are elaborated literary forms, usually performed only by experts on social occasions. They often recount the heroic exploits of ancestors. According to African writer NgugiwaThiong'o, orature or oral literature passes from ear to mouth, generation to generation. It consists of songs, poems, drama, proverbs, riddles and sayings and it is the most ancient

and richest in African heritage. Much of the West African culture has been passed down through is oral traditions.

African oral arts are 'arts for life's sake' not European 'arts for art's sake,' and it was considered to be foreign and strange by European readers. Oral culture takes many forms: proverbs and riddles, epic narratives, oration and personal testimony, praise poetry and songs, chants and rituals, stories, legends and folktales. West Africa's oral tradition includes hundreds of old stories called folktales.

Most well-known of African Oral forms is probably the proverb, a short witty or ironic statement, metaphorical in its formulation, which aims to communicate a response to a particular situation, to offer advice or to persuade. The proverb is often employed as rhetorical device, presenting its speaker as the holder of cultural knowledge or authority. Yet, as much as the proverb looks back to an African culture as its origin and source of authority, it gives an idea about the African culture and illustrates immediate problems and occasions in Africa. Africans do not radically separate art from teaching. Rather than write or sing for beauty in itself, African writers taking their cue from oral literature, use beauty to help communicate

important truths and information to society. Indeed, an object is considered beautiful because of the truth it reveals and the communities it helps to build.

The value of African literature lies in its African tradition retained in spite of its cosmopolitan origin. This is the significant characteristic feature of the African literature, when compared to the literatures of the other parts of the world. Written African literatures began during the colonial period. It raises a

number of complicated and complex problems. The first problem concerns the small readership for African literature is Africa. Over 50% of Africa's populations are illiterate and hence many Africans cannot access written literature. The lack of books, the cost of those books, and the scarcity of publishing houses in Africa have worsened the existing critical situation.

Pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial African literatures are the three major divisions of African literature. Before Africa was colonised, the continent was characterised by a large degree of pluralism and flexibility. The continent consisted not of closed reproducing entities, equipped with unique and unchanging cultures, but of more fluid units that would readily incorporate outsiders (even whites) into the community as long as they accepted its custom and where the sense of obligation and solidarity went beyond that of the nuclear family. During the period African literature existed in the oral form.

When the Africans are exposed to western languages in the colonial period, writers began to write in those tongues. Many historical events influenced the literature of Africa. The encounter with Europe through trade relationships propelled missionary activities and colonialism in Africa. The arrival of Christian missionaries paved way for the production of morality tales and other literature in African languages. In 1930s black intellectuals from French Colonies from Paris initiated a literary moment called negritude. Negritude writers found solidarity in a common black identity as a rejection of French colonial racism. They wrote poetry in French and presented African traditions and cultures as opposing but equal to European culture.

Africa gained its independence in the 6th March 1957; Ghana became the first sub-Saharan African country to gain its independence from European colonisation. After liberation there was enormous growth in literature. African literature has grown drastically in quantity and in recognition, with numerous African works of art appearing in western academic curricula. African writers have made an enormous contribution to world literature by frequently examining issues such as emerging entities in the postcolonial climate, neocolonialism and new forms of oppression, cultural and political hegemonies, language appropriation, and economic instability. During the last decade, their works have elicited increasing critical attention. Some of the well-known postcolonial African writers and theorists are Chinua Achebe, WoleSyonika and HomiBhabha. Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* which was published in 1958 made a significant mark in postcolonial literature.

The influence of colonialism and race on the development of African literature has been the subject of a number of studies. The effect of patriarchy and gender, however, and indeed the contributions of African women, have until now been largely ignored by the critics. "Contemporary African Literature and the Politics of Gender" is the first extensive account of African literature from a feminist perspective. In the first radical and exciting work Florence Stratton outlines the features of an emerging female tradition in African fiction.

South Africa is a single country. At one level this may seem to be an extremely banal statement, but at another it is highly contested. For many years, the government of the country denied it. The African National Congress (ANC), which sees itself as the embodiment of the nation's unity, campaigned

under the slogan "One Nation, Many Cultures." SouthAfricans of the early twenty-first century are having to work within, and to cope with, the heritage of their past, both recent and distant. By 1996, about 55 per cent of South Africa's population lived in towns. However, the policies of apartheid had kept the proportion of urban Africans relatively low, at two-fifths of the African population. With the abolition of the laws that kept many of the Africans in the countryside, this percentage is increasing rapidly.

One of the apartheid era's most prolific writers, Nadine Gordimer's works powerfully explore social, moral, and racial issues in South Africa under apartheid rule. Despite winning a Nobel Prize in Literature for her extraordinary skills in describing a society mingled with racial tensions, Gordimer's most famous and controversial works were banned from South Africa for daring to speak out against the oppressive governmental structures of the time. Her novel *Burger's Daughter* follows the struggles of a group of anti-apartheid activists, and was read in secret by Nelson Mandela during his imprisonment time in Robben Island.

In the study of the connections between adventure tales and imperialism in modern world, Martin Green briefly turns his attention to "a group of writers whose hour has just struck, the women born in the empire, who rebelled against that rebellion" (Greenstein, 227). Although he does not mention Nadine Gordimer, she belongs to the company of those who make up his list: Doris Lessing, Olive Schreiner, Elspeth Huxley, Jean Rhys and Katherine Mansfield. Gordimer, in fact, is the only one of these writers who did not eventually return to metropolitan culture, which gave birth to the

literature of empire. She remains in South Africa, determined to invent an identity for herself as an African writer.

Nadine Gordimer was born on 20 November 1923 in the small gold mining town of Springs near Johannesburg. Her parents were both immigrants: her mother, Nan Myers, was born in England, and her father, IsidoreGordimer, was a Jew who emigrated from Lithuania at the age of thirteen. Although both parents were Jewish by birth, she was raised in a largely secular environment, and educated in part at Catholic girl's schools. The social hierarchy of a small South African town in the 1930s was both complex and rigid. Recent immigrants from Eastern Europe, like Gordimer's father, Isidore, occupied a section below that of the earlier English settlers and the white Afrikaners, mostly descendants of Dutch, French and German colonists. The black Africans who worked in the town's gold mines were the most disadvantaged, and were denied access to all public facilities. Gordimer's father, who had experienced religious discrimination as a Jew in Tsarist Russia, accepted the system as he found it, but her mother Nan bristled at the injustice of the South African order, and founded a day care centre for the children of black workers in the town. The brutal reality of the system was fully impressed on young Gordimer when local police raided the family home, apparently because they suspected the family's black housekeeper making beer illegally. The incident would later form the basis of one of Gordimer's first published stories.

Although she showed an early enthusiasm for writing, Nadine Gordimer also enjoyed a youthful passion for dance.A brief illness ofGordimer's frightened her mother so severely that she withdrew the child from dance classes and then from school altogether. From then on she was

educated at home. In the midst of this private existence, with few friends and no literary life, she found a world of adventure and ideas in reading. She began to write fiction of her own, and published her first story in the children's section of the local paper. At 15, she published for the first time in a journal for adult readers.

With little formal education, she schooled herself by studying the masters of European fiction; Proust, Chekhov and Dostoyevsky were powerful role models, and she studied their work closely. She briefly attended the University of Witwatersrand, where she got acquaintedwith the educated young black Africans for the first time. She came to know many of the young black artists and writers who gathered in the Johannesburg neighbourhood known as Sophiatown.

Gordimer was brought up in Springs and attended the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg for one year; she left college without a degree and settled in Johannesburg in 1948. That same year, the National Party, dominated by the white Afrikaners, won a national election and began to institute its policy of apartheid, mandating absolute separation of the races. Sophiatown and other neighbourhoods were demolished, to remove black Africans and replace them with white residents. In Johannesburg, Gordimer formed a deep friendship with the labour activist Bettie du Toit, who had a powerful influence on her political thinking and her increasing opposition to the white supremacist government.

Gordimer's writing career to date has run in parallel with the era of apartheid in South Africa, an era in which the racist organisation of South

Africa was systematically intensified through legislation and brutal state control following the election to power of the Nationalist Government in 1948. Apartheid was a political programme of separate development supposedly justified by the perception of Africans as a distinct subspecies of humanity, inferior to whites, and who had no historical claim to the territory of Southern Africa. Prominent measures of early apartheid rule include the prevention of inter-racial relationships, and the arbitrary division of black Africans into ten separate 'nations,' each confined to a designed 'homeland.'

One notorious feature of apartheid was its division of the South African populace into four 'racial groups': White, Coloured, Indian and African. This presents obvious problems for the interpreter of South African culture since one is sometimes obliged to employ a racist terminology in order to convey how particular legislation operated: where it has been necessary to use it, the term 'coloured' in invented commas, to design it as an artificially imposed label. In common, other recent critics have made use of the term black African to identify the numerically dominant and most systematically persecuted and disposed demographic segment; one should also be sensitive to the border concept of black culture and black identity to describe a less divisive and more communal impulse amongst non-whites in South Africa.

Writers like Christina Stead, Doris Lessing, and Nadine Gordimer, three white women were born or grew up in British colonies or former colonies. These writers, whose lives span the 20thcentury, are situated at the intersection of the colonial and the postcolonial, the modern and postmodern. As white women, they occupy positions at odd angles to these binaries. Their lives and work encompass a range of national identifications. They exemplify three

strategies for negotiating between colonial or formerly colonial "peripheries" and metropolitan "centres": Stead, who lived most of her life away from Australia, where she was born and died, has an unsettled national identity; Lessing is or becomes English; Gordimer identifies as a South African. These identifications are played out in their novels, which raise questions about the role of whites, especially white women, in the contemporary – postcolonial, post imperial – global political and cultural order.

Sue Kossew was a Professor of English at Monash University. She was on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Commonwealth Literature* and *New Literatures Review* and has published numerous journal articles and book chapters on postcolonial and South African literature. Shespoke to Nadine Gordimer in her home in Johannesburg on 25 January 2001. Gordimer is the only South African writer who, has won a Nobel Prize for Literature. She has been a lifelong fighter for human rights and has championed the cause of political and personal freedom in her native South Africa and abroad. This political dimension has always informed her fiction but, in her Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech, she stated that "nothing factual I write or say will be as truthful as my fiction"(Gordimer "Writing and Being," n.pag). Her 1998 novel, *The House Gun*, like other recent novels written by her contemporary novelists, Andre Brink and J.M. Coetzee, engages with the issue of violence and crime in post-apartheid South Africa as well as with the theme of forgiveness and reconciliation.

Gordimer initially identified herself as a colonial; subsequently, she saw herself as a dissident, part of a minority within and opposed to the dominant white minority. The country

is no longer ruled by a white minority, she identifies herself as a South African who belongs to a non-racial nation. Her novels, set mainly in South Africa, explore the implications of this belonging. They also constitute, "offering of what I was learning about the life within me and around me," a "gesture" by means of which "I entered the commonality of my country" (Yelin 4). The most recent novels speculate about the place of whites – women and men alike – in a postcolonial future to which they look forward.

Gordimer's first short story collection, *Face to Face*, appeared in 1949. It was quickly followed by two more collections, *Town and Country Lovers* and of *The Soft Voice of the Serpent.*Gordimer's writing began to attract attention outside her own country in 1951, when her stories began appearing in *The New Yorker* magazine. The year after the National Party took power, her first novel, *The Lying Days*, appeared in 1953. It may be her most autobiographical work, describing the political awakening of a young woman growing up in Gordimer's hometown, Springs.

One of Gordimer's best early novels, *A World of Strangers* (1958), was banned by the South African government, but her work continued to attract attention outside South Africa, and in 1961 she received the W. H. Smith Commonwealth Literary Award, the first of many international honours. Despite an increasingly hostile political environment, Gordimer continued to voice hercriticism of apartheid in her work. Her 1963 novel *Occasion forLoving* portrayed a white woman in love with a black man, while actual interracial relationships were forbidden by law. *A Guest of Honour* (1971) won praise throughout the English-speaking world, and received the James Tait Black Memorial Prize. In 1974, she published *The Conservationist*. Hailed as a

masterpiece, it was awarded the Booker Prize, the highest literary honour of the United Kingdom.

As the armed conflict between the African National Congress (ANC) and the National Party government intensified in the 1970s, Gordimtravelled frequently to lecture at universities in the United States, but she refused all offers to settle permanently outside her own country. She joined the banned ANC and at times hid its fugitive leaders in her home. In 1976, her novel *The Late Bourgeois World* was banned by the South African government. She was censored again when the government banned her 1979 novel, *Burger's Daughter*. Partly inspired by her friendship with Bram Fischer, it tells us the story of the daughter of a left wing activist who must deal with her parents' radical legacy. Rather than accepting the ban, Gordimer published a pamphlet protesting the censorship, *What Happened to Burger's Daughter*. Thegovernment soon lifted the ban on *Burger's Daughter*, but Gordimer's troubles with the censors were far from over.

In her next novel, *July's People* (1981), Gordimer imagined a post-apartheid future in which a violent black-led revolution has driven many whites into hiding. The title refers to a servant, July, who hides his former employers in his native village, where they gradually learn to accept second-class status. This novel too was banned, but white South Africans continued to read Gordimer's work covertly. For them, as for readers around the world, her books had exposed the absurdities and injustice of apartheid. By the end of the 1980s, a critical mass of South Africans had finally concluded that the system could not continue.

The year 1990 proved to be the long-awaited turning point in South Africa's history. The government recognised the African National Congress as a legal opposition party and soon thereafter began negotiations for the transition to a multiracial democracy. When ANC leader Nelson Mandela was released from prison, Nadine Gordimer was one of the first people he asked to see. The same year, it was announced that she would receive the Nobel Prize in Literature. In selecting her for the award, the Swedish Academy praised the "intense immediacy" of her work in portraying "extremely complicated personal and social relationships"(Gordimer "Writing and Being," n.pag). Her work, it was said, exemplified the concept of literature's "benefit to humanity" that Alfred Nobel had envisioned when he

created the prize.

Having chosen apartheid as 'her theme' throughout her writing career, Gordimer faced a paradoxical situation when this racist ideology finally gave up its spooky ghost in the early 1990s. However, the influence of literature on political practice may be limited and indirect, she has doubtless played her part in that process; but the accomplishment of her goals also deprived her of her most basic theme for writing, leaving her a 'rebel without a cause,' a writer without a theme. While early on critics have worried about how she would deal with this problem. Gordimer's latest novel shows that at the age of 78 she is still flexible enough to look for new frontiers.

The award to Nadine Gordimer of the Noble prize for Literature in 1991 was an affirmation of her distinctive contribution to twentiethcentury fiction and to the creation of a literature that challenges apartheid. Dominic

Head discusses each of Gordimer's novels in detail, paying close attention to the texts both as a reflection of events and situations in the real world, and as evidence of her constant rethinking of her craft. Head shows how Gordimer's concerns, apparent in her earliest novels, are developed through increasing stress on the politics textually; and he pursues the implications of this development to consider how Gordimer's later work contributes to postmodernist fiction, and to a recentering of political engagement in an era of uncertainty.

Gordimer's post-apartheid work continued to explore the difficult issues of a society in transition from a tragic past to an uncertain future, as well as the sorrows of her own personal experience. Her 1998 book, *The House Gun*, dealt with the increasing level of violent crime in a newly free South Africa. Taking the present 'New South Africa' as its point of departure, her 2001 novel, *The Pickup* has already picked up a major literary award - 2002 Commonwealth Writers' Prize for the best book from Africa.*The Pickup*continues to deal with the problems of race and class, bureaucratic arbitrariness and the connection between the private and the political, but it lifts these problems from a local or national to a global level, with the story's setting changing from liberal post-apartheid Johannesburg to a conspicuously unnamed Arab country in the second and longer part of the novel. The interracial love story between Julie and Abdu thus picks up Gordimer's theme of Self and Other and widens its scope from the racial opposition 'Black and White' to the cultural one between 'East and West'.

Julie, the privileged white woman of Johannesburg and Abdu, the illegal immigrant at the car repair garage, came together, strangely. Their

most urgent quest was fulfilled by each other. Julie has already avoided the comforts of her father's world in the Suburbs. She suspects, unconsciously that the pretension of her young intellectuals' group at the table at the LA Café will never fulfil her. She was thirty years old and wants to find her place in the world. Her car breaks down one day and Julie's life changes.

A young mechanic from Arab, Abdu enters the story, repairs her car. He has already lead an uncomfortable years of his young life in attempting and gaining access to the West, and away from his sorrowful village at the edge of the desert, in an unnamed part of the Arab world. His illegal immigration status is discovered by authorities. He has ten days to leave the country. He probably suspects that time is running out on him in South Africa, that the immigration authorities will soon track him down to deport him.

Despite the barriers of the class, race, language, religion and legal status a romance blossom between the two. There is no surprise when the two become lovers and Julie decides to join him to an unnamed country somewhere in the Arab world, they get married and board the plane. The novel becomes interesting when Abdu reveals his real name as Ibrahim, and that he has a family which has seen him deported back home before but he has never been in the company of a white female non-muslim. It doesn't take a turn toward Ibrahim having been some kind of a failed sleeper. It focuses on him expanding all of his energy trying to get a visa to some other country that might give him a chance to life.

More importantly the novel focuses on the crushing process of Julie learning how to be a woman in the cramped difficult confines of Ibrahim's

family's house and life. Ibrahim fears that she might call her daddy and get a ticket back to South Africa. But Gordimer keeps pounding of the situation into which Julie adapts herself to the family, finding a meaning in certain relations, times of day, beliefs, methods of preparing food that she never found in the emerald belt of South African Suburbs where she was raised.

The primitive conditions of life in Abdu's village ashamed him. Julie's cheerful willingness to acculturate to her adopted home, to embrace its rituals and traditions, its gendered roles and restrictions puzzled him. He expects her announcement on any given day that she is heading back to her daddy in South Africa. Meanwhile, Abdu races from one mission to another, worried to obtain a visa to any western country that will accept him Eventually, Abdu wants to leave his village and obtain a visa to America but Julie refuses the plan to leave his village. She has other ideas and has found home and family.

The reading process seems somewhat formulaic in Gordimer'snovels, there has often been a coldness and detachment. The novel ends ambiguously, with the questions unanswered, and with Julie facing a perverse kind of freedom. Will Julie stay in the desert village and, if so, what sort of life will it be for her? Will Ibrahim come back? Will he go to America or change his mind at the last moment? Like the quality of muteness that Julie finds in the desert itself, these final questions raised in the mind of the reader are met with silence.

Chapter Two

Clashes ofCross-cultural Identity

The history of South Africa is associated with a set of facts and realities affecting and changing the course of its intrinsic identity. The question of identity is necessarily complex as it takes into account the totality of social experience, much of which is inextricably influenced by a shared history and culture of community. In South Africa there was an existence of at least three communities the Black, the Whites and the Coloureds. This diversity of communities sharing the same living area necessarily leads to many real or supposed identical clashes.

Nadine Gordimer gets on to the delicate topic of identity through the novel *The Pickup*. She demonstrates the power of literature in transforming complex situations into acceptable ones, Her authentic narration and her sensitiveness to the challenges in the story are enormous. Literature works with fluidity that permits flexibility even with issues of identity. It allows for openness, change, curiosity and avoids closing of possibilities. Gordimer's examining of the aspects of identity indicates new trends in post-apartheid South African English Literature. In Gordimer's novel identity has always been an important theme. The theme of identity in *The Pickup* is first examined in the South African background and then in the backdrop of an unknown town somewhere in the desert.

Further, literature can provide a testing ground; it is a discourse on the exploration of possibilities. The Mandarin-Speaking Australian Novelist Nicholas Jose quoted by Haskell in *The Australian* in an article entitled

"Identity is a process, not fixity" has claimed that "the journey of mind to make intelligible what we perceive at first to be only dimly part of our world is what we are all about" (169). Literature and authors play a role in solving the problems human beings are facing and it is the part of the missions of any intellectuals or novelists.

Identity crisis is considered as one of the dominant phenomena in a postcolonial society depicted by Gordimer. Identity crisis is not only because of the postcolonial subject failing to identify him/her either with the colonial burden or with the subsequent postcolonial existence, but also of the present context enchained to the dynamics of the New World Order. Postcolonial identities are never static, but rather as a twister they are ever spinning in a violent motion.

Identity tends to undergo changes and transformations through time and spaces, but it should not be taken as a fixed essence; neither permanent nor enduring. Identity is to be shaped and reshaped. To emerge and transcend national, religious, ethnic and racial boundaries a new sense of identity needs to be elaborated. The identity of individuals should not be confined to one nationality, one culture, one religion and one ethnic group. Identity has always been a motif in the writings of Gordimer and is featured prominently in them. Having grown up in postcolonial South Africa where she happened to be one of the staunchest critics of the apartheid system that deprived people of their identity, Gordimer has become the representative voice of the voiceless Blacks in South Africa. Her earlier novels focus on the characters' struggle to attain political or racial rather than personal freedom, while her later ones examine the construction of individual identities.

In the novel *The Pickup,* the collision between different identities through the love between Julie, a white South African women and her husband Abdu also called Ibrahim, a Muslim Arab could be perceived. With regard to the postcolonial theories which predict destruction of the postcolonial legacy, Gordimer promotes a global identity beyond the tribe, the identical structure of the New world have been changed by taking into account issues of globalisation, cross cultural and transracial identities. Moreover the force of identity is pervasive enough to transcend binaries and move freely in and out of spaces.

Gordimer prepares the mind of her compatriots to take into account the fact that in a changing world no one can serenely be self-sufficient. Within a more open-ended and dependent cultural politics, the notion of identity needs to be revisited and theorized. According to Gordimer, a globalised world is the best way to have a national identity as an international one first, as multiculturalism is enrichment, but not a threat. In surpassing the monolithic national culture, the notion of identity has reached a stage where it has to be represented. There is a need at this era of globalisation to devise an identity that crosses cultural barriers.

The Pickup has echoed the renewed idea of identity. Gordimer brings to the fore an identity that originates from the intermingling of cultures. At the confluence of cultures individuals' identities were constructed and were offered to see a society. Gordimer once praised these kinds of identities built at the confluence of different cultures. According to her, no reasonable individual can fix an environment or a culture that does not favour openness and connectedness. Bhabha's intention from such a point of view is to show

that connectedness and openness lead individuals to a new kind of cultural hybridisation. A cross-cultural identity is the one constructed or resulting from the combination of two or more cultures.

Culture as a product, thing, and substance is disembodied from experience. It is culture neutralised and turned into objects of consumption. By identifying the world, the new pretenders identify themselves as well … a loose network, of course, of people in media, art galleries, journalism, and the 'cultural sciences.' It is to be noted that these intellectuals, from the cultural experiences, have also created a peaceful, even charming world for themselves.

When Julie initially distances herself from her rich white middle class divorced parents, the paradoxical nature of the novel is clearly evident. She lives in a formerly black part of the city, drives an old second hand car, and spends her leisure time with her multicultural and liberal circle of friends in the EL-AY Café. From Gordimer's description of the "mixed race bunch," it clearly indicates that in Julie's circle race and colour play no part. Though Abdu-Ibrahim is the main character in the novel, Julie's place becomes engrossing.

> A place for the young; but also one where old survivors of the quarters past ageing Hippies and Leftist Jews, grandfathers and grandmothers of the 1920s immigration who had not become prosperous bourgeois, could sit over a single coffee. Crazed peasants wandered from the rural areas gabbled and begged in the gutters outside. Hair from a barber's pavement booth blew

the human left of African hair onto the terrace. Proverbially from Congo and Senegal sat at tables with the confidence of local queens (8-9)

In the novel *The Pickup*, the protagonist Julie Summer and Abdu known also as Ibrahim ibn Musa were undoubtedly probed in keeping with the cross-cultural identity in the narrative. In fact, they both hold an identity that rises beyond their places of origin. Identity Crisis is a psychological conflict that involves confusion about one's social role. In such a state, a person experiences uncertainty in life.

In *The Pickup*, the protagonists are longing for their identity. Even though Julie possesses the power of the owner of the Rover (car), she declines "It's not mine! She claimed her identity: I'd like to have my own old one back!" (9). It proves that she loves the simple life. The lack of physical involvement in daily activities is also reflected in her attitude towards her job in public relations and failure in commitment regarding her choices.

> What I do, what you do. That's about the only subject available. I don't know how exactly these things work out. I wanted to be a lawyer, really. I had these great ambitions when I was at school—there was a lawyer aunt in the family, I once went to hear her cross-examine in that wonderful black pleated gown and white bib. But with various other things on the way…I quit law after only two years. Then it was languages…and somehow I've landed up working as a PRO and fund-raiser…sycophantic. I

> won't stick to it for long. I don't know what I want to do, if that means what I want to be. (11)

Abdu's cross cultural identity was illustrated when Abdu introduces himself to Julie. Abdu said, "I was in America for a year some other country would have been better idea for me. I go where they'll let me in" (12). He holds an identity that results from the mixture of the oriental and the western cultures which has been cleared without any further delay.

Cultural clash is a conflict between cultures or a disagreement arising between two parties of different beliefs, values and practices. The love affair between Julie and Ibrahim starts as a casual pickup and later involves into a very complicated relationship. It leads them to new directions that none of them have expected. Ibrahim overstays his South African permit for one year and five months. It is a criminal offence against the government. He wants to escape from this critical situation but he has no money to pay for his visa. The owner of the garage employs him illegally. It is cheap for the owner because he does not pay accident insurance, pension and medical aids for Ibrahim.

The ideas of cultural intersection appears in *The Pickup* through metaphorical and symbolic images. Julie lives in a formerly black part of town, drives a second hand car, works for a rock 'n roll agency and spends her leisure time with a multiracial and liberal circle of friends so called "Table." Indeed "the table" in *The Pickup* is a symbolic place that deserves a particular attention in the narrative. "The Table" is a place where young people from different cultural, racial and social backgrounds meet and enjoy themselves and share ideas.

> She still joins the friends as usual at The Table to which she belongs—they are, after all, her elective siblings who have distanced themselves from the ways of the past, their families, whether these are black ones still living in the old ghettoes or white ones in The Suburbs. (23)

In other words, the symbolism of "The Table" in *The Pickup* is an invitation to create a world in which it should put forward the appointments of the give and take of cultural, racial and social values. Dates where there is no minor, or advanced culture, but a convivial place where all types of cultures are accepted and respected with their strengths and weaknesses. In Gordimer's own words "whatever you do, love, whatever happens, hits you, mate, Bra, that's all right with me" (23).

Gordimer presents the illegal immigration as testing the individual's emotional capacity to survive uncertainty although Julie initially tends to view it as romantic until Abdu's immigration papers arrive and his state of not belonging is forcefully exposed. Julie unsuccessfully tries to pull strings to keep him in the country. Her uncle's lawyer, however, bluntly tells Ibrahim that in having shed his identity, he has lost all credibility in the country:

> You have placed yourself in the position where you have a criminal charge waiting against you, let alone an order to quit the country....That is what weighs against however many testimonies to your character, your desirability as a future citizen...you elected to stay on illegally, you shed your identity. (79)

Literary critics tend to claim that there is no love between Julie and Abdu -Ibrahim. But Julie loved him, only Abdu-Ibrahim did not sense that love. Abdu's absence of love is expressed by the note that he does not translate love phrases into his language. All taboos for women in the Muslim community were obeyed by Julie because of her love towards Abdu: there should be someone to accompany; to cover head and body for the others; not to have sexual intercourse during daytime in Ramadan. Perhaps her sacrifice towards that culture survives her; the family accepts her as one among them. Gordimer claims that the family neither loves nor hates her, but the mother is bit jealous of her, because she is a "foreign woman." An epigraph was used by Gordimer from William Plomer's poem.

Let us go to another country

Not yours or mine

And start again.....

The rest is understood

Just say the word. (88-89)

Love does not know a boundary is the idea hidden in the epigraph. In the globalised world, there are many Abdu's and Julies, who connected by love, interrupted by migration policies, exile and travel. Abdu loved Julie in his own way; in most of the eastern cultures, love should not be expressed by words, love should be felt.

Being a black, Ibrahim is disqualified and he cannot earn money like other people in the garage. Blacks live in old ghettos while, whites stay in the suburbs. The discrimination of Blacks is highlighted. Until Julie shows up her father's car there is no personal interaction taking place. Ibrahim uses the wealthy girl's relationship, when Julie buys two air tickets and insists that she also accompanies him to his country he gets angry with her.

> Who asked you to buy two tickets? You said nothing to me. Don't you think you must discuss? No you are used to making all decisions, you do what you like, no father, no mother, nobody must ever tell you. And me- what am I, don't speak to me, don't ask me- you cannot live in my country, it's not for you, you can't understand what it is to live there, you can wish you were dead, if you have to live there. Can't you understand? I can't be for you-responsible. (95)

Abdu tries to explain her, that his country is not suitable for her. He tries to explain everything about his country to her, and insists that she has everything in her country. But Arab country is very dry, dusty and sandy and it is uncomfortable for her to survive in his country. According to her, it is a place where women are treated like slaves. She expands her limited horizons and experiences the culture of which she knows nothing. Julie experiences positive things in her life by seeing happiness in every incident whatever she encounters. Julie makes her place in the new environment. Slowly she adapts herself to and learns how to be a migrant in an Islamic Arab society. The deliberate transcultural effect in Julie helps her adapt to the cross cultural exchanges. She never heeds the words of Ibrahim about her lifestyle in the desert. Julie is

determined to experience the new culture. She is surprised "Where to locate the self?" She describes her love with Abdu as "the kind of love-making that is another country, a country of its own, not yours or mine" (96).

Abdu is from a third world country. The community that he grew up is Islamic. It is a primitive society with micro-bourgeois class. The Islamic culture is dominant. The social class that Abdu belongs to is so inferior to Julie's. Therefore, he isn't willing to talk about his family status, his country and the things. Julie is from a well to do family in South Africa with European culture which is the opposite of Abdu's society. Julie does not feel cheerful in her industrialised homeland. Her father is an investment banker. She doesn't like her father's idea. When her father learns she has made love with Abdu, an immigrant from unknown land, he cuts her allowance. When Julie goes to her father and informs him of her marriage and her leaving the country, he gets annoyed and talks about social class distinction:

> Make something of your life and all the advantages you've had – including your freedom. You're nearly thirty. And now you come here without any warning and simply tell us you are leaving in a week's time for one of the worst, poorest and most backward of Third world countries, following a man who's been living here illegally, getting yourself deported – yes – from your own country.....You are out of your mind. What more can I say: you choose to go to hell in your own way. (98)

Julie is embarrassed with the culture in which Abdu was familiar. Julie tries to be out of her culture, when Abdu wants to enter the culture from where

from belongs to. The curiosity to know him and also contrasts between their backgrounds make their relationship grow. Though Abdu does not approve of his culture and socio economic system of his country, he tries to follow the traditions and cultural codes as long as he is there. So he wants to marry her formally. Abdu says that "before we go, we must be married"(107). The hybrid relationship started when Abdu asked Julie to marry him.

> If you must live with me then we must marry. I cannot take a woman to my family, with us like this. (…) He took her arms and kissed her solemnly as if exacting a vow. Two days before the aircraft took off they went to Magisrate's Court and before a marriage officer. (107)

Islamic country has strong laws, so before Abdu and Julie go to Arab country they got married. Abdu loves Julie passionately and married her happily, provides her a lot of freedom. Abdu decides to follow her wherever she goes. At the same time, Abdu returns to his home without earning enough money to give a better life to his mother, this made him feel guilty of arriving home with a foreign wife. Julie does not care for marriage, she claims "what for, we do not need that" (107). Indeed regarding the representation of identity and crossing culture, one is prompted to assert that it promotes the idea of cultural exchange.

> He was coming back and it was not as the successful son who had made a better life, the Western life of television version, bringing them a share of it in his pockets and in his person, but as a reject, with nothing but a wife- a foreign woman. (114)

Julie and Abdu got married and after their marriage Julie travelled to her husband's country and started learning Arabic language and converted herself to Muslim religion. Their roles change upon the arrival to the homeland of Abdu-Ibrahim, it may be Morocco...Upon the arrival Julie recognises him from the homeland perspective: he does not like Julie see the lavatory; Julie is aware of her new identity: she is the wife of Ibrahim ibn Musa, and he has to lead her everywhere; that is the rule for women in that country.

The shift of the identity changes when they were closer to the village. Gordimer expresses the mind of Ibrahim when they both were about to reach the village.

> As he knew they were coming close to the village where there was the image of the family waiting, he looked at her, up and down, in a way that made her turn, smiling enquiry. Have you got something else to put on.In one of the bags. Put on? What? He touched at his breast-bone in the open neck of his shirt. Here..... A scarf something. I don't see how I can get at things- in our stuff- among all these people, I'll be tramping over them. Wait. Wait – I've got safety pins somewhere. (115)

Julie adapts herself to the new situation and started learning new things, once Julie said "I have to learn the language" (121). Having introduced his wife to his extended family Ibrahim visits the capital, where he spends his time at the embassies, searching for contacts to get a visa. Julie accepted her husband's family, whereas Abdu her husband continuously attempts to leave his culture and his desire is to live in Western places. When Abdu sees Julie in

Muslim robe he becomes angry and does not speak with her in Arabic. While Julie attempts to accept the newness, Ibrahim still perceives her as the western woman.

> There was no bathroom. Had she thought of that, when she decided to come with him. This place is buried in desert. Water's like gold is in her country, it's got to be brought up from deep, far down, pumped to this village- what there is of it. Had she any idea of what a burden she would be. So there it is. Madness. Madness to think she could stick it out, here. He was angry – with this house, this village, these his people- to have to tell her other unacceptable things, tell her once and for all what her ignorant obstinacy of coming with him to this place means, when she failed, with all her privilege, at getting him accepted in hers. Tomorrow.The other days ahead. (122)

Julie's relationship with Ibrahim certainly plays a major role in her transformation, which leads to a process of boundary- crossing between spaces and cultures. Arab people consider English as a foreign language and they do not know how to speak English.

According to them, Julie is a stranger, she must learn Arab for her communication. In this village women are not allowed to eat with men. A thing around her seems to be mystery and she has to adapt herself to that situation which was exactly opposite in her country. In this village there is no alarm clock, Jackals cry loudly in the desert which is the call for prayer. The culture of the village irritates her very much.

> The containment of life in a society commences. The other demarcations of the day set by that particular society follow, commuter time, clock-in time, canteen brake time, work out time or cocktail time, and so on to the last divide of the living of a day, depending on your circumstances. (124)

According to Bhabha, culture has dual identity on the one hand, it is homely or realistic, asserting its stability and coherence; on the other hand, it is unhomely because it is always changing; it is always made meaningful by others. Culture, to Bhabha, is never coherent and self-sufficient. Though its narratives seem confident and stable, they are always drawn into displaced relationship. They are in relationship with other cultures, texts or disciplines. He says migrants can be a good example of this dual nature of culture; they are always situated in relation to both an original culture and a new place and location.

Bhabha argues that the uncanny possibly has more power when it is applied to the homeliness of the coloniser, when it is used to explore the foreignness that is central to original

and self-sufficient source of colonisation. Bhabha points out that the relationship between the self and the other is always an uncanny one. He says uncanniness is not only a question of place, but also a time, since our sense of national identity is open and static. We don't 'own' our nation, as it is something that is our own and at the same time it is not ours, because its identity is always changing or coming from future. He adds, like culture, Western knowledge is homely and unhomely or canny and uncanny (Bhabha 158).

Bhabha believes in Western and non-Western identities. Because the concept of 'uncanny,' undermines the stability of all concepts in general, it seems to be a slippery concept as his theoretical strategies.

Renee Green, the African American artist reflects on the need to understand cultural difference as the production of minority identities that 'split' – are estranged unto themselves – in the act of being articulated into a collective body:

> Multiculturalism doesn't reflect the complexity of the situation as I face it daily....It requires a person to step outside of him/herself to actually see what he/she is doing. I don't want to condemn well-meaning people and say (like those T-shirts you can buy on the street) it's a black thing, you wouldn't understand. (Bhabha 4)

The stairwell as liminal space, in-between the designations of identity, becomes the process of symbolic interaction, the connective tissue that constructs the difference between upper and lower, black and white. The hither and thither of the stairwell, the temporal movement and passage that it allows, prevents identities at either end of it from settling into primordial polarities. This interstitial passage between fixed identities opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy. (Bhabha 4)

Bhabha while talking about stairwell evoked the same idea as liminal space, in-between designations of identity which becomes the process of symbolic interaction, the connective tissue that constructs the difference

between upper and lower, black and white. Norton consolidates this point of view, he said every time we speak, we are negotiating and renegotiating our sense of self in relation to the larger social world and reorganising that relationship across time and space. Our gender, race, class, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, among other characteristics, are all implicated in this negotiation of identity (Bhabha 5).

Julie adapts herself to the new situation like the small child's first day at school. The voice of muezzin from the mosque will reach them five times a day, and they read the inscribed version of the Koran. In Julie's country they read the Bible. She thinks about her past where she lived happily with a beautiful garden. But here she has not even seen a single plant. When she enters the village for the first time she refuses to cover her head, but now she covers over her mouth and nose to protect her from the cutting fury of flying sand.

> The containment of life in a society commences. (...) Five times each day the voice of the muezzin set the time-frame she had entered, as once, in her tourist travels, she would set her watch to and live a local hour different from the one in the country left behind. (124)

Once she satirised the café in the village but now she drinks coffee at the same café. Julie knowingly or unknowingly follows the habit of Arabians. This is the reality of people who try to adapt to another culture. Now Julie completely changed and learned their language thoroughly, she teaches lessons for the adults. She came to know that she must fight for survival in the desert.

She assimilates many new accomplishments in her life. Gordimer clearly visualises the suffering of the immigrants in her novel.

Abdu's identity of uncivilised, marginal and dominated by the former coloniser is to be discarded. Indeed in our corpus we have the female protagonist who teaches her English language to the Arab ladies and in return she learns their Arabic one.

> Julie was teaching English not only to Maryam and the quiet young neighbourhood girls and awkward boys who sidled into the lean-to whispering and making place for one another cross-legged on the floor.[…]she agreed—but in exchange for lessons in *their* language. (142-143)

Julie who wants to set up a new self-hood crossed the borders of western beliefs and cultural identity. Therefore, it is worth saying that in this twentieth century with its increased emphasis on place and globalisation, identity has to be thought in terms of hybridity and multiculturalism.

> Sutras, the footnotes said they were called. She read aloud to herself as if to hear in the natural emphasis of delivery which had been the passages come upon for life in these choices out of much advice and exhortation, inspiration, consolation people find in religious texts. (144)

Gordimer herself underscores the value of the blossoming that cultural exchange promises to the whole humanity. She herself is the fruit of this cultural intermixture. In fact, she was born from a Jewish immigrant

watchmaker from Zagare now Lithuania, and her mother, Hannah "Nan" (Myers) Gordimer was an English woman from London. Cultural interdependence suggested by Gordimer, has to be considered as a way to cope with any cultural hegemony, there is no need to fear the various cultural intersections, exchanges and networks; no need to fear mixing with foreign cultures, for if each culture is in a position of indebtedness vis-a-vis the other that will set up a state of esteem of culture difference.

When Julie tries to talk in the local language to Ibrahim, he says that he wants to communicate in English with her so that it will be helpful for him to get a decent job. It shows the passion of speaking English as a foreign language. Moreover, people around the apartheid countries long to speak English. They think that it gives some sort of respect in the society. Julie alone makes herself ill. "We must talk English. I need to speak English. I must speak English with you if I am going to get a decent job anywhere. I can be able to study some more there. Only with English. He tipped the water to the tub." (152)

Ibrahim is generally cold throughout the novel and has problems leaving his feelings for Julie grows; he refuses to translate "love words" into his own language for Julie. Latent feelings do, nevertheless, appear to force their way to the surface of Ibrahim's consciousness:

> She had come...all the way with him...Love. He had to believe it, existing in her. He felt something unwanted, something it was not necessary, no obligation on penniless illegal to feel for one of those who own the world, can buy a ticket, get on a plane,

present a passport and be welcomed back into that world of time – he felt responsibility – that's it – responsibility for her. (173)

The most plausible way to account for Ibrahim's lack of feelings towards Julie would be to think of Ibrahim as being afraid of commitment, since this would not allow him to pursue his dreams. But he still marries her before coming to his home country and he is the one who comes up with the idea. Therefore, his feelings and attitude towards his companion and wife, Julie, seem to be special. Julie finds her own psychological identity in the beauty of the Arabian Desert.

Abdu has become captive in his country and is trying to escape again and find his true homeland to settle. His uncle, Uncle Yaqub is a religious man. He has a workshop, and business is great for him; Abdu was said to do repair works and also go on business of buying and selling of American and German second hand automobiles. Uncle Yaqub is against his nephew. He doesn't want Ibrahim to go and spend time with malcontents who blame the government and authorities. About political malcontents, Uncle Yaqub says:

> The Lord has given them what a man needs to live a good life in the Faith, their families have educated them, they can marry and bring up children in security, there are no foreigners from Europe flying flags over our land any longer – what more do they want? They want to bring down the government, aoodhubillah. That's the evil they want. (189)

Julie explains the reality of the people in USA. It is not his country. He never gets out the garage in his country. But America is completely different from his country. One of the biggest, the most important financiers of the whole world lived in USA. They are locked in within four walls. But in USA, women run away from home for earning. He seeks "permanent residence" in America. But Julie wants to escape from the wealthy life in USA. To him it's a very big dream. He says "I am going to America" (190). She explains the reality of America.

> Works for You are a stray dog. I know you don't mind, you even seem to like to live...rough...but this is different, it can be bad, bad. I don't mind for me—because this time I have the chance to move out of all that, finished, for ever, for ever, do what I want to do, live like I want to live. This is the country for it. There's plenty of chances again now, there; you don't read the papers, but the unemployment is nothing. Lowest for many years. Work for everybody. (227)

Julie's psychological maturation was neither understood nor appreciated by Abdu. Towards the end of the novel he still sarcastically refers to "her rich girl's Café ideas of female independence" (256) and states that "her decision was a typical piece of sheltered middle class romanticism" (262); he cannot take a decision about what is more important for him. While Ibrahim feels imprisoned by his own Arabic-Islamic culture, Julie is increasingly attracted to it as she finds what she has unconsciously been looking for in South Africa, namely lasting values, such as commitment, solidarity, family cohesion and

spirituality. By contrast, Ibrahim "shuns the desert. It is the denial of everything he earns for, for him" (262).

In search of his own identity, Ibrahim shifts from his village to America and joint family to nuclear family but fails to find his own roots amidst socio-cultural change. One of them identifies themselves in an alien land. At the end of the novel, Julie is left alone by her husband and living without hope in slum environment. She is a symbol of woman's searching for identity and freedom. She starts a new life in Arab. Thus the novel paints a clear picture of cultural clash and identity crisis in an alien environment. Cultural clash and identity crisis are two sides of same coin. The author ends the novel with an optimistic note. Julie has courage to covert the consequences of life into success. She geared up to tackle the worst situations that she will have to meet in the deserted Arab country.

In this era of globalisation like the one depicted by Gordimer, identity should be rethought as a fluctuating issue, rather than a fixed and static essence. Therefore, it should be privileged hybrid and global identities. Identities are constructed from the combination of different cultures. To paraphrase Bhabha (1994) "those located in the between or the third space" (Bhabha 9). For Bhabha it is such kind of identity emerging in the cultural interstices that introduces creative invention into existence.

Finally, it may enable to lead humanity to understand and accept the new conceptions of identity induced by globalisation. South Africa is particularly invited to make of its specificity strength. The fact of having different cultures sharing the same area can be seen as richness, but not a malediction.

Julie's finding of her own spirituality completes her psychological identity and may perhaps be indicative of the possibility that Ibrahim might one day return to his own home in the desert, as his mother senses that it might be Julie who will "bring him home at last" (259). Although the novel thus ends on an ambiguous role, there is a slight possibility that Ibrahim might perhaps return after having followed the call of wealth and prosperity beckoning him to the Western world.

In addition, Gordimer's creation of authentic Muslim characters adds to the cultural richness of the novel. *The Pickup* is undeniably a fine and skilfully woven novel, a continuation of its author's epic narration which has made her such a worthy recipient of the Nobel Prize for Literature more than a decade earlier. *The Pickup* undeniably satisfies as an exploration of questions about freedom, responsibility, love and identity. It is a valuable contribution to post-apartheid South African English fiction in aiding readers who are still endeavouring to come to a better understanding, and perhaps acceptance of current issues resulting from change in this country, especially by examining identity in the context of different meanings of "another country" as artistically done by Gordimer.

Julie is the one who seems to be more affectionate, loving and she proves this many time. She has no second thoughts when she decides to follow Ibrahim to his country and she doesn't regret her decision, not even for a second throughout the entire novel. She always respects her husband's decision and tries to help him with as much as she can. What is surprising, however, is her resolution at the end of the novel, when she makes it clear that she doesn't want to go to the United States with Ibrahim. Perhaps, Julie is trying to escape her

Chapter Three

Relocating the Identity

The Pickup is hugely different from the time Gordimer was writing her pre-Apartheid novels and short stories. In South Africa Apartheid was a system of racial segregation enforced through legislation by the National Party, the governing party from 1948 to 1994. Movements of the majority black inhabitants under apartheid, the rights, associations and other ethnic groups were curtailed, and white minority rule was maintained. By the Afrikaner-dominated National Party organisations, apartheid was developed after World War II. The ideology was also enforced in South West Africa, which was administered by South Africa under a League of Nation mandate, until it gained independence as Namibia in 1990. By extension, the term is currently used for forms of systematic segregation established by the state authority in a country against the social and civil rights of a certain group of citizens due to ethnic prejudices. Under the Dutch Empire racial segregation in South Africa began in colonial times, and continued when the British took over the Cape of Good Hope in 1795.

Apartheid as an officially structured policy was introduced after the general election of 1948. Legalisation classified inhabitants into four racial groups – "black," "white," "coloured," and "Indian," the last two were divided into several sub-classifications – and residential areas were segregated. From 1960 to 1983, 3.5 million non-white South Africans were removed from their homes, and forced into segregated neighbourhoods, in one of the largest mass removals in modern history. Non-white political representation was abolished

in 1970, and starting in that year black people were deprived of their citizenship, legally becoming citizens of one of 10 tribally based self-governing homelands called Bantustans, four of which became normally independent states. The government segregated education, medical care, beaches, and other public services, and provided black people with services that were inferior to those of white people. Apartheid sparked significant internal resistance, violence, and a long arms and trade embargo against South Africa. Starting in the 1950s, a series of popular uprisings and protests resulted in a retaliatory ban of all opposition, and the imprisonment of anti-apartheid leaders. As unrest spread and became more effective and militarised, state organisations responded with repression and violence. Along with sanctions placed on South Africa by the international community, this made it increasingly difficult for the government to maintain the regime. Apartheid forms failed to quell the mounting opposition, and in 1990 President Frederick Willem de Klerk began negotiations to end apartheid, culminating in multi-racial democratic elections in 1994, won by the African National Congress under Nelson Mandela. The vestiges of apartheid still shape South African politics and society. De Klerk began the process of dismantling apartheid with the release of Mandela's mentor and several other political prisoners in October 1989. Although the official abolition of apartheid occurred in 1991 with repeal of the last of the remaining apartheid laws, non-whites were not allowed to vote until 1993 and the end of apartheid is widely regarded as arising from the 1994 democratic general elections.

When Gordimer was at the age of about 77, Apartheid was gone officially and was writing at the very beginning of the third millennium.

Gordimer's fiction dealt mostly with the African situation, including apartheid. Most of her critics were concerned about the theme of her future work, for she had lost one of her favourite ones-apartheid. However, she surprised all of them with the *The Pickup* which offers a picture of the new South Africa and its usual problems of race, class and bureaucracy, taken from a local to a global level. The change of setting from post-Apartheid Johannesburg to an Arab country and its villages, deserts and Muslim people is unusual for Gordimer, who used to devote her attention to the specificity of South African society. In addition, the novel depicts an idealistic image of the Other world and its inhabitants, as Julie Summers, the white South African woman who chooses to relocate to her husband's Arab village, is fascinated by the traditional values of the Arab family and by the immensity of the desert.

Postcolonial literary studies, with their emphasis on globalisation, migration and cosmopolitanism, form the theoretical framework for study. The field is not characterised by a single overriding theory, being rather a collection of related and complement perspectives that engage with a wide variety of issues such as centre/ margin imbalances, fractured identities and social inequalities. Initially postcolonial studies focused 'inwards' in their emphasis on specific national issues, social oppressive power structures. The declining influence of the traditional concepts of colonisation coupled with "growing uncertainly over nationalism" and increased globalisation has promoted a shift in the postcolonial focus.

The Pickup portrays a world of fragmented and "unfixed identities," an asymmetrical world of "skewed power relations" (169) in a post-Apartheid South Africa that has to redefine its identity in order to enter the "global

village". The intercultural marriage is Gordimer's "silver lining" for the postcolonial world, just as interracial marriages were for the colonial period. In this regard, Nadine Gordimer undermines stereotypical distinctions and the opposition Orient/Occident is reversed. At the beginning of the 21st century, South Africa is defined by political renewal, liberalism, and economic progress, South Africans being described as "European–but they don't call themselves that [...]" (94)

Many of Nadine Gordimer's novels and stories are concerned with the devastating effects of Apartheid on the lives of South Africans. The constant tension between isolation in exile and commitment to society, related to the need to be part of the changes that will lead to social justice, can be found in Gordimer's Apartheid and post-Apartheid stories. Unwillingness to accept Apartheid and its laws led to two possible reactions: on the one hand, numbness, indifference and the inability to change them and, on the other, concern, indignation, initiative and rebellion against them. Gordimer's writings are full of characters that are refugees, immigrants, or exiles who assume one of these two positions, yet their status does not always imply that they are victims. The South African writer makes connections between memory and the social space occupied by migrants, who constantly renew their identities in their target communities, who invariably appeal to their past experiences and representations of physical and social space in order to fulfil their physical and psychological needs. Fragments of personal stories are joined together to reveal the history of a multiracial society and draw readers' attention to what HomiBhabha called "easily obscured, but highly significant, recesses of the national culture from which alternative constituencies of

peoples an oppositional analytic capacities may emerge –youth, the everyday, nostalgia, new 'ethnicities,' new social movements, 'the politics of difference'" (Bhabha 3).

In her development of characters later in her career, Gordimer takes on post-apartheid issues and looks beyond spaces in farm to urban and desert environments outside of South Africa. However, some hesitate to limit Gordimer to the position of postcolonial writer. Ileana Dimitriu believes that Gordimer "avoids what might be a temptation for the writer who turns from the peripheries of the ex-colony or post-colony" (160). Instead, Gordimer "presents the reader with the impact of liminality and exile on one's sense of identity and belonging, on one's relationships" (167). Her fiction uses personal relationships to illuminate racial and social imbalance as well as how these elements shape gender roles.

The Pickup highlights Gordimer's approach to postcolonial spaces. The texts focus on issues of identity and exile within gendered and communal spaces as well as their effects on personal relationships. The central female characters in these two texts experience a sense of freedom through domesticity and immersing themselves into the gendered spaces established for women in another country. As shown in this text, white women have the ability to use social class to their advantage and to negotiate their role in their society. Julie becomes an emigrant, flees from her privileged life in South Africa, joins her Muslim lover and later her legal husband in an unnamed desert. Julie at first exhibits marital happiness, the narrative ends by Julie choosing herself as how she wishes to continue her life without her spouse. Julie undergoes a transformation that solidifies her place in the new

environment. The change she undergoes is a result of her ability to become a part of female homosocial spheres and to use hose spheres to navigate her position in the new social systems. However, Though Julie is referred to as "spoiled," due to her wealth and her independence, she is a natural sociable woman whose feminine self quite easily bonds with the Muslim women of her husband's family and she refuses to emigrate with him to the United States.

Post–Apartheid literature has manifested its capacity to rewrite and reinvent new identities, new stories that have aroused profound interest and will continue to generate curiosity, defining the individual as part of the collective and mapping new trajectories to explore. Despite the fact that two South African writers have been awarded the Nobel Prize, South African literature is still in some ways an emerging field of inquiry, and one that continues to require redefinition in view of the changed circumstances in the country.

The contemporary novel was born from South Africa's colonial and apartheid history, and literary investigation of spatial justice are interwoven with centuries of dispossession and the destruction of physical and spiritual homes. The tenuous search for belonging in South Africa, and the feeling of being at home, is tied to the destruction of dwelling spaces and the dehumanisation of indigenous and slave population, as well as the myth of belonging and ownership presupposed by European settler colonists. South African spatial frameworks of identity are rooted in the imperial mission beginning in 1652 as Dutch settlers endeavoured to view the Cape Colony as home and develop a mythology to justify their occupation and eventual dwelling.

Prior to apartheid's demise, protest and resistance dictated the dominant modes of narrative fiction in English. Protest novels reveal flagrant images of squalor and subjugation as many images focus on hardships in the townships and homelands juxtaposed with formulaic wealthy, white landowners. For decades, imaginative art in South Africa that teased out ambiguities and rejected binaries was overshadowed by apartheid literature instrumental in revealing black and white issues of race, morality, and justice in the timely battle to end state-sanctioned subjugation.

Post-apartheid novels, while still focusing on the various cries facing the nation, challenge contradictions and ambiguities, and allow the space for internal examination of identity. This internal examination continues to be shadowed by anxiety over land and the politics of belonging. Many post-apartheid South African writers are unable to move past issues of crisis standardised by the protest novel, because the foundational crisis of belonging and being at home still remains unresolved.

In Gordimer's first novel, *The Pickup*, to fill the locality with significant global resonance, the shift is particularly noticeable. The novel unfolds two locations of "peripheries" South Africa and North Africa, which are qualified by global allure and constraint. Abdu finally hopes to seek his destiny; it is to her mother's United States connections that Julie turns to secure Abdu his precious identity card. South Africa has emerged from its isolation was considered as a symbolic fact to seek a role on the African continent. Gordimer presents South Africa today as both a microcosm of world forces and a country collectively seeking a better understanding of it. Gordimer offers a skilful way of exploring new post-apartheid issues at home

through a distant reading of the local, particularly of the politics of identity and belonging or suggested home and exile or emigration and immigration by placing part of the action in North Africa.

The novel sets in liberal post-apartheid Johannesburg and shifts to a conspicuously unnamed Arab country in the second part of the novel. The two central characters enact both metaphorically and literally. Julie comes from a well off white family and, Abdu, an illegal immigrant in Johannesburg from some unnamed Saudi Arabian country; completely change their roles in the second part of the novel.

This novel represents two novels in one as an abrupt juxtaposition of what may strike. The novel could have been two separate short stories, one dealing with the dreams and realities of illegal immigration and the other dealing with the dreams and realities of escape against the background of the unnamed desert country, indeed desert itself. Abdu the illegal immigrant having been expelled from his first imagined mecca (South Africa) seeks another destination, whereas Julie his South African wife finds contentment in Abdu's home country, an unnamed North African state. But there is no apparent reason why the familiar South African setting was removed by Gordimer.

The impact of exile on one's sense of identity and belonging, on one's relationship was presented by Gordimer. The condition of dislocation in post-ideological times, the novel is an exploration of how immigration as well as emigration, affects the sense of self in human interaction. As Gordimer said in an interview, she has been preoccupied with the new, post-apartheid

phenomena of illegal immigration to her country, and the reactions of resentment and racism that it usually provokes. Gordimer reveals Abdu's psychological turmoil and internal contestation of the presupposed monolithic 'centre'.

The continual movement and interchange between different mind-states and hypostases of the self or what HomiBhabha refers to as liminality is expressed by Gordimer. The particular form that liminality takes in the first part of this novel is the underground of illegal immigrant in South Africa.

> He must go underground. There is a world underground in this city, in all cities, the only place for those of us who can't live, haven't the means, not just money, the statutory means to conform to what others call the world. Underground. That darkness is the only freedom for him. (58-59)

The emigration of two characters from South Africa to Abdu's unnamed home village, somewhere in North Africa has been dealt in the second part of the novel. Significantly, the couple emigrate from the periphery to another, not to the metropolis, in this way by seeking familiar patterns elsewhere. While in a distant reading from the periphery's many interactions and exchange with global forces, Gordimer offers a defamiliarisation of the local. In order to see the real character of her place of origin, Julie needs to leave her home in South Africa and immigrate to a place similar to the one she has left behind – a world of severe differences. Being in a new family Julie has a realisation of the fact that she is now a stranger to herself, to her familiar ways.

> That girl, that woman had lived all her life in the eyes of black people, where she comes from, but never had had from them this kind of consciousness of self: so that was what home was. She was aware of this with an intrigued detachment....if she was strangely new to them, she was also strangely new to herself. (117)

Julie begins to ponder her life style as an independent young woman before she met Abdu, the old ways of her privileged life as a rich businessman's daughter in the northern Suburbs of Johannesburg. She thought of an independent multiculturalism and the embrace of diversity in a new South Africa, in a different light. "We were playing at reality; it was a doll's house, the cottage; a game, EL-AY Café" (164). In the North African state her insights deepen as she is constantly exposed, to extreme forms of poverty, which she had somehow failed fully to absorb back at home in South Africa.

> The normal state of lassitude in the extremes of poverty, there was no demarcation between what was the thoroughfare and the shacks where goats were tethered and women squatted in their black grab like crows brought down wounded – suddenly he had to swerve to avoid a dead sheep lying bloated in a shroud of flies. (132)

The roles are now reversed and Julie is "like one who has to settle for the underbelly of a car" (143), just as Abdu had to do literally as an illegal motor mechanic in her home country. At the same time as she is forced to look at the poverty around her, she learns about the embarrassment of

unproductive organisation. "...never before had she shuffled along in a queue in hope to gain a right – that had been the history of blacks in her country" (202).

Julie blinded by her privileged upbringing did not see at home, if post-colonialism is a material condition. Post colonialism has metaphoric and psychological values as the material conditions, over the decades, deeply scared Abdu as an all-encompassing condition, and the scars begin to leave their mark on Julie's mental universe when Julie enters an inter cultural marriage. When Abdu takes her to the local market, Julie finds alongside traditional merchandise cheap plastic utensils "decorated with flower patterns of organic ostentation that seemed tactless in a deserted village" (126) all wares that the first world through its multinational sweatshops – has "dumped" here and which the locals are eager to buy because "they do not break so soon" (126).

Julie also comes to experience the impact that the global circulation of new technological forms of communication has on the third world. Instead of a muezzin announcing prayer time from the top of mosque, " there's a recording and a loudspeaker, you see it on top of mosque, that is what we have in the miracle of technology in our place" (125). Abdu says sarcastically, "change with a voice over the internet, not from the minaret, a voice demanding to be heard by the financial gods of the world"(176). Julie comes to understand that these people desire global technology even as they resent its offerings to their conditions of asymmetrical access.

As she learns about the younger generation's response to westernisation, Julie can see that Abdu and his companions, who all share a similar educational background, are critically aware of global interactions and exchanges in the third world. Raymond Williams referred to the dialectic of residuality and emergence of a dynamic that produces a mutation in which traditional and progressive ideas or practices are reconfigured into new perspectives and modalities. The generation that cherishes "Nike boots, cell phones, TV consoles, hifi and video equipment" (203) is at the same time, aware that important changes have to be made for these status symbols to be truly affordable and integrated into everyday life. Abdu regularly meets like-minded young men, unemployed or unemployable graduates, who have also "been returned (from the West) like dead letters- illegals have no fixed address, no identity" (176). Back home, they keep talking about politics and pondering various solutions for the overcoming of economic discrepancies.

> These young men want change, not rewards of Heaven. Change in the forms already had taken for others in the old century, change for what it was becoming in his new one. To catch up! With elections that are not rigged or declared void when the government's opposition wins; hard bargains with the West made from a position of counter-power, not foot-kissing, arse-licking servitude. (176)

Having been exposed to the West through illegal immigration, or through the West's own invasion of the local market place, the young educated generation of North Africans thinks in terms of meaningful exchanges and interactions – the need to "cross fertilize Islam with the world, if the ideals of

Islam are to survive" (177) – rather than of rigid traditionalism. ".... total Islamization, against world powers – what a mad dream" (177). they understand the complex interactions between the global and the local not in mechanistic terms, not as rigid polarities, but in terms of irregular boundaries as well as unpredictable disjunctures and overlaps i.e. "fractually" and "polythetically," as ArjunAppadurai refers to the complex dialect between the local and global. In using these terms, Appadurai explains how the collective identities in the Third World are constantly shaped by western images, what he calls "the ethnoscapes, technospaces, financescapes, mediaspaces and ideospaces" that are

brought back home by the returning migrants from the West.

While Julie becomes a keen observer of these collective identities, she also feels a sense of profound alienation. She is thus forced to consider another type of dislocation that the internal exile in solitary communion with the North African desert. She experiences a sense of localised alienation. Julie's growth and redefinition of self is evident in her struggle to come to terms with a new culture, a new language, and a new religion. The desert is an echo of and companion to, Julie as she challenges her old secure white South African experience of love, location and independence. "The desert. No seasons of bloom and decay. Just the endless turn of night and day. Out of time" (172). For Julie, the vastness of the desert provokes a longing for self-knowledge, for reassessment of her past. Contrasted with the silent effect of the desert on her, Julie's early privilege in South Africa seems frivolous and insignificant.

Apart from its being offered as support for introspection and self-knowledge, the desert may also be interpreted as embodying Julie's scepticism about the meta-narratives of socio-political totalities, whether South African, North American, Australian: the desert is outside of any social space, including that of the North African village itself. This is an indirect way of expressing doubt about the ultimate validity of any single system of reference, whether local or global. It may also suggest Gordimer's own sense of exhaustion with political over determination or her disenchantment perhaps with more recent social configurations, both locally and internationally. In short, the desert is itself a multivalent, hybrid device in the mental exploration of the material conditions, as it opens new awareness in Julie of an increasingly sterile relationship between her husband and herself. It is also a sobering reminder of the psychological damage that has been inflicted on Abdu by global neocolonialism. Both Julie and Abdu wish to find a home in exile, to be integrated and accepted in a different social space. But Gordimer presents Abdu's damage beyond healing. Abdu, however, is presented as unable to change: he has lost his ability to love – sex is to him something apart from love – and cannot reciprocate Julie's feelings in genuine intimacy.

To use the other binarism once more, Abdu is bitter about what he perceives to be his being 'othered,' and starts resenting Julie herself for refusing to support him in securing access to the [global] Other that has been so inaccessible to him. He is even prepared to be an exile again; as this is the closest he can get to the gaze of the mythical Other and its seductive appeal of material advancement. As she has an intimate knowledge of the western mentality with its social and psychological hierarchies, Julie is realistic about

the difficulties her husband is almost certain to encounter in the United States. She is, therefore, not prepared to join him when he "return[s] to the same new-old humiliations that await him, doing the dirty work they don't want to do" (266).

The couple are unable to go beyond, or process, their diverse views and background experiences, unable to open up to what they are prepared to endure in the future. They can only pursue their different needs and ideals by going their separate ways: the final irony of the relationship resides in its sacrifice and loss. In this relationship, cultural "diversity" cannot translate into a mature acceptance of "difference" – to use Bhabha's terms a fixed and predetermined diversity cannot be transformed into meaningful understanding of, and respect for otherness.

The novel ends with a perplexing reversal of roles. Abdu, an illegal immigrant to South Africa, proves to be the eternal nomad, but one who no longer manifests his earlier dignity. Tragically, he is a phenomenon of the 1990s: a global mercenary condemned by history forever to be seeking opportunities elsewhere. Julie, previously a spoilt daughter, manages to transform her claustrophobic life not by substituting one place of privilege for another, but by turning her back on materialistic pursuits and global metanarratives, such as emigration and immigration. Instead, she embarks on a journey of self-discovery that proves to have no boundaries other than those imposed upon her by her own inner dedication. Rejecting what she comes to regard as the superficial landscapes of global opportunities, she identifies the map of her own inner life as a new country of exploration. Intriguingly, she

does not wish to emigrate to the United States, but neither does she choose to repatriate herself to South Africa.

One may say, of course, that Julie's privileged upbringing permits her the luxury of her decisions. *ThePickup*, however, is not a moral tale. Gordimer is not judgmental of Julie, but permits her own struggles of belonging and belief in the importance of internal exile. To her credit, neither is Gordimer judgemental of Abdu. He is compelled by circumstances to seek his own location and journey on to the allure of the United States. If the migrant is the product of neocolonialism, he is also the product of the postcolonial condition that time after apartheid, after the ideological binaries of the recent past.

Gordimer's literary output is not surprising that criticism of her work has evolved. Gordimer's fictional and personal attempts to tackle social issues prevalent during apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa especially concerning race and gender have been well documented. Her fiction suggests that one rethinks relationships among whites and blacks and men and women. However, Gordimer's relationship with feminism itself has been ambivalent and at times dismissive. Gordimer's fiction "shows the potential for transgression, for alternative ways of seeing, amidst the existence of patriarchal-cum-racist stereotypes" (Driver 58), Karen Lazer points out in her 1994 study of *Something Out There*.

Regardless of Gordimer's personal feelings and public remarks regarding feminism and her own refusal to be identified as a feminist writer, her writing offers a significant contribution to the field of feminist studies. Gordimer's fiction contributes to the history of South Africa and of the

political environment that prevails outside and within her fictional worlds. However, there are limitations to her female characters' ability to emancipate themselves from the political and social systems governing the world in which they live. White immigrant or white South African women are often illustrated as negotiating patriarchal systems and circumventing consequences from non-conformity in order to secure their social position or to free themselves of their privileged obligations. Although white women in Gordimer's fiction have freedom to move outside their social circle they are not always portrayed positively. Black and Muslim characters are at times eroticised or are generic backdrops for a South African or unnamed setting. Within the gendered spaces occupied by blacks and, in her fiction, by Muslim women, the cultural norms that dictate behaviour are tied to traditional roles and communal expectations. Additionally, their spaces are disrupted and dictated through laws imposed on them during and after apartheid.

In her development of characters later in her career, Gordimer takes on post-apartheid issues and looks beyond spaces in farm velds to urban and desert environments outside of South Africa. However, some hesitate to limit Gordimer to the position of a postcolonial writer. Ileana Dimitriu believes that Gordimer "avoids what might be a temptation for the writer who turns from the peripheries of the ex-colony or post-colony" (160). Instead, Gordimer "presents the reader with the impact of liminality and exile on one's sense of identity and belonging, on one's relationships" (167). Her fiction uses personal relationships to illuminate racial and social imbalance as well as how these elements shape gender roles.

[illegible] in another country. The protagonists' story is [illegible] narrative calls into question gender roles and social ideas. Julie [illegible] Abdu see in the "Other" a freedom that cannot be obtained [illegible] other Gordimer stories written during post-apartheid [illegible] picture of the new South Africa and its usual problems of race, class and bureaucracy taken from a local to a global level," but what is different is the stuff "from post-apartheid Johannesburg to an Arab country and its villages, deserts and Muslim people". Julie and Abdu serve as contrasts to show privilege and poverty to examine the realms of what is legal and illegal. However, gender and the spaces in which gender comes are shown to have the greatest potential in the novel. Traditional female gender roles within homo-social bonds become powerful, whereas male gender roles are ineffectual and have no real authority within the context of female spheres.

Chapter Four

Sphere of the Migrated Women

The idea of migration has expanded to include a wide variety of cultural and social crossings, which challenge accepted notions of identity and belonging. Regardless of the type of border crossing, the migrant experiences arise from the recognition and consequences of difference and is characterised by loss, hybridity, ambiguity and dislocation often, it leaves migrants on the margins of the society, outside the "hegemonic power structure" unable to find a safe space of belonging. Migration forces one to come to terms with the way in which home is constructed and to evaluate the usefulness of hose definitions in an entirely different society and cultural landscape. Extremely environmental conditions, economic or political instability have made migration both more necessary and more frequent than ever before.

In the novel *The Pickup*, the settings change to the desert where Abdu, in reality Ibrahim Ibn Musa, is from the dynamics of gender, especially within female spheres and for Julie it is with the woman in this strict Muslim culture that she finds freedom from her family and privilege. While Gordimer intersperses the first part of the narrative with images of black and white South African women, they mainly serve as stereotypes to contrast with Julie and to illustrate her inability to accept her privilege of her social class. It is her status as a wealthy South African Woman that has given her freedom, Albert in a Muslim culture, to actively reject her own culture. Interestingly, Julie cannot form significant female bonds in her home country; Gordimer does not include any strong female characters in the first half of the novel. Julie's step mother, Danielle is portrayed as a perfect accessory to her father's success; she was beautiful, trust her father for that. Her mother living in California

with Julie's casino-owning step-father has little connection to her father [illegible] African women are merely backdrops in the streets, patients at her uncle's gynaecology office, or prostitutes in the EL-AY Café. This extension intended or not, is telling.

As Julie disconnects from her South African life, she finds that in her new setting she ultimately seeks the solace of women for comfort. However, when Julie arrives first in the unnamed desert, she is out of place, and has no set role in the traditional Muslim world in which she has chosen to live. She is not one of them. When she asks, "Where's the bathroom?" (121), Ibrahim gets angry, he wants to "tell her once and for all what her ignorant obstinacy of coming with him in this place means, when she failed, with all her privilege at getting him accepted into hers" (121). Julie wants to explore her new environment, but is naïve about the cultural norms. Ibrahim sees this as her privileged ignorance and her need for an adventure.

> Of course. Of course. Independent. This is the way she's accustomed to living, pleasing herself. Again. But that's impossible, here. He has to be with her, some member of the family, if there could be one who could be understood, has to accompany her everywhere beyond a few neighbourhood streets, that's how it is in the place he thought he had left behind him. It's not usual for women to sit down to eat with the men, today was a special exception for the occasion-does she understand. It's enough, for these people, that she goes about with an uncovered head–that they can tolerate with a white face, may be. (122-123)

While Ibrahim cannot accept being back home, Julie wants to connect herself with her new family and their language. However, she is initially "not invited or even permitted to participate in the women's activities". Her inability to penetrate the "women's sphere illustrates the inter sectionalism of gender, race, nationality and geography; Julie is kept on the boundary until the other women learn more about how she will negotiate those difference." While Julie wants to help the other women with cleaning dishes, "the women crowded about to prevent her from so much as putting her heads in water" (136). Ibrahim's mother is the central power in the female sphere; she decides if and when Julie will become part of their sisterhood. Without her say, Julie cannot be admitted into the women's space or allowed to become an integral part of the family. Ibrahim himself does not want Julie to fully integrate with his family. He shouts at his sister Maryam when she "kits" Julie in traditional attire "like any village women in the street" (162) and tells her to "take that thing off her" (162). This scene ends not with Julie going to Ibrahim to calm him, but with his sister, the two with arms again about each other on the sofa quietly as if Ibrahim's wife were a sister. (162).

In time, Julie forms connections with the women and children outside of Ibrahim's family. She teaches English to local children and women and then Ibrahim's sister and his sister-in-law join to exchange language. According to Derek Barker, "Julie's ability to communicate with members of the community is rudimentary. The only clearly positive relationship she has is with Maryam – no men interact with her and all other women keep her at arm's length her possible place in the society is potentially self-alluring." Although Julie is kept at arm's length, she is able to exist on the periphery and use her connection to Maryam to skirt the edges of

the female domain. Julie does herself find part of the female spheres of her new family; however, it is still limited. The matriarch of the family expects Julie to participate fully in the culture to truly become one of them. To become accepted the expectation is that she should give birth. However, the mother does not speak to Julie directly of this; instead, Maryam tells her "They wonder why you do not get a baby. Then perhaps you will just marry here, Our way" (166).

To additionally highlight Julie's struggle to find her place in this new world, Gordimer uses a recurring image of the desert, which becomes the site in which Julie can abandon herself and where she can reflect. It is in the desert that Julie has seemingly found the place where humanity ends and the unknown begins.

> The desert is always; it doesn't die it doesn't change, it exists. But a human being, she, she, cannot simply exist; she is a hurricane, every thought bending and crossing its coherence inside her, nothing will let her be, not for a moment. Every emotion, every thought, is invaded by another. (230)

The desert offers a stability that Julie has not found in her prior existence. The allure of the desert and its "eternity" is sublime; "there is no last time, for the desert. The desert is always. It does not matter that she has turned and gone back up the street, buying three circles of warm fritters from the vendor as she returns to the family home, the lean-to for transients."(246). When debating her life and her new world, Julie could "tell it to the desert, that is safe"(245). The endless desert is where Julie can truly be free; but more importantly, the desert is outside space of any social space. It has "no onlookers" and it comes to represent a space without limits, without clear boundaries, and without time.

At the end of the narrative, Julie decides to stay behind in the desert and to remain in the restrictive culture. She finds solace in its isolation and other female characters, while Ibrahim "began to feel that his manhood was in question" (175) because she would not go to America with him. Ibrahim's mother now sees Julie was the one who draw her son back to her. Ibrahim realises this when "she, who always has advice and a solution, for everyone, whether this is welcome or not, has none for him. My son – she gives him her blessing[…] Ah, an ally, that's it; but not his…(259) without his mother's support, Ibrahim understands that he has no authority over Julie. As a final gesture of her anger, Ibrahim

> Kept away from her, in company of the family, making sure there was no chance for them[…] Let her have an idea of what she doesn't realize[…] that she will be in this house[…]without the love making she needs so much […] without his love for her. (266)

Once he leaves in the cab, Julie goes to their room and the troublesome sister-in-law, Khadija, who "has never come to the lean-to […], put an arm around her conspiratorially and in Arabic, which the foreigner understands enough, now" she tells Julie: "He'll come back" (267). This final gesture and her mother-in-law's realisation to their lives solidifies Julie's place in the female sphere.

The narratives in the work offer a range of characters who find ways to navigate a world that has rendered them inferior and dictated the spaces in which they should identify. The characters illustrate vast social differences based on race and gender as well as consequences of occupying the space relegated to others through social rules and laws. Gordimer does not resolve the inequalities of her society, neither does she romanticize its past or present, but the trajectory of her writing has

expanded her range of characters and settings to question non cultural practices and in her later works to locate female spheres that offer unknown possibilities. The evolving nature of Gordimer's characters reflects the ever-changing roles that men and women are expected to play in addition to her own development as a writer. Her contributions to literature are vast and offer much to our understanding of life in South Africa and beyond, of human nature and weakness and of the nation of self and others.

Gordimer is fascinated by the kinds of power shifts that occur when people become displaced from their comfort zones and have adapted to new ways of thinking and being. Much of this adaptation occurs through language. Initially, what seems to be a barrier to communication can become a means for more productive cross-cultural exchange. Warned by Ibrahim that his country is "not for you" and her father who cautions Julie that it is a place where women are 'treated like slaves'. Julie is nonetheless determined to expand her limited horizons and experiences a culture of which she knows nothing. Ibrahim remains desperate to escape from village to the wider world-trying to get to Australia, Canada and United States. He is unable to understand how or why Julie, who has so many choices about where to live, would choose the very place from which he is trying to escape. And one is always aware that Julie still has the power to choose to leave whenever she wants to, while Ibrahim does not. The idea of the world as a global village is still an extremely one. Sided one: only those from privileged countries are really free to "pick up" other cultures and to drop them too, when they wish to- "the freedom of the world was hers."

Julie and Ibrahim's story is, at its core, a story of migration and the physical and emotional experience of leaving home and arriving and living in a foreign

country. The dual setting and contrasting accounts of migration – influenced by legality, race, gender and privilege allow Gordimer to interrogate the consequences of migration in the modern world. *The Pickup* may appear to be radical shift in subject matter. It allows Gordimer to link a South African issue – the influx of undocumented immigrants from other African countries and the resulting xenophobia- to the border issues surrounding migration. The political reality of South Africa in the 21st century has changed: the social and economic reality has been impacted upon by migration, prompting some to suggest that the migrant is "the political figure of our time."

The Pickup offers several examples of the way in which migration influences our understanding of home, but it is not only a story about the bare facts of migration; the narrative techniques employed by Gordimer also conveyed a sense of emotional loss and alienation involved in the experience. The novel offers a female and male protagonist whose understanding of the world has been shaped by migration and globalisation: both Julie and Ibrahim are searching beyond the border of their homes, for a place to belong, a place that affords the opportunity to live the lives that they desire.

Ibrahim has little to no control over the space that he occupies: his privacy is limited and living in his place of work restricts his ability to rest or relax – his continued residence being at the mercy of the owner of the garage. Ibrahim's Johannesburg home at the beginning of the novel is unstable and precarious. Despite this, Ibrahim does not appear to be overly concerned about his position. He has lived like this before, and the novel seems to suggest that Ibrahim considers such a precarious home as an inevitable part of his long term goals.

> It's hard nothing is nice, at the beginning, Julie. Without proper money to live. You are a stray dog; a rat finding its hole as the way to get in. I know you don't mind, you even seem to like to live....its like a camping trip to you. But this is different, it can be bad, bad. I can't take you into it. (227)

Although this quote is from the final chapters of the novel, it offers insight into Ibrahim understanding of precarious home. His willingness to live with hardship in exchange for the promise of opportunity implies that he views his future home as a place where he can live securely and pursue his dreams.

Migration challenges the essentialist narrative of home, as well as the cultural, national or personal identification linked to stability-by subjecting the migrant to alternative identities, homes and cultural facts. The conflicts between past certainties and new, uncertain realities can leave migrants without a coherent sense of identity or home, and give rise to feelings of alienation, disorientation and dislocation. The experience of dislocation has been theorised in many different ways. Bhabha refers to it as an "unhomely moment," brought about by a blurring of borders between the home and wider world. The migrant can no longer distinguish one from the other and is forced into a vision of the world that is "as divided as it is disorientating".

According to Bhabha, double vision is distressing, it is not necessarily negative. The critics believes that such a divided view of the world results in what he terms cultural hybridity or the ability to draw meaning from a variety of different cultures. Hybridity then provides the basis for broader, more flexible and ultimately more positive definitions of nation, community and culture. Rushdie also considers dislocation as based on double perspective to be arising from the fact that the migrants

are both an insider and an outsider in the new society. In other words, migrants may be physically part of the host society – living, working and contributing to it – but culturally not central to it and therefore not privy to insights hidden to full insiders. Rushdie also suggests that leaving one's homeland involves losing one's physical link to the past, making it impossible to link one's memories with a physical space. The result is permanently fragmented vision that makes the migrant incapable of reclaiming "precisely the thing that was lost."

Julie's confusion is compounded by the fact that she does not speak Arabic. Although she claims that, 'the hoarse flow and guttural hum of the language reached her on a wave length of the meaning other than the verbal, "she is left to decipher the reactions of the people she meets from their gestures and facial expressions. Ibrahim does not assist in this situation, either falling to translate at all, or getting frustrated with his compatriots' inability to speak English" (118,119). Ibrahim's reluctance to translate for Julie is indicative of a broader discomfort with her presence in his family home.

He actively blocks any attempt Julie makes to assimilate into his family; he will not teach her Arabic, nor allow her to assist with the household chores. When she questions him about his country and his culture, he is hostile or dismissive towards her attempts to understand. Ibrahim's behaviour towards Julie adds another layer to the sense of dislocation that she experiences: she is unable to live in his village as she was used to in Johannesburg and she is isolated from the family's day to day life. This restriction and isolation would be disorienting for someone so used to forming connections wherever she goes. In addition when she looks for reassurance in her relationship with Ibrahim, she finds none: "She often has the sense that he is not

[illegible] at her when his regard is on her, it is she who is looking for herself in [illegible] eyes" (129).

Finally, Julie experiences dislocation arising from the temporal and spatial differences between Johannesburg and Ibrahim's small, native desert town. Johannesburg may be multicultural city but its organisation of time is largely based on western business principles. The flow of the day is absorbed from a young age:

> This begins with the small child's first day at school: the containment of life in a society commences. The other demarcations of the day set by that particular society follow, commuter time, clock in time, canteen break time, workout time or cocktail time. (124)

Ibrahim is an excellent example of this kind of "undesirable" migrant. As a young Arab male, his reception in western countries, even before the terror attacks of 11 Sep 2001, was likely to be hostile. Even in South Africa, Ibrahim was perceived as a competitor for already scarce jobs and would be subject to all too common flare-ups of xenophobic violence.

The effects of Ibrahim's dislocation in South Africa are perhaps more evident in his relationship with Julie and her friends. In these relationships, the social difference between him and young South Africans in the story became apparent. Ibrahim finds Julie's friends immature and spoilt, and criticises their inability to take matters seriously.(22,24). He also appears uncomfortable when socialising them.

> Sometimes he would sit in the shadows, drink nothing; at others he would suddenly swallow alcohol with determination, as if set on a strange kind of reverse discipline. If the theorist among them had

concerned himself with this, he would have found it a [illegible] technique.(30)

The inconsistency of Ibrahim's behaviour is a sign of his discomfort in the presence of Julie's friends. Ibrahim cannot identify with the lifestyle of Julie's friends because he cannot understand why they would willingly withdraw from their families. When socializing with Julie's friends forces Ibrahim to confront the stark contrast between their care-free existence and the realities of his life as a migrant. The narrator suggest that when Ibrahim is not working – his sole reason for being in the country – he is unsure of how to form meaningful relationships with people at his age: "in the evening he steps from his only identity; here, into a disguise, the nobody Abdu" (31). He cannot reconcile their differences on a social, cultural and economic/class level and, as a result, cannot feel entirely comfortable with them.

Ibrahim also fails to find belonging in his relationship with Julie, not because he is unable to connect with her, but rather because he actively resists developing any romantic attachment. After their first sexual encounter- an encounter that Julie considers immensely fulfilling-he "resists residue feelings of tenderness towards this girl. That temptation". He stays with Julie, however, because he assumes that she may be able to help him in some way. In short term, she gives him access to more comfortable accommodation (26,33,92) and once he receives his notice of deportation, she organises a meeting with a lawyer who could potentially help his case (64).

His attitude towards Julie reflects his earlier understanding of home and belonging: a relationship or situation must provide him with some tangible benefit for him to feel any connection. Ibrahim's reaction to Julie after his final appeal to stay in

South Africa is officially denied- supports this view of their relationship. He was moderately affectionate before, he becomes impatient and short tempered. The narrator provides the following insight into his thoughts:

> She's a child, they're all children, and what she wants to do now is something for her, the living she's totally innocent of, hasn't any real idea of, innocence is ignorance with them [...] She knows nothing, Nothing (94)

Ibrahim family home is radically different from the homes Julie has lived in before, both materially and socially. Despite these differences, Musa household provides Julie with a sense of community and belonging that she has never associated with family life: a home that is "strongly associated with the rites and rituals of family". Unlike Julie's relatively cold and emotionally distant family context, the Musa household is a place where the daily practices of human life play out: children are born, marriages celebrated and deaths mourned. It is a space that is structured and controlled by a strict set of cultural, familial and religious rules that Julie slowly comes to understand and, in her desire to belong enact.

Women are doubly empowered and have to struggle a lot to prove their identity with both men and women. The outcome of the creator or leader in women is packed down by both genders. When a controversy emerges, there come delinquent situations between men and women. Behind successful women there must be a lot of struggles, failures and bitter experiences. This is only because of gender discrimination. The hardness makes a few women to achieve highness in life. In this novel Julie's eagerness to learn Arabic is an excellent example of her desire to understand Ibrahim's family and culture. But when Ibrahim refuses to teach her and

... an excuse is that he needs to practise his English, Julie asks his sister Maryam ... to teach her Arabic in return for English lessons. These lessons attract the attention of the wealthier women in the village and Julie ends up in teaching a weekly English class(143). Julie's friendship with Maryam also facilitates her entry into Ibrahim household's community of women and Julie is frequently invited to take part in the women's daily routines: fetching water, cooking and even becoming involved in the planning of Maryam's wedding (169,196). Julie's sense of belonging is her based on inclusion and familiarity. She may not fully understand the significance of all the customs, but by the repetition of daily tasks, she has found when Appiah calls "points of entry to cross-cultural conversations."(97)

Even though Julie works hard to get involved in Ibrahim's family and community, it is ultimately her connection with the desert that helps her find a more permanent sense of belonging. Following a routine established during Ramadan – family awoke early for the pre-dawn meal – Julie wakes before Ibrahim and walks to the edge of the street where the town ends, and the desert begins. This daily routine takes an almost spiritual element as Julie contemplates her identity in relation to the physical space in which she finds herself.

Julie's connection with the landscape and her desire to involve herself in the community has provided her with a trajectory that separates her from Ibrahim. Without her driving force of romantic love, Julie is able to redefine her sense of self through the bonds of friendship and the desire to root herself within the desert community, an echo of the kind of alternative home. As Julie spends more time in the desert, she gains a deeper understanding of her own desires. Although in South Africa, Julie had played the role of the 'independent woman', her previous identity

had been dictated by family, friends and even by Ibrahim; paradoxically in this desert space, she starts embarking on a reconstruction of herself.

Juile's trajectory from dislocation to redefinitions of home appears to be successful. Her decision to remain with Ibrahim's family is indicative of her expanded understanding of home and belonging. She finds a real sense of belonging in what is ultimately a very traditional understanding of home: one based on familial bonds, spirituality and the day to day rituals of a small community.

In the context of migration, articulation allows migrants to reconstruct their identity by adding or discarding elements of their identity to suit their context better. Ibrahim is an excellent example of this kind of identity reconstruction. He adapts to his circumstances- illegal grease monkey, lover, petitioner and hopefully legal immigrant – as the need arises and then uses those circumstances to his advantage. The fluidity of Ibrahim's identity would be a positive trait if it did not prevent him from forming any meaningful connection to an individual person or community. Ibrahim is so focused on the project of attaining permanent residence in the west that is unable to consider belonging in any other context. Unlike Julie, Ibrahim is a migrant at the start of the novel, suggesting that he is already disconnected from his home country and that any attempt to redefine home in that place will be problematic. As Dannenburg suggests, Ibrahim is:

> A double outsider: he is an outsider in his own world because of his restless quest to join western society, and he is represented as being unable to form any bond with the desert landscape of his home country because of his yearning for the world of western cities and affluence where he has yet to establish a foothold or identity.(2008:85)

Ibrahim's ability to find some stability and belonging in an unstable community is again evident when he returns to his family home. While waiting for answers from the various consulates to which he applies for a visa, Ibrahim socialises with a group of young men who are in the same situation(175)

> Three-like himself – have been declared illegal and deported, back to this place from the countries they managed to enter and work at whatever they could turn a hand to. They talk until late in order not to go home to the family warrens they escaped once and to which they have been returned like dead letters – illegals have no fixed address, no identity.

These young men are not unlike Julie's group of friends who meet at L.A. Café. Instead of being bound together by the shared experience of attempted relocation, immigration and rejection. In this space, Ibrahim finds support for the things that he cannot share with Julie (175) as well as a respite from the day-to-day work of securing legal entry. Even though this group provides Ibrahim with support, he does not feel any lasting connection to them.

On the other hand Ibrahim always wants to escape from his village to the wider world like Australia, Canada and United states. He is continuously applying for visas to all western countries. For him it is hard to understand how and why Julie choose his place, which he is trying to escape. Julie refuses to go with Ibrahim and stays there because she has found a home herself and she refuses to see Ibrahim degraded in America, where he would lose his self-respect without necessarily gaining much material reward.

Julie feels that there is no home for Ibrahim to be had as a migrant worker in America, that in spite of the corruption and aridity of his homeland, it is home. Here she shows her responsibility than specificities of place. When Ibrahim is ready to go America, Julie realizes that she must give up the metaphorical country and retain there within her adapted family. Julie is ready to lead a life in Ibrahim's village, where women must do as men tell them. Ibrahim's mother is a dominant figure in the household, where women have to handle vital and rewarding roles. With the surprising end of the novel Julie is considered as a rare figure and enjoys the transcultural element which is degraded to her level that is only because of her love with Ibrahim.

At the end of the novel, Ibrahim having secured legal entry to America (267) leaves Julie behind in his family home. Even though his life there will be characterised by hardship and humiliation, it is yet another opportunity to pursue his dream of permanent residence anywhere other than at home. Chetzee agrees with this summation, stating that

> Ibrahim[ ] will swallow any amount of insolence as long as the beacon of Permanent Residence continues to glow. Permanent Residence is a blessed state. Permanent Residence is the masters of the world. With their magical paper in their wallets, all doors are open to them. (2007: 204)

Without the finality of permanent residence, it is impossible to consider Ibrahim's trajectory a success. As Dimitrin suggests, Ibrahim is a tragic figure, a "global mercenary condemned by history to be forever seeking opportunities elsewhere"(172). Although he indicates that America might offer him the best chance

to improve his life (226). There is no guarantee that he will be able to find the belonging that he seeks. He remains a poor immigrant with a "dubious degree from an obscure Arab university, a halting command of English [and a] deep desire to shed the identity he was born into." (Coetzee 247)

The experience of living aboard involves a continuous negotiation and renegotiation of identity between old and new understandings of self. *The Pickup* is particularly interesting because it offers two completely different portrayals of migration. On the one hand, there is Julie Summers, a young middle class South African woman who migrates legally and with relative ease. On the other hand, there is Ibrahim ibn Musa, an undocumented immigrant from an unnamed North African village. Both the characters are disconnected from their 'traditional' homes: Julie has cut herself from her wealthy parents, and Ibrahim has been living in Johannesburg under an assumed name to avoid deportation to his home country. Julie's experiences suggest that one's understanding of home depends on changes in one's understanding of social and cultural dynamics. Her discomfort with her family's continued privilege in the new South Africa prompts her to redefine her notion of "home" in a way that reflects her progressive cultural values.

In contrast, Ibrahim's understanding of 'home' is noticed in the perceived material advantages of any given relationship or location. At the end of the novel, he chooses to continue pursuing his goal of obtaining permanent residence in the west even though Julie remains behind in his family home. Ibrahim's apparently single-minded search for economic opportunity is hampered by racial and religious prejudices. Although this novel was published before the September 11, 2001 terror

study in USA. It shows how such social stereotyping has long impacted on Arab and Muslim people, especially men

Chapter Five

Summation

South African literature witnessed the increasing social commitment of writers in the very process of articulating people's collective consciousness against the struggle they have faced. The writers, through their works have exposed to the world the anguish of the social and political incarceration and its effect on people. In a hostile world, where modernity had already set to abduct the spirit of life of the individual, Gordimer analyses the occult problems of the miserable and wretched people of South Africa.

Nadine Gordimer talks about marginalization in terms of not only blacks and whites, but also women and men and the marginalization among whites. There are margins within margins and centres within centres. She delivers the message that racism and subordination operate at several rungs. The novels of Gordimer rapidly changed the entire history of South Africa capturing the real pictures of life in the forlorn continent. Historical events forming the backdrop of the novels, gives a meaningful message to the public who monopolize the ideas and thoughts. The political, social and economic struggles of South Africa build up an extremely fresh fictional world. The novel reflects the situation in various alternatives which help to bring about transformation in the country.

The present study scrutinizes the political, social, and cultural milieu of South Africa as presented in Gordimer's novel. The introductory chapter outlines the growth and development of African literature. The contemporary writer deals with the oppressed and neglected sections of the society are

discussed. The chapter analyses the position of Gordimer as South African writer, her contribution to the literary world, outline of the plot of the novel, the relevance and the scope of the study are recorded and the review of the literature, the methodology adopted and the structure of the thesis.

Gordimer has repeatedly maintained that as a South African, her adherence lies with the country and she feels that as a writer, the novelist has responsibility towards the place of her birth. The novelist had recorded the 37 years history of South Africa enduring the devastating changes and the real events of South African history of the marginalized, the separated and fuming figures in the apartheid free new South Africa.

The Pickup deals with the familiar themes of the possibilities of personal redemption through immersion in the politically alien and culturally other. The author brings in the elements of history to analyse the lives of the characters relating them to the historical situations. The novels of Gordimer provide a haunting picture of the white domination and the ironies underlying the comfortable provincial white South African society, voicing the moral inability of an individual in the society that has consistently battered millions of its citizens.

The vision of the novelist in picturing South Africa, free from letters of colour and gender, is also revealed. She is anxious to know and witness the role of the Blacks and the whites in the apartheid free South Africa. Hence, the novelist prophetically visualizes the future of South Africa with the Blacks and the Whites live in peace and harmony, prior to the annihilation of apartheid. A white writer, deeply devoted to Black Literature and its people,

the writer presents an honest unprejudiced stance where black and white characters are presented equally without artificiality.

Critics have appraised Gordimer's preoccupation with the theme of apartheid. Her single-minded pursuit of the theme of apartheid can be explained as the consequence of life in South Africa. She has lived in the midst of brutality and she has been witnessing man's inhumanity to man-the cruel law of apartheid. This explains why her writings are so full of apartheid-related themes.

Nadine Gordimer's writings span a prolonged period of colonial rule. Though South Africa changed hands during the twentieth century, the predicament of the natives did not improve. Apartheid rule replaced the colonial rule. In fact, there was a second innings of the colonial era in the form of apartheid.

Any country's history is shaped by opposing forces. South African history is no exception. Gordimer's works record the changing history of the opposition. The dialectic or the opposing trends of the British and the Afrikaner politics gave way to the conflict involving the black and white races. After the abolition of apartheid, the native rulers are not without problems. The native opposition parties are fighting the native government, thus mimicking the previous dialectic.

Present research points to the fact that Gordimer is not without solutions to the problem of apartheid. She believed that South Africa could achieve redemption once they got rid of the evil law. For example, she suggests that interracial marriages pave a path towards racial harmony.

The Pickup continues to deal with problems of [illegible] bureaucratic arbitrariness and the connections between the private and the political, but it lifts these problems from a local or national to a global level with the story's setting changing from liberal Post-apartheid Johannesburg to a conspicuously unnamed Arab country in the second and larger part of the novel. The inter racial love story between Julie and Abdu thus picks up Gordimer's theme of Self and Other and widens its scope from the racial opposition 'Black and White' to the cultural one between 'East and West'.

With the thematic choice *The Pickup*, like several other fictional stories of 2001, has regrettably gained in topicality. To pick up the theme of Arabic – Islamic cultures came probably quite naturally to a writer that has always been filled under what at various times

called 'Common Wealth literature', 'New Literatures in English', 'World Literatures in English' or 'Post-colonial literatures'. The post-colonial aspect is given a particularly ironic twist in this novel as South Africa- a former colony itself- is here contrasted to another post-colonial culture, which meanwhile has fallen prey to the neo-imperialism of western capitalist states for which the New South Africa described in the novel paradoxically serves as an example.

The unfailing feature of Gordimer's works is humanism. The strands of her different themes are always held together by the unifying theme of truth about humanity. She wrote about the pains and aspirations of blacks were considered as less than human. Her writings are deeply rooted in the social and political milieu of South Africa, yet they are not parochial After all,

marginalization exists in one form or the other in all parts of the world. Wherever her readers hail from, they can relate to the characters and situations they find in her works. Greatness of any literature lies in its ability to make the readers relate their own experience to the fictional experience.

Gordimer fictionalizes the real life events of South African society which reflects the nuances of the country by delineating the experiences of the blacks and the whites. As an ardent fighter for apartheid, the novelist is very confrontational in portraying the segregated society under the official policy of racial discrimination that ably condemned the Blacks of their rights. The writer has exhibited the pain and strain, regression and repression, suppression and oppression, and confusion and the unfairness that exists in South Africa. Gordimer novels deals with motifs of understanding, clemency and adjustment record the vain efforts of the middle-class whites and the poor blacks to respect each other's values. The artistic representation of the bond between the whites and the blacks announces the novelist's inner longing to be together even in the frustrating situations.

Gordimer examines the social twists of the apartheid through the microcosm of the family relationships in apartheid free South Africa. In *The Pickup*, the novelist logically portrays the inner pressure, pain, isolation, denunciation, love and life which mark the main characteristic features. *The Pickup* portray the unbridgeable gap between the blacks and the whites. The system of apartheid has established long and wide gap between the blacks and the whites that they could not overcome it even after the abolishment of apartheid.

The novelist cautiously presents the predicaments of the blacks which make them feel dislocated and an alien in South Africa. Apartheid created a heinous system of mistreatment in which racist minority monopolize economic wealth, while the vast majority of the oppressed; the blacks are damned to poverty. The novel reveal the pitiable condition of the blacks who are ghettoized, viciously presented and brutally outlawed from all avenues of decency, hope, progress and livelihood. Gordimer portrays the excruciating pain and traumatic experiences of the Blacks in South Africa. The dilemma of the voiceless people without permit pass is well depicted by the novelist in this novel. Their life in the crowded reserves, and always at the beck and call of the whites as a source of cheap labour brings to light the pathetic condition of the blacks.

"Cultural diversity", a spectacular cultural tapestry of the novel is realistically outlined by Gordimer to express the culture of South Africa through the use of myths and rituals. Public follies, troubles and ambiguities of life pictured in the novels display the cultural traits of the country. Rituals mentioned in the novels clearly exhibit the cultural splendour of the society to which the author is dedicated. Religious beliefs and customs are presented with an objective to present everyman's culture. The rituals beginning from the birth till death are exhibited to display the culture of common South Africa candidly. The novelist's exceptional exhibition of Islamic rituals is still in practice among the Muslims. The ritualistic practices are strictly followed by all Muslims and Gordimer pictures the living figures who readily comply

themselveswith all ritualistic practices. In this novel the use of The Quran exemplify the author's regard for religion. Through the commandments of

these scriptures, the novelist creates awareness in people of the moral code they have to follow in their lives. As Gordimer herself has envisaged, the South African culture is a portrait of harmony in the pluralistic society of whites and blacks.

Dislocation is a feature of colonization that the author views with understanding. Her language is European and her style is modem, yet her approach to the native subject is humane. Her novels transcend journalistic reporting by creating the imaginary yet convincing plights of immigrants and exiles. The theme of the travails of living in restricted areas in her books is a constant reminder of her disquiet about the living conditions of blacks.

Cultural adaptions in the novels reflect the harmonious living of the blacks and the whites in future in South Africa. The novels of Gordimer are models or statutory books of perception, which any one at any era could follow. The life and experience in South Africa had given the novelist, a clear vision as an outsider and insider to portray the suffering, the cultural diversity and the encounter between the private and public. Gordimer through the novels create awareness in the society by revealing the horrors of racial discrimination, cultural diversity, the encounters between the private and public thereby bridging the unbridgeable.

The cultural framework clearly makes for a hierarchal shift in gender relations between Julie and Abdu, power structures are far from being definite in either context. The depiction of Arabic-Islamic culture in this respect particularly surprising. It is indeed a patriarchal culture, but in Ibrahim's family it is less the father than the all-pervading "presence" of the mother that

resides over the symbolic order. Besides, the very segregation of men and women in this culture creates a space of female solidarity and agency, that in Gordimer's Arabian country seems to be less limited than is usually assumed for Islamic culture in general.

The binaries of the oriental and the western, civilized and primitive, rich and poor, men and women, master and servant, liberal and radical, personal and political, and neo-colonialism and trade unionism are some of the examples of postcolonial contraries. The binaries of Western Materialism and Oriental Spiritualism are touched upon in *The Pickup*. The conflict between immigrants and natives is another question. In this novel, only immigrants from poor Oriental nations face punishment in South Africa. The author holds that the South African whites have forgotten their own history. They are all descendent of immigrants. They cannot afford to look down upon the other immigrants.

The author also comments on the implicit acceptance by blacks of their own inferiority. The compliance of blacks in their subaltern position is evident in her characterization of black servants. She does not marginalize blacks' life in her works. Her writings depict the ambitious self-consideration of the colonizer neglecting the welfare of the colonized. Maureen Smaies is a typical colonizer justifying the stance of imperialists as benefactors. Women, servants, workers, exiles, ex-prisoners, immigrants and coloured are some of the marginalized sections in South Africa. Gordimer lends voice to the voiceless that live on the periphery.

Gordimer presents characters exiles, either within their own country or in another country. The protagonists' desire to flee their respective lives, the narrative calls into question gender roles and social class. Julie summers and Abdu see in the "Other" a freedom that cannot be obtained at home. Like other Gordimer stories written during post-apartheid, the novel "offers a picture of the new South Africa and its usual problems of race, class and bureaucracy, taken from a local to a global level," but what is different is the shift "from post-apartheid Johannesburg to an Arab country and its villages deserts and Muslim people".

Julie and Abdu serve as contrasts to show privilege and poverty to examine the realms of what is legal and illegal. However, gender and the spaces in which gender comes are shown to have the greatest potential in the novel. Traditional female gender roles within homo-social bonds become powerful, whereas male gender roles are ineffectual and have no real authority within the context of female spheres.

The gender structures of the liberal post-apartheid "New South Africa" as well as those of the traditional patriarchy in the unnamed Arabic-Islamic country cannot be easily pinned down and opposed. As the relationship between Julie and Abdu shows they are continuously modified through negotiation.

The structural ironies in Gordimer's novel, subtly undermining neat stereotypical distinctions, that though it clearly builds on the opposition of orient and occident, the former is represented by a man, latter by woman and what is more by a while woman from South Africa, a country belonging to a

continent which traditionally has been more closely allied with images of the orient than of the west. Just as in the case of colonialism, the opposition would to deconstruct itself here because the very category that needs to be defined already contains elements of the other it projects for just that purpose.

On the other hand, South Africa at the beginning of the 21st century indeed seems to be an apt example of what generally are considered to be the unifying features of the west. Its process of political renewal, its liberalism and its economic progress make the "New South African" society appear decidedly Western. As Abdu puts it:

> European – but they don't call themselves that, they are not in Europe - they belong here. So – white, young, not smart but dressed in the style they think disguises the difference between rich and poor, the way my overalls outfit was supposed to disguise that I'm an illegal on the run" (94).

Being a post-colonial country with a high degree of cultural diversity, however, the "New South Africa" is also threatened by the loss of its cultural or national identity seen from this angle it is maybe not accidental that a writer in Post-apartheid South Africa becomes interested in the Orient and cultural other..

Gordimer, who is interested in imposing the quality of social life, has tried for social transformation through art. Through the characters the writer makes the readers and the society aware of the existing social evils and to rise in rage whenever they see such evils in life. Gordimer has probed deep into the most crucial human problems faced by the whites and the blacks and have

artistically recorded them in the [illegible] ways and means of eradicating them [illegible] freedom should be earned by the individual and [illegible] fight for their own rights and equip their mind with [illegible] impossible for them to achieve dignity and self-respect. The individual himself is responsible for the ultimate pain or the joy and that he should not accept compromise of any kind.

For eradicating the evils suffered by the down-trodden, she suggests remedies from within; the protest should come from within. The urge should flame the sparks of freedom as it is their right to rightly live in the continent. The blacks are not born low, they are to be acknowledged, recognized and respected. They should have the nerve to question the whites. As a humanist writer, the novelist believes that dawn and brightness in their lives is in their hands. Gordimer presages a new society founded on trust and true love. She exerts the South African whites that decades of oppression and repression have caused deep and bleeding wounds in the minds of the Blacks; only love and compassion for the fellow beings would heal and evaluate their humanity. She affirms that only true love could put an end to all kinds of injustices and exploitation and help to build a modern society where race or colour is not the deciding criterion. The novelist makes them realize their day is not too far. Thus,

Gordimer brings to radiance, the spirit, upheaval and awakening of the downtrodden.

The predicaments of the blacks are the predicaments of any one who occupies the edge in the society. All her writings radiate immense compassion for human beings. A rare writer with a cute perception and love for the country, her feelings is that the edges have to move towards the centre. The novelist makes the marginalized assume optimistically that the future world would be better for them, bereft of division, economic status and without racial prejudice. Thus, Gordimer through the novels create awareness in the society by revealing the horrors of racial discrimination, cultural diversity, the encounter between the private and the public thereby bridging the unbridgeable.

The novels of Gordimer are models or statutory books of perception, which any one at any era could follow. All her works are forays of different problems and predicaments faced by the blacks and the whites in the changing political scenario of South Africa. The life and experience in South Africa had given the novelist, a clear vision as an outsider and insider to portray the suffering, the cultural diversity and the encounter between the private and the public.

Gordimer's books demand that her readers approach her with rich schema. Her works are highly literary, replete with references to other great contemporary African and European writers. Comprehension of her works is directly proportionate to the reader's concentration and effort and, of course, his previous literary and critical knowledge. She has a highly objective style that makes the reader feel that she is sometimes too cold to demonstrate any warmth or closeness. Gordimer's complex, detached and cold style renders comprehension difficult for most of the readers. Some of her works are as

Gordimer has always presented man in his environment. There is dialectic or conflict at the end of which there is self-realization. She has spelt out that at the end of colonization a situation will emerge where new conflicts will spring up between opposite forces. One conflict is resolved only to give way to another. Intertextuality is a common trend in her works. Her works have been influenced by other writings as well as by the political events in her country. Incidents happening around were the raw material with which she worked.

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Aphonic Aural: A Study of Afflictions in Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence*

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Abstract

The paper examines about the feminist perspective in Shashi Deshpande's novel *That Long Silence* which depicts the inner dilemma and conflict of the female protagonist. In 1990's the tradition -bounded society entitled male as the superior, even his mistakes cannot be questioned. But the female where considered as the suppressed, have to live in silence and sacrifice her life between the four walls. She should not have any desires and emotions concerning about herself. In this spell-bound society male has the right to choose violence, while the female has to remain silent, but violence is not a solution for all the problems. Thus, the paper shows how women are treated brutally and ends up her life in staying silent between the walls of their house and it is an exploration of the nature of the cultural construction of the female identity.

Keywords: Betrayal, Identity, Marriage, Patriarchy, Silence.

Feminism has its origin from the Latin word 'femina' meaning woman. From the early 20th Century for securing women's suffrage in the western countries and the later well-organized Socio-political movement for freedom from patriarchal oppression the term "Feminism" became popular. In the works of women writers, the feeling of marginality and their views against the purely masculine world has been echoing. The major concerns of the contemporary literature all over the world is to highlight the plight of woman, problems, financial and emotional exploitation and their mental anguish in the male dominated society in every sphere of life.

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Shashi Deshpande's novels mainly focus on the suffering of women, who belong to Indian middle class family. The development of girl child in Deshpande's novel has been explained minutely. She focuses on the removal of women from a male dominated society and find out their own identity in the society serves as a major theme in her works. Silent sufferings of Indian women for years has been mainly focused by Deshpande in *That Long Silence*. Her novel *Dark Holds No Terrors* portrays about the lack of perfect understanding between husband and wife which was published in 1980. The situation of Indian women after their marriage is clearly depicted by her in both the novels *That Long Silence* and *Dark Holds No Terrors*. Her work *A Matter of Time* moves beyond feminist concerns published in1996. In Deshpande's novels the image of middle class women is highlighted, how they are bonded up with tradition and modernity.

The feminist perspective is marked by male-controlled power in the structure of Indian family. Women are colonized in the patriarchal society which results into the relationship of inequality leading to injustice. Women have to assert themselves through self-discovery and self-reliance. Simon de Beauvoir in her work *The Second Sex* says, "Two Separate beings, in different circumstances, face to face in freedom and seeking justification of their existence through one another, will always live an adventure full of risk and promises"(248).

Shashi Deshpande's novel *That Long Silence* was published in 1988, which was an award winning novel. The novel holds her to the position of Sahitya Academy award winning Indian Novelist in English. It is a psychological novel that explores the psyche of a woman. Deshpande clearly shows that woman's backwardness in the society starts within her family. Deshpande visualizes her protagonist in a realistic manner. She highlights the conflict between tradition and modernity in relation to women in middle class society. The quest for self - identity is a major role played by women in Deshpande's novel.

In olden days, Women were controlled by male dominated society and they were unknown to the outside world. Deshpande focusses on the marital relationship and seeks to expose the tradition by which woman is trained to play her subservient role in the family. Deshpande's novel is a part of man-made patriarchal traditions and uneasiness of the modern Indian woman.

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That Long Silence is both symbolic and metaphoric. The destiny of Indian women down the centuries show that they have to be calm in all the situations even when they are refuted, abused, beaten, expelled and raped they have to be silent. The main focus in women forum is to bring the oppression faced by women in various forms and thus *That Long Silence* contains rich approach. Deshpande's novel portrays the life of middle class women who are aware of social and cultural disabilities to which they are subjected in the male dominated society.

The subjugation of women does not happen because of men; both find it difficult to outgrow the images and roles allotted to them by society. Jaya, the protagonist of the novel undergoes self-expression and psychological traumas. Jaya in the beginning of the novel seems to be a girl who wants to go for oxford and win Chatfield Prize or Ellis Prize. Her dreams get shattered after her father's death at an early stage and she got married to Mohan. Mohan wants her to be obedient and he even changes her identity as "Suhasini". Jaya according to her father the name seems to be victory, but Mohan discarded it and renamed her.

Jaya tries to mould herself into a new identity, she flits between the two linguistic identities. "And I Jaya. But I had been Suhasini as well. I can see her now, the Suhasini, who was distinct from Jaya, a soft, smiling, placid, motherly woman. A woman who coped."(Goyal, 257). *That Long Silence* traces the passage of a woman through a puzzle of doubts and fears towards her declaration.

Jaya after her marriage started her career as a writer. The assumption of masculine right to control is seen in Mohan's attitude to Jaya's writing career. When Jaya's story reached to great applause among the audience, Mohan starts blaming about her writings that people may think her writings are her own lifestyle and, he puts an end to her writings. The entire novel brings out the stale married life in a middle class home and Deshpande tells the story from the wife's point of view.

In Mohan's family, women were so definite about their roles and duties. But Jaya had no idea about her role in that family. After her marriage she becomes concerned only about the taste and interests of Mohan. Jaya lost her authenticity and shaped herself to the wishes of Mohan, her likings was kept away from Mohan. Jaya at last learns that she has to be silent always and has no right to question him.

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Shashi Desphande's protagonists are strong enough to refuse their individuality for the sake of upholding the traditional role models laid down by society for women. But there is a temporary withdrawal to resolve their problems. In this novel, Jaya undergoes mental trauma because of her husband's illegal earnings at office. Jaya had to accept all the things done by her husband without questioning him. Especially, middle class women remain silent about their husband's desires. Jaya started question herself whether woman are born to suffer and that too without any complaint about their lives. Jaya in this novel holds the position for all the injustice.

The novel was concerned with a woman's quest for self-exploration into female psyche and an understanding of the mysteries of life. The novel poses a host of women's problems, their dilemmas, disappointments and frustrations besides the self-assertion of Jaya. Deshpande's novels holds on to extra-marital relationships, that turns out to be a fruitful relationship of Jaya and Mr.Kamat. Kamat was a widower, who was a neighbour of Jaya in Dadar. Kamat was the one who encouraged Jaya to continue her career as a writer. He advises Jaya to be honest to her and realise her own faults. Kamat said,

> Spare me your complexes. And you're a fool if you think I was joking. I'm warning you – beware of this "women are the victims" theory of yours…Take yourself seriously, woman. Don't sulk behind a false name. And work – work if you want others to take you seriously. (Goyal, 289)

When Jaya feels sad about her father's death, Kamat seems to be her comforter. The feeling towards Kamat and Jaya was more than friendship but Jaya remains silent when Kamat is about to die. She becomes silent and becomes indifferent towards her friend for the sake of her married life. Jaya's negative approach and her habit of analysing every situation causes havoc in her personal life. In Indian context, it is unrealistic view that considers men all the time at the oppressing side and women seems to be in the oppressed side of the patriarchy.

Through the protagonist's conscious raising voice, struggling to assert her femininity, Deshpande gets to the root of existence and gives outlet to a kind of female subjectivity which refuses to reconcile and

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identify herself with a patriarchal and male dominated society. Through her female protagonists, seems to convey the message that marital polarizations defect human potential and individual happiness.

Deshpande is a chief writer in the way she utters human emotions, the fear and feelings experienced by humans. The paper portrays the condition and status of women and how they suffer in the patriarchal society without having any identity of their own. Here we view an individualistic woman's alienation and paralysis of the self in the context of an oppressive, female corrosive system which family system imposes and reproduces in India.

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Self Beyond the Mask in John Knowles *A Separate Peace*

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Abstract

The paper examines about a harrowing and luminous parable of the dark side of adolescence. It follows the friendship of the serious, intellectual Gene and the athletic, charismatic Phineas and their relationship take a moment to terrible consequences while they face a tragic turn. The novel was published during the early years of Second World War; *A Separate Peace* is timeless in its description of adolescence during a period when the entire country was losing its innocence. It is a crowning achievement and an undisputed American classic. The paper holds a dark tone because of the back and forth feelings that Gene has about Finny.

Queer theory was rapidly growing field in the critical theory tradition, which emerged in the early 1990s. Often examining the intersection of capitalism, gender, hetero-sexism and the state, queer theory is constantly seeking to break down norms and question the status quo. *A Separate Peace* may on the surface seem a novel about dealing with social power and learning what it means to be a man during such confused times but when looked at deeper it is the story of young man dealing with his own internalized homophobia. Gene hates himself for the way he feels and so he takes out his anger on Finny. Queer theory builds both upon feminist challenges to the idea that gender is part of the essential self and upon gay/lesbian studies' closes examination of the socially constructed nature of sexual acts and identities.

Italian feminist and film theorist Teresa de Lauretis coined the term queer theory for a conference she organized at the University of California, Santa Cruz in 1990 and a special

issue of Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies she edited based on that conference.

A Separate Peace was Knowles first published novel and became his best-known work. It explores morality, patriotism, and loss of innocence through its narrator, Gene. The novel set at boys' boarding school in New England during early years of World War II which follows friendship of the serious, intellectual Gene and the athletic, charismatic Phineas and the tragic turn their relationship takes when a moment's impulse has terrible consequences. *A Separate Peace* is timeless in its description of adolescence during a period when the entire country was losing its innocence; it is an American classic, published more than fifty years ago and a bestseller for decades, striking in its depiction of coming-of-age and the struggle to understand human nature.

A Separate Peace was adapted for a film in 1972, directed by Larry Peerce. It was adapted by John Knowles and Fred Segal, from the former's best-selling novel of the same name. it was released on September 27, starred Parker Stevenson, who would later rise to fame as Frank Hardy on The Hardy Boys/Nancy Drew Mysteries and as "Craig Pomeroy" on Baywatch.

Knowles is masterful in conjoining his context, the circumstances surrounding the events of the novel and his subtext, the underlying desires and meanings. Even when the war is being talked about, it's being talked about. And often when the war is being talked about, the baser human nature that causes wars and fights between friends is also being talked about. At the beginning of the novel, Finny has made up a peaceful world of his own and he invites his friend Gene to come and occupy it with him. At this point, Gene can only find peace through his relationship with Finny. By the end of the book, however, he has sort of found himself, through dealing with the effects of hurting Finny and has figured out how to live with him. So now he is separate from Finny and is at peace.

The title became significant when both Gene and Finny need to achieve a separate peace they both have a separate talents. The paper examines about the context and subtext within Gene and Phineas's friendship. The context being it is 1942, and the boys are seeing their relationship through the lens of their times, not ours. The subtext being, there is clearly love and desire between Gene and Phineas- but what kind?

In an interview with the *Sun-Sentinel* in 1987, John Knowles had this to say

> Freud said any strong relationship between two men contains a homoerotic element. If so in this case, both characters are totally unaware of it. It would have changes everything; it wouldn't have been the same story. In that time and place, my characters would have behaved totally differently....If there had been homoeroticism between Phineas and Gene, I would have put it in the book, I assure you. It simply wasn't there. (207)

Finny has to stay at home while he heals and while he is gone Gene becomes like a whole new person. Without the burden of Finny being a constant reminder to him of his sexual desire Gene is free to be the man he thinks he should be. He becomes more confident and happy. He takes Finny's place as top dog on campus. His love for Finny is not gone through, which can be clearly seen by the way treats Finny's belongings. There is once scene where Gene puts on Finny's pink shirt and where it around his bedroom. Not only is it a very romantic idea to where someone else's clothes but it happens to be a shirt that is in itself a gay symbol. Gene also only feels comfortable doing this behind closed doors where no one else can know.

> I decided to put the same clothes. We wore the same size, and although he always criticized mine he used to wear them frequently, quickly forgetting what belonged to him and what to me. I never forget, and the evening I put on his cordovan shoes, his pants, and I looked for and finally found his pink shirt, neatly laundered in drawer. Its high, somewhat stiff collar against my neck, the wide cuffs touching my wrists, the rich material against my skin excited a sense of strangeness and distinction; I felt like some nobleman, some Spanish grandee.(62)

Gene goes through a more painful process by remaining in the Devon to fight for his salvation within himself. The conflict that he feels inside regarding the relationship with Finny becomes the source of his final development. Throughout the novel, Gene is forced to examine his own feelings over and over again because of the accident he had committed against Finny's fall. When Gene realizes that he has to be responsible for his actions; the repeated painful examination of his feelings and guilt result in growth.

Gene's feeling was genuine, but his feelings towards Finny have been ruined by jealousy. Finny addresses Gene that he is his "best pal", silence occurs between the two when Gene agrees the statement of Finny. Finny stated

> I hope you're having a pretty good time here. I know I kind of dragged you away at the point of a gun, but after all you can't come to shore with just anybody and you can't come by yourself, and at this teen-age period in life the proper person is your best pal. (48)

Gene remains silent when Finny address him as a best pal, this shows a little jealousy of Gene. Once in this novel life of Gene was saved by Finny while they climbed the tree. But Gene's mixed feeling towards Finny cause him to blame for "dying" almost in the tree. Gene have some "internal gratitude" towards Finny when his life was saved by Finny, but jealousy takes place to resent Finny, making him look like the bad guy.

Gene's jealousy of Finny corrupts their friendship and leads Gene to "jounce" Finny out of the tree. Some of Gene's jealous feelings toward Finny are casual, such as his desire for Finny's carefree charm. Others are more deeply rooted, so that even Gene doesn't understand their origin. Gene's jealousy only wanes after Finny's injury destroys the traits about Finny that Gene most envied. Gene simply wants to look like Finny and he wants to experience a little bit of his life, like a nobleman and like a Spanish grandee. Ultimately, Gene's jealousy deepens into a hatred for his good friend, the destructive quality of his jealousy leads him to negative consequences.

Self-understanding explores the difficulties during adolescence explores in this novel. A difficult friendship with fellow student and rival leads to a further confusion of identity when narrator enters adulthood in a time of war. The characters are forced to deal with their selves, actions, and personal identities. The novel discovers the teenage characters own identities as individuals. Gene struggles to express his own identity before his friend, Finny, who had broken the school record in swimming, his identity has no value they remain silent."To keep silent about this amazing happening deepened the shock for me. It made Finny seem too unusual for – not friendship, but too unusual for rivalry. And there were few relationships among is at Devon not based on rivalry." (45)

When Gene alters his own identity to be more like Finny their friendship is threatened. Gene andFinny's identities seem to merge both are happy and close. When Gene is a senior at the school, he provokes at identifying himself through Finny. Gene's anger and opposition against Finny's personality separate himself from Finny.

The novel ends with Finny coming back to school with a mostly healed leg. While there the other boys inform Finny about what actually happened on the branch. He had previously thought that it was an accident but when he finds out that his best friend seemingly knocked him off on purpose he becomes irate. At that time Gene reaches his peak of maturity. His act of courage to go to Finny and admit his guilt is evidence that he has finallygrown. Finny rushes out of the room and in his haste he trips down the stairs and in doing so breaks his leg again.Finny's trust in Gene's innocence is evident when Finny says, "But I do believe – it's important after all form to believe you. Christ, I've got to believe you, at least. I know you better than anybody." (163)

The next morning the doctor informs Gene that during surgery Finny died when a piece of bone marrow got into his blood stream and traveled to his heart, stopping it completely. The symbolism of Finny's death is apparent. He essentially died of a broken heart and Gene was the cause. Gene gains maturity and becomes an adult Finny dies, as he realizes that his own enemy was not Finny but his ignorant heart.

The themes become more substantial when Gene is wearing Phineas' clothes. The theme of living through another's identity, is made clear again when Phineas said, "we're aiming for the 44 Olympics"(121), this showed that Phineas was living through Gene. Therefore, it shows Gene and Phineas' identities were interdependent. The themes appears once more at the end of the book when Gene said "Phineas-filled", showed that he still had some of Phineas identity. Knowles did not write about two boys who know they are gay or have conscious gay feelings, but he certainly created a compelling resonance for boys who do. The overall lesson people can take from this novel is to be more independent. The novel chronicles the boys' development as the war encroaches further and further into their lives.

A Separate Peace is an American Classic and great best seller for over thirty years. This novel is timeless in its description of adolescence during a period when the entire country was losing its innocence as students were forced to involve in Second World War.

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(Re-accredited with "A" Grade in the third cycle by NAAC)

Certificate

This is to certify that M. ABARNA , RESEARCH SCHOLAR , St. MARY's COLLEGE, TUTICORIN participated / presented paper entitled SELF BEYOND THE MASK IN JOHN KNOWLES "A SEPERATE PEACE" at the One Day State Level Seminar on " LITERARY THEORIES: BEFORE AND AFTER" organised by the Post Graduate and Research Department of English, Aditanar College of Arts and Science, Tiruchendur held on 27th September 2019.

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Ambiguity in Hybridity: A Postcolonial Diasporic Reading of Meera Syal's *Anita and Me*

A Dissertation submitted to

St. Mary's College (Autonomous)

Thoothukudi

affiliated to

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in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the award of the Degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN ENGLISH

By

BERCINA FERNANDO A.

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RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **Ambiguity in Hybridity: A Postcolonial Diasporic Reading of Meera Syal's *Anita and Me*** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is a work done by Bercina Fernando A. during the year 2019-2020, and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled **Ambiguity in Hybridity: A Postcolonial Diasporic Reading of Meera Syal's *Anita and Me*** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is my original work and that, it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diplomd or similar title.

Bercina Fernando.A

SEPTEMBER 2020 **BERCINA FERNANDO A.**

THOOTHUKUDI

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PREFACE

The dissertation entitled **Ambiguity in Hybridity: A Postcolonial Diasporic Reading of Meera Syal's *Anita and Me*** encapsulates the influence of the culture and the society on the immigrants in the formation of identity. Through the life journey of a juvenile protagonist, Syal addresses the notion of home and homeliness and the individual's search for native identity in an adopted land. The immigrants are found tattered between two disparate cultures that pull them in two opposite directions. As a second generation South Asian diasporic writer situated in Britain, Syal deals with the feelings and aspiration of young adolescent girls who work hard to be accepted as part of the English community in spite of the stereotypical prejudices people had against the immigrants. The protagonist breaks herself free of these stereotypes and is not crippled by any fear of being different, and she is able to relocate her real self by embracing the challenges of the hybrid identity.

The thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter **Introduction** throws light on the perception of Literature in general, Diasporic Literature, Contemporary writings in the field of diaspora, Meera Syal and her works.

Chapter two entitled, **Conflicts of Hybridity** analyses the impotent position occupied by the immigrants and the agony undergone by them through the life of the protagonist. The chapter captures truthfully how the immigrants encounter dilemmas, perplexities, hopelessness and the questions of belonging due to the wide gap between the culture of the community to which they belong and the world in which they live.

The third chapter, **The Politics of Performativity** deals with the usage of language as a significant tool to reformulate one's own identity and alter the ways by which others perceive an individual. It also throws light on the rupture caused between the aural and visual identities which rise out due to the incongruity between the visually but not audibly racialised identity.

The fourth chapter, **Relocating the Real Self** highlights the fact that self-actualisation would liberate oneself from the stereotypical framework set up by the members of the dominant group and embark on a journey toward maturation.

The final chapter sums up all the important aspects dealt in the preceding chapters.

The researcher has consistently referred to and resorted to the guidelines prescribed by MLA Handbook 7th Edition for the preparation of the thesis.

Chapter One

Introduction

Literature mirrors the lives and culture of the society. It reflects on the commonality of human experience rather than focusing on a particular individual. "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past" (Marx 103).

The word 'diaspora' has gained a different connotation in the contemporary world than that of which has been used two hundred years ago in association with the expulsion of Jewish people. In this controversial world people move in large numbers from underdeveloped countries to developed countries in search of security or better livelihood. Initially, the term diaspora was used to refer to the Jews who were banished from Israel, the Holy Land and taken as captives to Babylon around 607 B.C. All these Jewish people were tortured, captured and chased away from their land.

History says that they were scattered throughout the world and ran away to every continent. They lost their country and their identity. The nation of Israel's name was changed from Israel to Palestine by the Roman Government. They dispersed from a specific origin 'center' to several parts of the world. Having settled in foreign regions, they felt that they were constantly insulted, alienated and not fully accepted by their host society. They considered Israel as their true, ideal home and the idea of returning to their original homeland remained a part of their collective consciousness. Due to this continuing sense of insecurity and lack of 'homeland', they had to undergo bitter persecution for they have been considered as the proverbial 'Other' in

terms of religious and cultural practices. Thus 'diapsora' comes to signify the scattering of people who were forced to leave their place of origin due to some socio-economic, political and cultural reasons.

Diasporic communities consist of a large group of displaced people who share a common cultural heritage such as single, ethnic, religious affiliations but are banished from their homeland due to some social or political reasons. The migratory experience of these displaced communities is the major source of influence for the formation of Diasporic Literature. Being expelled from the homeland, completely cut-off from their roots, they have to face harsh social, political and cultural realities which bewilder them. Having been estranged from the place which was once familiar creates in them a yearning for their homeland.

William Safran, in "Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return," has discussed the six characteristics of diaspora that the diasporic communities share in common. The first one is the dispersal or scattering of the members of the community or their ancestors from a specific centre to peripheral or foreign regions. The second requires that they keep a collective consideration and are thoughtful and reflect upon their place of origin. Thirdly, they regard themselves alienated and insulated from the real situation, and discarded or cast off totally or partially by the host country. The fourth characteristic is that they recognise their homeland as the true ideal home where they actually belong to and would eventually return if conditions are appropriate. The fifth involves a moral or an ethical obligation or commitment with the reestablishment of their homeland. And the sixth requirement is that they speak about and relate to their homeland in some way and that "their ethno communal consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by the existence of such a relationship" (84).

The features mentioned by Safran that make up a given diaspora are not constant and differ extremely when compared with other groups. It depends precisely on the situation encountered by them and involves their myriad conflicts, their allegiance and commitment to nation-states, and their ambivalence through their societal, economic, political, or cultural manifestations.

Robin Cohen, in *Global Diasporas*, points out the diverse and varied nature of diaspora by elucidating the claim that the ancestral homeland on the diasporic communities, regardless of its nature, a particular engagement with the old country and a specific manifestation of this relationship:

> However, all diasporic communities settled outside their natal (or imagined natal) territories, acknowledge that "the old country" - a notion often buried deep in language, religion, custom, or folklore- always has some claim on their loyalty and emotions. That claim may be strong or weak, or boldly or meekly articulated in a given circumstance or historical period, but a member's adherence to a diasporic community is demonstrated by an acceptance of an inescapable link with their past migration history and a sense of co-ethnicity with others of a similar background. (ix)

The nostalgia for their homeland and being far away from it urges them to create imaginary homelands in their minds, in the place where they are residing. This enables them to engage themselves with their old country and recreate a feeling of being in their homeland.

Recent years the critics bring up the difference between differentiating diaspora from a demographic movement. Not all movements can be considered as a diasporic one. Safran cautions about this:

> ...dislocation from one's native village ... does not automatically bring about a diaspora condition; if it did, a population that moved from a village in France to a place in francophone Belgium- and indeed, many of the inhabitants of modern countries marked by geographical mobility – would have to be considered as living in a diaspora. (87-88)

All forms of migration and dispersion beyond the nation-state need not necessarily be termed as diaspora. Avtar Brah has explained this concept of diaspora by posing a question in *Categories of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* (1996):

> Diaspora are clearly not the same as casual travel.... Paradoxically, diasporic journeys are essentially about settling down, about putting roots 'elsewhere'.... The question is not simply about *who travels* but *when, how, and under what circumastances*? What socio-economic, political, and cultural conditions mark the trajectories of these journeys? What regimes of power inscribe the formation of a specific diaspora. (182)

Brah argues that the journey of a community which answers these above questions is considered as diaspora. He also mentions that there are also other elements at play which include the issues of race, gender, and religion. These elements aid in shedding light on the existence of any diaspora and in finding the distinctiveness of each one.

Robin Cohen in *Global Diaspora* has discussed the four main types of diaspora namely the "Jewish diaspora," (x) (check whether single quotes are permitted) who were taken as captives to Babylon with the destruction of their temple in 586 BC. Then comes the "victim diaspora" (x) where Africans and Armenian were forced to leave their lands in consequence of some traumatic event such as invasion, oppression, enslavement, massacre or exile. The next type is the "labour diaspora" (xi) where the Indians were taken as indentured labourers to work in the plantations of the British, Dutch and French regions from 1830s to about 1920. This was subsequently followed by the "trade diaspora" (xi) where people left their homeland in pursuit of trade and to seek a better employment. Whatever may be the nature of diaspora, each type has one or more common characteristics which can be associated with the diasporic community which far exceeds the traditional notion of victimhood.

Transcending national borders, relocating territorial spaces, and redefining one's status, identity and a sense of belongingness have become a commonplace in this increasingly globalised world. It is no less than a wonder to encounter people who are pledging allegiance to more than four or five homes in different parts of the world. As mentioned by Khaching Toloyan, in *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* (1991), the word 'diaspora,' "now shares meanings with a larger semantic domain that includes words like immigrant, expatriate, refugee, guest-worker, exile community, overseas community, ethnic community" (4-5). He has expanded the list:

> Since the late 1960's, 'diaspora' has come to mean what it does in its imbrications with the terms transnationalism, globalization, migrancy, exile, the post-colonial and the nation. Since the 1980s, the changing meanings of 'belonging' and 'citizenship' have further complicated the conceptual situation. (Toloyan 2012, 4-5)

Moving away from the origin of Jewish diaspora, we could perceive that the Indian diaspora has attained the multiplicity. The natives of India cross their national boundaries and migrate overseas in search of better opportunities, employment and even some are hired as indentured labourers whereas some are forced to leave their lands due to political reasons. With the mass migration of IT professionals, Engineering and medical graduates, in the seventies followed by the effects of globalisation made Indian diasporic community to be the second largest in the world. According to an official report of the Indian government, the Indian Diaspora, "estimated at over twenty-five million, is spread across more than 200 countries with a high concentration in regions such as the Middle East, the United States of America, Malaysia, South Africa" ("Engaging Diaspora", 32).

Four main currents exist for the migration of South Asians. Each current has its own unique background, feature, characteristics and circumstance. Some variations are found in the migration pattern as they vary in accordance with the age, the number of people who left and the historical context which precipitated them.

The earliest flow of migration was in search of trade and business. For instance, many Indians went to East Africa as indentured labourers to construct the Keya-Uganda railway. Although many returned after their contract ended, many choose to stay there as merchants or traders for more than six generations whereas in Arab states they are recent arrivals. In countries like Mauritius and Fiji, indentured labourers of Indian origin cover more than sixty-eight percent of their population and this majority had made them politically and economically dominant. But in countries like San Marino, Iran, and Turkey there are only a minority of Indians residing in these places.

The second flow of migration of began when nearly two million Indians were transported to the British, the French, and the Dutch colonies to work as the substitute for the slave labour in the early nineteenth century. The Slave Trade Act 1807 prohibited the illegal method of carrying slaves to work in the colonies. So these colonies recruited Indian labourers who were willing to work in their plantation for a contract of five years and much of this migration was voluntary and not forced.

The third current of migration happened with the outburst of the most violent event of the twentieth century, the Partition of India and Pakistan. Mass migration took place with the formation of two independent dominions, the 'Republic of India' and the 'Islamic Republic of Pakistan.' The birth of Hindu-majority India and Muslim-majority Pakistan made Muslims feel insecure to reside in India and Hindus to reside in Pakistan. Having felt that the new government would not safe guard their minority rights, Muslims migrated from India to Pakistan, while Hindus left Pakistan for India. Due to the religious conflict many left their homeland and went overseas and settled in far off nations and never chose to return again. They mostly migrated to countries like Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, Malaysia, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania and settled as successful businessmen. Few decades after Indian independence, Punjabis were employed in industries, factories and plantations of foreign soil for low wages as they were unskilled or lowly skilled.

> After the post Independence of India many Indians migrated to the European countries and gradually settled there. They came across the other Indians of the old diaspora whose generations migrated as 'twice migrants' to the European countries. During the 1960s many unskilled Indian migrants followed a 'chain migration'. For example, if a migrant came from Punjab he consciously helped village fellows and

> helped him to bring another village fellow. Britain, Netherlands and Germany are good examples of such networks. Even after restrictions were imposed on migration, the custom of chain migration continued. After the 1970s, many skilled and semi skilled Indians, migrated to Denmark and Norway. (Gautam 12)

This was subsequently followed by the movement of highly skilled Indian IT professionals, teachers, doctors, engineers, and lawyers who left India for US and Canada in search of better wages and career prospects. Some chose to return while others intentionally settled there and became permanent residents abroad. (point good. but there is time gap)

Asians residing in Uganda were entrepreneurial, skilful, industrious and hard-working people, proficient in business, and they formed the backbone of the country's economy. This made the educated Africans to become envious of the position held by the Asians. They wanted to overthrow them from their jobs and replace them with the natives of Africa. After attaining independence, the East African governments started to levy heavy tax upon them, exhorted their wealth and harassed them with the aim of lessening the Asian population. This expulsion of Asians from East Africa due to political reasons pushed them to leave for countries like UK and Canada. Although they had some cultural ties with their homeland they chose to seek their fortune in other countries rather than re-migrating to India.

Of all the four currents the third current was so powerful since the partition of India precipitated a mass migration of nearly two million Indians across the world. Before this event has occurred there was religious coexistence among the natives. They lived in relative peace although there were differences among them in terms of language, culture and tradition. But the independence of India from the British Raj

and the demand for a separate nation to safeguard the minority rights of the Muslims turned to a breathtaking event in India's history. Communal violence rapidly spread across the whole nation mainly along the borders of Punjab. Many Punjabi Sikhs, whether skilled or unskilled, migrated to United Kingdom for economic reasons. They were employed in mines, factories and industries for low-wages.

Britain and United States have always been the nation of migrants. The influx of immigrants after Post-World War II radically brought changes in the demographic composition of Britain. The conflation of cultural diversity existing in Britain has made it a multicultural nation-state. According to the national census in 2011, among 63.2 million residents, South Asians in United Kingdom make up 8% of their population out of which 2.3% are Indians Britons and they are considered as the largest overseas communities of Indian diaspora.

In this newly adopted land they face issues of discrimination and unfair treatment due to racial distinctiveness. Although the passing of Race Relation Act 1968 made it illegal to discriminate any individual on the basis of their skin, the process of transforming institutional and interpersonal racism has been relentlessly slow, and is an ongoing theme in contemporary literary and dramatic work. A great deal is being written to articulate their personal experience and the exploitative tendencies of the whites. Through literary texts they highlight the problems and issues of intolerance, narrow-minded and chauvinistic behaviour towards the minority group due to their racial and ethnic disparities.

As analysed by Avtar Brah, in *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* (2005), memories, narratives of nation, ethnicity or race and storytelling in literary descriptions configure a distinct meaning of diaspora. The diasporic subjects

> ...configure into one journey via a confluence of narratives as it is lived and re-lived, produced, reproduced and transformed through individual as well as collective memory and re-memory. It is within this confluence of narrativity that 'diasporic community' is differently imagined under different historical circumstances. By this I mean that identity of the diasporic imagined community is far from fixed or pre-given. It is constituted within the crucible of the materiality of everyday life; in the everyday stories we tell ourselves individually and collectively. (183)

The two main aspects of diasporic writings are memory and narrative. The role played by memory is central to all forms of literary writings and when it comes to the penning of disaporic experience, it is much more central. Legends, folklore, epics read or heard, methods of worships, procedures of rites and rituals, festivals, and languages serve as mediums to recollect and reminisce about the past. Each of them in the above mentioned list plays its role individually or collectively. Letters, photographs, home remedies, and anecdotes also help connect to the memories of the homeland.

Memory is never detached, secluded and isolated. It has a personal perception: the same incident may be seen distinctly by different people and by the same person in different circumstances and on different occasions. It is likely to be deep rooted in a continuum of other events, people or environments. And most important of all of them is that these recollections naturally get fused with imagination.

> All memory is an emotional going back in the first instance, whether personal or political. And the moment it is expressed through words, it

> acquires language. Verbal evocation or expression shakes it free of the purely personal and gives it a body....Memory seeks narration in multiple ways: vivid recollections, silent references cloaked in something else, metaphors, symbols, parallel events, or by working with consequences of a particular event, which sends the listener back to his own memories or perceptions of the same. Evocation of the past is not merely an individual act: memory may be evoked by many things such as photographs, places, re-enactment of past events, people and the whole lot of it. (Jain 7)

A diasporic writer takes two concomitant moves. First is the temporal move in which the writer looks back at the past and narrates the past events (analepsis), and looks forward and anticipates the future (prolepsis). This move makes the writer to relate fondly to some events of the past and takes one away from the present realities. At the same time, the anticipation of the future raises in the mind the questions of survival and cultural assimilation as the new kind of life pattern that has come into being. The spatial move entails a deterritorialisation and a reterritorialisation, as one shifts from home and settles in a foreign country. So a shift occurs from 'familiar' to 'strange', from the 'old' to the 'new' and the diasporic fiction deals with the comparison and contrasting of these two spaces. This creates a vague idea of existence and a split occurs in their minds giving rise to questions of 'who am I?' and 'where do I belong?' This turns them nostalgic, homesick, homeless, and rootless as they constantly engage in forging new kind of identity. Diasporic writers, in their works, speak about the issues of amalgamation or disintegration of culture that arise out of the immigrant settlement as they are uprooted from their homelands and re-rooted in host country. Uma Parameshwaran has defined it as follows:

> ... first is one of nostalgia for the homeland left behind mingled with fear in a strange land. The second is a phase in which one is busy adjusting to the new environment that there is little creative output. The third phase is the shaping of diaspora existence by involving themselves in ethnocultural issues. The fourth is when they have 'arrived' and start participating in the larger world of politics and national issues. (165)

Conscious attempts are made by the first generation immigrants to pass on their culture and tradition to the upcoming generations. In a way of maintaining culture abroad the first generation immigrants carry with the social, cultural baggage which consists of language, religion, art, music, etc. intact. Some of these elements persist and continue to survive while some have vanished, and others have gone through assimilation, amalgamation, syncretism, and some are to be revitalised.

The place where these immigrants arrive and come in contact with already has its own inhabitants, own culture and therefore a kind of clash occurs. So they make attempt to assimilate into the host culture to gain a sense of identity. But they find themselves in the borderline neither belonging to their homeland nor to their adopted land. The attempt to maintain the traditional culture on one hand and the effort taken to integrate into the adopted culture on other hand develops a kind of dual identity.

There always exists a kind of inequality or a kind of unequal situation in which somebody is superior and the other is treated inferior. The inferior or minority group is therefore suppressed, criticised, treated as the less privileged, and often looked down upon by the dominant or majority class. The discrimination on the basis of race, colour, religion, language, and culture alienates them from the mainstream of

the society. So the attempts made to blur the distinction in order adapt, assimilate and amalgamate within the host society turns futile. This generates in them a feeling of insecurity, rootlessness, and dislocation which results in the formation of fractured identity.

Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*, Indra Sinha's *Animal's People*, Hanif Kureishi's *The Buddha of Suburbia*, Meera Syal's *Anita and Me*, Sunjeev Sahota's *The Year of the Runaways*, Hari Kunzru's *Gods Without Men*, Salman Rushdie's *Midnight Children*, and Tahmima Anam's *A Golden Age* are some of the major contributors of British Asian fiction who unfold the multiplicity of diasporic presence. Nostalgia, homelessness, displacement and dislocation are some of the major themes tackled by them. Being far away from their mother country, their own tradition and their own cultural ethos enable them to construct imaginary homelands in the foreign lands to compensate the gaps of the homelands. These writers who have settled abroad in different continents try to establish a kind of connectivity with their native land by creating imaginary homelands, India of the minds.

Meera Syal, a versatile personality, writer, journalist, actress, TV artist-comedienne, social activist is one among the Indian diaspora residing in England. She was born on 27 June, 1961 in Wolverhampton to Punjabi parents who were one among the refugees who migrated across borders in the wake of the partition of India and Pakistan, and settled in Britain. Syal was brought up in the mining village of Essington in the West Midlands, which serves as the setting for her first novel *Anita and Me*. She attended Queen Mary's High School in Walsall and holds double first in English and Drama from Manchester University. During the course of her studies, she joined the Stephen Joseph Studio and served as a co-author for *One of Us* (1983) for which she received the National Student Drama Award.

Syal has gained popularity by writing screenplays for films such as *Bhaji on the Beach*, *Anita and Me*, and *My Sister Wife*. She is a member of the BBC Television comedy series and has co-authored the script for *Goodness Gracious Me* (1996-2002) which won British Comedy Award and RTS Award, and has performed in *The Kumars at No.42*. The Asian Awards has praised Meera Syal for her outstanding contribution:

> Although perhaps best known for her acting work on radio and television, Meera Syal has long been an accomplished and critically respected novelist. Combining her acting and writing careers in the final year of her drama degree at Manchester, Meera co-wrote and won the National Student Drama Award. Her novels *Anita and Me* and *Life isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee* (1999) are substantial and her work, both in writing and on screen is characterised by the way in which she uses humour to challenge the limits of political correctness. Meera's work as well as being enormously entertaining has made a huge contribution to the border understanding and appreciation of British Asian culture. ("Outstanding Achievement in Television," n.p)

Syal is a member of the Southall Black Sisters, which is a non-profit organisation established in 1979 and it fights against inequality, injustice, and discrimination faced by the British Asian and African Caribbean women. As a social activist and active member of this group, Syal fights for justice, equality, and freedom of the British Asian women in Britain. She is also a journalist and writes occasionally for *The Guardian*.

Syal's semi-autobiographical novel, *Anita and Me* (1996), capsulate her childhood experience of growing up in Tollington. This novel has won her Betty Task Award and was filmed in 2002. Her second novel, *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee* (1999), was translated into German and published under the title *Sari, Jeans and Chilischoten* in 2003. It was also adapted for a three-part television series which brought her many laurels.

Being a daughter of a partition survivor and a second generation immigrant in Britain, Syal laments the loss of the homeland and their changing positions and status in the adopted land. She addresses the notion of home and homelessness, and the ways by which they preserve their ethnic traditions simultaneously adapting themselves to the culture of the host land. Alienation, cross-cultural encounters, racism and violence, culture and belonging, and search for real self are some of the major themes tackled by Syal in her literary works. Through short colourful sketches, her novels dismantle the British perception of Indian communities and remark the stereotypes that are created against them.

Anita and Me, set in 1960s, traces the early childhood days of a nine-year-old Meena, who is the daughter of an Indian immigrant who lives among the white, British working class community growing up in the city of Brimingham. Being more adventurous by nature, Meena dislikes the confined world of the Indian immigrants who frequently visit her house. She imitates and tries to become like Anita in order to fulfill her desire to gain a British identity. But as for her parents and community, "Anita was a bad influence, that was official ... Anita and I were non officially mates" (135).

Meena makes desperate attempts to fit in with the other friends of the yard and to gain their attention and approval. Meena has to face the realities of racial discrimination even though she takes more pains to emulate Anita and put on an "authentic yard accent" (122). She finds it hard to balance between the physical aspect and the ethnic origin. She feels that her dark skin is a marker of the difference. This makes her turn against her own body with the realisation of the fact that her dark skin could no longer be discarded and it is not temporary. The racialist slur she confronts on her way to *gurudwara* in Brimingham, is a perfect example where she comes to realie that linguistic assimilation could no longer create sameness and achieve a sense of belonging that her body cannot assume.

The racialist slur encountered by her even among her closest circle gradually transforms Meena to acquire an indigenous culture which she once rejected. The arrival of Meena's maternal grandmother, Nanima, marks a turning point in her development. She encounters her own culture through Nanima, who serves as the 'Mother India' figure in whom Meena finds a secure abode for self-disclosure. Nanima has weaned her out of her infatuation for the alien culture and has also provides her confidence to confront all the social difficulties that she is yet to face.

Chapter Two

Conflicts of Hybridity

Multiculturalism is an ideology that promotes the harmonious coexistence and co-habitation of different cultures. It does not discard the moral and political claims of the marginalised group so that the immigrants can integrate into the dominant culture and maintain their distinctive collective identities and practices without having any need to adhere to any specific central value system or mores. It transcends politics, social theory and professional practice. Andrew Heywood in his *Political Ideologies,* a discussion about the doctrines that have shaped the world politics, distinguishes between two characteristics of Multiculturalism. He says:

> The term 'multiculturalism' has been used in a variety of ways, both descriptive and normative. As a descriptive term, it has been taken to refer to cultural identity. As a normative term, multiculturalism implies a positive endorsement, even celebration, of communal diversity, typically based on either the right of different groups to respect and recognition or to the alleged benefits to the larger society of moral and cultural diversity. (313)

Therefore, multicultural society deals with cultural diversity at national and communal level. It endeavours to respect and protect the divergent cultures that make up this society and allows them to develop their identities outside their particular ethnic group. Cultural self and belonging are the major concerns for identity construction. Negotiating or constructing identity in a multicultural society for a diasporic individual is a tedious task as the diasporic minority are discriminated because of the difference of their race, religion and political beliefs when compared

with the people of the dominant culture. They are mistreated, denied rights, excluded and isolated because of the unfair assumptions and generalised beliefs by a particular group based on their cultural identity. Diaspora communities living in ethnically diverse spaces have to cope up with these formulations on regular basis. The norms and values of these groups do not find any justification in the multicultural world which is assumed to accept all cultural groups. They encounter dilemmas, perplexities, hopelessness and the questions of belonging due to the wide gap between the culture of the community to which they belong and the world in which they live. This creates a rift in the self of the individual as they have to face the challenges of two contrasting cultures, which is manifested in their writing.

Each individual has a sense of self which is innate. This self-image is not built by a solitude phenomenon, but rather it is constructed through our interactions with other social beings which helps us to figure out the 'real me'. Self and society are interrelated and twin born.

Jonathan Culler puts forward two questions based on self, "Is the 'self' something 'given' or something 'made' ... should it be conceived in an individual or in social terms?" (108). 'Given self' pre-exists before we acquire or attain any other identity. It includes the identity formed on the basis of nationality, the culture, race, class, gender, and religion to which one belongs. This identity is something that is beyond our control. 'Made self' or constructed identity is self-made and it lies within our control. This identity is created depending on the likings of an individual in order to enhance the self-esteem and improve his/her status in the society. This process of socialization and development of identity varies for each individual depending upon the social circle and the distinct class one belongs to. The desire to transform from the

'given' to 'made' identity, especially in the case of the victims of diaspora and the subalterns, raises many problems.

South-Asian diasporic cultures and identities in contemporary Britain are going through a radical metamorphosis owing to the relentless interaction, fusions, and transactions of their cultural values and ideas with their host cultures. The majority culture of the British has a powerful influence upon the South Asian diaspora. While looking onto the present socio-cultural landscape of Britain, we come to know that this influence has become so powerful to an extent that it has blurred the distinction between the historical binary of identities between host and the migrant cultures.

The emergence of transnational culture in Britain has a two-fold ground. Firstly, the end of Western colonisation witnessed a mass migration of people across the world. So the route of diasporisation in Britain has a pertinent connection with this massive displacement of races to different parts of the world. During the period of British Imperialism that happened in the sixteenth century, apart from hiring Africans as indentured labourers or slaves, South Asians were brought to England as either slaves or mistresses by their British masters.

Large scale displacement of South Asians to England was triggered by natural disasters, communal violence against minorities, unsettled borders, socio-economic underdevelopment. They went to Britain in search of good fortune, to lead a better life and to improve their standard of living. These migrants brought their families along with them, made Britain their second home, and bred a new generation where they have to face challenges related to identity, economic insecurity, and social and cultural dislocation. These displaced masses have to experience massive impact of

multicultural negotiations. They engage in multiple ways of affiliations and belonging where the South-Asian minorities transcend the boundaries of ethnicity and nationalism which eventually led to transnationalism.

The question of identity is the central point of debate in postcolonial text and it is an ongoing theme in many diaspora writings. Mass migration and large scale displacement of people, either voluntary or forced, creates a traumatic situation where the identity of a displaced individual is questioned and his /her mind is preoccupied with the questions of 'who am I?' and 'where do I belong?' This ambivalent nature of their existence in an alien land forces them to adapt and assimilate into the dominant culture in order to relocate themselves in the host land and create a sense of belonging. Chinua Achebe has described the position of being caught between two cultures as living "at the crossroads of cultures" (Schwarz H. and Ray S. 152). This crossroads for Bhabha obviously is 'hybridity', and he defines it as "new, neither the one nor the other" (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 37).The process of interweaving of elements of the native culture and host culture leads to a new/hybrid culture and this result in the formation of a 'hybrid' individual. So, the cultural identity of a diasporic individual undergoes transformation due to cultural or linguistic assimilation.

Meera Syal in *Anita and Me* has brought out the notions of multiculturalism and how an India immigrant deals with the cultural clashes, survives and prospers in the Third space. It is a semi-autobiographical debut novel which is structured in the first-person narrative. It covers three years in the life of Meena Kumar, the only Indian girl growing in the mining village of Tollington near Wolverhampton in the 1960's. Her parents have moved to Britain in the wake of the partition of India in

1947. They chose to settle in the village of Tollington because the "fields and trees, light and space, and a horizon that welcomed the sky which, [...] could almost look something like home" (35). Meena, being the daughter of a Punjabi migrant family, struggles to locate herself within the framework of English culture. Born and brought up in Britain, she has never been to India and is ignorant of her roots and lineage. As a second-generation immigrant, she is confused about her identity. She has to make compromises to survive at school and in the yard to find a place within them as she desires for social integration to belong and become British.

The novel opens with the arrival of Meena's parents to Tollington, which they hope will be the land of promise to fulfill their dreams and aspirations. With the landing of the airplane in the United Kingdom in "Indian village garb," the first sight that caught their eyes was a board with the words, "WELCOME TO BRITAIN" (9), simply written on it. However, their repressed wishes and dreams are fulfilled through sorrow and heartbreak. Being far away from their native land and completely cut off from their roots, the anguish and pain felt by them due to racism is immense. Meena's mother is disillusioned and disappointed as she could find nothing to connect herself in the adopted land. The culture and traditions in this adopted and are completely different when compared to their land of origin and certainly she does not have any means of identifying with it: "She didn't follow the news, no telly, no radio, no inclination, being a simple Punjabi girl suffering from a culture shock, marooned and misplaced in Wolverhampton" (9). She is baffled and perplexed by this constant sense of displacement. She is bewildered to deal and identify with the world around her. The sense of being lost and misplaced is not only restrained and confined to Kumar's family but it is painful and difficult to deal with for the entire Indian community who

has settled in an alien land. In the absence of their blood relations, they try to find solace and comfort by constructing substitute extended families. These substitute families create an environment where they feel secured and accepted in the midst of experiencing cultural shock. This creates an atmosphere where migrants are able to fashion their identities, in relation to their own cultural community.

Syal depicts the experience of the second-generation migrants through the voice of the young narrator Meena, who experiences the culture clash in a land where 'multiculturalism' is the official position but finds the social values and mores entirely different from her own. Meena is an epitome of all the migrant children growing up in host land. Living in an all-white environment, the only connection Meena retains with her Punjabi culture is by the values imparted to her by her parents and by the members of the Indian community who make frequent visits to her house. However, the moment she steps out of her home, she confronts a different set of cultural values and practices that puzzles and confuses her as she finds it contradictory to the traditional values that is imparted to her by her community. This conflict is noticeable in Meena when her consciousness pricks her for having stolen some sweets from Mr. Ormerod's grocery shop. "I wished I'd never gone to Sunday School, I wished I did not know the name for what I now was now feeling. Sin. One word, three letters, eternal consequences. Unless I confessed all now" (12).

Living in a predominantly Christian society where people consider sin as very offensive act, Meena finds the concepts like sin and confession alien to her. The belief of Hindu religion is that sin is the result of an evil action which is cleansed through self-effort and devotion to God. So, there is no need of confessing it either to their priests or to God. But she is not sure whether the lessons she has learnt while

attending the Sunday School that confession would obtain divine forgiveness and save her is applicable in such situation as she does not culturally and religiously belong to Christianity. After having stolen sweets and caught by her father for lying and stealing, she wonders whether confession would free her from the current situation. "Papa's expression made me wonder if this only ever worked with English people" (22). It is the belief of Christians that the Lord promises to save those who admit their deeds and feel sorry for having done something wrong. But, Meena wonders whether she would be saved or have to face the dire consequences if she confesses because at that instant it is her father and not the Lord who controls the fate. She wonders whether confession would work in such a situation. Meena's contemplations comment on the absolute powers the Lord's promise is supposed to have and are expressed by someone who has not completely imbibed or even understood the tenets of the religion. It is a comment from the margins, from someone who does not belong to the mainstream.

The struggle in Meena reaches its height when Anita Rutter, an English friend, explaining to her about the Big House which showed no signs of life in it. She dumbly believed that the house was believed to be the dwelling place of the Witch and she is after kids because she needs their blood to keep her alive. Anita tried to scare Meena since her bedroom was directly, diagonally across the gates of the Big House. But Meena blurted out saying, "I don't care!" [...] My mom knows loads of prayer anyways. She says them every night in my bedroom before I sleep." Anita laughed. "Them's no good! The witch is English, isn't she? You need proper English prayers. Like Uncle Alan knows" (101). Anita implant in Meena's mind the thought that only English prayers will work against the witch who is English and if she wishes to be

protected from that evil one she must have known English prayers. Meena is preoccupied with the fact that only English prayers will work and protect her and not her mother's. She believes that there is a vast difference between her mother's method, manner of prayer when compared with that of Anita's, and this difference lies in the language and the effectiveness produced by it. This makes her aware of the difference and the inefficacy of the tools her own culture can provide for her to survive in a completely different environment. Anita plays upon the feelings of Meena in many such instances and this makes her realise the difference and creates a sense of fear her mind.

Meena, in a controversial tone, offers a vivid picture of the localised community among whom they reside.

> I could see my mother, even at this distance her brown skin glowed like a burnished plant drifting amongst the off-white bed sheets of her neighbours. She was wearing one of her slop-around outfits, a faded Punjabi suit whose billowing trousers rippled in the breeze, mercurial wings fluttering at her ankles. She paused, gathering some bundle from the basket at her feet, and then with one motion shook out a peacock-blue sari which she began tucking to the washing line. (12)

Meena's mother dressed in Punjabi clothes (salwar), the peacock-blue sari hanging in the wash line, and her brown colour skin – all these objects and colours that do not belong to the English landscape made Meena identify her mother as an odd-one among her neighbours which is markedly recognisable. Her clothing has become a marker of difference which reflects her Indianess and her alienation. Edward Eames and Howard Robboy in their article "The Wulfranian and the Punjabi:

Conflict, Identity and Adaptation," point out that the ethnic identity is fortified with the help of cultural signifiers such as language, "style of dress and culturally based mannerisms" (211). They further add that most significant means of establishing ethnic identity are language and attire. "The use of turbans by men and the use of Punjabi dress by women are related to their obvious self-identification as Punjabis" (12).

The way one dresses creates a visual identity and it signifies our cultural and societal positions. It is an embodiment of cultural identity. Meena realises that those clothes and their colour act as signifiers of cultural difference when she compares her mother's clothes with Mrs. Christmas' clothes which are,

> all delicate flowers, roses and bluebells and buttercups against creamy silk or beige sheeny muslin, ivy leaves snaking around collars and cuffs, clover and may blossom intertwined with delicate green stalks tumbling along pleats like a waterfall. It was as if a meadow had landed in my lap. (43)

They were different from the clothes her mother wore. They were all bright coloured such as open-heart cerise and burnt vivid oranges and these "colours that made your pupils dilate and were deep enough to enter your belly and sit there like the aftertaste of a good meal" (43). It was decorated with dancing elephants, peacocks and long-necked birds and it reminded her of "bare feet on dust, roadside smokey *dhabas*, honking taxi horns and heavy sudden rains beating a *bhangra* on deep green leaves" (43). Whereas Mrs. Christmas' clothes brought to her mind the thought of "tea by an open fire with an autumn wind howling outside, horses' hooves, hats and gloves,

toast, wartime brides with cupid bow mouths laughing and waving their hankies to departing soldiers, like I'd seen on telly programme, *All Our Yesterdays*" (43).

Soft, gentle and muted colours of Mrs. Christmas' clothes seem to better suit the English environment, climate and cultural background, while the vivid colours and motifs of Mrs. Kumars' clothes differentiates her and makes her unfit in the English environment. The attire stands as signifiers of the history and cultural heritage of Mrs. Kumar and Mrs. Christmas. It symbolises the lifestyle and culture of their community. This generates an idea that Mrs. Christmas' clothes are better suited to the English landscape when compared to Mrs. Kumars.' This concept of one being better suited than the other results in conflict and questioning of the self of Meena.

Meena relentlessly tries to straddle two cultures as she is living between the influences of two different cultures- that of her parents, and that of her peers. It becomes obvious to her that the cultural system of the English is more suitable and fitting to her in the current scenario. So, she slowly drifts away from her culture of origin and dismisses it without knowing what is grounded in it. On one occasion while playing in the yard with her friends, she cracks a joke in Punjabi but it didn't have any expected impact on them. But once, this same joke was found funny by her parents and relatives, as they are familiar with the Punjabi language.

> When I repeated the joke in the playground the next day, I realised it lost a lot in translation and vowed I would swot up on a few English jokes before I undertook challenging Vernon Cartwright again for the title of the school wit. (56)

The joke does not have quite the expected impact when related in a language that does not lend itself to the same euphemisms.

The joke getting lost in translation is only an indication of how different the two cultures are. In order to please and belong to both, her family as well her friends, she realises that she wants to know two types of jokes. She is confronted by two sets of social codes which are so disparate and finds it hard to understand to which she must adhere in order to figure out her place in this world. She is suffering due to the split nature between whom she is and who she presents to the world in order to be accepted. She has to restrict herself to a set of social code laid to her by her family and community; on the other hand, she has to follow an entirely different set of social codes to be accepted in the playground and the outside world. She always felt the pressure to fit in the gap between what she always wanted to be and what her parents think she should be. More importantly, the two are not connected and cannot be brought together to minimise the split nature of Meena's existence. She tries to force herself to fit in where she truly doesn't belong.

These differences become more distinct and evident when her family engages in celebrating their cultural festivals. Meena's mother makes all preparations for the up-coming Diwali. Meena hates the way her mother compares Diwali to "Our Christmas" to make Mrs. Worrall understand it. Because she expects "a carload of presents and the generally festive, communal atmosphere that overtook the village somewhere around late November and continued into January" (91). Instead of clay lamps, coloured sand to create pattern on the floor, prayer ritual or puja, savoury dishes, she preferred Christmas cards, carols, Christmas tree, presents, Santa Clause. She expected all her yard-friends would wish her on her special occasion, but to her

disappointment they failed to understand the meaning of their festival even after explanation. It becomes clear to Meena that their culturally significant festival is not as important as Christmas.

> No one else in the world seemed to care that today was our Christmas. There was no holiday, except it happened to be a weekend so mama and I were off school and papa was only working a half-day, no tinsel or holly or blinking Christmas trees adorning the sitting room windows in Tollingtion, no James Bond films or Disney spectaculars on the telly, and nobody, not one person, has wished me a happy Diwali, despite the fact I had hung around the yard all morning with what I hoped was a general expression of celebration.
>
> Everyone's indifference had stunned me, and I now understood why my parents made an effort to mark Jesus' birthday, despite the remarks made by some of my Aunties and Uncles. "Meena would be left out.... It is not fair, when all the other children are getting presents." (91-92)

Since Christianity is the religion of majority of the people in Britain, Christmas is celebrated annually to commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ. It is not possible for countries like England whose citizens primarily follow a single religious and cultural code to make allowances for a minority population like Punjabi or Indian community in this case. Diwali fails to sparkle any recognition in the public eye and this indifference stuns Meena. She is disappointed by the religious discrimination and isolation she has to undergo when she celebrates her religious and culturally important festival. She feels that the vacuum in her life would be filled only when she starts to accept and practise the customary codes of behaviour of the larger British community.

She is interested more in celebrating Christmas than Diwali, since the way in which Diwali is celebrated by her family and Indian community distinguishes her from the majority population. This makes her feel different and her expectations are unexplainable as she is only familiar with the widespread nature of Christmas in the society.

Even though Diwali is not overly encouraged by the majority population, Kumars' family joins in celebrating the joy of the Christmas season. Although Meena's parents were not raised as Christians but they value the Christmas celebration and its meaning. They embraced others' perspective without sacrificing their own. They consider it as a way of honouring other people around them. Although Meena was brought up in a very traditional home, she was not denied the opportunity to join and share happiness with her Christian friends. As Meena explains,

> This was a typical example of Hindu tolerance, the reason, my mama told me, why so many religions happily co-existed in India- Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Sikhism and especially Islam. 'There are more Muslims in India than there are in Pakistan! mama told me proudly. Every path leads to the same god, that is what we believe, beti…' (92)

Meena's mother explains to her about her own culture and how this idea of tolerance helped them to love, value and respect the people of different sects. This enabled them to create an environment where the followers of different faith happily co-exist. The belief that all religions profess the idea of love, tolerance, unity, and direct us to God, makes Kumars' family accept the customs and religious values of the people surrounding them. This is very different from how nobody around Meena makes an

effort to understand her special day, Diwali, in a mono-religious, all-white and largely culturally uniform society like England.

One can witness the fusion and blending of two cultures in Meena, when she listens to the "pop song. One Two Three, Oh It's So Easy, Ba-by!" (109) and at the same time enjoys the traditional music, when her father turns the harmonium. Music helps express our feelings and emotions, and relate ourselves with the past. So, Kumar's family organise *mehfils* in which members of their own community residing in Tollington would gather together in the evenings. They would sing old Hindi film songs which would remind them of their life they have lived in their homeland and reminisce about their culture and past. These gatherings provide them with the courage to muddle through the commotions and confusion which they face on the alien land amidst their yearning for the familiar and the known. During one such *mehfils*, when Meena's turn comes she starts to sing Punjabi song with a Brimingham accent which was admired by everyone. When her father cheers her up to sing her own song she launches into a rendition of "We Wear Short Shorts,' complete with the gyrating dance routine I had seen Pan's People do to it on *Top of the Pops*. I flicked my hair and kicked my legs as papa and Uncle Tendon tried to match a key and rhythm to my showstopper" (115). Her mother rebukes her for "doing the splits, accompanied by a loud ripping noise" (115) but Meena to express her liking for that favourite song says, "It's so brilliant I could shag the arse off it," (115) an utterance she has heard from Anita in the context of liking something. This shocks others and stops them from viewing Meena as the golden child and turns her into a juvenile delinquent. "There was a sudden intake of breath and then complete silence, broken only by the harmonium emitting a death rattle as papa's fingers fell off the keys. In a

split second my beaming admirers had become parodies of Hindi film villains, with flared nostrils, bulging eyes and quivering, outraged eyebrows" (115). But, the innocent Meena unaware of the meaning and the impact the phrase has thrown her entire community off-balance.

Meena's close association with Anita and her aspiration and yearning to conform to that group compels her to embrace Anita's traits, language and manners. This gradual transformation of Meena not only astonishes her parents but it shocks the entire community they belong to. Her passionate and ardent desire for English song and her lack of enthusiasm in singing the Hindi song or relating her to the Indian self-infuriates the other members of the society. Through appropriation of Anita's idiom earns her condemnation and censure for which she is unaccepted and estranged from her cultural community. Her lure for the foreign and strange does not satisfy the minority community she belongs to, and the hegemonic environment which outcasts her due to race makes her 'doubly othered.' This 'doubly othered' makes it evident that she could never attain the sense of belonging that Multiculturalism promises her in the mainstream, she also risks becoming an outcast from her own minority community.

Meena's exposure to two different cultures bewilders her and creates conflict regarding self and identity formation which marks her impotent to completely belong to either culture. She is found tattered between two disparate cultures that pulls her in two opposite directions. Meena's anticipation for a happy and harmonious co-existence of two cultures in fact does not really materialise for her since the signifiers of English culture, for instance Mrs. Christmas' clothes, English prayers and

songs, appear to be more fitting and relevant in her environment when compared with the signifiers of the Indian one.

Ernest Gellner, in his *Nations and Nationalism*, states that the cultural homogeneity and the availability of the institution to promote cultural homogeneity leads to the development of a nation. This state apparatus facilitates the protection of High Culture. And the one who possesses this High Culture is a part of the state, whereas the one who is identified with a different rhetoric makes him an object of constant humiliations of being a stranger, outcast, secluded, incessantly doing 'the wrong thing' and he/she becomes an intolerable one. Gellner declares that confronted with a incongruity between one's own idiom and that required for success, people either get hold of the assimilation; force their own idiom into prominence (successful nationalism); or fester. As a result, the homogenising impulse of nationalism and the discourse of one nation disregard the differences exhibited by a marginalised community since all are expected to conform.

Since, multicultural society is also likely built upon the concept of nationalism; Meena has to assimilate into the systems of High culture in order to keep herself from humiliation. As she lives in a multicultural society, it is essential for her to pledge allegiance to a certain socio-cultural system and her future endeavours rest on this choice. Syal through Meena's character focuses on the liminal negotiation of cultural identity that has to be made on the part of a migrant. The space of ambiguity and constant flux makes it obvious that "It is in the emergence of the interstices-the overlap and displacement of domains of difference-that the intersubjective and collective experiences of nationness, community interest, or cultural values are negotiated" (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 2).

Bhabha's concept of hybridity "directs our attention to what happens on the borderlines of cultures, to see what happens in-between cultures" (Huddart 7). Meena, being a hybrid individual, could not conform entirely to the High culture as she has to pledge alliance to the traditional culture practised by her own community. She occupies a state of ambiguity as she finds herself straddling between two cultures. And so her 'hybrid' identity has turned out to be an 'unhomely' identity for Meena. As Tyson states, "to be unhomed is to feel not at home even in your own home because you are not at home in yourself: your cultural identity crisis has made you a psychological refugee" (421).

The following chapter will be a discussion about how 'multiculturalism' which was believed to provide acceptance continue to remain evasive for minority communities who reside in a culturally alien and foreign land. The lived experience of Meena in a space of ambiguity challenges the pedagogic rhetoric of a functional multicultural social structure.

Chapter Three

The Politics of Performativity

> Gathering of exiles and emigres and refugees, gathering on the edge of "foreign" cultures; gathering at the frontiers; gathering in the ghettos or cafes of city centers; gathering in the half-life, half-light of foreign tongues, or in the uncanny fluency of another's language; gathering the signs of approval and acceptance, degrees, discourses, disciplines; gathering the memories of underdevelopment, of other worlds lived retroactively; gathering the past in a ritual of revival; gathering the present. (Bhabha, "DissemiNation" 291)

In this world of increasing globalisation, the postcolonial subjects find themselves occupying a common place on the cusp. Languages, homelands, and present experiences are elucidated by their points of contact with which that is unfamiliar and strange to them. In the above mentioned epigraph, it is the gathering of multi-ethnic migrants who are positioned at the dividing line between the strange and the familiar, who travel almost nearer to a promising merging or amalgamation of the two sides of the divide. Laying down a fixed binary between the self and the other was a matter of concern of the writings of anticolonial and early postcolonial literary and cultural theorists. But, in recent times the division of these oppositions has come under attack, which is noted by Homi Bhabha, regarding the people who have actually travelled across the threshold of the nation. This blurring of binary oppositions is more apparently noticeable in the deterritorialised mindscape of the immigrant who thinks and speaks "in the uncanny fluency of another's language" (Bhabha,

"DissemiNation" 291). Language serves as a ground on which the most intense operation of alienation and identification is mapped out.

At present, the focal point of discussion for colonial and postcolonial subjects are the ways by which they can speak, think, and write in the coloniser's language. Language has given rise to controversial situations starting from Frantz Fanon's criticism on the colonisers who imposed French language onto the colonised, by forbidding the racialised mind and body to speak their mother tongues up to the recent debate between Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Chinua Achebe over the affairs of using English as a medium of writing instead of their native language. The usage of language has become a much debated question since its practice and usage is situated at the threshold between the self and the other, the cusp between discarded self and outside world. Eventually, it is through this practice of psychic formation in language that gives way to the bodily experienced process of racialization. Language and race are interrelated and interdependent on each other which in turn are related to the process of construction of identity, individuality, and belonging. Meera Syal's *Anita and Me* spotlights these issues through the formative years of Meena, a British-born Indian who is obsessed by the craving to fit herself into the dominant community.

Syal, through her humoristic and tender portrait of Meena's effort to belong, handles the fraught issues of race and class that was experienced by Britain during the mining crisis of the 1960s. Syal portrays the racial politics prevalent in Britain by stressing on language and accent and the subsequent result they have on the process of identity formation and others' conception about them. Syal unfolds the ways which the Tollington-accent acquired by Meena breaks through multiple registers of representation marked by her race and opens doors that were blocked due to her overtly racialised body. Meena utilises language as a prominent tool to shape others'

conception of her in order to reconcile herself to the identity construction imposed upon her. Through this act, Meena not only constructs her own identity but also reformulates others conception about her.

Meena is trapped by the politics of performativity in such a way that the more closely she draws toward acquiring an English identity, the more she becomes discarded from the Indian one. Only locally articulated accent can assert a sense of belonging within the community, but Meena's speech is distinguished with a nonlocal accent or inflection which can stipulate otherness. The rupture between her aural and visual identities creates a conflict within herself which rises out due to the incongruity between her visually but not audibly racialised identity.

Language is not merely a tool through which people convey their feelings and emotions with others, but it also gives them a sense of their own identity. Fanon states that "to speak means to be in a position to use a certain syntax, to grasp the morphology of this or that language, but it means above all to assume a culture, to support the weight of a civilization" (17-18). Knowing a language provides a sense of belonging to a particular culture. In his masterwork, *Black Skin, White Masks*, Frantz Fanon gives a picture of how language is used as a vehicle for colonial oppression. The colonisers impose their language upon the colonised and are forced to think that the language and culture of the colonisers are superior when compared with their own. This creates a desire in the hearts of the colonised to attain the experience and position of the oppressor which consequently leads to a complete alienation of them from their own culture, tradition, and practices and generates a kind of self-hatred among the colonised population.

Language becomes a weapon in the hands of the colonisers to assert domination. As Fanon asserts that

> Every colonized people- in other words, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality- finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation… The colonized is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country's cultural standards. He becomes whiter as he renounces his blackness, his jungle. (18)

Eventually, in the process of colonisation and immigration, the minor languages are replaced by the dominant ones. Language shift occurs in such a way that the immigrants' mother tongue is supplanted with a new mother tongue. Therefore, language turns out to be a ground on which sense of belonging and identity are constructed.

Derrida, in his text *Monolinguism of the Other; or, The Prosthesis of Origin*, reflects on the complication that befalls when an individual speaks a language that asserts contradictory claims to belonging. His main field of concern is monolingual subjects such as Meena who speaks a language that is not her own. He begins with the paradoxical claims of language: "We only ever speak one language. We never speak only one language" (7).

Derrida points out that these instances are applicable to all speakers of a language, but most notably to native speakers of an imposed tongue. He asserts that, Franco-Maghrebian who speaks no other language but only French, is subjected only to a single language although he shares a hyphenated identity. Being a Franco Maghrebian not only represents his relationship to culture but it also represents his

association with that culture. As Derrida states that, "the silence of that hyphen does not pacify or appease anything, not a single torment, not a single torture... It could even worsen the terror, the lesions, and the wounds" (11). Derrida believes that it is impossible to neither separate nor reconcile with the hyphenated languages or cultures, nor erase the animosity existing between them.

Monolingual subjects speak a language that is neither their own nor foreign, where the new tongue supplants the possibility of their mother tongue. The coloniser in order to exert his power puts up a pretence of absolute unity between himself and his language so that he can impose his language upon the colonisers through colonial education. This leads to the displacement of the language of the colonised. The delusion of a natural possession of language by the coloniser's will merely be "pretend[ed] historically, through the rape of a cultural usurpation, which means always essentially colonial, to appropriate it in order to impose it as 'his own'" (Derrida 23). This deception made "certain people ... yield to the homo-hegemony of dominant languages. They must lose their idiom in order to survive or live better" (Derrida 30).

The monolingual subjects believe the colonising language "to be maternal, but one whose source, norms, rules, and law were situated elsewhere" (Derrida 41). The colonial subject will be able to identify himself with that language and its literature only by "losing one's accent" (Derrida 45). It is precisely this ambivalence of speaking in a tongue whose familiarity is no longer "uncanny," to return to Bhabha, that Meena experiences. Meena, being a second-generation immigrant, has no power over the issue of accent and language since she learns English in a displaced 'homeland,' and this entails a sense of loss to a certain extent. She is always conscious of the position she inhabits between two fixed categories: British and

Indian. Although it is obvious that Meena is an Indian, she doesn't look back or yearn for an Indian 'homeland' since she was born and brought up in Tollington. But, she is trying to find a space and fit herself somewhere between the categories 'British' and 'Indian.' As she says, "I knew I was a freak of some kind, too mouthy, clumsy and scabby to be a real Indian girl, too Indian to be a real Tollington wench, but living in the grey area between all categories felt increasingly like home" (150). By referring to Meena as "mouthy," Syal emphasises on the variance that arises between her valorisation of Tollington-accented speech and her inability to be a real Indian girl. For Meena, the categories British and Indian cannot be fluid because such fluidity jeopardize her capacity to belong definitively in the category British.

The first-person narration employed in *Anita and Me* makes clear the ambivalent position assigned to her due to the elements of performativity. Syal portrays the conflict between one identity that is greatly preferred and deliberately performed on one hand, and on other hand the identity that sticks with Meena besides her best efforts to dismiss it. Meena by developing her speaking voice tries her level best to 'fit in,' as she makes use of linguistic performativity as a weapon to fight against the racism that she encounters on her way. Meena's identity is built out of the negotiation that takes place between her visual and aural 'selves.' Meena is aware of the dissimilarity between her projected identity and her fantasy identity. She relentlessly focuses on acquiring Tollington accent so that she could blur or metamorphosise her visual identity as a means of reconstructing her identity. Unlike those who encounter her. Meena is constantly in contact with her voice and only occasionally in contact with her visual self, as, for example, when she sees her image reflected in a mirror.

Meena's embarrassment regarding all the signifiers of Indian culture and tradition makes her loose, in Derrida's words, the ethnical and linguistic 'idiom' in order to belong. Meena expresses this loss in the following manner:

> I want to shed my body like a snake slithering out of its skin and emerge reborn, pink and unrecognizable. I began avoiding mirrors, I refused to put on the Indian suits my mother laid out for me on the bed when guests were due for dinner, I hid in the house when Auntie Shaila bade loud farewells in Punjabi to my parents from the front garden, I took to walking several places behind or in front of my parents when we went on a shopping trip, checking my reflection in shop windows, bitterly disappointed it was still there. (146)

Meena contemplates on shedding off her skin like a snake so that she would be reborn "pink," but at the same time she is also aware of the fact that being reborn with "pink" skin would make her "unrecognizable," doubtless to herself (146). The contradictory feelings that surface on the void between the urge to belong and the apprehension of becoming someone unrecognisable gives way to what Bhabha identifies as, "the ambivalence of the mimic man" (*The Location of Culture* 86).

Although Meena has some cultural and racial ties with India, her day to day life revolves around Tollington. Meena, being a second-generation immigrant, is deprived of cultural and personal histories, so she attempts to define her space by creating a mythology of personal belonging. As Meena declares in the Preface:

> I've always been a sucker for a good double entendre; the gap between what is said and what is thought, what is stated and what is implied, is a place in which I have always found myself. I'm really not a liar, I

> just learned very early on that those of us deprived of history sometimes need to turn to mythology to feel complete, to belong. (10)

The "gap between what is said and what is thought, what is stated and what is implied" (10) is what Derrida refers to the 'silence of that hyphen,' which points out an area that is both a threshold and a barrier. This uncertainty or "double entendre" (10) provides an opportunity to blur the line between history and fantasy, and this turns out to be an ambivalent place of the performativity for Meena.

Although the blurring of line fosters power and grants Meena the capacity to realise fantasy, it fails to provide positive implication despite developing Tollington accent. Since, the racial identity of Meena marks her different from others and this raises an internal conflict within herself. There comes a time where she has to deal with a horde of angry English drivers since her mother has lost control of the clutch and the car was moving backwards. Meena had to leap out of the car and plead with everyone behind them to roll back their vehicles. She makes a comment on this incident

> ...all wore the same weary amused expression, as if my mother's driving had only confirmed some secret, long-held opinion of how people like us were coping with the complexities of the modern world. Putting the car into reverse was, for them, an act of benevolence, maybe their first, as well-intentioned as any of Mr. Ormerod's charity parcels to the poor children in Africa. (97)

When Meena reaches the end of the queue she believes that she has "won" the drivers over by using her "deliberately exaggerated Tollington accent, thus proving [that she] was very much one of them, [that] they did not need to shout to make

themselves understood or think [that] they could get away with muttered swearing[s]" she would fail to understand. She feels, in other words, that she "belonged" (97).

Butler believes that social reality in not predetermined but rater it is continuously fabricated as an illusion "through language, gesture, and all manner of symbolic social sign" (270). She examines the ways by which linguistic construction and the speech acts we engage in every day serve to create our reality. By constantly referring to the beliefs and practices of the social world around us, we act out that reality. When it comes to the performative act of speaking, we 'incorporate' or act out that reality by performing it with our bodies, but nonetheless accomplishing reality through performativity remains a social construction, at one step removed from the real. Meena deliberately makes use of her accent, her Englishness becomes performative, and this performance constructs "the identity it is purported to be" (Butler 25).

Butler and Austin believe that performative language has the ability to effect changes and call some identity or derogatory descriptions into being. The perlocutionary force of language used by Meena helps her to convince and persuade her listeners. However, she becomes a victim of its forceful use. When she reaches the end of the line, she comes across a "sweet-faced elderly woman," whom Meena believes to be very gentle and soft. When Meena requests her to roll back her car, the "sweet-faced elderly woman" shouts at her in an angry tone, "Bloody stupid wog. Stupid" (97). The 'sweet' face of the elderly woman does not reflect her character and temperament, and the performative force of her language is at odds with the assumption generated by the visual gaze. On the other hand, Meena's deliberately exaggerated Tollington accent fails to reveal her internal conflicts and multiple complexities of her circumstances. The performative force of language exercised by

both displaces the preconceived notions and stereotypes associated with their visual bodies. By relying on the privilege of possessing white skin and white voice, the elderly woman successfully undermines and threatens Meena's attempt to 'fit in' within the mainstream society. At this juncture, it is evident that Meena through the use of deliberately exaggerated Tollington accent poses an obvious threat to the elderly woman because her speech is freaky and uncanny much like the woman's own speech. And thus, as Bhabha makes it clear in his discussion of the stereotype, the woman needs to repeat her insult in order to make it stable and fixed.

Meena's use of the Tollington idiom cast doubts on the stereotyped image of her formed by the elderly woman on the basis of the visual gaze. The setting up of false image based on the visual gaze makes it uncertain the ability of the eye to detect 'identity.' Bhabha indicates that stereotypes are specifically formed on initial gaze by visually identifying things based on our prior knowledge about them. Most stereotyped images are formed on the basis of skin colour, as Bhabha states that "the difference of the object of discrimination is at once visual and natural-colour as the cultural/political *sign* of inferiority or degeneracy, skin as its natural '*identity*'" (Bhabha, *Location of Culture* 80). Bhabha puts forward the identification of physical difference detected by the eye, and how difference of race and culture converts it into a "*sign* of inferiority or degeneracy," where skin is used as a signifier to refer to the bearer of this inferior state (80). As applied to Meena's case, the "sweet-faced" elderly woman's gaze is undermined by Meena's nonaccented speech. Thus the woman becomes aware of the necessity to impose the stereotype by repeating the words, "stupid" and "wog" (97). However, equally important in this engagement is the auditory experience and furthermore the visual appearance marked by the colour of her skin exert influence upon Meena's recognition and identification about her own

self. Meena's self-observation, introspection and performance fail to distort the perception that others have formed about her, yet it has some impact on the way she converses with others around her. As the novel gradually proceeds, it becomes evident that she occupies a space amid perception and performance. Meena continuously struggles to achieve a sense of belonging in the place where she was born and brought up.

Meena's yearning to act out her belonging by endorsing the Whiteness of her voice plays itself out in her theories of literary origin and cultural legitimacy. When her father narrates to her an Indian fable about "the boy and the tiger," she is annoyed and irritated to hear it:

> I felt cheated. This was the Boy Who Cried Wolf! I had read it hundreds of times in my *Golden Anthology of Fables and Tales*. Did he think I would swallow an old story dressed up in Indian clothes? I closed my eyes, pretending to listen, and imagined myself in lime hot pants and blonde hair singing "Let's Go Fly a Kite." (70)

At this point, Meena blindly grants legitimacy to the English version of the story whereas she rejects the Indian edition as a plain retelling, an imitation of the earlier one. This differentiation makes her break away from the Indian voice of her father and runs into a world of fantasy wherein she imagines herself inhabiting a different body. She tries to find a balance between her visual and auditory self by conjuring up an image of herself "in lime hot pants and blonde hair," which would match with her White "English" thoughts. This situation resembles her earlier dream where she desires to shed off her skin like a snake so that she would be reborn "pink." This imagination of being reborn with white skin so that she could fit in with the

Whites is her consistent response to the complex issues that arise in her due to the duality of her ethnic and cultural background. For Meena, the British and the Indian are two distinct groups wherein she could not imagine of being in lime hot pants singing "Let's Go Fly a Kite," with dark skin and black hair (70).

Meena tries to carve a niche of belonging by trying to imitate the children of the yard, a gang headed by Anita. Meena's admiration for Anita stems from the fact that she sees in her a projection of an image of her desired self. Anita has become a source of empowerment for her and she constantly seeks her validation. But, Meena's yearning to belong is shaken down due to the racial slurs that she has previously encountered and her awareness that "in an instant, those you called friends could suddenly become tormentors, sniffing out a weakness or a difference, turning their own fear of ostracism into a weapon with which they could beat the victim away, afraid that being an outsider, an individual, even was somehow infectious" (142). Here, Meena's perceived status and others perception about her as an 'outsider' makes her conscious of the fact that achieving a sense of 'belonging' is an uncertain and unstable condition for her.

What Meena exhibits is an account of Bhabha's opinion about the stereotypes that are formed based on the complexion of the skin which represents one's identity, although they are not actual or real identity. The lighter the colour of the skin, more superior a person becomes whereas darker the skin, it becomes a sign of inferiority and it can also have a contaminating force. At this juncture, Meena is trapped in a dilemma between her yearnings to fit into this social group and to act in accordance with its conditions implicitly sanctions the ideology upon which her exclusion is premised. Her eagerness or need to place herself in this position betrays an intense fear of coming to terms with the racial difference. Meena is disturbed by the fact that

not only that Anita and her friends will demarcate her as different and separate from them, but also that she will be compelled to perceive them as entirely distinct from herself.

"If Meena is invested in privileging a cosmopolitan obfuscation of difference, she is simultaneously increasingly confronted with raciality as a site of difference. The incommensurability of her two responses results in Meena's tendency to produce a fictive personal history" (Murphy 109). As she has stated in the prologue, Meena repeatedly shapes the truth to suit her needs as she finds herself trapped between the shame of Indian heritage and her yearning to be truly British. For Meena, the categories 'Indian' and 'British' are contrary and fixed. Finding herself mastering the grey area between 'Indian' and 'British,' she tries to fill this gap through deception. Feeling ashamed of certain aspects of her Indian identity, she fabricates lies to create a desired alternate persona. Meena explains her method of dealing with shame through lies:

> It was all falling into place now, why I felt this continual compulsion to fabricate, this ever-present desire to be someone else in some other place far from Tollington...this urge to reinvent myself, I could now see was purely driven by shame, the shame I felt when we "did" India at school, and leafed through tatty textbooks...where erect Victorian soldiers posed in grainy photographs...whilst men who looked like any one of my uncles, remained in the background...their postures servile, their eyes glowing like coals. (211)

Meena experiences a sense of discomfort when she gets to know about the incompatible relation that existed between India and Britain. The pictures in their

history textbooks portray British men as triumphant heroes standing erect in the forefront whereas the Indians remained in the background as defeated men suppressed with the sense of humiliation. In these books, while discussing the Indian independence revolution, they have created an image of the natives of India as the agents of evil while the British are pictured as undefeated, victorious men.

> There would be more photographs of teeming unruly mobs, howling like animals for the blood of the brave besieged British, the Black Hole of Calcutta was a popular image, angelic women and children choking on their own fear whilst yet more of my uncles and aunties in period clothes danced an evil jig of victory outside. (211)

Even when depicting the current scenario, these history books do not improve the rendering of the Indians atmosphere:

> Then there were the 'modern' images, culled from newspaper and television clips, where hollow-eyed skeleton, barely recognizable as human beings, squatted listlessly around dry river beds, and machete-wielding thugs tore into each other in messy city streets, under the benevolent gaze of a statue of Queen Victoria. (211)

For Meena, the illustration of her own kinfolk in such humiliating and undignified positions develops in her an aversion towards them as she stops to identify herself with them and began to develop hatred towards History, as the subject of study at school.

> I always came bottom in history; I did not want to be taught what a mess my relatives had made of India since the British had left them

> (their fault of course, nothing to do with me), and longed to ask them why, after so many years of hating the 'goras,' had they packed up their cases and followed them back here. (211-212)

Even though Meena associates the subjects of the textbook as her "relatives," she quickly detaches herself from them by stating that it was their fault and it has "nothing to do with me" (212). Dealing with a conflicting past fastened Meena to detach herself from both the "India [they] 'did' in school" (211), and also implicitly from Tollington where this is the way in which India is done.

The history lessons done by Meena in her British school has resulted in creating an image in her mind that being Indian is identical to what Fanon identifies the colonised subjects as "blackness, his jungle" (18). Although Meena notices that such historical narratives about Indians are prejudiced and unfair, she could not get a clear idea about them until the arrival of her grandmother who recites to her stories of a nontextbook India. Until then Meena remains perplexed about her own belonging and intensely wishes to transform herself in a way as opposed to what history has depicted her.

As noted by Edward Said, the artificial boundary drawn on the basis of the stereotypes, that were formed by the dominant group, gave rise to the notion of the East and the West, the civilised and the uncivilised, and to the concept of 'them' and us. Certain generalised attributes were used by the Occidents to describe the Orients and these artificial characteristics attributed to the Orientals were publicised in the Western world through literary works, cinematic images, and through other sources. This shaped the way the people of the Western world perceived the natives of the Eastern as barbaric, rude and uncivilised.

When Meena notices that she is looked down by others as inferior by the general public, she starts to identify herself in the ways by which others perceive her. When she gets admitted in the hospital after an injury, she comes across a doctor who insists on calling her "Mary." When Meena corrects the pronunciation of her name the doctor barked at her saying, "Can't say your real name so Mary will do, ha ha!" (280). The desire of the doctor to translate the foreign into the familiar is similar to Meena's wish to detach herself from the "India [they] 'did' in school." The comments made by the doctor state obviously that the brutality of this imposed internal alienation becomes visibly pronounced when it is forced from the outside. Meena's encounter with the doctor is, in Derrida's terms, "the rape of a cultural usurpation" where the doctor carries out effectively the colonial gesture of forcefully confiscating Meena's name "to appropriate it in order to impose it as '[her] own'" (23). The actions of the doctor, herself implicitly linked to education and power, indicates the degree to which recognising Meena-particularly as a citizen-subject receiving care under the auspices of the National Health Service- is dependent upon capitulating to an assimilated Anglo identity signified in the conversion of Meena to Mary.

Such occasions accelerate Meena to restrain her Indian self to the privacy of her home whilst exhibiting her English self overtly. Meena through the use of language as a significant tool tries to reformulate her own self-conception and change the ways by which others perceive her. She uses linguistic performativity as a tool to attain her fantasy identity and to subsume her Indian identity. But, the linguistic assimilation does not assist Meena's effort to fit in the mainstream society, since the path towards successful assimilation is foreclosed by her visibly racialised body. Meena's attempt to valorize an exaggerated Tollington accent makes her completely cut off from the local accent articulated within her own community. Her mother

tongue gets replaced by a 'new' mother tongue, and this turns out to be her new mother tongue. Therefore, she speaks a language that neither belongs to both the communities. The more she approximates an English identity, the more she is discarded from the Indian one.

Meena could not fit into her own community, since only locally articulated accent can achieve a sense of belonging. At the same time, even though she has acquired Tollington accent by losing her accent, she could not achieve a sense of belonging within the mainstream English community due to the disjuncture between her aural and visual identities. The stereotypes formed on the basis of the colour of the skin demarcate her as inferior and 'other,' since dark skin is marked as sign of inferiority. Therefore, Meena has to occupy a space between perception and performance. This makes her doubly otheredu, unable to belong to both the communities.

Once operated, these stereotypes strongly affect the social perceptions and behaviour. These raise problems to an individual or groups to be fixed into one place, deny them their sense of identity and shape the way others perceive them based on the prior knowledge, which is usually at best defective. Bhabha points out that skin, the loaded signifier of identity, is the most apparent sign intensely associated with power, and to the process of othering. Due to the ideologies of superiority, we find Meena uncomfortably negotiating and stuck between her public and private performance of identity. She relentlessly focuses on blurring the dissimilarity between the projected identity and desired identity.

The racialist slurs encountered by Meena make her turn towards the safe haven of her family. Although, Meena as a young child is not able to articulate her

private self, the realisation of the fact that there exists a bond of affection among the people she tried so hard to distance herself from makes her realign with her own traditional Punjabi culture. The moment she starts to give up her attempts to be liked and accepted by her English peers gives her the courage to challenge all the rules imposed by the hegemonic racist society. Her journey towards self-actualization makes her feel liberated from the stereotypical framework set up for her by the members of the dominant group as she starts to embrace her multicultural identity.

Chapter Four

Relocating the Real Self

We are born with some God-given identity and they pre-exist before any other identity we create for ourselves. Some other identities are given to us and are shaped by other factors surrounding us. Therefore, identity is not something fixed and static, but it is something which is dynamic, contextual and undergoes a continuous evolution depending on the social circumstances.

Charles Horton Cooley, an American sociologist, introduced the term 'looking-glass self' in is work *Human Nature and the Social Order*. The term is modeled on a social psychological concept in which the 'self' continually alters and modifies itself through a three-step process based on our imagination of how we appear to others and their impression about us; then we interpret how others evaluate us based on that appearance, and we develop the 'self' based on those perceived judgment. The people around and their perceptions about us serve as a kind of mirror for viewing the 'self' and it keeps on altering based on their opinions. Therefore, self and society are interrelated and twin born.

G. M. Mead, an American sociologist and psychologist, believed that 'self' comprises of 'I' and 'me.' "The 'I' is the response of the organism to the attitude of others; the 'me' is the organised set of attitudes of others which one himself assumes" (175). Mead describes the "me" as "a conventional, habitual individual," and the "I" as the "novel reply" or response of an individual to the set of attitudes generalized to that person by others (197). For Mead, "both aspects of the 'I' and the 'me' are essential to the self in its full expression" (199). One's individual self is a social product which achieves self-awareness and self-image through social experience. A

reciprocal relationship exists between the self and the society. Therefore, individual autonomy and community are essential to figure out one's identity.

Paul A. Singh Ghuman, in *Asian Adolescents in the West*, states that Young South Asians who live in postcolonial Britain have to confront and tackle the issues related to the formation of identity. But, their parents find themselves safe and secure as they are deeply rooted in the ethnic traditions of the country from which they migrated. "In contrast, the younger generation in the West is likely to find identity exploration and formation a real challenge because of dual socialization and racial prejudice" (35). These young individuals have to come across unique challenges of straddling two cultures which have a strong impact on their identity construction process. "The home emphasizes the religion, culture and traditions of the 'sending' society, whereas school stresses the norms, values and attitudes deemed important by the 'receiving' society" (32). The contradictory differences which arise between the two, make them unable to wholly belong to either of the society.

Meena, in *Anita and Me*, finds herself in an in-between state, unable to cope with the two cultures. She is caught between the conventions of her Indian heritage and her desire to break free of all the rules imposed on her, in order to become a Tollington wench. She finds the two worlds contradicting each other. She has to face the issues related to the conflict between the South Asian culture and the culture of Britain. She is constantly aware of this difference and develops a desire to be a part of the mainstream English society. It has become a tedious task for her to fit into any social groups of her neighbourhood. In order to categorise herself with the white working class community, she detaches herself from the Indian heritage.

Erik Erikson, a German-American psychologist, has developed a theory on the stages of psychological development. Based on Erickson's identity construction theory, Jean Phinney, Professor of psychology at the California State University, has published a study on the young South Asians growing in Britain. Jean Phinney states that

> young South Asians are likely to go through various stages commencing in an identity diffusion status where there is a lack of interest or concern with, ethnicity. At the next stage, the foreclosure stage, ethnicity is based upon the unexamined views of parents and of significant others (most probably peers). In the memorandum stage, there is an attempt to explore and to understand for oneself the meaning of one's ethnicity. At the final stage, the achievement stage, a clear and confident sense of one's own ethnicity is established. (qtd. in Ambursley 10)

Meena, the juvenile protagonist in *Anita and Me*, is struggling to locate herself within the framework of English culture, although she is aware that it is not her own. She does have any desire for cultural authenticity, but she only longs for social integration. In order to succumb totally into English society, she is ready to assimilate into the host culture. She believes that she would be complete only by fixing herself within a definitive cultural location. In order to accomplish this she keeps on altering her self-image based on others' perceptions about her.

Meena draws inspiration from Anita Rutter, a white girl in her near neighbourhood. She is a cynical character who is brazen and disregards rules. Meena's yearning to merge with the white mainstream makes her develop reverent

love and adoration towards Anita, whom she finds exhilarating and intriguing. Meena's acquaintance with Anita makes her far removed from the "pleasant, helpful, delicate" (149) little Indian girl she is expected to be as she chooses the path towards becoming Anita, "the cock of the yard" (38-39). With the hope of gaining an identity through Anita, she voluntarily separates and alienates herself from her home culture. Meena pounces on into the idealised and romanticised world of Anita, in an earnest attempt 'to belong.' "Now I only thought of myself [...] and where I wanted to belong... My life was outside home, with Anita, my passport of acceptance" (148). She is attracted by Anita's flair for the dramatic and prefers strolling hand in hand with her on Tollington's dirty yards.

Meena's friendship with Anita takes her to an extent of telling lies, stealing candies, acquiring a 'yard' accent, craving for boys and gloating over her own wench potential. In her efforts to assimilate into the dominant white society, she creates a bond with Anita. Meena endorses on the carefree amoral life and creates an image of herself more like Anita. She doesn't have any sense of guilt in Anita's company: "There was never fear or censure or recoil in those green, cool eyes, only the recognition of a kindred spirit, another mad bad girl trapped inside a superficially obedient body" (150). Meena is enthralled by the way that "sex [...] hung around her [...] like a faint perfume, what she gave off by the tilt of her thin hips, in the quizzical arc of an eyebrow, in her constant unhurried monologues about the boys in her school" (139).

Meena gains Anita's acceptance when she shamelessly manipulates her cousins, Pinky and Baby. On arriving at Mr. Ormerod's shop, Meena steals some sweets and the charity money box and puts it in the jumper of Baby and threatens with, "Yow say anything, and yow'm dead" (155). This is not the first time she steals.

In the beginning of the novel, she is caught by her parents for stealing money from her mother's purse. She tells her parents lies that only harm her and she never feels guilty and shameful for what she has done. But, in Mr Ormerod's shop, we find Meena bullying Pinky and Baby to exert her power over them and intimidate them into silence. She has acquired this trait of Anita who more often used to exert the same power over Sherrie and Fat Sallie. When Meena is got caught for the theft, she throws the blame on her cousins. She does not have any sense of guilt or feel ashamed for what she has done to those innocent girls; she is happy and thrilled about this:

> I had earned my Wench Wings without even trying, and it had been so simple and natural, and what thrilled me most of all was that I did not feel at all guilty or ashamed. I had finally broken free, of what I did not know, but I felt my chest expanded as if each rib had been a prison bar and they had all snapped slowly one by one, leaving my heart unfettered and drunk with space. (156)

Meena's transformation from a pleasant, delicate Indian girl into a Tollington wench begins here. She sets on her journey of transformation by imitating Anita. By mimicking Anita, she believes that her desires are growing up and gaining an identity and power for herself. Anita has become a source of empowerment for her. Meena's admiration for Anita stems from the fact that she sees in her a projection of an image of her desired self. "Anita made me laugh like no one else; she gave voice to all the wicked things I had often thought but kept zipped up inside my good girl's winter coat" (138). She ends up being different from what she was.

After gaining Anita's approval as a joint leader of Wench Wings, she identifies herself as Anita's equal. She has broken free of her exotic self and feels liberated, unfettered and thrilled. Meena's transformation makes her turn against her

own family and she cuts all the ties she has with them. She is contented of becoming Anita she has always wanted to be. If this breaking free of 'Meena beti' brings her true happiness, then why doesn't the novel end here? Since *Anita and Me* is a perfect example of Bildungsroman, which, according to Berthold Schoene Harwood, "insist[s] on the narrative consistency of their characters, suggesting that, whilst they grow and evolve, they do not change but remain identical with whom they were at the outset and will be in conclusion" (160).

Meena, living in adopted land, has to confront issues related to existence. Due to the heightened sense of racial discrimination between 'migrant' minority and the 'resident' majority, she has to make constant negotiations and reformulations of the self in order to fit herself within the predominantly white environment. The colour of her skin not only discriminates her but also makes her as an object of hatred, since it is a sign of inferiority. Being physically Indian and mentally Britain, she experiences exclusion and difference due to her racialised body, as she is treated as the unknown, the 'other'. She goes through one such situation where the village boys flirt with Anita and her friends, but she is excluded to the point where she wonders whether she is invisible. She turns up to be the odd one out in Anita's gang: "I knew, I knew it was not because I was too young or badly dressed, it was something else, something about me so off putting, so unimaginable, that I made Fat Sally look like the glittering star prize" (105).

Meena has to face the realities of racial discrimination even though she takes more pains to emulate Anita and put on an "authentic yard accent" (122). She finds it hard to balance between physical aspect and ethnic origin. She feels her dark skin as a marker of the difference. This makes her turn against her own body with the realisation of the fact that her dark skin could no longer be discarded, as it is not

temporary. She feels that her body stands as an obstacle in her way towards social acceptance and success. "I wanted to be anyone else except myself only older and famous. But now for, for some reason, I wanted to shed my body like a snake slithering out of its skin and emerge reborn, pink and recognizable" (146). The notion of inferiority due to skin colour creates a rift in her desire to fit into the white society.

Meena tries to gain an identity by putting on a "deliberately exaggerated Tollington accent" with the hope of fostering alliance, "Meena constantly draws attention to her Tolligton accent as a token of identity [... because] she believes, ultimately erroneously, that her accent will [...] help her achieve the sense of belonging that her body cannot assume" (Neti 104, 106). She tries to blur the distinction by perfect linguistic assimilation.

The racialist slur she confronts on her way to *gurudwara* in Brimingham, is a perfect example where she comes to realise that linguistic assimilation could no longer create sameness and achieve a sense of belonging that her body cannot assume. When mama found the car moving backwards as her feet was slipping off the pedals due to those strappy sandals she was wearing, she got panicked. Meena had to leap out of the car and was pleading everyone behind them to move back. At the end of the queue a sweet-faced elderly woman blinked at her and said in a casual tone, "Bloody stupid wog. Stupid woggy wog. Stupid" (97). She felt as if she had been punched and her "mind was too full of the old lady to think about God" (98). The racialist abuse taunted her mind and made her feel "hurt, angry, confused, and horribly powerless because this kind of hatred could not be explained" (98). On the other hand, her lack of fluency in her mother tongue makes her unfit in her family context and among her relatives. Her continuous attempt to gain a British identity makes her far removed

from the Indian one. This intensifies her sense of alienation and emotional dislocation. She finds herself living in a gray area between two cultures.

Meena begins to accept her racial identity during the village Spring Fete, where Sam Lowbridge appears "as skinheads armed with a new-found racist discourse" (Bromley 147). His remarks about going to protect his own community by refusing to "give everything away to some darkies we've never met. We don't give a toss for anybody else. This is our patch. Not some wogs' handout" (193). This single remark made Meena and her family feel like an outcast in the place they have been so long residing. That night her heart was filled with the feeling of fear and loneliness. She comes to realise that she does not share the same sky with her English peers in Tollington; and she turns towards her family for this connection.

Meena feels "punched in stomach" (193) and stands up against Anita for the first time as she shows some admiration towards Sam. She gets to know that Sam engages himself in a team with overtly racist agenda whose animosity is focused specifically on the immigrants such as Meena and her family. When Sam and Anita emerge as a couple, they denote the cohesion between the paramount marginalising forces in the dominant society whom Meena ardently assumed that they will draw her to the centre. With the brutish behavior of Sam, she comes to realise that all her efforts and pains taken by her were futile. This made her conscious of the fact that they will always be regarded as the 'other' in the foreign land, their so-called home. This deterioration of her relationship with the English peers creates a rupture in the fluid formation of Meena's subjectivity. It is here for the first time Meena reaches "the safe haven of papa's arms" (195).

On their way back to home, papa advises her, "If anyone ever says anything rude to you, first you say something back, and then you come and tell me. Is that

clear" (195). Meena nodded her head reassuringly as she realised that she would need her papa on her side for the foreseeable future. She tries to identify herself with her own kind and this realistic perception of self enables her to give up all her efforts to fit into her environment. This acceptance of race makes her realise the positive aspects of the coloured existence. "But tonight I finally made the connection that change always strolled hand in hand with loss, with upheaval, and that I would always feel it keenly because in the end, I did not live under the same sky as most other people" (197). The advice given by her papa earlier kept on drumming into ears, "Don't give them a chance to say we're worse than they already think we are. You prove you are better. Always" (45).

The arrival of Meena's maternal grandmother, Nanima, marks a turning point in her development. As predicted earlier by the fortune-teller at the Spring fete, help comes "from over the seas" (184). Nanima serves as the guardian figure for Meena. She perceives a mutual sense of recognition and intimacy between her and Nanima, which seems to transcend language. Naima's recital of her memories about the past in Punjabi, along with the translation provided by her father enhances Meena's knowledge of Punjabi. "With Nanima, Punjabi is no longer a language of exclusion and unbelonging for Meena; on the contrary, with her acquisition of her parents' native tongue she gains access to a whole area of the family identity that was previously closed to her" (Assmann n.pag.).

In her early days, Meens felt Punjabi as an indoor" (203) language which was, "written in astrological symbols, all half moons and flying dots like comets" (322). Meena gradually gets well-acquainted with Punjabi and she could understand it without any translation. The language barrier which existed between Meena and her family is now broken. Access to the traditional language has gained a significant

space for Meena within her Indian immigrant community. As Meena notes that she could feel a sense of deliverance when she hears "Punjabi under the stars" (203) which also helps her form an emotional picturising of India,

> Papa's singing always unleashed these emotions which were unfamiliar and instinctive at the same time, in a language I could not recognize but I felt I could speak in my sleep, in my dreams, evocative of a country I had never visited but which sounded like the only home I had ever known. (112)

Through Nanima, Meena comprehends the root cause of their migration from India. Social, political and economic problems caused due to the British colonisation in India made Meena's parents migrate to Britain in search of better opportunities.

Meena's is deeply hurt when she hears the story from one of her elders about the Partition of India and their arrival to Britain in search of a place to settle, "walking around the Swiss Cottage trying, to find a boarding house that did not have the sign "No Irish, Blacks or Dogs?" (165). She then learns of the letters written to home by her father. The letters had so many lies about the job he had. He would "ring up and get an interview in his best voice" (165) but once the employer sees his face his job is gone. The status of Indians in the Third World and the experience of rejection due to racism in her own village shatter her heart. This "marks the second stage of her double estrangement: first from family [...], now from her 'elected' community" (147).

Nanima serves as a 'Mother India' figure in whom Meena finds a secure abode for self-disclosure and also provides her confidence to confront all the social difficulties that she is yet to face. Nanima's narration of story about the suffering undergone by them during the Partition and the painful story of colonial past allures

Meena and creates a longing in her to visit India, her imaginary homeland. Being a second-generation immigrant, she could not accomplish her dream.

Nanima's stories help Meena build a positive counter-image of India. It also helps her to break all the stereotypical racist notions of Indians as "unruly mobs, howling like animals" (211). She becomes aware of the racist rendition of the false representation of the given reality which is imparted through British school system. She starts to identify herself one among the people of coloured existence and gives up all her efforts to distance herself from them. She stops faking her identity and takes a strong resolution to "always tell the truth" (284). With the realisation of her real ties, she takes the responsibility to fulfil the unaccomplished ambitions of her parents. The company of Nanima triggers her transformation and makes her realise the value of home, "there was a corner of me that would be forever not England" (112). The vague idea that Meena has about India acquires a definite form.

Nanima has brought a miraculous change in Meena's perception about India. Meena begins to embrace the identity model offered by her grandmother that is located in Indian culture. Meena realigns herself emotionally with the family values of relationality and interdependence. This helps to reconstruct the intergenerational family bonds. When Meena, her mother, and her grandmother line up for photography, we find "[s]he is relocated, reconfigured along an 'Asian' continuum" (Bromley 148). Nanima is endowed with a magical power to re-organise and re-adjust the constellation of family relationship by wonderfully managing to break mother-fixation from Sunil. This makes Meena give up all the resentment she has towards him and makes her a loving sister.

Meena is now filled with the new found confidence by her Nanima. She is now in a position to defend herself. On comprehending that the verbal abuse of Sam

has slowly turned into physical attack, she turns down the tempting offer given by him to free her from the racist stereotypes. After becoming aware of the subtle racist undercurrents and the racist assault done to an Indian Bank Manager through the combined efforts of Anita and Sam, Meena stands for herself and her Indian community for the first time. She gathers courage and looks right into his face and says "You mean the others like the Bank Manager? [...] the Indian man. I know you did it. I am the others, Sam. You did mean me" (313-14).

When Meena has taken freedom on her own terms, Sam turns powerless and confused before her new found confidence.

> Sam gripped my wrists tighter for support. "Yow've always been the best wench in Tollington. Anywhere! Dead funny." His face darkened, maybe it was another shift of the moon. "But yow was never gonna look at me, yow won't be stayin will ya? You can move on. How come? How come I can't?" And then he kissed me like I thought he would, and I let him, feeling mighty and huge, knowing I had won and that every time he saw another Meena on a street corner he would remember this and feel totally powerless. (314)

Meena starts giving up all her attempts to be liked and accepted by her English peers. "I [...] hated Anita for speaking to me all those years ago when I sat on my front step eating stolen sweets, hated Sam for not being cruel to me so that I could have dismissed him long ago" (321). She starts to challenge all the rules imposed by the hegemonic racist society. She frees herself and feels liberated from the stereotypical framework set up for the migrant minority by the dominant majority. Her journey towards adulthood starts from the moment when she splits herself from Anita and Sam, and realigns her identity as a traditional Punjabi girl. After attaining

self-actualisation, Meena starts to embrace her multicultural identity. She gives up all the affinity she had towards the Western culture and practices. She sheds off all the illusions about the dominant society and begins to accept her in-between position.

Meena conscious of her hyphenated existence as a British-Indian girl comprehends that she has her own space and can move between both the worlds without any need to discard either one. Memories shared by Nanima serve as a link between Meena and her parents' past which brings the world of Meena closer towards her grandmothers' world. "At first, these remembrances seemed so farfetched, so far removed from anything I recognized as reality [...]. But gradually I got used to Nanima's world [...] and for the first time I desperately wanted to visit India and claim some of this magic as mine" (210-211). Nanima helps Meena restore the lost link with her homeland. The things which had remained strange, alien and unfamiliar turns out to be something recognisable each with its own meaning which makes her anxious to discover more about India. This transformation made her love herself and her family. Meena hopes,

> I would grow my hair long and vaguely feminine, I would be nice to Pinky and Baby and seek out their company willingly, I would write letters to India and introduce myself properly to that anonymous army of blood relatives, I would learn to knit, probably, and I would always always tell the truth. (284)

With the realisation of the traumatic past of her parents which made them move to Britain in search of better opportunities instigated her to concentrate on her studies. She becomes conscious of the fact that, "[T]is was no longer a mere exam. If I failed, my parents' five thousand mile journey would have all been for nothing"

(213). Her successful completion of her eleven plus exam gained her scholarship to join in a grammar school. When Meena leaves Tollington, she states that

> I now knew I was not a bad girl, a mixed-up, a girl with no name or no place. The place in which I belonged was wherever I stood and there was nothing stopping me simply moving forward and claiming each resting place as home. (326)

Although Meena experiences alienation and rejection while straddling between two cultures; this grey area turns out to be a productive space for self-observation and provides her an opportunity for maturation. She stops envying of becoming like her English peers. She gives up all the efforts of faking her identity and arrives at an optimistic conclusion about her hybrid identity as a British-Asian. "It was time I let go and I floated back down into my body which, for the first time ever, fitted me to perfection and was all mine" (326).

Chapter Five

Summation

Literature is a reflection of human feelings, passions, pains and joys. Its universality, timelessness and eternity make it appealing to readers which transcend any national or linguistic boundaries. Prose, poetry, drama, short stories, and novels are some of the genres in literature. The novel is the most widely read and popular form of writing which gives unique insight into the lives of the people. Although the novel is fictitious, people record their thoughts and experiences with some degree of realism. At present days, the modern novel does not have kings or heroes as its protagonist. But it is a representation of struggles, temptations, triumphs and failures of common man like our own. This makes it interesting and helps us relate to ourselves with that situation of everyday experiences and prevents us from committing those errors. It has taken innumerable and countless forms down the centuries.

The end of the colonial rule led to the development of post-colonial literature. Due to the changes in the political and economic set-up there was a large scale displacement of people moving across the globe in search of better prospects of life. Therefore, there was an increase in the number of immigrant population. Many factors are responsible for the people or groups to migrate. Some chose to migrate in short distance within the country which is known as internal migration. Some crossed the boundaries and migrated across seas either voluntary or forced. This long distance migration is known as international migration. Internal migration is less traumatic when compared with international migration as they found some similarities in terms of foods, clothing, language, social and cultural practices.

People left their home country mainly to flee from past or future persecution as they have been unjustly treated based on their caste, race or religion. Those living in war-torn countries in order to escape conflicts and violence go in search of peaceful environment. Political instability which rises due to cultural diversity, lack of job opportunities, environmental factors which render people homeless and helpless and they go in search of safer environment are some of the other factors which contribute to migration.

In India, a great shifting occurred after the end of the British rule, in connection with the Partition of India and Pakistan. This event led to the displacement of nearly eighteen million people. Communal violence rapidly spread across the whole nation mainly along the borders of Punjab. Many Punjabi Sikhs, whether skilled or unskilled, migrated to United Kingdom for economic reasons. They were employed in mines, factories and industries for low wages.

In this newly adopted land they face issues of discrimination and unfair treatment due to racial distinctiveness. A great deal is being written to articulate their personal experience and the exploitative tendencies of the whites. Through literary texts they highlight the problems and issues of intolerance, narrow-minded and chauvinistic behavior towards the minority group due to their racial and ethnic disparities.

The place where these immigrants arrive and come in contact with already has its own inhabitants, own culture and therefore a kind of clash occurs. So they make attempt to assimilate into the host culture to gain a sense of identity. But they find themselves in the borderline neither belonging to their homeland nor to their adopted

land. The attempt to maintain the traditional culture on one hand and the effort taken to integrate into the adopted culture on other hand develops a kind of dual identity.

Syal is a British Indian Comedian English writer, journalist, actress and playwright. She was born on 27 June, 1961 in Wolverhampton to Punjabi parents who were one among the refugees who migrated across borders in the wake of the partition of India and Pakistan, and settled in Britain. Syal was brought up in the mining village of Essington in the West Midlands, which serves as the setting for her first novel *Anita and Me*.

In her novels, Syal portrays her personal experience as an Indian descendent. Being a daughter of a partition survivor and a second generation immigrant in Britain, Syal laments the loss of the homeland and their changing positions and status in the adopted land. She addresses the notion of home and homelessness, and the ways by which they preserve their ethnic traditions simultaneously adapting themselves to the culture of the host land. She successfully represents the lives of first generation as well as second generation non-resident in her novels. Syal describes the struggle of second generation Indians to preserve the culture of their parents at the same time carving their own identities in a cultural landscape which is totally alien to them.

Syal's first novel *Anita and Me* (1996) is a based on her own childhood experience growing up in Britain. It is a semi-autobiographical novel. This novel traces the formative years of the young protagonist Meena, the daughter of an Indian immigrant residing in Tollington. It is a best bildungsroman novel as it encompasses all the experience undergone by Meena from her childhood to the attainment of psychological or emotional maturity.

Bildungsroman is a literary genre that focuses on the formative years of the protagonist from youth to adulthood. The plot line centers mainly on the psychological and moral growth of that character. Bildungsroman or 'novel of self-formation' revolves around a youthful, juvenile individual who struggles to fit into the wider framework of his/her society. It has a protagonist who matures socially or psychologically, receives an 'education' in life and comes to a new understanding about self and the world.

The distinctive qualities of Coming-of-age story pattern include a beginning where the character is introduced as youthful and immature. Then the character encounters a challenge or problem. To deal with this problem, they go through struggle. The character makes tough choice or decision to overcome difficult obstacles. Maturation takes places while coming across all these stages and by the end the character seen is different or changed. The events happening around change them and at the end of the story they are matured person from what they began.

Stand by Me, *Perks of Being a Wallflower*, *Mean Girls*, *Hunger Games* are some of the famous coming-of-age novel where the character starts as a young child, experiences these difficulties, goes through these journeys to become a different person by the end. The character growth begins when he/she is faced with loss or discovery. Generally, there is a clash between what he/she wants and the rules imposed by the society. The protagonist moves from a state of naivete to a state of knowledge; from a state of inexperience to a state of experience; from a state of immaturity to a state of making mature response or decision. He gives up all the romantic view of the world and comes to have a more realistic view.

The ultimate goal of the central character is to achieve maturity. But this maturation is achieved gradually and with difficulty as he has to go through many disappointments. The changes do not happen all of a sudden, but they grow and evolve, and at the end they remain identical with whom they were at the outset and will be in conclusion. As Paul Ricoeur has mentioned, in his article "Narrative Time", "the end of the story is what equates the present with the past, the actual with the potential. The hero *is* who he *was*" (186).

In accordance with the bildugsroman plot structure, we can make out the different stages of Meena's development. First and foremost, it begins with the detachment and distancing of Meena from the members of her family which is followed by her simultaneous attempts to assimilate into the host culture. "A strong will to change and the revolutionary potential of adolescence are deployed to rebel against parents, home, and past in order to become a fully-fledged member of the peer group. This is exacerbated by the experience of displacement due to the family's history of migration" (Assmann n.pag.). Her lack of access to the traditional language results in the formation of a language barrier. This lack of interaction within the members of her community leads to a fragmentation of the past which eventually results in the weakening of the family bond.

Meena faces many struggles as she desires to fit in a society which is culturally alien to her. She has to confront various issues related to identity, home, and belonging. Besides theses issues, she also has to face the problem of race. Being the daughter of the only non-white family in Tollington, she is seen as 'other' by the children of her own age group. She feels the world is segmented into Indianess and Englishness. This dichotomy is seen when she is expected to exhibit Indianness inside

her home, while in public or outside sphere she behaves the way she is expected by her English audience.

> Whenever we [the family] went 'out', out meaning wherever English people were, as opposed to Indian friends' houses which in any case was always 'in' as all we would do was sit in each other' longue, eat each others' food and watch each others' televisions, my parents always wore their smartest clothes. (25)

This dichotomy encompasses all areas including clothes, food, manners, interactions, and language. The disparity she faces is brutal which makes Meena wonder, "if the very act of shutting our front door transported us onto another planet" (165). She finds herself caught between two worlds, each having its own set of rules and values, and "living in grey area between all the categories" (149-150). She has to satisfy her parents' desire on one side and please her English peers on the other. This position of not belonging either 'in' or 'out' generates a feeling of belonging nowhere which stands as an impediment in Meena's identity construction process.

Syal has given a clear picture of the "system of semiotic oppositions English vs. Indian" (Reichl 174), which is apparent in the life style of Kumar's household. Woodward declares, "We symbolize the sort of person we want others to think we are through the clothes we wear and the way in which we behave" (12).When comparing with the English neighbours, Kumar's family have a different set of cultural and religious practices, and Meena is always conscious of this dissimilarity that her family exhibits in an English environment. As Meena longs for social acceptance, she says, "It was a constant source of embarrassment … that our front garden was the odd one out in the village" (15).

When compared with rest of their neighbourhood, the Kumars' remain very possible, as their house is frequently visited by other British-Indian Families living in Tollington. Staying far away in a nation which is not their own and cut off from their own roots, they adopt/assume a circle of Indian friends as their own extended families to compensate the loss of their own blood relations. Even though they are not real relations, Meena is taught by her parents to call these pretend relations as Auntie and Uncle, as they share a special bond with them. "I knew how intensely my parents valued these people they so readily renamed as family, faced with the loss of their own blood relations" (31).

From the young age, Meena's parents inscribe in her heart the importance of family relationship. They strive hard to transmit their family values and strengthen a collective family identity. They would spend their evening playing cards, chatting, playing simple folk songs and sharing histories of their past. When she hears the stories narrated by her Uncles and Aunties she feels her "heart … trying to break out of [her] chest. Her sleep is disturbed that night as her dreams are "full of blood red trains screaming through empty stations, scattering several limbs as it whistled past" (74-75). During the evening parties hosted by her parents, Meena finds that

> my elders became strange to me […], tragedy and memory illuminating their features […]. I did not often stay for these mournful *ghazals*, preferring to creep off to bed unnoticed whilst my younger cousins slept in milky heaps like an abandoned litter. There was no point in my being there; when I looked at my elders, in these moments, they were all far, far away. (72)

Meena has no concern about the pain endured by her parents. The thought of their existence horrifies her and she feels disgusted by that fact that she would be perceived as 'other' by her English peers and they would clam up and deny her entry.

Food habits play a crucial role in this conflict as they are an indicator of racial, class and caste differences. They act as an identity markers of region, religion and culture. It has symbolic value connected with their home land. "This food was not just something to fill a hole, it was soul food, it was the food their far-away mothers had made and came seasoned with memory and longing, this was the nearest way they would get for many years, to home." (61). By cooking traditional foods, Mrs Kumar tries to retain uniqueness of the home culture. This brings them the memories of "far-away mothers" (61) and it functions as an intergenerational link by bringing people and community together. When Meena is served rice and daal, she shows her dislike for it and makes her own choice of food. "I don't want that …that stuff! I want fishfingers! Fried! And chips! Why can't I eat what I want to eat?" (60). She resists all her "mother's attempt to teach me the rudiments of Indian cuisine" (61). This shows her disregard for her cultural and family tradition. Her rebellion against her parents shows that she is very much interested in Western eating habits and is trying to align herself with her friends.

Meena, on visiting her neighbours kitchen finds Mrs Worrall cooking style very impressive to her. She feels that her mother cooking in a traditional way singles their family out from other families in Tollington and it has indirectly become a primary marker difference for Meena. This generates an intercultural conflict for Meena. Indian food and the way of cooking is something that is emotionally

connected with Meena's parents but it does not add any extra layer of meaning for her as she does not share any of her parents' memories and nostalgia.

For Meena, these attempts made by her parents seems vague as she lives in a societal set up that is entirely different from theirs. She desires to lead a life of singularity and autonomy just like her English friends. She wants to feel free and liberate from the clutches of traditional family values of obligations and caring. She wants to attain success through individuality and singularity which is clearly reflected in her dream of becoming a popular figure in *Opportunity Knocks*, a television show which she hopes would be her "most realistic escape route from Tollington, from ordinary girl to major personality in one easy step" (65). Like her English friends, she no longer values familial interrelationships and the circle of pretend relations could not recompose the disruption of the joint family due to migration.

Schoene-Harwood states that, "the postcolonial self's identity is never at one with itself but invariably overlapping, multiply mirrored, blurred" (160). He further states that an individual in this hybrid position is "continually at risk of becoming a solitary, freakishly shape-shifting nomad, haunted by rather than settled in culture [...] In Meena's case hybridity signifies a state of not being able to fully meet the standards of either culture" (160-161).

The intergenerational cultural dissonance is connected closely with questions of cultural identity and is therefore over determined, "such that the parents' wants are associated with the culture of origin [...], and the child's want is associated with the culture of destination" (Ahmed 149). In this situation lies a typical dilemma in representations which is experienced by second-generation immigrants who are

trapped between the two cultures and must cherish their traditional culture on one hand and simultaneously please and adapt to the host environment on the other.

Secondly, the estrangement from the members of the community consequently leads to total isolation. By gaining Anita's attention and approval, Meena believes that she has attained the new sense of belonging for which she was longing for. "I'd been having the best day of my life being Anita's new friend" (60). But, this happiness was short lived. This crisis arises due to the cognizance of the incompatible difference between Meena and the circle of friends she tries to gain entrance to, which is coupled with her former attempt of estranging herself from her family. The fear of being different haunts Meena, so she tries to gain entrance into the British society by using language as a tool. But the linguistic assimilation does not produce desirable outcome.

Language turns to be a ground on which the most intense operation of alienation and identification are mapped out. The incongruity between her visually but not audibly racialized identity fails to achieve perfect linguistic assimilation. These stereotypes associate with coloured existence strongly affect the social perceptions and behaviors and this raises problems to her to fix herself into one place. This shapes the way others perceive her based on the prior knowledge and denies her the desired identity that she seeks. Lozano-Vonrich has made a study on the depression undergone by the immigrants and states:

> Some studies have shown that language barriers, disconnection from family and friends, and exposure to new and different customs and traditions can lead to difficulties in adapting to a new country. Difficulties acculturating can, in turn lead to low-self-esteem and

increased self-doubt, with additional psychological stress (qtd. in Joshi 85)

For Meena, difficulties which arise due to articulation makes her feel alienated, depressed and stressed. Additionally, the unfair treatment meted out to Meena due to the stereotypical images that are created against the Indians makes her inhabit a state of ambivalence and anxiety. This makes her turn against her own body. Moreover, the supplantation of her mother tongue with a new one and this loss of locally articulated accent draw her away from her own community, which subsequently leads to the dissonance of family bond. The more she draws close to acquiring English identity, the more she is discarded from the Indian one. In doing so, she is totally set adrift first from the members of her community and then from her English peers. As Tyson states, "to be unhomed is to feel not at home even in your own home because you are not at home in yourself: your cultural identity crisis has made you a psychological refugee" (421). Living on the threshold between two cultures and the feeling of unhomeliness at home converts her into a psychological refugee.

Uma Parmeshwaran has made a remark on the dilemma faced by the immigrant,

> In the immigrant context, one might say that minorities especially have to fight for both the erasure of a negative identity pre-given by the power group and the forging of a positive identity. In the process, they are often transformed into an uneasy hybrid condition of non-belonging in both homelands. (23)

the uneasiness in the hybrid condition arises mainly in second generation immigrants such as Meena, due to the lack of knowledge about the significance of one's traditional values and customs.

Thirdly, there is a process of reconciling with her roots, her home, and the past. The radical transformation in the narrative that elevates Meena's accomplishment to build a sense of identity is not based on her imitation or mimicking and performance. It is based on a more persistent sense of belonging which is achieved with the arrival of her grandmother, Nanima. "As a benign ancestral figure and a benevolent spirit of the past, she helps to suture the torn fabric of the family and restores a sense of identity by opening a way for Meena to access the past and the family stories that had been previously out of bounds for her" (Assmann n.pag.). With the arrival of her grandmother, Meena's perception about her family changes as she starts to identify herself with them. "I vowed that I would never leave her, this wrenching of daughter from mother would never happen again" (202). This positive self-positioning as "a British girl with a Punjabi background" (Stein 52) gives Meena the power to initiate change in her own life.

Major change takes place when Meena accidentally has her leg fractured and ends up staying at hospital, as Meena says, "I decided there and then to heal myself, both in body and mind" (284). Her days at hospital turn out to be a period of self-observation where she gets a clear view about friendship and the importance of her studies. This self-realization makes her a changed persona as she emerges as a matured, independent and gives up all her efforts to emulate Anita. The final step towards maturation is Meena's withdrawal from Anita: "Anita and I had never been meant for each other: Sam and Anita, Anita and Sam, it sounded as natural as breathing" (282). Meena, having lost all the admiration to be like Anita, is now ready

to distance herself from Anita without any hesitation or delay. She does not develop any hatred towards them but as her mother instructs her, she is open to learn good things from other culture but at the same time embraces her Indian identity which makes her turn towards her family for love and support. The novel ends optimistically where Meena is seen not crippled by any fear of being different but she turns the margins to be the most creative place by embracing her dual identity as British-Asian.

Syal, in *Anita and Me*, has penned her own experience of being an immigrant and growing in Britain. Syal, while offering talks in schools, encourages immigrant children who have the fear of being different as they grow in a different environment.

> I feel really lucky that my parents chose such a strange place for an immigrant family to grow up... Right from the off I was an outsider. I was always forced to think about who I was and issues of identity and self-worth in ways I probably would never have had to if I had been born surrounded by people like me. ("Meera Syal," n.pag.)

The novel *Anita and Me* urges the readers to respect every one regardless of colour, creed and religion. It highlights the fact that family plays an important role in imparting such values to their children. We are born out of love, and so it is this very love we share in a family, that we need to give out to everyone. Self-introspection is another factor that must compel individuals to question oneself their attitude and biases towards others in society, especially a different colour than oneself.

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Life Instances of the Gender Dysphoria Community in A. Revathi's *Truth About Me: A Hijra Life Story*

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with its rich population has more than five lakh hijras living in it. People belonging to the nity undergo triple marginalization. They are geographically marginalized having no place to ere they feel loved, accepted and secured. They are also economically marginalized. They are n their livelihood by singing 'badhai' songs on ceremonial occasions and are occasionally ex. They are also marginalized in socio-political context, and are forced to live in the fringes y. The trauma, pain and agony that these people undergo are brought to light by A.Revathi in raphical novel, *Truth About Me: A Hijra Life Story*. This paper focuses on how Revathi fights dds, how she stands against all obstacles and boldly raises her voice for the Hijra Community lty, ridicule and shame. She fights for the rights of the Hijra Community and this seems to be a ry step to break all the social and cultural politics of gender and introducing the 'third sex'.

Discrimination, exclusion, heteronormative society, hijra, identity construction

Revathi, a transgendered woman, is a Bangalore based writer who boldly raises her voice for the ...e Hijra Community. The term '*hijra*' refers to "a transgendered person, a physiological male ...s a feminine gender identity, women's clothing and other feminine gender roles" (Samanta 220). ...nearly five lakh hijras in India. Although the Supreme Court accepted 'Hijras' as 'Third ...ey find it hard to exercise their basic rights. The traumatic events they undergo in academic ...and workplace leave a negative impact in their hearts and minds. They find it hard to move ...e life as they are abused emotionally, physically, sexually and mentally. Constructing an identity ...dean task as they are not allowed to raise their voice against the oppression and injustice done to ...ey are denied certain privileges that a normal human can enjoy. In this specific autobiography, ...k about Me*, Revathi shares with us the troubles she faced and the pains of being marginalized in ...ter oriented society. She brings to light the pain, trauma and agony of being forced to live in the ...of the society.

...A. Revathi, initially named as Doraisamy, was born as the youngest in the family. Although he ...ey he grew up timid and bashful. He longed to dress up like girls and perform activities assigned ...n. The thought of being a girl haunted him. "In class, I would sit staring at the girls … I longed to ...them and suffered that I could not do so" (4). As soon as he returned home from school, he would ...s sister's dress to satisfy his inner urge. Having a body of a male and dressing up like female ...his heart. He found it harder to ignore these activities. It made him confused and anxious.

...Doraisamy was on a quest to find a solution to his problem so that he could construct his own ... He was in search of someone who could understand his feelings. "Why did I love men? Was I the ...e who felt this way? Or were there others like me … if indeed they were there?" (14). He was ...d to exhibit masculine traits and behaviour as he was born with the body of a 'male'. But his male ...ctured the passion of a 'female'. He ponders, "A woman trapped in a man's body was how I ...t of myself… I longed to be known as a woman and felt shamed by this feeling. I wondered why ...e chosen to inflict this peculiar torture on me, and why he could not have created me wholly male ...by female" (15).

ay, in his thirteen's, encountered a group of people and felt comfortable in their company similar feelings with him. These people introduced to him the Hijra community. Doraisamy in this group. So he stole some money from his house and left to Delhi to join the Hijra e guru accepted him as her daughter. She christened Doraisamy as 'Revathi'. She was oman and this filled her with the feeling of being loved, accepted and secured. She happily a woman that was assigned to her. Her duty was to help the elderly people to wash their e, fetch water for them, and help them in doing household work and cooking. She also money by dancing in the temple festivals.

ia, the hijra community is colonized economically. They beg in market places or in a railway go in groups for 'doli-baddai.' The society blames the Hijra for choosing the life of a beggar, nderstands the truth that a Hijra is never allowed to carry out a job of his/her own interest so n enter into the mainstream economy. It does not mean that they are inefficient to carry out ssigned to them. Being the 'Third Gender' they are denied employment of their own interest. engaged in begging and sex work to earn their daily bread. "Heteronormative society is tactful perpetuating its hegemonic gender discourse" (Samanta 222).

vathi faces humiliation and brutality in all walks of her life to gain employment. She has to fight e social and economic injustice done to her. She is engaged in sex work to satisfy her physical ijras are not allowed to marry a normal man, so Revathi finds sexual satisfaction by engaging in But the violence done on her body by the rowdies and the inhumanness of the police shake her hin. Lack of education and family support, hatred of common people in the society and the done to her by the police authorities left her with no choice other than begging.

Revathi realized that she can lead a life of dignity after having association with the NGO Sangama. lized that they were not only meant for begging and sex work but for something far more than that. angama made her conscious about the fact that they too are citizens of India and they also have the ights as other citizens. It also made her aware that being a citizen of India she also can exercise the o equality. This altogether changed the perceptions that she had about her life. Now she has become

gh to fight for her rights and for her community. She wanted to live a life as other women do.
s also begot them as they did other children. They are also humans born of mothers. They are
nts from the sky. They have the rights just as others. They are also citizens of this nation.

ing hijra as an owner or at least an attendant of any shop is a rare sight in India. They are not
nter into the mainstream productive economy. Their gender is totally neglected,

In India the application form for any government jobs maintain a column specifying the gender of the applicant, but this specification is clearly stated to be either a 'male' or a 'female.' This … makes them all the more an object of rejection and derision. The tragic part of the story is that it is society who denies them entry into the main stream productive economy, and it is society itself who curse them for living a parasitic life. (Samanta 222)

vathi fights against all odds and boldly raises her voice for the Hijra Community. She fights for of the Hijra Community and this seems to be a revolutionary step to break all the social and olitics of gender and introducing the 'third sex'. Many hijras have started breaking out their l roles. Though some progress has been made, there are still miles to go, and they need our o go there. Let's support them and respect them.

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Gender Hegemony and Marginalization in Mahesh Dattani's *Bravely Fought the Queen*

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Abstract

Mahesh Dattani's *Bravely Fought the Queen* analyses the emotional, financial and sexual complexities of Indian urban family and deals with women as marginalized subjects who are oppressed sexually, socially and culturally. It reveals Dattani's keen and acute insight into the struggle and position of marginalized women in a middle class household. This paper consolidates the male world by stitching the various strands of masculinities that are prevalent in the Indian society and throws light on women in the Indian scenario who are stunted in terms of development of their independent identities through the symbol of bonsai.

Keywords: hegemonic masculinity, subordinate masculinity, bonsai

Drama, as a progressive and zestful art form, is present in almost every society through the ages. It is the most wide-ranging, the blend of all the arts, representing life as well as a way of seeing it. The drama of India has a universal history, singularity, identity, and a universal presence. It is the incarnation of human action or performance and universalization of the hidden truths of the human

relations. It enacts man's relationship with man, which is fundamental to every social science.

In the theatrical scenario of contemporary India, it is seen that both men and women playwrights have taken important initiatives by representing the crimes committed against women through their literary works. This conscious awareness as to the injustices done to women is apparent in the writings of male playwrights like Vijay Tendulkar, Girish Kamad, and Mahesh Dattani to name a few.

Dattani is taken to be the true successor of all these playwrights and responsible for the betterment of English drama. He emerges as an influential playwright who projects the postcolonial dichotomy at various levels. He keeps women at the focus of his dramatic world and may be referred to as avant-garde feminist. He wrote plays under the influence of Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller and Madhurye.

Dattani is a versatile genius: a director, actor, playwright, dancer, and choreographer. He started his theatre activity, writing plays and directing them after 1980s. The literature of 1980s and 90s placed an emphasis on the issues like male hegemony, restraint of women, gender bias, and violence on women, Indian patriarchal family system, and marginalization of women, problems of eunuchs, dilemma of homosexuals, lesbians, and socio-political problems of urban-metropolitain Indian.

Dattani with a huge bulk of drama appeared on the literary scene as the most dynamic force to mould and modify the traditional form of dramatic art. He laid the direction of New Drama. He heightened the horizon of Indian drama by embodying radical themes like homosexuality, gender issues, the new dynamics of man and woman relationship, the persistently growing spiritual apathy, disillusionment and

soothingness in the middle class life and tradition. He epitomizes the changing social scenario of India.

Without conforming to any conventional dramaturgy, Dattani has fabricated a dramatic tradition of his own by drawing theatre close to real-life experiences. The main area of his focus is the human relationships. Apart from portraying the 'visible' social reality, Dattani also depict the 'invisible' issues present in the marginalized sections of society like the plight of homosexuals and the eunuchs. While articulating their psychological fears, oppressions and constraints, Dattani also illuminates the roles of the creeping effects of societal set-up that consciously or unconsciously reckon the fabric of human relationships around them.

Dattani's plays demonstrate the complex family relationships with certainity, veracity and distinctness. Patriarchy has been depicted in his plays as a system of domination and control over the family members to impose the will, needs and desires of the patriarch, i.e. the head of the family. In *Bravely Fought the Queen*, through the characters of Jiten, Nitin and Praful, Dattani shows how prejudiced patriarchal figure functions in families. Dattani condemns dishonesty and hypocrisy in relationship which may ruin the lives of people around.

Every act is titled as per the gender of the characters present within that context. Act I entitled *The Women* deals with the women characters in the play which are Baa, a widow woman and the mother of Jiten and Nitin; Dolly, wife of Jiten; Alka, wife of Nitin; Daksha, daughter of Dolly and Jiten; Lalita, wife of Sridhar, an employee in Nitin and Jiten's office. Act II entitled as *The Men* is dominated by men characters of the play as Jiten, Baa's elder son; Nitin, Baa's younger son; Sridhar, an employee in Jiten and Nitin's office and Praful, brother of Dolly and Alka. Act III entitled as "Free for all" is very allegorical and provocative. There is an outpour of

...ness and passion, fury and hostility, blaming and counter blaming. The women ...ise, assert, and move about freely in this act.

Dolly, wife of Jiten, is depicted as a segregated woman. Jiten marries her not ...se of any fondness or love for her but only for the sake of the societal norms of ...rriage. Jiten is neither faithful to her nor he tries to comprehend her. He never ...ats Dolly the way she deserves. There is impediment in every prospect of her ...istence. Here, Jiten is the symbol of patriarchal domination. Dolly's mother-in-law ...wokes Jiten to beat her up in the advanced stage of pregnancy. As a result, Daksha ...born immature at seventh month, and she is mentally deficient. Thus Daksha too, is ...fended. Here, Daksha stands as the symbol of Jiten's brutality and torture on Dolly. ...iten oppresses her because he wants to show his superiority over her. Dolly resolves ...o remain within patriarchy at all times. Her disabled child Daksha is the symbol of ...er unfulfilled selfhood. Sujata Sen in *Gender Studies* says, "Women tolerate all the ...rture silently keeping it all within themselves in order to keep the family fabric and ...restige intact" (Sen 101).

Alka, the wife of Nitin is the victim of patriarchal society. Alka, the younger daughter-in-law has her own cross to bear; her husband has a homosexual relationship with her own brother, Praful, who has intended this marriage to sustain this relationship, right in the house and outside the house. First, she endures sufferings at the hands of her brother, Praful and then her husband and mother-in-law. Praful is very unsympathetic to her. Her husband has homosexual relations with her brother Praful even before his marriage to her. Because of this, her life is devoid of any love. Alka's husband is gay and maintained a relationship with her own brother Praful. Thus, Alka, who longs for her brother's acceptance for herself, mutely undergoes her impotent marriage with Nitin. The existence of Dolly and Alka in the house are taken

for granted. They are expected with their constant presence at home, to understand the requirements of the ones who are really in charge.

John Beynon in his *Masculinities and Culture*, which is a discourse on the cultural framework of masculinity, says, "Men are not born with masculinity as part of their genetic make-up; rather it is something into which they are acculturated and which is composed of social codes of behaviour which they learn to reproduce in culturally appropriate ways" (Beynon 46). While talking about the heterogeneity of masculinities, Connell comes up with four variants of masculinity – hegemonic masculinity, subordinate masculinity, complicit masculinity and marginalized masculinity.

In *Bravely Fought the Queen*, Dattani analyzes the social pyramid and multitude of dominant masculinities through the characters of Sridhar, Jiten, and Nitin. Jiten is introduced in the second act with his arrogant demeanour, overbearing temperament, dictating terms to his younger brother and their secretary, Sridhar. His supremacy over Sridhar curtails from the fact of being economically superior. Jiten's masculinity is distinctly hegemonic equivalently in his work-place. His temperament and outlook is capitalist and therefore, patriarchy shows up to be the incarnation of hegemonic masculinity.

Jiten's masculinity is also recognizably hegemonic in his family. Family is "the crucial site of women's oppression, the space where, unheeded by the world outside, women are at the mercy of fathers or husbands; where the law of 'patriarchy' hold its most primitive form" (Pilcher and Whelehan 44). Jiten being the sole provider of the family acquires authority and makes women reliant on him economically. So, Jiten's higher position in his family renders him the power to

enforce violence and force. Jiten powerfully exercises 'hegemonic masculinity' in his family.

Nitin's sexual attitude discards him from the patriarchal premise; he is driven to the lowest hierarchy of masculinity where he displays values, principles, and behaviour that are at variance with those expected from a 'man'. He comes under the last category of masculinity, 'subordinate masculinity'. Nitin has to conceal his homosexuality behind the institution of marriage, with Alka. Nitin's secret relationship with Praful is revealed at the very end of the play. He appears as a disempowered man, whose competency and capabilities have been seized by the 'hegemonic masculinity' that makes Jiten powerful. In this play, Dattani describes the hardcore patriarchy present in Indian society.

Dattani's skilful use of 'Bonsai' symbol exposes the survival of each protagonist. In semiotics, symbol is a sign. A symbol is defined as ". . . a word or phrase that signifies an object or event which in its turn signifies something, or has a range of reference, beyond itself" (Abrams 206). Bonsai is a Japanese term which means 'tree-in-a-tray.' It is the art of miniaturization of trees by growing them in containers. It is accomplished for purely aesthetic purpose. This practice is in contrast to the ordinary practice which aims at utility-based activities like production of food and medicine. Hence, bonsai is a non-productive practice and the final product is a piece of decoration which looks similarly like a tree but lacks its benefit. The designer clips, trims and shears the sampling in order to enforce his intention and plan. Therefore, the art of bonsai cultivation is the art of imposing order on a miniature object, for the purpose of pleasure. In the same way, in patriarchal society a woman derives her identity form the man who controls her.

Lalitha brings an orange fruit-bearing bonsai as a present when she comes to meet Dolly. The fruit-bearing tree reminds Lalitha of a child-bearing woman because she longs for a child inwardly. But, she is forced suppresses her feeling because Sridhar's intention is to buy a flat and then have children. Lalitha has practiced to shape her life, its imaginations and passions according to Sridhar's tastes. Renounced of an active professional life Lalitha adheres on to her husband's work and deceives herself into believing that she is deeply interested in it. She assumes of acquiring a sense of self—worth from such an association. For Lalitha, "the emptied out female self, shut out from the general intercourse provided by an active work life, is left with no alternatives but to feign interest in her husband's work, and believe in gaining a sense of self-worth from such an association" (Bourdieu 117).

Bonsai is particularly the depiction of Dolly's torments and sufferings, to whom Lalitha present this sapling as a gift. This plant is not given enough space to spread and they are constantly trimmed so that they can reach only a particular level. Even its sprouting are immature and inedible like Daksha, which is dwarfed and stunted in every aspect and yet surviving. As Daksha is born premature due to her father's brutality towards her mother, she lives a deformed and retarded 'bonsai' life. She represents the restricted growth of female self ensuing from dehumanization of women in society.

All these grafting and stripping makes bonsai into a pretty and valuable object and this makes Dolly an ornamental piece of decoration in the household and at office party to Jiten. Dolly could not take pleasure in completeness of motherhood. Lalitha deceives herself to believe that her husband's work and decision making process are her own and Daksha is been denied a normal life at an infantile stage all because of the impediment of the hindering process of patriarchal force.

Dattani makes use of the bonsai symbol to associate with women in the Indian scenario who are smashed in terms of the development of their independent, individual identities. The female bonsai becomes a subtle weapon with which Dattani reveals the indiscernible process through which society disorts, curtails, and clips the heart and soul of women. Thus like the bonsais, the women in the play are unable to realize their full potential. The bonsai plant is an apt symbol of the entire family which echoes their inner thoughts and feelings and shows that the family has not 'grown' normally but has been stiffed and suffocated. Thus, "the symbolic connotations of the metaphor of the bonsai produce the effect of a larger reality in which the female is pinned down under a monolithic edifice of patriarchal injunctions" (Bourdieu 104).

At the end of the play, Dolly and Alka challenge the oppressive authority of their husbands and show gestures of resistance and defiance. But, their voices remain unheeded. Often, the female voice is thwarted, muted and passivized by the very structure of power that patriarchy owns and controls. Throughout the ages, women are expected to be subordinated to men. The irony of the title, *Bravely Fought the Queen*, lies in the fact that none of the two women, Dolly and Alka are unable to change their humiliating position. Marxist feminists assert that women without being financial independent could never change their subjugated condition.

Alka and Dolly having no opportunity to earn their livelihood remain forever in their stunted state of bonsai looking attractive but inwardly discontented and forlorn. Without being financially independent, Dolly and Alka are unable to voice against the strong patriarchal force and so their craving for love, emancipation and dignity remains a passive dream.In *Bravely Fought the Queen*, Dattani analyses the

emotional, financial and sexual complexities of Indian urban family and also dramatizes the barrenness and deception in the lives of its cloistered women.

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Certificate

This is to certify that A. BERCINA FERNANDO, M.Phil SCHOLAR, St. MARY'S COLLEGE participated / presented paper entitled GENDER HEGEMONY AND MARGINALIZATION IN MAHESH DATTANI's "BRAVELY FOUGHT THE QUEEN" at the One Day State Level Seminar on "LITERARY THEORIES: BEFORE AND AFTER" organised by the Post Graduate and Research Department of English, Aditanar College of Arts and Science, Tiruchendur held on 27th September 2019.

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The Dream of Being an American in a Transnational Zone in Teju Cole's *Open City* – A Study

A Dissertation submitted to

St. Mary's College (Autonomous)

Thoothukudi

affiliated to

MANONMANIAM SUNDARANAR UNIVERSITY

in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the award of the Degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN ENGLISH

By

BHUVANESHWARI N.

(REG. NO. 19MLEN05)

RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

ST.MARY'S COLLEGE (Autonomous)

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SEPTEMBER 2020

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **The Dream of Being an American in a Transnational Zone in Teju Cole's *Open City* - A Study** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is a work done by Bhuvaneshwari N. during the year 2019-2020, and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

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EXAMINER

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled **The Dream of Being an American in a Transnational Zone in Teju Cole's *Open City* - A Study** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is my original work and that, it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

N. Bhuvaneshwari

SEPTEMBER 2020 **BHUVANESHWARI N.**

THOOTHUKUDI

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PREFACE

Teju Cole a novelist, photographer, critic, curator, and the author of five books is currently the Gore Vidal Professor of the Practice of Creative Writing at Harvard. Born in Michigan and raised in Nigeria, Cole turned the rather innocuous activity of wandering through New York City into a contemporary rumination on culture, death, absence, and individual odyssey in his 2011 novel *Open City*.

Written in 2011, the novel focuses on the Nigerian immigrant Julius, a young graduate student studying psychiatry in New York City, has recently broken up with his girlfriend and spends most of his time dreamily walking around Manhattan. *Open City* centers on Julius' inner thoughts as he rambles through the city, painting scenes of both what occurs around him and past events that he can't help but dwells on. Ostensibly in search of his grandmother, Julius spends a number of weeks in Belgium, where he makes some interesting friends. Along the way, he meets many people and often has long discussions with them about philosophy and politics. He seems to welcome these conversations. Upon returning to New York, he meets a young Nigerian woman who profoundly changes the way he sees himself.

The thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter **Introduction** throws light on the perception of African American Literature and contemporary diasporic writings in general and the biography of Teju Cole and his works in particular.

Chapter two entitled, **Realm of the Beyond** highlights the construction of immigrants' identity among the cultural diversity in America as they encounter racism,

dilemmas, perplexities, discrimination, hopelessness, hostility and the question of belonging due to the wide gap among different cultures of the community to which they belong and the world in which they live.

The third chapter, **Transnationalism** highlights how the open space transforms each immigrant of American society. As an observer of open space and a transnational figure Julius frequently reflects on each space that has a transnational contact zone through its inhabitants. This section gives emphasis to its title "Open City" that allows the reader to look into the global figures who crosses multiple borders, while contravening their physical location only to find a space to create new identity.

The fourth chapter, **Language Constrains** deals with the use of language as a significant instrument to reformulate one's own identity. It also throws light on the indifference of Julius who keeps a distance to his friends and acquaintances.

The fifth chapter, **Summation** sums up all the important aspects dealt in the preceding chapters.

The researcher has consistently referred to and resorted to the guidelines prescribed by MLA Handbook 7th Edition for the preparation of the thesis.

Chapter One

Introduction

The history of the African American literature involves of complicated transitions. Black Fiction was evolving in rigorous efforts by Black American writers to secure their constitutional rights as full citizens of the United States. They aimed to destroy the legal and extra legal barriers that excluded full participation of African Americans in their social and political lives. Among the themes and issues explored are the roles of African Americans within the larger American society, their culture, racism, slavery, and equality.

African American writings have tended to incorporate oral forms, such as spiritual sermons, gospel music, blues, or rap. As the African Americans' place in American society has changed over the centuries, so, has the focus of African American literature. African American history predates the emergence of the United States as an independent country, and African American literature has similarly deep roots.

African American literary genre has started with African-born Phillip Wheatley's *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* (1773). It was the first African American book, to prove the spirit of Nigerians who were not integrally inferior to Americans. Before the high point of slave narratives, African-American literature was dominated by autobiographical spiritual narratives. African-American literature reached early high points with slave narratives of the nineteenth century and Harlem Renaissance. The Harlem Renaissance was a time of pinnacle of literature and the arts in 1920s.

The first well-known African American novel *Clotel or The President's Daughter* was published by the fugitive slave William Wells Brown in 1853. *Clotel* is a story about American miscegenation. Long denied freedom and equality to Blacks in the United States was explored in the African-American literature, along with further themes such as culture, religion, racism, slavery, segregation, migration, feminism, a sense of home. It incorporate oral forms, such as spirituals, sermons, gospel music, blues, or rap. This oral poetry also shows up in the African American tradition of Christian sermons. It made their way into African-American literature.

Today African American Literature occupies a significant place, an integral part of American literature with eminent writers like Toni Morrison, Maya Angelou, Alice Walker, and Walter Mosley. Toni Morrison and Maya Angelou expressed their sufferings from twin evils of racial, discrimination and gender bias. Black women suffered not only because they are Black but also they are financially poor. The black poor women who could hardly approximate the norms discriminated and dehumanized which eventually make them lose their self-esteem and develop self-hatred.

African American writing has deep roots in historical circumstances of slavery. In fact, whether one is born as slave or not, their literary works have slave narrative. African American Literature can be described as a multi-faced nature of oppression, protest against the sub-human condition of black people and the idea of the Old Negro as servile docile. Thomas Jefferson and Fanny Kemble persisted, only the slave knew the depths of that degradation. They could sing what Du Bois has called 'The Sorrow Songs'. It was due to the special and bitter experience which was later known as sorrow songs. Only the slaves knew and felt the double meanings of these songs. Slavery is indicated as the subgenre of slave narrative.

The desperate conditions of African Americans in the South sparked the Great Migration of the early 20th century, combined with growing African American community in the Northern United States like Chicago, where they found work in factories and other sectors of economy. It led a movement to fight against violence and discrimination of African Americans. The Migration produced a new sense of independence in the Black community and contributed to the vibrant Black urban culture during the Harlem Renaissance. It also empowered the growing American Civil Rights movement, from 1954 to 1968 which made a powerful impression on Black writers such as James Baldwin, Ralph Ellison, W. E. B. Dubois, Toni Morrison and other African American women writers in general.

Today, African-American literature has become accepted as a whole part of American literature, with books such as *Roots: The Saga of an American Family* by Alex Haley, *The Color Purple* (1982) by Alice Walker and Toni Morrison's *Beloved*. On other hand the novelists create dramatic tension by borrowing from African oral forms or traditional Western literary forms. Charles Chesnutt turns to the folktale; Alice Walker, the epistolary novel and the female Bildungsroman; Charles Johnson and Sherley Anne Williams, the slave narrative; Margaret Walker, the folk novel; James Baldwin and Leon Forrest, the African American sermon; and Ralph Ellison and Albert Murray, the blues. The value placed on narrative's closure differs markedly from novel to novel. Toni Morrison emphasizes the internationalization of those conflicts that shatter the sense of reality, making the narrative closure difficult.

At the turn of the 20th century, authors of non-fiction works such as W. E. B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington debated whether to confront or appease racist attitudes in the United States. Just as the Black activists were pushing to end

segregation and racism and create a new sense of Black Nationalism, black authors were attempting to address these issues with their writings. During the American Civil Rights movement, Richard Wright and Gwendoly Brooks wrote about the issues of racial discrimination and Black Nationalism. They dealt with the issues of how Negro life in America operated to develop Negro personality. Negro culture in America found self-consciousness and articulation leading the jargon of psychology and existentialism in African American fiction.

In the wake of the Civil Rights Movement and its aftermath, the African American novel became a reminder that race was a political minefield and that culture found its origins in the interactions among Europe, Africa, and Americas too. Thus the novels became grounded within an apex of ideas about culture and cultural transmission and served up notions of human possibility. The African American novels were capable of representing the broadest of human concerns, and it could absorb multiple forms of expressive culture. The social mission of the novels bear a special relationship to the history of African Americans, its aesthetic significance lies in the rhetorical strategies and metaphorical language, authors use to reenact if not resolve the novel's inherent tensions. At times these tensions appear in the form of conflicting literary tradition.

The slave narrative of 20th century helps the Black Americans deal with their lives with the words of their ancestors. Most Black people during slave-era couldn't read or write and they didn't have the freedom to think. The descriptions of the Black women were negative in the early literature: 'Black people often presented them as fat

and doting mammies or as seductive temptresses and jezebels, seducing and conquering with sex.' (Smith 55).

At the end of slavery and the American Civil War, African American authors wrote nonfiction works about the condition of African American people and their lives in the United States. W. E. B. Du Bois published a highly influential collection of essays entitled *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) coined the term "double consciousness" to explain what it is to be an African on American soil. This feeling of being different with "double-consciousness" was evident in the lives of the black people, and also in black art and black aesthetics. Commenting on American Black history Du Bois in *The Souls of Black Folk* says:

> The history of the American Black is the history of this strife- this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost...He would not bleach his black soul in a flood of White Americanism, for he knows that Black blood has a message for the world. He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Black and an American without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of opportunity closed roughly in his face. (Du Bois 16-17)

The essays on race were ground breaking and drew from Du Bois's personal experiences for describing the life of African Americans in rural Georgia and in the larger American society. In *The Souls of Black Folk* Du Bois writes: 'The problem of

organization of Afro-American Unity founding rally on June 28, 1964. *Malcolm X Speaks: selected speeches and statements (1965), Le Pouvior Noir (1966), The End of the White World Supremacy (1971), February 1965*is a record of his thoughts during 1964, a year that included his pilgrimage to Mecca and two trips to Africa.

Cole pinned the political changes from Malcolm X to recent politicians of America. He reported the statement of Americans who are supporting and opposing the political activity of their nations. Vitally some people are accept the point of rulers, some don't because of Muslim and Christian diversity of American city. They have strong religious motifs then ideological reality Cole's political and social concepts provide the readers to know the development of African's life style, educational status and their social identity. From the point Cole's, readers can understand the political conditions and analyze politician's activities to promote the nation to next stage. It shows the communism and partiality among the city. Peoples are demanding more for development in contrast way. Cole discovered the difficulties of politicians, how they are struggling to control the multiplicity people's expectations.

Civil Rights movement was a period for advocated Black Power. This was a new cry for Black Nationalism, and Black separatism. The themes of the author's works were Black pride, self-actualization, and Black sexuality, justice, and race relations. Civil Rights Movement was actually different for black liberation and Black Nationalism, the Black Panthers, the students Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, all grouped together as Black Liberation Movement for the liberation of black male.

The turning of Twenty First century has pointing out the social conditions, political issues which affects and reflects the living beings. Most of the writings are

raising on social media. They are visualizing everything which is happening around their country. Modern world writers have plenty of opportunities then beginners. Both American and African – American writers stepped out from the slave narratives, battle descriptions, racism, and life struggle. Their motifs and style has totally changed from earlier. They are focusing on the changes of society how it has changed after the war and natural disasters. It has made various kind of cultural, political and economic changes too.

Day by day the social changes have changed the people and their living style numerously. It has collapsed the ethical value among the people. They believe scientific truth more than the ethic. Because of this believes scientific novels has popularized. It has thirllarized the readers and make them to long for more logical element in literature. Most of the scientific creations are beyond from the imaginations. They brings their readers to next century and its industrial development and make them to think more about the world and cosmos.

On the other side African – American literature has been moving to innovative concepts. People want ideological content than the philosophical concept. They are gathering social information from the writers who picturizes the society and its developments. Recent authors are painting their works with new cultural which has collapsed from the former, politics, socialism and so on. These concepts are earning critical views from critics frequently.

Resent writings are enhancing the readers to address the global issues, divertive culture, religious, and lifestyle in a spirit of mutual respect and open dialogue in personal, work and community and understanding the cultural practices of neighboring countries. People offer separate time to analyze the level of economy in

society and using their entrepreneurial skills to enrich workplace productivity and career option. It lead them to point out the political issues and criticizing politicians and their activities. Through their knowledge they are stepping to know about the local and global implications of civic decisions. Vitally they are taking prevention on physical and mental health including proper diet, nutrition, exercise, risk avoidance and stress reduction. They are gathering all these information from social media. The word social media has capture a prominent role among the people. Without these technology twenty first century modern world is considered as nothing.

The contributions of Toni Morrison had been entering into twenty first century. Her *A Mercy (2008), Home (2012), God help the Child (2015).* It speaks about the racial discriminations of a girl in public places, churches and schools. It is the bursts of rumination examine world history, skirt religion, scour philosophy, racism, anti-Semitism, femininity war and folk tales. *Love (2003), The Origin of Others (2017),* it reflects the theme of political domination, race, fear, borders, mass movement of people, desire for belonging. She wrote several novels such as *What Moves at the Margin (2008), Peeny Butter Fudge (2009), Please, Louise (2014), Burn This Book (2009), Goodness and the Literary (2019), The Ant and the Grasshopper (2011),* because of her nonstop dedication to literature, She gained worldwide recognition.

Innovative themes, philosophical thoughts, psychological conflicts and political atrocities are reached ordinary people because the communication of authors with readers has stepping into Medias. It will send the ideas and messages to audience very quickly. Media is producing more choice and comments in multiple way. Readers connect to their authers to know about their views on their works. Like Teju, Colson Whitehead, Ben Lerner, Zadia Smith, Nikki Govanni, Alex Halay,

Chinamanda Ngozi Adichie and some other's contributions on broadcast made them to progress continuously. It makes them to modify their writing style and motivate them to go for new themes and ideology. Cole represented the issues of social media and its usage. He showed the efficient role of communication through web. Mass media has taken a place in modern writings.

The Nigerian born Teju Cole's writings elaborates the situations of Africans who have migrated from their native lands to American city for academic purpose. Most of his description has pointed out their mental illness and how they come out from those problems. His works have connect the people with society and how they are related to him. The influence of painting can stimulate Cole's mind to think about his ancestor when he lives in American city. Readers and critics can evaluate his genre by reading his lonely characters, and it creates sentimental issues among them. He has clearly analyzed the political changes in America and how it would be capturing the youngsters.

Teju Cole pointed out all the little changes in American society in an absolute manner. He noted out the new kind of liberation which occupies the mind of all people who wanted to stand at the separate place in the complicated world and evaluating their powers and rights. Today identifying one's own citizenship is becoming a movement of liberty throughout the world. It has been changing the thoughts and writings of modern writers that stimulate them go for the past events too.

As an African – American diasporic writer Teju Cole generates crisis in his fictions. Cole recognizes that migration is central reason for people to follow different culture. He relies on the word migration which provides reality of life. Migration can teach everyone to learn about different places, peoples, culture, and vitally about its

recent changes. Migrating life evokes longingness for their native land. It admits them to compare and contrast the effects within them. Cole's works are not only for the migrated people and also for the natives too.

Teju Cole has taken major theme from the life of immigrant people. He stated out the Yorubaland, Egba people which is followed as a culture of Africans. Later he reported about the American Folk Art Museum, where people can see ancient paintings and instruments which represented European tradition and agrarian life of the new American country. He portrayed how those paintings expressed the mind of artist and their contemporary thoughts innovatively.

From the words of Salman Rushdie, Teju Cole is "among the most gifted writers of his generation." Teju Cole was born on June 17, 1975 in Kalamazo, Michigan to Nigirian parents. Cole and his mother returned to Lagos, Nigeria, shortly after his birth. His father joined them after receiving his MBA from Western Michigan University. At the age of seventeen Cole moved back to United States to attend Western Michigan University for one year then transferred to kalamazoo, where he received his bechelor's degree in 1996.

Teju Cole enrolled in an African art history programme at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London after he dropped from the medical school at the University of Michigan. He is unable to pay attention on his medical study but on African art history. He was influenced by African paintings, and history which stimulated him to gather about art and its illustrations. From the views of art, he realized that paintings can speak a lot more than the words. It made him to create many literary works elaborately about any concept. He pursued a doctorate in art

history at Columbia University. He is the Gore Vidal Professor of the Practice of Creative Writing at Harvard University and currently lives in Cambridge, Mass.

Teju Cole is authority of four books: *Every Day is for the Thief* (2007), *Open City* (2012), *Known and Strange Things* (2016), is a collection of forty essays, *Punto d' Ombra* (2016) is a photo book published as *Blind Spot* in English in 2017. His reputable work *Open City* has won PEN/Hemingway Award, National Book Critics Circle Award, in 2012, and International Literature Award in 2013.

Followings are the analytical document of Cole's *Open City's* which receives notable appreciations from readers, scholars, and critics too. It has observed on post – modern and post – colonial aspects of American society. It has illustrated cultural values and its diversity from the renaissance in America which has taken place in American history by black people. Cole's protagonist Julius who travelled and encountered with different people from neighboring countries had migrated from Nigeria to America for his medical studies. His miserable solitude made him remember his family and childhood days in Brussel, his break up with his girl friend Nedge and his longingness to return to his native land.

Through the travel in New York City he found the ancient painting and its description through its appearance. Cole pointed out the development of the city and people from the war. Julius enjoys the museums, parks, and concerts and connects deeply with what he sees even when he is alone. When he entered into the American Folk Art Museum, he noted the simple, open – faced, and awkward art that stems from devotion to craft even without money or patronage, as well as the peculiar silence of John Brewster's paintings which represented the crucial situations of Civil Right Movement and Harlem Renaissance.

Travelling and making friendship with many people has associate Julius with American city. During the journey from Brussel to NewYork he has met old lady who remember his grandmother. Whenever he feels about his grandma he recollect his identity of Nigerian – American – European collaboration. Experience of both Nigerian and American culture and history evokes Julius to think about the contradiction and African's climbs for their identity. He has faced unspeakable discrimination in America and social irregularity among the poor peoples.

The abnormality of people in society has largely marked by Cole's contemporaries. The debut novel came from the pen of Zadie Adeline Smith's pen produced *White Teeth (2000),The Autograph Man (2002),On Beauty (2005),* follows the lives of mixes-race British – American family living in US, addresses ethic and cultural difference in both the USA and UK. It shows the clash between liberal and conservative academic values. *Changing my mind (2009), Stop What You 'r Doing and Read This (2011) Swing Time (2016*), is around New York and West Africa and focuses on two girls who can tap dance. *N-W (2012),* attempts to reflect polyphonic nature of contemporary urban life.

Cole noted the musical controversies between Africans and Americans. Julius visited to an African restaurant where he meet many African continent immigrant peoples. He wondered about the dance culture which is totally vary from Jazz and others. African Youngsters have attended there blissfully. It remained him about the music and dance of ancient Yorubians and Igba peoples. He has seen all the cultural diversity and multiplicity African descent.

When he went to watch the movie *The Last King of Scotland,* which is about Ugandan dictator Idi Amin who murdered three hundred thousand Ugandans while he

was in power and destroyed Uganda's economy. The host had to leave Uganda because of Amin and was openly opposed to African people in general because of experience. Julius made friendship with Fraouq, who has been maintaining browsing center near by Julius apartment. Fraouq has such an intelligent analysis about American politics, from whom Julius observed the political philosophy. Fraouq says Malcolm's ruling ideology is better than Martin Luther King. He is failed in spreading the political philosophy through the instinct ion of his Biblical reference.

While speaking with Fraouq and his ally Julius interrupted about recent politicians of America. They are totally complicated with former politicians. He has pointed out the contributions of the 44th President of America *Barack Obama.*But their views have complements with one another. Obama has creating his experience of communism in his works *Dreams from my Father (1995),* he acknowledged his entire memoir to reflect on his personal experiences with race relations in the Unites States. *The Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream (2006).* Outlines his political and spiritual beliefs, as well as his opinions on different aspects of American culture. *If Thee I Sing (2010),* is the book of thirteen groundbreaking Americans and the ideals that have shaped his nation. He has hailing as the clear savior of not only the Democratic Party, but of the integrity of American politics.

As a politicians both Malcolm X and Barack Obama has written their life experiences as black with American society. They have explored their mind to boost the youngsters and motivate them to know about the global issues, how it interfere into their personal life and it guides them to survive and solve all the social difficulties in mindful manner.

Colson Whitehead wrote several books based on the resent concept. *The Intuitionist (1999),* is a speculative work speaks about place in New York which is full of skyscrapers and other buildings requiring vertical transportation in the form of elevators. Colson plays his pen with notions. Both Cole and Colson's works has similarity on the description of New York City which has marked as Black American's City. Cole noted the architecture of New York and its majority of migrated peoples. Walter Kirn writing in Time that "The freshest racial allegory since Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man and Toni Morrison's The Bluest Eye."John Henry Days (2001), The Noble Hustle: Poker Beef Jerky & Death (2014), The Colossus of New York (2003) L' In tuitionnist (2003), Apex Hides the Hurt (2006),* American magazine *Entertainment Weekly* stated that "a blurry satire of American commercialism."

Ben Lernermolds philosophical insight, political outrage, and personal experience into a devastating critique of mass society. His works have quality of page turner, a raped – fire feather –assault of words, textures, images and he deals with love, art, city, illness, having children and writings. Lerner explores how human personalities and emotional health can impact our wellness and self-awareness.

While walking on the railway plot form Julius detected two blind man, one who is kind at his disabilities but the second man has foolish thoughts to make peoples as fools because he is using the blindness even though he has proper vision. This observable incident give him the reference of ancient god. Cole has represented the drunken stage of African god who made human beings perfectly, but when he took drinks, he made them with evil mind. He wondered about god's destination. From the social observation Cole represented society which has evil minded creations of god to collapse the equality among the people. But it generally showed the selfishness of people.

A man notes for his dense and complex novels Thomas Pynchon, covered vast array of subject matter, genres, and themes including history, music, science and mathematics. One of his characters play on the "Clavier" the varsity of drinking song. He explores the scientific, theological, and socio cultural foundation on the Age of Reason while also depicting the relationships between actual historical figures and fictional characters and archetypal genre. Pynchon's discovers philosophical, theological, and sociological ideas exhaustively through in quirky an approachable ways. He demonstrates the artifacts of low culture, comic books, cartoons, cookery, urban myths, conspiracy theories and folk art. He has revealed an aficionado of popular music both Jazz and Rock and Roll.

Cole's *Known and Strange Things* is persuasive and provocative erudite yet accessible, and an opportunity to live within Teju Cole's wide ranging enthusiasms, curiosities, and passions, and the chance to see the world in surprising and affecting new frames. It is the collection of more than fifty pieces on politics, photography, travel, history, and literature. Cole solidifies his place as one of today's most powerful and original voices and deploying prose dense with beauty and ideas, he finds fresh and potent ways to interpret art, people, and historical moments, talking in subjects from Virginia Woolf, Shakespeare, and W.G. Sebald to instagram Barack Obama, and Boko Haram. He found his ways to a startling and true depiction of black subjects and the White Savior Industrial Complex, the system by which African nations are sentimentally aided by an American developed on pillage. *The Atlantic* says *Known and Strange Things* is "A heady mix of wit, nostalgia, pathos, and genuine desire to untangle the world, or at least, to bask in its unending riddles."

Blind Spot is an inimitable artistic vision into the visual realm as he continues to fefine the voice, eye, and intellectual obsessions that earned his such acclaim for

Open City. Cole's full-color original photos, each accompanied by his lyrical and evocative prose, forming, a multimedia diary of years of near-constant travel. from a park in Berlin to a mountain range in Switzerland, a church exterior in Lagos to a parking lot in Brooklyn; landscapes and interiors, beautiful or quotidian, that inspire Cole's memories, fantasies, and introspections. Ships in Capri remind him of the work writers from Homer to Edna O' Brien; a hotel room in Wannsee brings back a disturbing dream about a friend;s death; a home in Tivoli evokes a transformative period of semi-blindness, after which "the photography changed... the looking changed." *Blind Spot* is a testament to the art of seeing by one of the most powerful and original voices in contemporary literature.

Cole's *Every Day is for the Thief* has similarity of his *Open City*. It saying about a young man who sets out to visit his home country, Nigeria, it reads like a travel diary explaining the way of life in the city of Logas and along the way, how the democratic nature of corruption can affect anyone regardless of their status in the society. It offers a wild ride through a city where corruption, bribes and scams are front and center. He thinks many Nigerians are dealing with a sort of constant post – traumatic stress. Cole describes the "yahoo yahoos" scammers that populate internet cafes in Lagos and syas about Nigerian society and its culture which dominate ethnic group in Lagos.

He start to recognize what a true melting pot New York is as far as culture and civilizations are concerned. Julius also notices that stark separation that still draws an imaginary line segregating one ethnic group from another. Whenever he went for the evening walk he went back to his childhood memories and connect those all with some historical and cultural incidents. The life of the city and its people has been changing according to the new adaptation. Both people and society has been changing

into new culture, even though most of the rural and road sides were capturing the native visualizing.

Critics were mostly positive in their reviews of Cole's Open City. They took *Open City* under post-colonial, post- modern and notably on migration. They don't focus on national migration but on the migration in American city which offered experiences of decade. Michiko Kakutani, writings for the *New York Times*, compared work to those of W.G. Sebald and said that Cole's failure to dramatize his alienation, underscored the ad hoc nature of the overall narratives.

Anthony Doerr comments on Cole's , '*Open City* is not a loud novel, nor a thriller, nor a nail – biter what it is, is a gorgeous, crystalline, and cumulative investigation of memory, identity, and ensure. It gathers its power inexorably, page by page, and ultimately reveals as nothing less than a searing tour de forces. Teju Cole might just be a W.G Sebald for the twenty – first century'

Rawi Hage appreciates, 'The pages of *Open City* unfold with the tempo of a profound, contemplative walk through layers of histories and their posthumous excavations. The juxtaposition of encounters, seen through the eyes of knowing flaneur, surface and then dissolve like a palimpsest composed, outside of time, by brilliant .'

New York Times stated, 'Cole's writings is assured, his ideas are well developed and his imagery is delicious … and his talent for juxtaposing past and present turns this book into a symphonic experience.'

The following pages explore the relationship between personal memory, public spaces and the recollection of history through Julius and how public space is used for personal and public, economic and cultural purposes. And as a transnational

perspective how the narrator embodies the mobility necessary to adequately imagine the interlocking geographic spaces and geopolitical systems that produce the erasure of sovereign mobility and cultural production that memorials and monuments represent. To sum up Cole's *Open City* has proved that his title undoubtedly stands for its content.

Chapter Two

The Realm of the Beyond

Teju Cole's *Open City* is neither a melodrama, nor is it about a city that has technically been declared "open" during war time. The novel is set in New York City, no more than a couple of years ago, and narrated by a Nigerian psychiatrist on a research fellowship. Throughout the novel, the psychiatrist, Julius, wanders the streets of the city taking careful note of everything he sees, and everyone with whom he interacts. His observations are recorded in beautifully clear prose with the precision of a clinician. The descriptions of the cityscape around him are interspersed with memories of his boyhood in Nigeria. His time in New York is interrupted by a trip to Brussels which Julius takes using up his entire four week vacation time, in the vague, unrealized hope of somehow encountering his grandmother there. He is, however, unsure as to whether she is still alive, or even if she lives there at all. Without a clear plan to find her, he continues his habit of wandering, observing, interacting and recording what all he sees around.

Teju Cole uses *Open City* as a platform to explore myriad cultural and historical ideas. *Open City*, explores the relationship between personal memory, public spaces and the recollection of history. Julius, the novel's protagonist, sees history written on the city. The city can be read through identifying the kinds of people that inhabit different neighborhoods and how public space is used for personal and public, economic and cultural purposes. As a transnational immigrant, the narrator embodies the mobility necessary to adequately imagine the interlocking geographic spaces and geopolitical systems that produce the mixture of govern mentality and cultural production that memorials and monuments represent. With a

focus on the hybridity of cultural and political production, Cole's narrator exemplifies the process of the perception of people and ideas through historic time and geographic space.

Born of Nigerian parents the writer brings an intimate perspective to the work through his protagonist, Julius, the only child of a dead father and an estranged mother. The setting of the novel is the cultural melting pot of New York City where, on his meandering walks, Julius meets a cast of characters that change his perspective. He is no stranger to the racial ambiguity he is forced to endure. In his native homeland of Nigeria, he stands out for not being completely black. In New York City, he is keenly aware of not being white. It is through this lens of not completely belonging to either that gives him a unique awareness and appreciation for those he encounters. His conversations with strangers, friends, and acquaintances pose more questions than they give answers to, including some of the most profound issues of the day.

Teju Cole narrates the story of *Open City* in accordance with that of Homi Bhabha who in the introduction to *The Location of Culture*, says that "It is the troupe of our times to locate the question of culture in the realm of the *beyond*"(1). Elaborating on this "realm of the *beyond*," he continues:

> The 'beyond is neither a new horizon, nor a leaving behind of the past . . . Beginnings and endings may be the sustaining myths of the middle years, but in the *fin de siècle,* we find ourselves in the moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion. For there is a sense of disorientation, a disturbance of

> direction, in the 'beyond': an exploratory, restless movement caught so well in the French rendition of the words *au delà* – here and there, on all sides, *fort/da*, hither and thither, back and forth. (Bhabha 1)

The reader of Teju Cole's *Open City* is immediately aware of his narrator, Julius's "restless movement" within this realm of the *beyond* – the *au delà*, the here/after. Indeed, in the novel's very first line, as Julius sets the scene of his seemingly aimless wandering that will characterize the whole novel, the name of the New York City, neighborhood of Morningside Heights, stands out as an incommensurable confusion of time and space. As "an easy place from which to set out into the city" (1), it is from within this very confusion that Julius guides his readers through the "open city", a place, and title, that unsurprisingly also connotes the dissolution of time and space borders, that he inhabits, and indeed, that he never escapes: on the last page, the reader finds him still aimlessly wandering, still inhabiting a disorienting, liminal space and time just as it began *in media res*, the narration also leaves off in transit.

Time-space confusions are inescapable throughout the entirety of *Open City*. They appear as other places and times represent themselves to Julius and the reader through the city's architecture, as with the Loews 175th Street Theater, in seemingly irrelevant asides - 9/11 being described as a "great empty space" (52) and in more direct reflections: "The past, if there is such a thing, is mostly empty space" (155) or "they left, and time's shape was restored" (213). In fact, Julius's musings at moments seem to echo Bhabha directly: where Bhabha says that being in the beyond is *"to touch the future on its hither side"* (Bhabha 7), Julius wonders, "Why did I feel suddenly that they were visiting from the other side of time?" (55).

It is thus within a framework of Bhabha's "beyond', that the novel's major themes, which certainly include transnationalism, globalism, and post-colonialism, could best be understood. Conversely, it is perhaps only through fiction's manipulations, fragmentations, and concentrations of time that Bhabha's "beyond" can truly become palpable, present, for the reader. As he introduces the scene in which he crosses paths with Moji for the first time in New York, Julius muses, "we experience life as a continuity, and only after it falls away, after it becomes the past, do we see its discontinuities" (155). The reader later recognizes this musing as foreshadowing for the disturbing, forgotten fragment of Julius's life that reveals itself later. These two episodes, the first meeting, which foreshadows the later revelation, thus appear as discontinuous both in the novel and in Julius's life, but they later reveal themselves to be part of a continuum- although an invented one. In the very recognition of foreshadowing, the reader thus realizes that the experience of reading the novel is much like what Julius has just described life to be like. It first appears as continuous: one reads novels linearly, just as, on a day-to-day level, she experiences time linearly. But in the life of the mind, one's life becomes disjointed; some moments return, others are lost, and time, spaces and history are reconstructed out of similar casts.

It is from his place in New York that Julius has revealed an episode from his past in Nigeria, in which his mother "decided to take [him] with her into her memories" (79). His memory of his mother's disjointed memories become part of his own narrative as he discloses to the reader that he has pieced together his mother's past to realize that his mother was a child of war - a child likely to have been born of a rape. Here, he similarly reflects on his and her overlapping past: "It was an entire vanished world of people, experiences, sensations, desires, a world that, in some odd

way, I was the unaware continuation of" (80). The reader must wonder: is Julius' past act, which re-presents itself much later in the novel, a repetition of his past? Regardless, this fragment seems to join in the continuum with the other two episodes presented above, despite its displacement and disjuncture from them in the time and space of the novel.

Cole thus presents the locational differences through Julius who meets several people on the process of finding his grandma in different places of Belgium. Julius wonders on the processes of New York where immigrants are struggled with mixed culture and different nationalities. Through his observation he reveals layers and varieties of buried stories rooted in the cosmopolitan city. It is relevant to note that the cities that Julius steers in the novel New York and Brussels are cosmopolitan in many regards, but mainly in the range of people and regarding the collaboration of native born citizens and immigrants who have common aim, try to weave their differences into a mixture.

The sense of fitting of the demoted subject, and their struggle to reserve their racial, ethnic, cultural identity alongside the identity of cosmopolitan subject- is critically inspected in the protagonist's narrative. This new space is credited with a critical understanding of displacement, exile and rootlessness of the migrant subjects living in cosmopolitan cities. The sort of the American dream, as highlighted by the writer, is also core to the discussion of New York as a cosmopolitan metropolis. The orthodox representation of the American dream and its appeal and promise is the primary reason for the presence of the various populations, and Cole's narrator investigates this claim of the cosmopolitan space. He further investigates why the American Dream or European nations of freedom and liberty have not been able to

produce coherent cosmopolitan societies, subsequently, he points to the histories, and questions of difference, conflict and dominance.

The concept of openness is invoked by the title, and that's an apt description for Julius. He is open to experiences because he is detached from the American Dream surrounding him. He sees the city through his own perspective, making value judgments about things from his bi-racial, bi-ethnic background. Not only is he detached from his cultures of origin, he is also detached romantically, and he tries to reconnect with his matriarchal grandmother, a sign of reconnection no doubt, but he even fails that. He experiences unhappy moments, and he suffers ennui and disappointment, perhaps even regret. But mostly, Julius concerns himself with what can be gleaned from daily life. He enjoys taking walks, because it gives him a chance to use his imagination to amuse himself, as he interprets the reality around him, adding layers and associations until his thoughts converge on something. He is scientific and curious.

Cole uses Julius as a first person narrative voice in his novel. Instantaneously, the reader is refreshed to interpret the story and taking interest in the way of Julius continuous back to the past due to present experiences, sensual impressions and coincidences with other main and minor characters. At times, he also strolls away from reality. Sometimes his mental wanderings involve longing, and sometimes they are labeled to tell a story about a topic, theme or way of thinking. Interestingly, when the longing aspect is involved, it does not concern a clear longing for home, but rather for a time passed and for a belonging in the present that in the course of the novel never arises.

Cole's narrative finds Julius in his early 30s, in the fall of 2006, absorbed with the humanistic intellectual life and a lover of classical music Julius has always felt like something of an outsider. While at the Nigerian Military School, he was mindful of not being sufficiently black. After moving to the United States to study medicine, he learned what it was to not be white. As the perpetual Other, Julius casts an inquisitive eye over the world he encounters, one where a diversity of identities and ideas is often overlooked as the norm. He holds down a demanding job as a psychiatric fellow at Columbia-Presbyterian Hospital, and is navigating the rocky terrain of a recent breakup with his girlfriend. These clashing circumstances put Julius in a reflective mood, perfect for the large swaths of time he spends walking through Morningside Heights.

The son of a Nigerian father and German mother, Julius spent his early childhood years in Nigeria before migrating to the east coast of the US. Julius chooses to spend his time taking in the sites of his adopted city. His travels take him to the financial district and the ruins of ground zero. He visits Tower Records, and peruses various theaters and diners throughout the city. Julius's peripatetic wanderings and their connections to personal histories both his own and those of the people he meets form the driving narrative, allowing him to reflect on his adopted New York, the Africa of his youth, the America of today and a Europe wary of its future. With every anecdote, with each overlap, Cole lucidly builds a compassionate and masterly work engaged more with questions than with answers regarding some of the biggest issues of our time: migration, moral accountability and our tenuous tolerance of one another's differences.

As Julius takes his long walks through the city he contemplates the troubled lives of his patients, and is aware of how little he can do to improve their lives, how

limited has been medical progress with respect to mental illness. Julius muses about the nature of severe depression and other illness of the mind that afflict patients identified by letter, 'V' or 'M,' an indication of Julius' adherence to the code of anonymity in his professional calling. There are intimations, but nothing explicit, that there may be analogies between these private agonies that Julius confronts at work and the grotesque pathologies of our collective existence as a species.

The very first words in *Open City* Teju Cole, imply an inevitability, connecting the narrator's past with his present task, that of explaining his place in the world: "And so," his narrator, Julius, says, "when I began to go on evening walks last fall, I found Morningside Heights an easy place from which to set out into the city" (3).

From Morningside Heights, his peregrinations liberate him from the stresses of both his work as a psychiatric fellow at Columbia-Presbyterian Hospital and his recent breakup with his girlfriend. His feet lead him widely, to Tower Records and Central Park, to diners, movies and the subway, to the financial district with its gaping wound at ground zero. Julius visits friends, goes to museums and concerts, vacations in Europe. He attends a poetry reading at the 92nd Street Y. Everyday activities, all.

The significant travels occur, however, via the interactions of the quotidian and his mind, an intellect at once solid in its urbanity and restless in its isolation. Julius summons a palimpsest of connecting and conflicting histories. Some of these concern the oppressed, like the slaves interred in the African burial ground near Wall Street, or the Moroccan clerk at an Internet cafe who gives his perspective as a Muslim intellectual. Others involve the forgotten: a statue in Chinatown, erected in honor of a 19th-century antidrug activist, now collecting pigeon droppings; a Liberian

refugee, sitting in limbo in a detention center in Queens. Most of the histories, however, are of the often memorialized Mahler, Nietzsche, Alexander Hamilton, New York City police officers killed in the line of duty - who live on either in the work bequeathed to us or in the myths constructed around them after their deaths.

Julius is estranged from his German mother who lives in Lagos while missing his recently dead Nigerian father. Thus he has little reason to return to Nigeria for visits. Instead he searches for his beloved German grandmother who he believes is living in Brussels, and once there is much more enthralled by the ambience of European culture than anything that the non-West has to offer and by a new city to explore. While in Belgium, his supposed reason for making the journey fades into the background, and is replaced by his chance acquaintance with a couple of Moroccan immigrants, who sought refuge from an oppressive monarchy in their native country. To leave for Europe was for them to realize their dream of political and intellectual freedom, but upon arrival disillusionment immediately their fate. They were daily challenged by an increasingly vicious and omni-present Islamophobia. Their reaction was to learn economic and social survival skills needed to remain in Brussels, while inwardly converting their disillusionment into a blend of anti-American radicalism and an embrace of Islam.

The resulting conversations between Julius and Farouk, and his friend, Khalil, are fascinating exchanges of views and perceptions. The narrative voice controls the shape of the dialogue, but it has an authenticity that fits with the variety of experiences and viewpoints that give vibrancy to the book. In essence, Farouk and Khalil hold somewhat stereotypic left views on such key issues as Israel or Palestine and the 9/11 attacks on the United States, although they distance themselves from the tactics of terrorism, they empathize with the motivations of the terrorists who are

regarded as having legitimate anti-imperial grievances. In contrast, Julius, is far more detached during the conversation, reacting in a measured apolitical and evasive tone, manifestly distrustful of dogma in any form. When asked directly for a response, he speaks of attitudes toward Israel in the United States without revealing his views, choosing to occupy a neutral, uncommittal space, and somewhat derisively attributing highly critical views on Israel to "left-leaning magazines and journals." He challenges the stereotyped views on the conflict, including that all Americans are unconditionally pro-Israeli, by explaining to these two ardently pro-Palestinian Moroccans: "There's strong leftist support for Palestinian causes in the United States. Many of my friends in New York, for example, think that Israel is doing terrible things in the Occupied Territories" (118). By referencing 'many of my friends' keeps his own attitudes hidden from the reader, but they can be presumed to be more balanced, less partisan. Julius goes on, "there's also the perception that we share elements of our culture and government with Israel." The use of 'we' as America and 'our' as American in this sentence is an important signifier of Julius' primary attachment to his chosen place of residence rather than to his African place of origin.

The Moroccans, as is the case with many progressives around the world, view the Israel/Palestinian conflict as the most important contemporary litmus test of international morality, as well as an unresolved remnant of the anti-colonial struggle. They are perplexed by why the Palestinians have failed where almost all colonized people have succeeded, and in their search for an explanation, reach for straws. In this spirit, Khalil challenges the uniqueness of the Holocaust, and alleges that to relegate the other countless genocides to a secondary status functions as a device, diverts public attention, especially in Europe, from the injustices imposed on the Palestinians, serves to silence criticism of Israel, and to punish those who dare raise questions

about the uniqueness that Jews attribute to the Holocaust. "Did the Palestinians build the concentration camps? He said. What about the Armenians: do their deaths mean less because they are not Jews" (122). An agitated Khalil then proclaims, "forget the Cambodians, forget the American blacks, this is unique suffering. But I reject the idea. It is not a unique suffering. What about the twenty million under Stalin? It isn't better if you are killed for ideological reasons" (122-123). Julius is obviously made uncomfortable by such hectoring rhetoric, and does his best to change the subject by ordering food in the restaurant. He fails. Farouq "steers the conversation back," letting on that he is not unfamiliar that Jewish critics of Israel exist and several are living in America. In this vein, he recommends that Julius should read Norman Finkelstein's searing expose of the holocaust industry, which he says deserves special respect, not only because Finkelstein is Jewish, but because his parents were Auschwitz survivors. Julius admits that he has not heard of Finkelstein, and when Farouq offers to write down the title, Julius indicates that this is not necessary as he will remember it, but this is said in such a way as to convey disinterest, and to let the reader know that he has no intention whatsoever of following up. Throughout the entire book Julius seems deeply uncomfortable with passion and partisanship unless it is historically removed from the present or is apprehended in artistic form.

Farouq is depicted as a kind of fugitive philosopher from the non-West who had hoped that he could cope with the poverty of his Moroccan background working in Belgium as a janitor, while devoting himself to his studies. He declares that he was driven by the grandiose ambition of becoming "the next Edward Said! I was going to do it by studying comparative literature and using it as a basis for societal critique." (128). Proceeding on this path after arriving in Brussels, he wrote an M.A. thesis on

Gaston Bachelard's *Poetics of Space*, which was rejected by a Belgian university on the grounds of plagiarism.

> They gave no reason. They just said I would have to submit another one in twelve months. I was crushed. I left school. Plagiarism? The only possibilities are either that they refused to believe my command of English and theory or, I think this is even more likely, that they were punishing me for world events in which I had played no role. My thesis committee had me on September 20, 2001,...That was the year I lost my illusions about Europe. (128)

Again Julius offers no response, even refraining any comment on the rather strained effort of Farouq to explain the arbitrary rejection of his thesis as a punishment to be visited on all Muslims after 9/11. Julius does not hide his distaste for the Farouk's extreme rejection of the West, which is the counterpoint to his own cautious constructions of a life and career in New York undertaken with a full awareness of the crimes present and past of the West.

Julius makes his own position clear both by seemingly ignoring Farouq's advice to read Finkelstein and even more emphatically by mailing him a copy of Kwame Anthony Appiah's *Cosmopolitanism*, a diametrically opposed intellectual posture to that of political engagement. The choice of Appiah as a preferred alternative to Finkelstein is a perfect expression of Julius sensibility, and a telling sign that he is self-aware. Appiah is a much heralded and impressively cultured exponent of an apolitical cosmopolitanism that affirms rootedness in the familiar landscape of home with an appreciation of the world as a whole, including its many forms of strangeness and diversity. For Appiah a true cosmopolitan celebrates both the

homeland and the world, and privileges that which is near at hand over all that is distant. As with Cole, Appiah has a superb command of the English language, as well as a vast intellectual comfort zone that manages to encompass the whole of Western thought. It is worth noticing that Appiah, like Julius, but not like Cole, has an African father and a European mother, and chooses to leave Africa for a life in America.

To a degree, the city in which Cole's protagonist lives is as much a vital character as he is. Visits to places like the African burial ground near Wall Street or the "gaping wound" where the Twin Towers once stood help define the novel as an exploration of cultural, moral, and ethical issues. But the real meat of these seemingly aimless wanderings is in the people he encounters. Whether a clerk at an internet café that gives his "perspective as a Muslim intellectual," or a monument to an anti-drug activist that is now target practice for pigeon poop, each encounter adds more color to Julius's experiences as a biracial immigrant himself.

One such demonstration of this is when Julius ventures abroad in search of his German grandmother, the last link to his maternal heritage. When circumstances prevent him from finding her, some readers might be left to wonder if the purpose of such details is to highlight Julius's ruminations on the differences between America and Europe. But his own biracial roots make these details more about Julius's internal struggles and less a generic observation by someone with little personal experiences.

Instead Julius contents himself by complaining about those who embrace 'fashionable politics.' It is this refusal to engage the world, and its destiny, that I find most disturbing about the Cole or Appiah or Naipaul worldview. I find their shared cosmopolitanism a posture of a superior mind that seems frightened of taking stands that might be treated as controversial in public space or seen as too humdrum for such

finely attuned intellects. Such detachment operates as a denial of love for the world and signals an unwillingness to lift a finger to reduce human suffering.

Along these lines Julius offers some rather strained observations on matters large and small, always worth pondering for their style even if not for their substance. For instance, Julius notes without qualification, "[w]e are the first human beings who are completely unprepared for disaster. It is dangerous to live in a secure world" (200). This sentiment seems spoken by Julius from within his cocoon of condescending detachment. Not only the mounting dangers associated with climate change, dangers now admitted at even the highest levels of government, but also living decade after decade beneath a nuclear sword of Damocles should at least establish remove from serious discussion any claim that we are living in 'a secure world.' True, there may not be the existential immediacy of earlier ages when the threat of epidemics, natural disasters, and bloody tribal warfare created pervasive and acute insecurity, but in our time there is more reason than ever before to apprehend the precariousness of our modern way of life, and even the fragility of the human species that appears so far heedless of the wailing sirens of planetary distress.

By establishing Julius as such a precise and subtle commentator on many aspects of the passing scene, Cole makes his readers think hard, while enjoying the pleasure of the beautifully crafted prose. The narrative smoothly navigates the succession of moods, experiences, and memories that lends an aura of coherence to this novelistic journal that delivers the reader to nowhere and everywhere. Despite my admiration for Cole's artistic achievement, what a flock of admiring reviewers agree as the excellence of his 'debut novel,' which has received several honors, my experience the book is more ambivalent. This is partly, as earlier noted, a discomfort with attitudes that are fully aware of injustices and yet opt for a response of passivity.

Also it is partly the overall impression of being under the spell of a rare, and ultra - refined version of Orientalism, which is paradoxically and obliquely acknowledged by references to Edward Said. Julius is wonderfully articulate in describing the nuances of painting, poetry, literature, and especially music. Super-sophistication is exhibited not by namedropping, but by treating the reader to extremely illuminating comments on particular paintings, buildings, musical compositions and memorable performances.

Truly Julius is a man of arts and letters, but almost exclusively those of the Western world. The artists and writers mentioned are prominent in the Western canon or Westernized, and there is only a passing reference to two Chinese poets revered in the West and none at all to such African stalwarts as Soyinka and Achebe. We readers are left with the misleading impression that any celebration of aesthetic cosmopolitanism needs to be totally anchored in Western creativity. This may not be Cole's intention, but it reflects my experience of this fine literary work. Cole demonstrates he is not only of a master of English but also an almost omniscient observer of all that is worth noticing and appreciating in the world around us. The fact that Julius refuses either to judge or to apologize for either private or public wrongdoing can be interpreted generously as the author's modesty or more harshly as his arrogance. At this point I am not sure which, and maybe it is best grasped as a Hindu mixture of both, a Non-Western infrastructure of contradictory feelings for the things and beings of this world, including its good and evil aspects. So conceived, maybe the Cole worldview after all transcends its self-imposed Western boundaries.

Early in the narrative, Cole introduces readers to Julius' disconnect from the external world and his detached observation of things and events occurring around him. In the first of many passages built around the presence of birds, in this case

migrating geese, we enter Julius' personal narrative, "I doubted in some part of myself whether these birds, with their dark wings and throats, their pale bodies and tireless little hearts, really did exist. So amazed was I by them that I couldn't trust my memory when they weren't there" (4). The birds thus give living expression to Julius difficulty in positioning himself within the larger story of his life, in particular around his migratory experiences. Evidence builds throughout the novel that brings into question Julius' ability to account for events outside of his subjective experience, even events in which he has actively played a key role. His understanding and recollection is colored by his own notions of self, as he reshapes the past to fit into an identity that he has carefully crafted.

The revelation of violence then has the power to elicit a double reaction in the reader the shock that accompanies the knowledge that a person has the ability to commit such violence, and the discomfort that comes with not having suspected as much. There is a tension that accompanies large-scale societal violence, in that such violence demands of an intellectual response alongside the emotional one that Cole mediates through the imaginary of fiction and use of a personalized, internal narrative. The personal and the historical have a causal effect in the protagonist's internal narrative and though Julius' interactions with people and places throughout the novel Cole provides a template for readers to utilize this process of navigating the passage between inner self and the outside world. Personal histories and historical events are connected in the narrative through Julius' analysis of art and architecture, an activity inspired by his movement through urban spaces. The instability in the relationship between memory and the changeable nature of one's physical, material environment thereby calls into question the stability dominant historical narratives.

During Julius's trip to Brussels in which he makes half-hearted attempts at finding his maternal grandmother and seems to settle for the companionship of the woman that he meets on his flight from New York, who also exists in a transnational space, moving between Belgium and the United States we meet Farouq, himself an immigrant from Morocco. As a scholar, Farouq despite his mundane employment that Walter Benjamin enters the text. Farouq is reading Benjamin's "On the Concept of History" at the time that the two meet. Cole uses the variety of men that he encounters to introduce his readers to different types of migrants Pierre the bootblack, from the Caribbean and Saidu, the Liberian he visits in prison but Farouq holds a special kind of significance, as he is able to parse some of the difficulties of modern experience and identity (and, indeed, migrant experience) with an intellectual vigor and curiosity that Julius himself can't seem to muster.

While in Belgium, Julius returns, to reading Roland Barthes' Camera Lucida. The book mirrors Julius' search for his maternal grandmother in that it describes a photograph of Barthes' recently deceased mother from childhood that Barthes repeatedly references, but never shows, despite the inclusion of other photographs in the book. Julius's experience in Belgium circle around a notion of family and belonging, visiting the city in which he last knew his grandmother to live, looking for her in passersby, but ultimately avoiding contact and the potential, for emotional impact that such contact carries have similarities with that of the novel's main protagonist and Cole himself. Both Cole and Julius leave Nigeria, Julius under somewhat secretive circumstances to attend university in the United States, and both attain citizenship and the privilege to travel freely that comes with it. Cole writes about a trip home to Nigeria in his second book, *Every Day is for the Thief*. In that book, Cole is perplexed by the change that has overcome him in his time away,

unable to pin down, what exactly is so different about him, what makes him stand out as foreign in his home country: When I start speaking Yoruba, the man I've been haggling with over some cared masks laughs nervously.

> 'Ah oga,' he says, 'I didn't know you knew the language, I took you for an oyinbo, or an Ibo man!' I'm irritated. What subtle tells of dress or body language have, again, given me away. This kind of thing didn't happen when I lived here, when I used to pass through this very market on my way to exam preparation lessons. (58)

Considered alongside a later scene in which Julius walks through a street market in Harlem, the passage shows the bewildering proliferation of difference that occurs when perception underlies belonging. One can infer from the above account of Cole's interaction in the market in Lagos that there is a cultural and ethnic identity that may be tied to a national identity that can signify belonging in that space. However, in Harlem, belonging seems to have more to do with one's ability to sell or purchase goods and, importantly, the color of one's skin:

> I saw the brisk trade of sidewalk salesmen: the Senegalese cloth merchants, the young men selling bootleg DVDs, the Nation of Islam stalls. There were self published books, dashikis, posters on black liberation, bundles of incense, vials of perfume and essential oil, djembe drums, and little tourist tchotchkes from Africa. (18)

These goods, described as being part of one collection, signify a specific set of objects that comprise ideas surrounding Black cultural identity. But Cole tempers the seemingly harmless quality of these objects a poster celebrating black liberation alongside incense and tchotchkes to suggest the commodification of political identity,

the removal of some of its power by making it an object rather than an ethos. To intensify this point he continues on to describe visual representations of violence, "One table displayed enlarged photographs of early-twentieth-century lynchings of African-Americans" (18). In what ways does this photograph of death live alongside consumerist items like posters and incense? Is it meant as a historical marker, a sign of progress, or a reminder of the way that gratuitous violence continually reasserts its presence as a boundary separating Africa and African-Americans in the contemporary period? This tableaux adds to an uncanny sensibility in Julius's observations, "Around the corner of St. Nicholas Avenue, the drivers of the black livery cabs gathered, smoking cigarettes and talking, awaiting the fares they could pick up off the clock" (18). Cole's description creates a sensation of timelessness, suggesting that this scene has played itself out over generations, perhaps in this very location. The sweetness of such nostalgic visions conflicts with the stereotypes of criminality represented by "young men in hooded sweatshirts, the denizens of an informal economy, [who] passed messages and small nylon-wrapped packages to each other, enacting a choreography opaque to all but themselves" (18). These young men, too, may be viewed as part of a long line of those.

As Julius continues on his walk, he describes the familiar sensation of seeing a person on the street who one might know, but being unsure one approaches with warmness, not wanting to risk either snubbing a friend or reproaching a stranger:

> An old man with an ashen face and bulbous yellow eyes, passing by, raised his head to greet me, and I (thinking for a moment that he was someone I surely knew, or once knew or had seen before, and quickly abandoning each idea in turn; and then fearing that the speed of these mental disassociations might throw me off my stride) returned his

> silent greeting. I turned around to see his black cowl melt into an unlit doorway. (18). There is a common bond suggested in this interaction, created by dint of being inhabitants of the same city, in the same neighborhood, by mutual recognition and, as Cole points out in his closing sentence of the paragraph, skin color: "In the Harlem night, there were no whites" (18).

But if Julius possesses a certain comfort walking the streets of Harlem, this comfort is compromised near the University, where his manner and bearing mark him as a person of privilege.

When Julius is attacked by three young men and beaten badly, their use of language affects him deeply, "I had encountered those words: never hostile, never directed at me...they were intended now, to humiliate, and I shrank from them. . .My hand was raised against curses too, as the blows kept coming" (213). Julius' feelings of violation go far beyond the physical violence he suffers. Before the attack, encountering the young men for the second time in his walk, he relaxes, recalling, "There had earlier been...a gesture of mutual respect based on our being young, black, male, on our being 'brothers'" (212). This situation is reversed when an African taxi driver of unidentified nationality lays claim on Julius' manners and invites his brotherhood, chastising his refusal to join in. Later, encountering the security guard from the museum he had been in before the encounter with the taxi driver, he is further annoyed with demands made on his attention by some assumed membership in a community. "I thought of the cab driver who had driven me home from the Folk Art Museum hey, I'm African just like you" (53).

In this narrative, Cole points out the differences in these perceived, felt and perhaps "true" brotherhoods. Julius is ultimately refused membership in the first encounter and refuses membership in the second, making it difficult to identify him as a member of any one group, but not necessarily excluding him altogether from either. Rebecca Walkowitz calls upon the scholarship of Leslie Adelson to describe the uncertain trajectories of texts written by immigrants in a way that mirrors Julius' impasse between migrant and racial identities, writing that "changes in thinking about migration require changes in thinking about belonging, community, and civic recognition. They reject two assumptions: that migrants move 'between two worlds' that are distinct and coherent, and that migrants bring with them or enter into literary systems that are unique and strictly local" (534).

The fallacy that migrants, or texts, smoothly move between two worlds is further supported in Cole's own description of his experience at the market in Lagos, and it seems clear that these passages of violence and misbelonging in *Open City* represent a sustained disruption that notion. Cole does not identify the "Africans" that he meets by nationality. Neither the cab driver nor the museum guard is given a specific nationality. We must consider this exclusion notable, especially as it resists the misleading conceptualization of "Africa" as a singular geographic space that ignores the greater ideological forces at work in the creation of putative geopolitical boundaries. James Ferguson addresses this in his book, *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order*. "Historically, Western societies have found in 'Africa' a radical other for their own constructions of civilization, enlightenment, progress, development, modernity, and, indeed, history... 'Africa' continues to be described through a series of lacks and absences, failings and problems, plagues and catastrophes... " (2). This vexed notion of Africa as a single and unified geographical

entity is echoed in *Open City*, where we encounter Nigeria only through the childhood memories of Julius, which focus on events that shape his notion of selfhood. There is no evidence of Nigeria as a political, cultural entity in its own right either as an ethnically diverse society or as a sovereign state capable of asserting international influence.

Set against the detail and historical knowledge that Julius has for locations in New York, the lack of attention to similar locations in Nigeria obscures its existence in his reality and negates its importance as a place that is part of his personal history. This is especially interesting when contrasted with Cole's vivid and thriving description of Nigeria in *Thief*:

> The air in the strange, familiar environment of this city is dense with story, and it draws me into thinking of life as stories. The narratives fly at me from all directions. Everyone who walks into the house, every stranger I engage in conversation, has a fascinating story to deliver. The details I find so alluring in Gabriel García Márquez are here, awaiting their recording angel. All I have to do is prod gently, and people open up. And that literary texture, of lives full of unpredictable narrative, is what appeals. (65)

If Cole hopes to act as "their recording angel" in *Thief* to record lives of unpredictable narrative then, in *Open City*, he invests in a univocal narrative, strategically placing Julius in a stream of events and connecting the individual to a larger historical narrative through subjective lived experience. This is movingly demonstrated in the scene in which Julius encounters the memorial for the African Burial Ground. Sighting a small patch of grass with a nominal marker, Julius

approaches the burial ground as a space as that is curiously both marked and unmarked.

"Legacies of Violence" the last sentence describes Julius' viewing of African Burial Ground connects Julius to the violence of the place: "The security island near the monument was unmanned. I stepped across the cordon, and into the grassy plot. Bending down, I lifted a stone from the grass and, as I did so, a pain shot through the back of my left hand" (222). This sentence also closes the chapter that began with Julius being beaten by three young African-American men. The pain in his hand physically connects him to the legacy of violence that is the true memorial to the heritage of chattel slavery in the United States. While the size of the monument in proportion to the enormity of these consequences disturbs, stranger still is the security island looming over the monument. "Unmanned," its efficacy lies in its mere signification of surveillance, while the description also communicates the anonymity and automatism of the power that whiteness wields in the period of late capitalism. This recalls the response to Julius' attack by

> ...the campus police, who would put up a sign by the elevator announcing as so often before, in all the previous instances when I wasn't the victim that somebody had recently been attacked in the neighborhood, and that the suspects were male, black, and young, and of average height and weight. (214)

The sign, like the security island, serves only as a sign of surveillance and authority, both grossly inadequate in marking the passing of historical events and suppresses the true systemic economic and political sources of danger to human life. The random violence of the previous attack leads Julius to reveal the rape of his

childhood friend's sister, Moji. Julius's refusal or his inability to respond to her accusation and the seeming indifference with which Cole indirectly addresses this through Julius's internal narrative, speaks not just to the suppression of this single act, but recall the suppression of another history. In describing his own family history we learn that Julius has, "surmised that my own oma, heavily pregnant, had likely been one of the countless women raped by the men of the Red Army that year in Berlin, that so extensive and thorough was that particular atrocity, she could hardly have escaped it" (80). It is this rape that was the beginning of the life of his own mother, but this detail in his family ancestry is something that he only considers later in life: "It was unimaginable that this is something that she and my mother would had ever discussed, but Mother herself would have known, or guessed it." Thus, in an attempt to fill in the lost space that the omission of this event has created, Julius tries to imagine a life that he had never directly experienced, other than through his own Mother's grief. "...I tried to imagine the details of that life. It was an entire vanished world of people, experiences, sensations, desires, a world that, in some odd way, I was the unaware the continuation of" (80).

In mediating on an unthinkable fate, Julius thus replicates the activity of the reader of a novel entering into the complete and complex sensory world of the totality of a lived experience. In the passage, Julius confesses to being an "unaware continuation" of his personal, family history. He is, however, driven to connect to the wider histories that converge at Ground Zero: "I wanted to find the line that connected me to my own part of these stories" (59). Ultimately, as a storyteller he unflaggingly seeks traces of his own past by collecting and connecting the stories that surround him in the city.

Much as the Negro Burial Ground is covered by the encroaching city, and as he World Trade Towers are rebuilt, so too, does Julius effectively bury his own personal history of violence by rejecting memories of the rape of his oma and his own rape of Moji. Cole leaves us with a series of observations as Julius's life moves on and away from his part in these memories, their personal significance being subsumed by larger historical events and Julius's silence in the perpetuation of incomplete histories.

The book concludes with an anecdote of the mass death of disoriented birds attracted to the "monumental flame" of the Statue of Liberty that both returns the reader to the theme of migration and parallels the monument of the African Burial Ground. The final lines abruptly relate the inexplicable and unnatural force of attraction that the monument seems to hold over the birds:

> The average...was about twenty birds per night, although the weather and the direction of the wind had a great deal more to do with the harvest. Nevertheless, the sense persisted that something more troubling was at work. On the morning of October 13th, for example, had been gathered in, all dead of the impact, although the night just past hadn't been particularly windy or dark. (259)

While Julius does not perform any actions of heroism, he is undoubtedly the hero of Cole's tale. Not because he says the proverbial dragon, but because of his embarking on a journey of self-discovery which is an adventure in itself.

Chapter Three

Transnationalism

Cambridge Dictionary defined "Transnational" as ". . . interconnectivity of several nations within a nation-state or region."According to Georage Fouron and Glick-Schiller's "Transnational Migration Theory" (2001) Transnational Migration is "a process of movement and settlement across international borders in which individuals maintain or build multiple networks of connection to their country of origin while at the same time settling in a new country." (60). Bhabha's conceptualizations of hybridity and Third Space are chiefly suitable for the examination of Julius' identity formation in New York City. Julius' identity is eventually composed of Nigerian, European, and American influences, which notes wide cultural and historical cognizance that basically crosses many transnational boundaries. New York City functions as a Third Space that enables the formation of Julius' hybrid identity. Julius' biracial background, his transnational border-crossings, and his ties to multiple cultures and nations characterize his identity.

It generally suggests the accumulation of different nationalities, cultural and religious groups, crossing the national border, in one region in order to sail across globalized economic and entrepreneurial significance. It establishes complex links and interconnection between people and institutions across the border of nation-states. In *Open City*, New York and Brussels are the "open space" for the emergence of "transnationalism" mainly through the multileveled "transnational histories" and immigrants' experiences. As a result, a clear authority of inequality exists in social condition that allows one group by disregarding the other groups. It illustrates the social space where various groups with innumerable power meets, while initiating a

majority and minority conversation. In contemporary globalized world, open space is providing a gloomy zone of collaboration between sociocultural groups, which is often harassed by miscommunication and frustration.

In Teju Cole's *Open City*, transnationalism emerges again and again in various ways. It presents itself in many themes; one such theme is immigration. Many characters in Cole's novel have been displaced, whether by choice or by the will of others. Professor Saito, whom the narrator befriends during his university days at Maxwell, becomes an integral character, one woven throughout the text. Saito, along with his Japanese family, "was forced to leave England" and return to the Pacific Northwest. "With them, shortly afterward, he was taken to internment in the Minidoka Camp in Idaho" (9). While we as the readers meet Saito in his New York City apartment, the aged professor holds memories from his travels made throughout his lifetime. His apartment holds decorations such as a Papuan ancestor figure and six Polynesian masks. The professor sees himself thus: "We were all confused about what was happening; we were American, had always thought ourselves so, and not Japanese" (13).

Likewise Saidu an inmate whom Julius happens to meet whilsthe was with the Welcomers. Saidu began in Liberia, escaped to Monrovia, hitchhiked to Gbarnga, walked to Guinea, crossed between Bamako and Tangier and Ceuta. He continued his journey in Spain, crossed the border in Portugal where he endured hard work for two years before saving enough money to fly into New York. When he reached New York, officers took him away. His home? "I don't want to go back anywhere, he said. I want to stay in this country, I want to be in America and work. I applied for asylum but it wasn't given. Now they will return to my port of entry, which is Lisbon." If he is allowed to stay in America, Saidu will be an immigrant. If he is deported to Lisbon,

he will be an immigrant. Part of his identity for the rest of his life will be that of an immigrant.

There are many more characters who are presented to the readers as immigrants, including Nadege and Moji, two female protagonists who interact with Julius in various ways. We only see glimpses of Nadege's life due to, I believe, the strain in her relationship with the narrator. As for Moji, we are granted the knowledge that she knows Julius from their adolescent years growing up in Nigeria. Both women seem to have become inundated in their new lives in the United States, but Moji in particular retains strong ties to her birth country.

The narrator has only returned once to Nigeria after leaving to attend college in the United States. Despite a good relationship with his father, he and his mother became estranged, and it's logical that this is the reason he chooses to stay in the States and, even when taking a vacation, chooses to go to Belgium to search for his oma. The narrator certainly appears to be comfortable and settled in his life in the States, with little or no nostalgia for his birth country.

Throughout the entire novel, the narrator provides little stories or anecdotes about various people, whether his patients or people from history. Each patient he discusses in detail and each historical personage demonstrate, in some way, an aspect of transnationalism. The book contains movement across countries' borders, but it goes much further than examining physical location, looking into lives of immigrants and how they've adapted or struggled to adjust to their new lives in other countries. The novel presents a multilayered critique on transnationalism.Even when the narrator sits down to a film, he describes the people around him. "The ticket buyers were young, many of them black, and dress in hip clothes. There were some Asians, too,

Latinos, immigrant New Yorkers, New Yorkers of indeterminate ethnic background" (28).

Teju Cole lets the reader to look into the relegated transnational declarations through its encrusted history, culture and narratives in metropolitan spaces. Julius, being a well-trained psychiatrist, his narrative becomes the opening of other immigrants' unfiltered viewpoints and experiences. Hence it allows the reader to look into the complex relationship between the open cities of New York and Brussels.

New York City has been lastingly shaped by its painful past that has left an open wound that slides across the city. Julius, similarly, has an open wound; a perpetrator's trauma that he tries to hide by focusing on the city's traumas. Along with the individuals of different residents immigrating to a particular place their history, culture, language and religions also become as open for all, resulting the title of the novel *Open city*.

Particularly, New York and Brussels which act as "open space" turn into a "melting pot" of different nations, cultures, religions and communities. Julius's aimless wandering around the city streets, lanes, museums and so on while he encounters strangers, associates and friends. However the cities of Cole's *Open City* looks alive as 'character' in the novel, it carries the stories of the immigrant inhabitants of the cities that let us understand how those cities are operate as "open space" in transnational view.

It is acceptable that *Open City* undoubtedly validates New York and Brussels as an "open space" which is the zone of different transnational groups, uttering the voices and opinions of the marginalized immigrants through the narration of a knowledgeable Nigerian-American character Julius. Though the multiplicity of voices

that Julius does not originally suggest any significant meanings, but the montage of stories ultimately give the reader the different experiences and backlashes of living in a global city where the power play is quite strong.

Space is void, empty and abstract which is entirely psychological, but we see the physical space or the solidity of space through architectural constructions, streets, monuments and other natural elements. There are different forms of spaces standing both in abstract and solid form such as geographical space, geopolitical space, cultural space, religious space, personal or inner space, imaginary or fictional space etc. Ruth Ronen's "Space in Fiction" described in literature, "Space, the domain of settings and surroundings of events, characters and objects in literary narrative, along with other domains (story, character, time and ideology), constitutes a fictional universe" (Ronen 421).

Thus, literature grants "space" in the form of metropolis or cities or places as setting that serves the plot to take place. Metropolis or cities are the physical or solid form of space. To come back to the question of flexibility in repute of space, the spatial foundations basically combine or move unrelatedly of lines, border or territory. For example, merging of alien space with the local space refers to the merging of its culture, tradition, beliefs or architectural ideas etc. Thus "open space" mentions to several urban areas or metropolis or cities and their related multicentric towns forming a complete in a single stretch.

The symbolized global cities New York and Brussels are the "open spaces" that has been diagrammed through the wanderings of Julius across different streets and places of the metropolis in the novel. And through the imageries of Julius's narratives indicating the experiences immigrants and his patients that he comes

across during his walks, history, and culture that he narrates, we get the authenticated textual understanding of the open cities.

Julius in *Open City* often recounts and recollects the past events and histories which moves from past to present. His recollection of memories and histories are not restricted to his personal life or individual experiences but its roots to transnational history or events crossing the one specific national boundary or nation-state. This again connects "open space" with transnationalism where it proposes how global cities are manufactured by the efforts of different nationalities, ethnic, cultural and religious groups and communities. The history of "open space" is not about acountry, but it concerns the expenses and hard labours of multiple nations that make it transnational while excelling space and time.

In *Open City* the quarrel of "open space" being a transnational zone comes from the outpost of both New York and Brussels which shaped with its present global form through transnational history. Transnational history promotes a field of history that expresses historical development and formation of a country has been formed by the development of other nation. The important feature of transnational history is to look at the past without the framing of the nation-state and analyses history outside of the particular nation-state that allows the sacrifices of the submerged populations to come to surface in the making of history.

Cole in *Open City* further brings out the stories of different immigrant people who are either of mixed races and ethnicities, or who have crossed multiple borders only to be an American citizen. The presence of these immigrants in both New York and Brussels suggests how "open space" is reterritorialized in nature that opens it border for all, but with "conditions". The merging of different cultural and racial

groups occur in there but it comes up with its own prices that only the immigrants themselves suffer and endure as per the uneven power-play. Julius, the protagonist himself seems to be a detached figure encountering racism but at the same time, his Western education and the prestigious job allows him to be an American citizen moving through the spaces and availing the modern amenities.

Despite Julius being a global figure, he seems to be displaced, who is disconnected with his Nigerian roots, as well as disconnected in New York living in solitude. His aimless walking seems to connect him with those of the immigrant people who come together in the "open space" but live a distinctive life. The experiences of these people on transnational region differ from one another other and make their stories significant in its own right. Cole intentionally draws Julius as the outlet of their stories, while taking away Julius's own ability to provide self-comprehension or judgment that allows the reader to hear authentic perspectives of the characters.

Also, we see both New York and Brussels as an "open space" being transnational country through these immigrants' stories and experiences who are often of mixed races coming to a "third space" for establishing their identity. "Third Space" is seen as heterogeneous areas. Homi K. Bhaba suggests "Third Space" as the interstices between colliding cultures, a luminal spaces giving rise to "something different, something new and unrecognizable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation". It is an "in-between" space that creates a new identity of the immigrants due to the experiences of displacement, alienation, exile, diaspora, transnationalism, hybridity, and cosmopolitanism.

In the context of the novel, the immigrants come to New York and Brussels that happen to be transnational zones open to all, for seeking a better life with a new created identity. One of such transnational figure is Professor Saito, whom the narrator befriends during his university days at Maxwell. He becomes the integral character, oven through the text, enlightening us time to time from his experiences that how his mixed races and nationalities could not make him an integral part of the Western life. After the end of World War II, Professor Saito, along with his Japanese family, "was forced to leave England and return to Pacific Northwest. With them, shortly afterward, he was taken to internment in the Minidoka Camp in Idaho" (9).

As reader we come across Professor Saito through his meeting with Julius at his New York apartment that is embellished with the memories from his travels made throughout his lifetime. His apartment is nicely decorated with "A half dozen Polynesian masks, arranged just above his head, formed a large dark halo. In the corner stood a life-size Paupan ancestor figure with individually carved wooden teeth and a grass skirt that barely concealed an erect penis" (11). His interest in collecting arts and ornamental pieces is evocating his attachment to be a global figure from multicultural background.

However, The Professor seems to be confused about his nationality created by the state that allows him to be there but does not confess his individuality. He says, "We were all confused about what was happening; we were American, had always thought ourselves so, and not Japanese" (13). Thus, Professor Saito stands for those immigrants who come from mixed racial and cultural background to assimilate in an "open space" that creates opportunity for transnational region but cannot resolve the emerging problems out of it.

As a result, immigrants migrating to New York is seen as a part of "melting-pot" process that in order to forming a new nation, instead of a an "adopted place" by the immigrants of the former colonies as we see in Samuel Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners*. The transformation of New York into the global city has started during the latter half of the twentieth century. In *Branding New York*, Miriam Greenberg argues that New York shifted from a harmful, declining industrial city on the verge of bankruptcy in the 1970s to a "free market, neoliberal model" in the following decades (Greenberg 39).

Greenberg enhances that the constant branding of New York at one hand "created jobs, globalized its influence, and increased the potential that can be made through association with the urban image, but on the contrary, their emerges another version of New York that "poses profound challenges to free expression and access to public space; to the availability of living-wage jobs and affordable housings" (251). *Open City* explores the tension of "open space" through the setting of New York and Brussels as a zone of connection where we see the transnational clashes, and tensions, as well as the implicit question s about "whose stories form the historical narrative of the city and whose stories are lost over time" (Hartwiger 3).

In the novel, New York, the centerpiece of global economy, and the economic empire on its own right posits a complex identity of its "open space" built through both "official" narratives along with the marginalized experiences, ranging from colonial and imperial history to the present influx of non-Western immigrants. In this process, history of the marginalized gets embedded within the dominant narrative, which is described in Julius's narrative. Julius at one point brings the strong from one of his patients named V., an assistant professor at New York University and a member of the Delaware tribe who wrote a book titled *The Monster of New Amsterdam*. V. in

the books describes the horror of Dutch East India Company and the brutal acts of Cornelis Van Tienhoven, a disreputable seventeenth century "shouts" of New Amsterdam, who murdered Canarsie Indians on Long Island, "after which he had brought back the victims' heads on pikes." In another raid, "Van Tienhoven had been at the head of a party of men that murdered over hundred innocent members of the Hackensack tribe" (26).

Professor V. while doing his research becomes troubled by the brutal oppression and the horrors Native Americans had endured at the hand of white settlers, which have been reflected in his book. Cole here indirectly brings the true history of the Native Americans who has been brutally killed in order to establish the Great America but with time America's darker history bloody history has been replaced with a made-up narrative. In addition, the decedents of those Native American are now the minority groups as Cole says "There are almost no Native Americans in New York City, and very few in all of the Northeast. It isn't right that people are not terrified by this because this is terrifying thing that happened to a vast population. And it's not in the past, it is still with us today" (27).

Shortly, he describes how the present New York despite its history coming from transnational root, is also a place of communication to all different nationalities resulting from the extension of the mixed history ranged with New York's "open space". The interconnection of space and people here come into context in the ticket counter of movie theatre where Julius goes to watch a movie based on Africa with no "marquee Hollywood names." The little space of ticket counter becomes a transnational zone as he sees many of the ticket buyers were "black and dressed in hip clothes. There were some Asians too, Latinos, immigrant New Yorkers, New Yorkers of indeterminate ethnic back-ground" (28).

Further, Cole brings the reference of the move *The Last King of Scotland* that deals with the story of Idi Amin and innocent Scottish doctor, Nicholas Garrigan. Like the Whites killing the Native Americans, "Idi Amin also murdered some 300,000 Ugandans during his rule, expelled the large community of Ugandan-Indians, destroyed the country's economy, and earned himself a reputation as one of the most grotesque stains on Africa's recent history" (30). Through the reference of Idi Amin and Uganda's fierce history of murder, just after the reference of the mass-killing of the Native Americans establish a close relationship of space and transnational history while suggesting how history simulates in different spaces, in different time interconnecting the whole humanity. And it is in the movie theatre where people from all over the world, of different races and ethnic groups come together to watch the horror and empathize that suggests it to be a transnational composite provided by open space.

While showing the amalgamation of different cultural and ethnic groups coming to a common ground, Cole also demonstrates the differences, complexities and problems of transnational perspectives in New York. There is evidence of how Julius encounters "racism" as well as gets beaten up by the thugs from the Harlem. While waiting for the train in empty subway station, Julius encounters with two teenagers13 year old sister and 10 year old brother from out-of-town. The girl asked Julius, "Hey mister, (…) wassup …Are you a gangster mister? Are you a gangster? They both flashed gang signs or their idea of gang signs." (31-32). While making derogatory signs with her fingers. The little boy wearing a Chinese peasant's hat had been "mimicking slanted eyes and exaggerated bows" (31).

Further, they keep on asking him, if he is gangster and the girls says, "He's black, (…) but he's not dressed like a gangster. I bet he's a gangster" (32), her

brother said. This is a mutual label of black men that is often spread through media representations and music and, therefore, all black men are probably gangsters in the teenagers' eyes. But that girl notes that Julius is "black" but does not dress "like a gangster" illustrates that the girl has a fixed notion of how black people are supposed to dress, and Julius is not dressed in accordance with his skin-color. This event is revealing towards the racism and stereotyping that the minority groups suffer in the process of transnational contact in public places. Unlike the hypocrisy of multiculturalism, New York and Brussels admits the problems and tensions that are faced by the marginalized group in power-dynamic relation.

This notion is armored by Julius' memory of his only deep conversation with his mother who explained that WWII had brought indelible sufferings upon her and Julius' grandmother. Julius' grandmother lived in Berlin when the Russians took over the city in May 1945, and it was "likely been one of the countless women raped by the men of the Red Army" (80). His mother, born in the wake of WWII, grew up fatherless in a country get well from war therefore, her childhood was marked by poverty, bitterness, and war-trauma. Trauma and suffering are, consequently, part of Julius' identity too.

Julius' identity is composed of Nigerian, German, and American influences, which involves that he is 'in-between' and embraces multiple cultures, which strengthen Julius' ability to infer and direct through New York City and its history. Julius is an immigrant-outsider in the perfect position to note the multi-layered nature and history of the city, which becomes evident from his extensive cultural and historical awareness. Julius, for instance, notes during a walk that the terrorist attacks of 9/11 "This was not the first erasure on the site. Before the towers had gone up, there had been a bustling network of little streets traversing this part of town.

Robinson Street, Laurens Street, College Place: all of them had been obliterated in the 1960 to make way for the World Trade Center buildings and all were forgotten now." (58-59). The site that is now referred to as Ground Zero, after all, used to have other purposes.

Before the building of the Twin Towers in the 1960s, the site was home to busy little streets that had to make way for the towers. Even before this, in the nineteenth century, Washington Market and the Syrian enclave were located there and, before that, the Lenape had inhabited the site (59). Julius reflects on this, because he "wanted to find the line that connected me [him] to my [his] own part in these stories" (59). Put differently, the common denominator those people and their histories have been forgotten; they have been replaced or displaced. Julius is aware of those displaced groups, because displacement and oppression are part of his own history and identity. He can relate to those that have been reduced invisible in contemporary New York City.

Julius' realization that he is the "unaware continuation of" (80) of a world that has been largely destroyed by a war decades ago underscores this as well, for the consequences of this war live on in Julius. Thus, because of his German ancestry, Julius is particularly sensitive to narratives of trauma and suffering, and, therefore, he is able to interpret and navigate through a city built on layers of suffering and displacement. In sum, Julius' hybrid identity allows him to roam his, what Bhabha refers to as, "interstitial space"; it allows him to shift back and forth between cultures and communities, which enable him to understand and navigate through a Third Space, such as New York City.

The transnational figure Saidu, also indicates how "open space" has been always profitable towards the people of the less privileged, war-torn countries as it showcases itself as an open place. Saidu is an inmate whom Julius meets while visiting the prisoners at a local detention center. Saidu began in Liberia, escaped to Monrovia, got a ride to Gbarnga, walked to Guinea, and crossed between Bamako and Tangier and Ceuta. He continued his journey in Spain, crossed the border in Portugal where he endured hard work for two years to save enough money so that he could fly to New York with a hope to start a new life.

Saiduwent through all the complicated processes such as making fake ID card and passport."Saidu Caspar Mohammed but the man had had to invent a birth date, because Saidu didn't know his real one. The passport, a Cape Verdean one, arrived on a Tuesday; by Friday, he was in the air" (69). But as soon as he reached New York airport, Officers took him away for illegal entrance. They arranged him to send back to "his Home?" but Saidu says, "I don't want to go back to anywhere. (...) I want to stay in this country, I want to be in America and work. I applied for asylum but it wasn't given. Now they will return to my port of entry, which is Lisbon" (70).

Unlike the other immigrants, Saidu's case is different in this sense that he is yet not permitted to stay in America. If he is allowed to stay in America, Saidu will be an immigrant like the others. Again, if he is deported to Lisbon, he will be an immigrant. Part of his identity will be always an immigrant but the significant thing to notice that Saidu crossed all the borders taking risk over his life only to his dream of being an immigrant in America. It shows how the Western municipal space have created a demand through its lucrative offer of better lifestyle, and job opportunities, openness of being transnational region, but with conditions apply.

The integration of different cultural and religious groups comes together in Europe also that is evidenced in the description of Brussels. In the novel, Brussels serves as "open space" that becomes the place for different religious and linguistic groups which is evidenced through the presence and free movement of the Muslim people. Julius, coming from the West and a person with Islam perspective becomes surprised seeing the many Muslim women wearing "veils" casually walking through the streets. He observes in the phone booth where people from different geographical locations and religious backgrounds come to make call, as "Not only for all people making New Year greetings but also for a lot of people calling home for the Eid" (112).

Julius also comes across people who speak different languages ranging from English with an Eastern European intonation to French, Spanish, Arabic and English. The realization of the co-existence of multicultural and different linguistic groups comes when he looks into the history of imperialism in Europe, and particularly in Brussels. He also understands how the global politics initiates the migration of Muslim people from the East to Europe, and what motivation thrives them which in Farouq's case to establish his own existence with individuality. Looking this crowd of individuals from different places who connect their call to all over the world, "Colombia, Egypt, Senegal, Brazil, France, and Germany." Farouq believe: "people can live together but still keep their own value intact." (112).

Further, his encounter with Farouq and Khalil, changes his stereotypical perspectives regarding Muslims when he sits for an informal chit-chat at a restaurant. The following paragraphs is the suggestion of the heart-warming interconnection between a Black American with Nigerian-German ancestry and two immigrants from

a Muslim country who exchange their stereotypical views and put upfront the clarification.

> Many Americans assume that European Muslims are covered from head to toe if they are women, or that they wear a full beard if they are men, and that they are only interested in protesting perceived insults to Islam. (...) the ordinary American probably does not imagine that Muslims in the Europe sit in cafes drinking beer, smoking Marlboros, and discussing political philosophy. In the same way, American blacks are like any other Americans; they are like any other people. They hold the same kind of jobs, they live in normal houses, they send their children to school. Many of them are poor, that is true, for reasons of history, and many of them do like hip-hop and devote their lives to it, but it's also true that some of them are engineers, university professors, lawyers, and generals. Even the last two secretaries of state have been black (119).

It summarizes the whole setting of Brussels an "open space" that enables these characters to come close and interact with each other clarifying their stereotypical viewpoints. It also suggests the optimistic side of transnational zone in "open space" that creates harmonious co-existence, while voicing the opinions and viewpoints of those marginalized people whose voice we generally don't get to hear in real context.

Further, Brussels can be seen as "open space" that functions as transnational region through the experiences of Farouq and Khalil. The two Muslim immigrants come to have a heart-to-heart discussion with Julius in a café. Despite their different racial, religious and ethnic background, they discuss world politics, global issues, and

immigration problems in the West and vice. Their discussion eliminates many misconceptions regarding each other, and opens up new perspectives of regarding world, philosophies, religions and polities.

The most intriguing was the Farouq's opinion regarding Al-Qaeda that he freely puts forward that is indicative of the positive side of transnational region. He explains himself saying, "I don't agree with what Al-Qaeda did, they use a method I would not use, so I cannot say the word *support*. But I don't cast judgment on them" (121). Indeed, Farouq through his concrete opinion and liberal perspectives, opens up new vistas to view "open space" as transnational contact zone but at the same time he alludes the hypocrisy of the Western or European ideals of multiculturalism or the idea of "melting pot".

Bhabha privileges that a person's identity is not ever the outcome of fixed factors; rather, it is collection of various cultural and historical traditions and methods of exchange that are continuously subject to change. Identity should be understand as culturally hybrid. Julius records all of New York City's multi-layered history in an attempt to overwhelm his own past, reinvent himself, and, as such, construct an 'ideal' identity. This becomes evident from, Julius' emphasis on the city's historical involvement with colonial cruelty.

On one of his walks, Julius lookouts children play in Battery Park. Julius reproduces upon the fact that this place has not always been such a pleasing 'playground' for children, as it used to be a busy site where slaves and paupers were hanged in the seventeenth century and where slaver's ships were built and launched during the nineteenth century. "The circuit from the old Customs House to Wall Street, and then down to South Street Seaport, was a distance less than a mile. The

Customs House faced Bowling Green, which had been used in seventeenth century for the executions of paupers and slaves," (163-164).

Battery Park, in other words, used to be the center of the lucrative slave trade that operated out of the city's ports. Thus, Julius exposes New York City's largely invisible and shameful history, a history that has interrupted the lives of his African ancestors – because the city played a significant role in and profited enormously from the slave-trade. Massively Julius pictured out the slave trade,

> In profiting from slavery, the City Bank of New York was not unlike the other companies founded by merchants and bankers in the same time periods – the companies that later became AT&T and Con Edison emerged from the same milieu. Moses Taylor, one of the world's wealthiest men, had joined the board of the City Bank in 1837 after a long and successful carrier as a sugar merchant. (...) He had made it possible, in other words, for plantation owners to pay for the purchase of slaves; this he did in the part by operating his own ships. (...) The profit margins were irresistible: a fully outfitted slaving ships costing around $13,000 could be expected to deliver a human cargo worth more than $200,000. *The New York Times* noted in 1852, as the City Bank brought in its greatest profits, that if the authorities pleaded that they could not stop this profiteering, they were simply confessing their own imbecility, and that, if it was a matter of will, the moral guilt they were incurring was equivalent to that slave traders themselves. (163)

On another walk, Julius fortuitously stumbles upon the memorial for the site of an African burial ground. Julius imagines this exact place in the seventeenth and

eighteenth centuries, when the burial ground actually comprised six acres of ground in which thousands of slaves lay buried (220). Julius observed, "as far north as present – day Duane Street, and as far south as city Hall Park. Along Chambers Street and in the park itself, human remains were still routinely uncovered. But most of the burial ground was under office buildings, shops, streets, diners pharmacies, all the endless hum of quotidian commerce and government" (220). Julius believes that, although this vast burial ground has been reduced to a tiny spot of grass, it still represents "the echo across centuries from slavery in New York" (221). This, again, illustrates the notion that fragments of slavery are still inscribed in the ground and, therefore, in the history of New York City.

Meanwhile, the two female characters Nadege and Moji who are also Nigerian-American living in New York, and acquaintances of Julius along with their respective stories tend to suggest the nature of relationship in "open space" that serves as transnational sector. Both Nadege and Moji are personally connected with Julius, as Nadege is his former girlfriend, whereas Moji is the girl from Julius's childhood in Nigeria, who he sexually violated, and chose to forget that particular memory. Julius explains thisphenomena of remembering selective memories saying "we are not the villains of our own stories. In fact, it is quite the contrary: we play, and only play the hero and in the swirl of other people's stories,..." (243). His statement illustrates his lack of self-awareness that warns the reader to what extent we must consciously believe Julius's narratives. Coming back to Nadege and Moji, both are ended up with white boyfriends which allows us the transnational merging in the "open space."

Julius simply reregisters his ancestor's sufferings; he does not fully tie with it as might be likely from an African immigrant; rather, Julius remains a distant observer of the city's history. It emphasizes the notion that Julius' focus on colonial

oppression serves a different purpose: it serves to suppress his own personal perpetrators-trauma of having raped Moji back in Nigeria. Julius fails to connect with his own memories: he cannot come to terms with the fact that he raped Moji and his aloofness towards New York's painful past is a reflection of his inability to connect with his own painful past. New York City's history, in other words, enables Julius to hide with a mask of sympathy for others. Julius notes that he presents himself as "the listener, the compassionate African who paid attention to the details of someone else's life and struggle. I had fallen in love with that idea of myself" (70).

Thus, New York City functions as a Third Space that enables Julius to hearth an identity from the bits and pieces that he allows to be part of himself. This is matching with Bhabha's argument that liminal, 'in-between' spaces enable people to attain selfhood and initiate new signs of identity (Bhabha 2). Thus, the examples illustrate that Julius' focus of New York City's history allow him to reregister his ancestors experiences with colonial oppression and importantly, it enables him to suppress his own painful memories too.

The "open spaces" of New York and Brussels are deterritorialized that transgresses the established boundaries and reestablishes new relations among people, places and things, while referencing or simulating the events of each spaces. It allows the characters to move through the borders and share opinions, and relate each other to different histories of the place despite coming from different backgrounds. For example, the questions of Palestine does concern Julius, Farouq and Khalil though they do not belong to that country. The juxtaposition of facts and fictions are referred by the precise imagination of the narrator. He runs after the history and tries to understand it with emotion and logic. He recreates the history or the past by using his imagination and psychological frame of mind.

Therefore, we find the detailed description and imageries of every single historical event and experiences of the characters that have been mentioned in the novel. Cinar and Bender in "The City: Experience, imagination and Place" states that "These urban experiences involve travels, interactions, and communicative practices of people within a city, which function to weave a sense of connectedness in space and in turn serve to imagine the city as a single place" (Cinar and Bender 15). Undoubtedly, Julius is an observer of open space and a transnational figure who frequently travels to New York, Brussels and Nigeria while reflecting on each spaces and its inhabitants.

Julius, being the urban figure as well as a well-trained psychiatrist gives us the inside stories of the history and immigrants whose experiences establish the transnational nature of "open spaces". The novel itself is a transnational novel indicative from its title "Open City" that allows the reader to look into the global figures who crosses multiple borders, while transgressing their physical location only to find a space to create new identity. Thus the novel is the montage of multiple stories we get to hear from Julius's perspectives that refer to both the positive side and backlash of transnational region. Therefore, the novel can be called a multilayered critique of immigrants' crises in open space as well as the idea of transnational region.

Chapter Four

Language Constrains

Language is an important factor of identity construction in an unhomely place and Teju Cole's *Open City* represents that through the usage and narrating style of his protagonist Julius. He is the first-person narrator in the novel. On his walks people and buildings trigger his memory, and his narration mostly takes the form of an interior monologue. Louis Chude-Sokei argues that Julius is a narrator with a strong "anomie and penchant for withdrawal". He continues:

> For a novel so deliberately worldly [...] and so committed to the random interactions of multiple types of individuals emerging from interlacing diasporas, its dubiously stand-offish relationship to black Americans is notable (66). Every time Julius is asked about his origin he withdraws from the conversation. (67)

In Julius's narration, his style becomes evident that he wants to create an identity for himself that is not based on the colour of his skin, or his country of origin. Instead, he attaches himself to the city he lives in, New York City. His style of narration is much distanced. He describes other people in detail, remembers their part of a conversation, but only in flashbacks reveals parts of his childhood and youth. When Julius describes strangers, he always tries to mention their ethnicity, for instance "I met a Haitian man" (70), "one was white, one Asian, and the other two black" (196); and he identifies someone else as "Filipino" (242). He does that in order to show the vast diversity of people in New York City.

It has to be pointed out that Julius' life is one of privilege. In New York, he has an interesting psychiatry residency at Columbia Presbyterian. As Julius is well educated and very well versed in the worlds of history, art, literature, and classical music, his perceptive nature is open, it seems, to everything and everyone. All of these characterizations bring us to believe that Julius is a reliable person and narrator. A person with such an extensive and detailed knowledge of human history, a person who works as a *psychiatrist*, must undoubtedly be trustworthy. While Julius is not aware of his own unreliability throughout the novel, the small "distance", when he realizes this, can be considered "uncanny moments". These moments disrupts Julius' present.

In Bhabha's understanding, to be unhomely is not to be equated to being homeless: "It has less to do with forcible eviction and more to do with the uncanny literary and social effects of enforced social accommodation, or historical migrations and cultural relocations" ("The World" 141). Julius often finds himself in situations where people make contact with him. In a way, he must give off some kind of openness so that people easily open up to him.

The fragmented, discontinuous chronology of the novel mirrors Julius' own consciousness it seems. For while people don't normally think our thoughts one after the other in a linear, chronological way, Julius' mind, at times, seems more fragmented than what is usual. He constantly dwells on the issue of time, sometimes compressing it with space: "the past, if there is such a thing, is mostly empty space" (155), other times solidifying it: "time was elastic", "time's shape was restored" (74-231). But most significantly, Julius layers time. Stories of people are layered with history, time is layered with space, information about streets, art, literature, commerce

and unhomely peoples overlap. The unfolding of all these narratives also seems to expose Julius to his own layered Self.

Furthermore, in his review in The New Yorker of *Open City*, James Wood points out the fragmentary style with which we are presented Julius' world: "...though people speak and occasionally converse, this speech is not marked by quotation marks, dashes, or paragraph breaks and is formally indistinguishable from the narrator's own language" (575). To Bhabha "... 'the present' ...in the process of repetition, becomes disjunct and displaced" (*LoC* 6). The stories that are relayed to Julius – stories that in themselves are fragmented and discontinuous – are repetitive throughout the novel, and are subsequently temporal overlaps that displaces Julius' present. His attention is given not only to the tragic fates of refugees, but to animals and wildlife, an elderly friend, a Caribbean homosexual, a Moroccan immigrant, a Belgian doctor are among the many people Julius interact with many of them in the margins of official history, many of them are not but all of these different routes overlap with Julius' at some specific moment in time.

Professor Saito is one of Julius friend, who used to be his English literature professor and later on became a friend. He even mentions that he felt closer to Saito than to his relatives because Saito is part of the Japanese diaspora who has also encountered racism. He grew up in the United States but during World War II he was forced to go to an internment camp. According to Saito, he felt American and therefore did not understand why this happened to him. When Saito dies, Julius realizes that their friendship has been private and that they had no common friends.

Julius's preoccupation occurs more often throughout the novel when he is with professor Dr. Saito or when he is with his ex-girlfriend Nadège. Julius does not fully paying attention is when he visits his friend Professor Saito: "When Professor Saito asked me [...] to read the civil unions story all the way to the end, I did so, fully understanding the printed words but without engaging with them. Afterward, we discussed the story, and that, too, I did at a certain distance" (171). The term "certain distance" has exited throughout the conversation with every one he meets. He is not ready to show his origin identification. It has proved when he met his Nigerian friend Moji during their conversation he just try to hide who is he and stated, "Again, I did most of the talking. I tried, again, to draw [Moji] out on the subject of recycling. She responded in yeses and nos, as though she knew well that I was prattling, filling in the silence" (204). Julius argues that what he said was not important by saying Moji would probably think so.

In this case, Julius does not only maintain his distance with his friends but also with the people whom he meets. For evidence, how Julius encounters racism while waiting for the train in empty subway station, Julius encounters with two teenagers13 year old sister and 10 year old brother from out-of-town. They turned to Julius and asked him "wassup? And "Are you a gangster mister?" (31-32). They both flashed gang signs or their idea of gang signs. At first we have go through the term of the girl "wassup" which refers the language of native Africans and the enquire about if he is a gangster or not and making some gang sign towards him is irritating him a lot so he just decided to avoid those children and their chilly activities on the station. While they are flickering their finger at him for several minutes he thought about walking

home. As a Nigerian born and American living Julius wants to maintain "certain distance" with both of his friends and strangers.

One can often find Julius' response as less interested. When visiting a detention centre in Queens, Julius is told the harrowing story of Saidu, a Liberian refugee who fears deportation out of the States. Saidu, in telling the story clearly considers Julius as trustworthy and talks freely about his ordeals, and he even invites him back to visit. Julius coolly divulges: "I said I would, but never did" (70). His concern is whether he comes across as the attentive listener.

This idea of himself as the compassionate listener is countered throughout the novel, as Julius repeatedly lets it be known that he doesn't want people to lay claims on him. Although he knows how to be social, and how he is *supposed* to act to given situations, in his mind he sometimes denies these notions, which adds to his detachedness, as when he realizes that his neighbor's wife has passed away. He ponders if it was before or after his neighbour had complained about loud music from his apartment: "Eventually I satisfied myself that it was before, and not after, his wife's death. I felt a certain sense of relief at this, which was taken over almost immediately by shame. But even that feeling subsided; much too quickly, now that I think of it" (21). Thus, Julius is fairly honest about how he wants to be perceived, yet, in reality he cannot always meet his own expectations.

Moreover, Julius is a first person narrator, who on his walks remembers incidents mainly from his life in the United States, but sometimes flashbacks to his childhood. The latter become more frequent towards the end of the novel after he has met an old acquaintance from Nigeria, Moji, who identifies more with Nigeria than

Julius. Julius's narration, largely an interior monologue is distant and aloof. He often mentions that, when talking to other people, he is absentminded, as shown in the example with the cab driver.

Julius behaves according to the unwritten code of greeting other black people. This can occur silently or by addressing each other with the term "brother". He reacts to a social obligation and therefore fulfills an expectation based on race. For example after a visit to a museum, Julius has to wait ten minutes in the rain until he can finally catch a cab. "I got into the car and immediately the driver said, Where? I must have looked lost. I tried to remember my home address" (40). Julius still thinks about his visit to the museum while interacting with the cabdriver.

> [Ellis Island] had been built too late for those early Africans – who weren't immigrants in any case – and it had been closed too soon to mean anything to the later Africans like Kenneth, or the cab driver, or me. Ellis Island was a symbol mostly for European refugees. Blacks, "we blacks," had known rougher ports of entry: this, I could admit to myself now that my mood was less impatient, was what the cabdriver had meant. This was the acknowledgement he wanted, in his brusque fashion from every "brother" he met. (54-55)

After he regains the memory of his address, he gives it to the driver and says: "So, how are you doing, my brother?" By calling him "my brother," he implies that the cab driver is black as well (55-101), and that race is a connection. This is confirmed when the cab driver answers, "Not good, not good at all, you know, the way you came into my car without saying hello, that was bad. Hey, I'm African just

like you, why do you do this?" (40). This incident shows that black people are expected to bond with each other in the United States. The African driver feels rejected because Julius did not greet him immediately and gives him the silence treatment during the entire ride. Julius is not "sorry" because he "was in no mood for people who tried to lay claims on [him]" (40). Inwardly Julius is angry, but in the end when the driver stops several blocks before the actual destination, he does not argue with the driver and pays him, "adding the standard tip."

Julius seems to be always very passive. In the beginning he cares for a second when he apologizes, saying that his mind was elsewhere and asking how the drive was. Later, he does not argue with the driver and forgets about the incident. This is similar to the scene when the children mock him while he waits for the subway. But it shows not only a connection among black people in the United States in general, but also the bond he has forthe black immigrants. Being African sets them apart from African Americans and the country of origin is replaced by the common factor Africa.

Another example of the term "brother" to denote a racial bond in the novel occurs between Julius and two black men before they rob him:

> There had been, it occurred to me, only the most tenuous of connections between us, looks on a street corner by strangers, a gesture of mutual respect based on our being young, black, male; based, in other words, on our being "brothers." These glances were exchanged between black men all over the city every minute of the day, a quick solidarity worked into the weave of each man's mundane pursuits, a

> nod or a smile or quick greeting. It was a little way of saying, I know something of what life is like for you out here. (212)

This shows the connection among young black males, no matter what their origin be. Obviously, one cannot ignore the fact that later on they rob Julius; however, it is not explicitly said that they rob him because he is black or whether race is not an issue in this case. They do call him "nigger" in a negative way, though (213), a word which, as Julius explains earlier, is used often among black people without a negative connotation. I think, therefore, that he is "just" being robbed and the word "nigger" is used as a general insult because they do not know whether he is African or African American.

Accent is not much present in *Open City*. Julius never tells the reader what his English sounds like or that he has to make a choice. The only time an accent is mentioned is when Julius meets Kenneth, the museum guard, again. The small talk appears to be one-sided, which Julius later confirms: "he launched into a monologue, flitting from one subject to another in a Caribbean accent." Here Julius classifies Kenneth by noticing his accent. He uses Kenneth's accent to give him an identity. Kenneth then says, "I'm really interested in African culture anyway. Are you Yoruba?" This generalization of the African continent irritates Julius, "Kenneth was, by now, starting to wear on me" (53). This is similar to the phrase Julius used earlier when talking about the cab driver, "lay[ing] claims on me" (40).

The choice of words is repeated and confirmed when Julius continues, "Hey, I'm African just like you. Kenneth was making a similar claim [as the cab driver]" (53). This scene and Julius's choice of words show that he does not wish to feel a

connection based on race. However, after leaving the bar he reflects on his encounters with Kenneth and the cab driver and begins to understand the reason of the feeling of connectedness among black people. This is the only scene in the novel where he partly identifies with African Americans, adopting a cultural black identity.

Juliush as compassion but never makes a show off to actually identify himself with them. One example is when Julius attends a photography exhibit on Martin Munkácsi, and engages in conversation with an elderly man who left Berlin for New York in 1937. Julius notes the man's slow articulation, as if he was "entering a memory" and as he speaks Julius silently remarks the "lightness" of which he speaks of his boyhood: "almost as if he were talking about something else, something less frightening, something less littered with disaster" (153). The conversation makes Julius contemplate his own German heritage, yet, he chooses not to divulge this fact about himself: "I did not tell him that my mother and my oma had been there, too, as refugees near the end of the war and afterward, and that I was myself, in a distant sense, also a Berliner" (153). As Julius moves through the exhibition he is suddenly taken aback, of shock almost, by an image of Hitler and Goebbels:

> I happened to be looking at this picture at the same time a young couple was. I stood to the left of it, and they to the right. They were Hasidic Jews. I had no reasonable access to what being there, in that gallery, might mean for them; the undiluted hatred I felt for the subjects of the photo was, in the couple, transmuted into what? What is stronger than hate? I did not know, and could not ask. I needed to move away, immediately, needed to rest my eyes elsewhere and be absent from this silent encounter into which I had inadvertently barged. (154)

Julius is so disturbed by this scene that he leaves the museum, and returns home. As he leaves he passes the old Berliner and contemplates: "His long-saved story of *illustrirte* had found the time and place for its airing: unimaginable how many small stories people all over this city carried around with them.

Similarly while "entering" into the memory of the old Berliner, Julius remembers a scene from his childhood in Nigeria, when, following the death of his father, his mother decides to: "take him with her into her memories" (79). As she speaks about her past in Germany, her German pronunciation of "Julianna" and "Julia" makes her seem "even stranger" to Julius (79). He has always felt an estrangement to his mother, and as she speaks, his mind wanders on to other things. Upon reflecting on their conversation years later, when Julius "became interested in these things for his own sake", he surmises that his oma must have been raped by a Red Army soldier at the end of World War II (80). Yet, he continues to confuse our conception of time when he states: "The afternoon was time taken out of time" (81). It seems as though, when Julius remembers or relives unpleasant memories he abstracts them, and pulls them out of time itself. In this way it is as if those experiences never happened. As if they were a dream. However, Julius later contemplates how we: "experience *life* as a continuity, and only after it falls away, after it becomes the past do we see its discontinuities" (155).

In an internet café in Brussels Julius meets Farouq, an Arab whom Julius calls "brother" after asking for his name and introducing himself (101). However, he describes Farouq's behavior as "aggressive familiarity" (102). This shows that Julius

is aware of this form of greeting other black people. However, he usually does not initiate it because he thinks it is too forward. Although Julius tries not to identify himself through the color of his skin, in the end he surrenders to these social norms often. One time when he meets Farouq and another friend in a café, they discuss politics and Julius is pushed into the role of the "outraged American" during a political discussion on the Taliban and 9/11 (120). He does act on this expected role, but he mentions to the reader that he did not feel outraged at all.

This shows Julius's ambivalent behavior. On the one hand he sees himself as a worldly New Yorker but he also behaves according to the black "code". And on the other hand he rejects his Nigerian identity but he also emotionally does not feel American. In a way, Farouq voices Julius's opinions, which he himself does not speak out loud: Farouq believes that people are able to live together regardless of their origin and beliefs because it works in his internet café (112-113). These three characters are the ones with whom Julius engages most closely like Dr. Maillotte.

Julius opens up to a stranger he meets on an airplane to Brussels: Dr. Maillotte. When he says he is from Nigeria, she says, "Oh Nigeria. Nigeria, Nigeria. Well, I know a great many Nigerians, and I really should tell you this, many of them are arrogant" (88). This is the first time Julius engages himself in a conversation about Africa and Nigeria. He explains Nigerians' arrogance by saying that they probably want to "make [their] presence felt" (88). Maillotte has lived in the United States for many years, but she is originally from Belgium and returns frequently to her home country, mainly to visit her friends. Julius tells her that his "last visit happened two years ago, and that was after a gap of fifteen years; and it was a brief visit. Being busy all these years was part of it, and losing some of the connection, as

you said, also plays a role. Also, my father died not long before I left, and I have no siblings" (142). Significantly, he does not mention his estranged mother but Julius admits freely to this stranger that nothing ties him to his home country. This is the only time in the novel that Julius has an honest conversation about his connection to Nigeria with a stranger.

Throughout the novel Julius has many encounters with strangers. The focus lies on random encounters between black people. Julius is walking through Harlem when "an old man with an ashen face and bulbous yellow eyes" passes by and "raises his head to greet" Julius (18). At first, Julius seems to remember the man but then realizes that he does not know him at all. However, he returns the silent greeting and mentions rather randomly that "in the Harlem night, there are no whites" (18). This example shows once again that he is an observer but he does engage in the silent greetings among black people. He acts on his identity of being black. In doing so, he fulfills external obligations.

This bond between black people is also visible when he treats a patient. A World War II veteran tells Julius how proud he is to "see a young black man like yourself in that white coat, because things haven't ever been easy for us, and no one has ever given us nothing without a struggle" (210). Thus being black in general forms a connection stronger and more important than whether one is African or African American. Even Julius is affected by the legacy of slavery and racial violence. After his talk to the bootblack, he imagines seeing a lynched man hanging in a tree. He is haunted by the African American past. Thus Julius feels connected to the members of the historic African diaspora and identifies sometimes with the cultural identity of the members of the African Diasporas.

On the other hand, some African Americans seem to recognize Africans on the basis of minor characteristics. For instance, when Julius sends a package to Farouq in Belgium, he does not want stamps with flags on the package because it might appear too patriotic. The man behind the counter answers:

> I know. And he added, after a pause, I know, my brother. Then he said, Say, brother, where are you from? 'Cause I see, I could tell you were from the Motherland. And you brothers have something vital, you understand me. You have something that is vital for the health of those of us raised on this side of the ocean. Let me tell you something: I am raising my daughters as Africans. (186)

This African American tries to connect with Julius on the basis of the fact that they are both of African origin. Julius remains polite even after the man recites his own poetry to Julius, but he vows to avoid this particular post office in the future (188). Thus some African Americans in the novel try to reconnect with their African origin, and therefore claim a collective identity. However, Julius does not want to be part of this identity and keeps his distance. Chude-Sokei argues on this topic that Cole's novel

> Dramatizes a tiptoeing around what is, in fact, a primary concern for African immigrants, and therefore a driving force behind these new fictions: the relationship with black Americans, the most influential representatives of the "old" African diaspora. Not only are the symbols and rhetoric or gestures towards transnational racial solidarity and ethnic pride mocked, stereotyped, or revealed to be meaningless. The very relationship

> with black America is treated as a tense, silent, incomparable, and awkward, more a question than a foregone conclusion. (68)

This is shown through Julius's reluctance to talk about Nigeria to strangers and to actively participate in the silent greetings. He does return these, but does not initiate them. Thus, Julius rejects a Nigerian cultural identity and can relate more to a cultural identity of the African diaspora members. Julius went to the United States when he was seventeen years old. He left right after he finished military school and applied in secret to American colleges (84-85). In the beginning of the novel the reader learns that his father is dead, and that he has no contact with his mother and only sporadic contact with an aunt in Nigeria. He went to military school because it was far away from his parents, and this suited all of them, himself and his parents (76-77).

The reason for Julius's troubled relationship with his parents is not mentioned but it cannot be only his rape of Moji, of which the reader learns at the end of the novel, because Julius mentions his unhappy childhood memories before the rape occurred: "I recall wrestling with myself about my unexamined loyalty to my father, and my growing antipathy toward my mother" (77). These are Julius's thoughts at the age of ten while he is being driven to military school. Thus, Julius's rejection of everything Nigerian might be rooted in his bad relationship with his parents. Julius' last visit to Nigeria was two years ago before the events in the novel and, before that, there was a fifteen-year gap. He has no connections left there, he admits to Dr. Maillotte on the plane to Brussels (142).

This suggests that only in remembrance can we see life as it really is. In that way one can see the mistakes that have been made its detachments. This applies to Julius' life and to the history of the world. Although Julius views his conversation with his mother in a more informed way in retrospect, it does not reconcile them in any way. While acknowledging that he himself is a "continuation of" what happened to his oma, still he has a distance from those memories, and thus his own origin (Cole 80). Julius includes the past, yet he also excludes what he does not want to engage with, whether it is other people's stories or his own past. He is neither outside or inside, he is in-between. Moreover, he does not, or does not want to, remember much from Nigeria:

> The past, if there is such a thing, is mostly empty space, great expanses of nothing, in which significant persons and events float. Nigeria was like that for me: mostly forgotten, except for those few things that I remembered with an outsize intensity These were the things that had been solidified in my mind by reiteration, that recurred in dreams and daily thoughts: certain faces, certain conversations, which, taken as a group, represented a secure version of the past I had been constructing since 1992. But there was another, irruptive sense of things past. The sudden reencounter, in the present, of something or someone long forgotten, some part of myself I had relegated to childhood and to Africa. An old friend came to me out of this latter past, a friend, or rather an acquaintance whom memory now made convenient to think of as a friend, so that what seemed to have vanished entirely existed once again. (155-156)

This passage shows that he is aware that his memories of the past and Nigeria are a construct. He also says that this is "a secure version of the past that he had been constructing since 1992". Julius' musing on the: "reencounter, in the present, of something or someone long forgotten, some part of myself I had relegated to childhood and to Africa." (156). Thus, Julius' "secure" construction of his past is now rendered unsecure, because of his erasure of Moji from his mind. This passage also announces the arrival of Moji, who will trigger more of his memories of the past that will force him out of his comfort zone for a while.

Julius' relationship with Nigeria is like his narration style: distant. Interestingly enough, even though Julius seems to reject everything that ties him to Nigeria, the reader finds out that Julius is Yoruba and that he still remembers Yoruba culture. When Julius sees two blind men in a short amount of time, he tells the myth about the Obatala, the creator of bodies in Yoruba religion (25). He grew up in a Yoruba culture and this knowledge is still present in his thoughts. However, after he finishes the anecdote of the god who forms disabled bodies when drunk, he changes the topic abruptly to the last time he went to see a movie. He appears to repress his memories of Africa and his African culture.

Julius appears to be well integrated into American culture; he has a good job, friends and even though he appears detached, he also appears careless. The only problem is his repression of his national identity. This repression is caused by the rape he committed as a teenager and comes back to haunt him at the end of the novel. However, even though the ending suggests a change in his identity construction, when Julius meets Moji in a supermarket, he does not recognize her. "She looked Yoruba, with a slight slant to her eyes and an elegant swoop to her jaw, and it was

clear from the accent that that was where I should look for the connection between us" (156). Julius is guessing her nationality and ethnicity. Moreover, her accent is mentioned. This is, in fact, the only time an African accent is mentioned. The reader does not know whether Julius has kept his regional accent or if he has adopted a standard American accent over the years.

Moji is different from Julius in that she is more connected to Nigeria. She could clearly distinguish between Africans and African Americans:

> I suppose that the things black people have to deal with in this country – and I don't mean me or Julius, I mean people like you [Julius's unnamed friend], who have been here for generations – the things you've had to deal with are definitely enough to drive anyone over the edge. The racist structure of this country is crazy-making. (203)

Moji triggers Julius's memories of Nigeria and his past. He appears less distant than in the beginning of the novel. Because Julius tries to deny his Nigerian identity, meeting Moji confuses his routine, his general thinking. He remembers for instance his father's funeral when he was seventeen. Towards the end of the novel, Moji reminds Julius the time when he raped her. His reaction is important; it undermines the detachment he has shown throughout the novel. Julius on the other hand has forgotten her to the point that he does not recognize her when they meet again in a supermarket. This is Moji's main point of accusation, not the rape itself but that he has forgotten. She reveals, therefore, that in Julius's detachment from places and people lies as honorable deficiency.

The representation of his own life seems to present itself when he encounters Moji, and Julius makes use of the word "apparition" to describe her sudden appearance. The same designation was used by the Liberian refugee, Saidu, to describe when what he thought was a snake actually revealed itself to be an exercise book and: "The memory of that apparition remained...because he often wondered, then and later, if it meant something for his future" (66). Moji's reappearance will mean something to Julius' future.

The lapse in his memory after encountering Moji, as well as his anxiety following their meeting, might serve as a foreshadowing of the trauma of remembering having raped Moji when they were teenagers in Nigeria. It might imply that Julius is hiding things about himself *from* himself. However, it is with Julius as narrator that his story is constructed, and in this moment in particular, his role as "double agent" might be revealed.

> Each person must, on some level, take himself as the calibration point for normalcy, must assume that the room of his own mind is not, cannot be, entirely opaque to him. Perhaps this is what we mean by sanity: that, whatever our self-admitted eccentricities might be, we are not the villains of our own stories. In fact, it is quite the contrary: we play, and only play, the hero, and in the swirl of other people's stories, insofar as those stories concern us at all, we are never less than heroic. (243)

This passage further solidifies the notion that by having Julius as narrator of his own story, the way he represents himself may not be truthful. Again we see that in the gaps where Julius either remembers something disturbing from his past or even if it is just anexcitment of an unhomely presence Julius realizes that he is not the hero of

his own stories, and subsequently loses his sanity, even if it is only for a brief moment.

The confusions that Julius experience between time and space are not only connected to people, but also to the confusions has experienced while visiting significant historical and symbolical places. For instance, when Julius walks near the site of ground zero, he remembers a tourist asking him: "how to get to 9/11: not the site of the events of 9/11 but to 9/11 itself, the date petrified into broken stones" (54). Again, Julius blurs the borders of time: "Time became elastic and voices cut out of the past into the present, the heart of the city was gripped by what seemed to be a commotion from an earlier time" (74). This contrast seems to signify Julius' liminal position between two worlds, that of at once being at home in the world and still feel the unhomely presence that exists as a haunting everywhere he looks and goes, and this causes a displacement that disturbs Julius' sense of Self.

In distinction to his habitual wanderings that take him to seemingly random places, Julius purposefully purchases a ticket to go see a concert at Carnegie Hall. Mahler's music seems especially compelling to Julius as he notes that his music transcends characterizations such as black, white, old or young, and wonders if it is particularly human at all. Julius points out, and he feels observed and displaced. Julius is deeply moved by its elegiac sentiment, and detects the deep concentration and: "the hundreds of private thoughts, of the people in the auditorium with him" (253).

In disparity to the scrutiny he felt by the other people before the concert, the classical, mournful music of Mahler creates a sense of "fellow feeling" between Julius and the other people in the audience. This connectedness is heightened by an almost spiritual experience, when an old woman stands up and as if "summoned", and as if

"leaving into death" walks down the aisle (253). As the woman moves, she is the image of an angel. Her white hair resembles a halo as the woman walks with her arm raised as if being led by someone, and this makes Julius think, again, of his oma; as if it were him who escorted her "out into the darkness" (253).

The spiritual and human connectedness Julius feels in "the glow" of that final movement comes to an abrupt end, as the next scene begins with the panic of being locked out. These people are now on their way home, "oblivious to his plight", as Julius is stuck on the fire escape, "locked out on the unlit side of Carnegie Hall" (255). This might symbolize Julius constant dissonance and detachment with people whom he met. Julius "locks" himself out of conversations with people and from an affiliation with anybody else. Julius is now in the shadows and the connectedness he felt before is replaced with a: "solitude of rare purity" (255). Surprisingly, this solitude, while looking at the starry sky, allows Julius to contemplate the past, and conversely, the future:

> Wonderful stars, a distant cloud of fireflies: but I felt in my body what my eyes could not grasp, which was that their true nature was the persisting visual echo of something that was already in the past...But in the darks spaces between the dead, shining stars were stars I could not see, stars that still existed, and were giving out light that hadn't reached me yet, stars now living and giving out light but present to me only as blank interstices. Their light would arrive on earth eventually, long after I and my whole generation and the generation after me had slipped out of time, perhaps long after the human race itself was

> extinguished. To look directly into those dark spaces was to have a direct glimpse of the future. (256)

These "dark spaces" where Julius sees both the past and the future, and he is in-between, displaced in the present. The people's stories and the history of places that Julius interact with can be understood as: "moments of transit…where time and space cross, to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion" (*LoC* 2). However, Julius never seems to *include* as much as he excludes. His attentiveness to the stories of people who are long gone "dead stars" excludes the people trying to reach him in the present. It appears to be a fact that he isn't quite aware of himself. However, in the passage above it might seem as though this is beginning to dawn on him, in that he understands that there is "something" that hasn't reached him yet.

In this denouement of the plot it becomes even more evident that Julius has repressed his national identity for years. He acknowledges the fact that he has been the villain in someone else's life (243). Even though he reevaluates himself as a person, he goes back to the old ways because "remaining here in the city is the only thing that makes emotional sense to him" (248). Only the metaphor of dying birds at the end of the novel implies a possible change (259-259) in Julius's identity construction towards embracing his African and Nigerian cultural identity because it is a repetition of bird migration he observes in the beginning of the novel. Julius looks that life of migratory birds as represents the immigrants of the world and he says during the conversation with one of his unnamed friend:

> As I reflected on the fact that in each of this creatures was a tiny red heart, an engine that without fail provided the means for its

> exhilarating midair maneuvers, I was reminded of how often people took comfort, whether consciously or not, in the idea that God himself attended to these homeless travelers with something like personal care; that contrary to the evidence of natural history, he protected each one of them from hunger and hazard and the elements. For many the birds in flight were proof that we, too, were under heavens protection, that there is indeed a special providence in the fall of the sparrow. (181)

In other words, Julius is a native Nigerian, but he distances himself from his home country and barely speaks about his past. "He admits his Nigerian nationality only when pressed and then with an ironic disavowal of its claim to encompass identity" (Dalley 26). He feels at home in New York City; for instance when being in Belgium he acts how is expected to act as an "outraged American" during a political discussion about the Taliban and 9/11. At the same time, many of his friends and acquaintances have a migrant background, and he never refers to himself as American. He does, however, act according to his blackness; for example when he silently greets other black people, he feels part of the black community in the United States.

Still, some African Americans immediately see that he is from Africa and focus on this fact while talking to Julius. Dalley summarizes Julius as a man who "resists the pressure of collective identification, objecting to the belief that accidents of birth, race, or family should entail ethical obligations" (Dalley 26). In so far that this is what Julius tries to be and often is. It is especially true for his relationship with Nigeria, a collective national identity he rejects. However, on the other hand he submits to some external pressures such as greeting other black people.

Here it is implied that he recognizes the fact that African Americans and Africans still encounter racism, and that this creates a bond between them. "Blacks had known rougher ports of entry" explicitly refers to the treatment of African slaves on board of slave ships, at their arrival in America, and their enslavement in America. By using "we blacks", he implies that even though the slave trade and slavery have long been abolished, and despite the achievement of the Civil Rights Movement, black people still face racism in the United States.

In conclusion, Julius creates his identity mainly based on race but at the same time refuses to identify himself by race and his nationality. His awareness of his skin color started at an early age, but as an adult he attempts to negate the fact that it has an influence. When faced with racism, he stays calm and tries to forget about it immediately. He refers to these events as if nothing happened. At the same time, he acts according to the unwritten code of greeting other black people either by exchanging brief looks or addressing each other with the term "brother". Moreover, his distant narration adds to his identity as an observer in the novel. He tries to disengage himself from a collective national identity and a diasporic identity; however, he does occasionally identify himself with African Americans. After his rape of Moji becomes known, he briefly realizes that his behavior was wrong but then he focuses again on New York City. Only the bird metaphor at the end implies a change.

Thus on the one hand, Julius is very open-minded and likes to observe and talk to strangers. On the other hand most times, he remains distant and barely reveals his origin or past to others. At the end of the novel, it becomes clear that the repression of

his African identity influences his behavior the most: He keeps a distance to friends and acquaintances. Abusing Moji when Julius was younger is the reason for this repression, and with her return, his African identity returns as well. Nonetheless, race is the dominant factor in Julius's identity construction.

Chapter Five

Summation

Teju Cole's *Open City* brings to the fore the complex and ambiguous relationship that Julius shares with both Africa and America. He decides to immigrate to America searching for better opportunities for his life. He chooses to live in New York and at first it all seems to be fascinating and comfortable. Certainly, he finally studies psychiatry in an American university and starts to work in a hospital there. Moreover, he discovers that New York is a multicultural city in which he can feel free and becomes a habitual peregrine of its streets.

In *Open City* Julius' mobility is mainly portrayed through his walks around the city. The perceptive walker is known as the representation of space, because such a figure only catches one side of things. In *Open City* New York City and Brussels have showed that Julius and the people he meets represent individual paths that are a product of New York City, but also a product of the places that they left behind, and together, as they intersect, produce the lived-in space of New York City and Brussels.

The very first words in *Open City*, imply an inevitability, connecting the narrator's past with his present task, that of explaining his place in the world: "And so," his narrator, Julius, says, "when I began to go on evening walks last fall, I found Morningside Heights an easy place from which to set out into the city."

Julius's peripatetic wanderings and their connections to personal histories both his own and those of the people he meets form the driving narrative, allowing him to reflect on his adopted New York, the Africa of his youth, the America of today and a Europe wary of its future. With every anecdote, with each overlap, Cole

lucidly builds a compassionate and masterly work engaged more with questions than with answers regarding some of the biggest issues of our time: migration, moral accountability and our tenuous tolerance of one another's differences.

It's the autumn of 2006, and Julius is in his early 30s, absorbed with the humanistic intellectual life and a lover of classical music. Born in Lagos to a German mother and a Nigerian father, Julius has always felt like something of an outsider. While at the Nigerian Military School, he was mindful of not being sufficiently black. After moving to the United States to study medicine, he learned what it was to not be white. As the perpetual Other, Julius casts a disquisitive eye over the world he encounters, one where a diversity of identities and ideas is often overlooked as the norm.

From Morningside Heights, his peregrinations liberate him from the stresses of both his work as a psychiatric fellow at Columbia-Presbyterian Hospital and his recent breakup with his girlfriend. His feet lead him widely, to Tower Records and Central Park, to diners, movies and the subway, to the financial district with its gaping wound at ground zero. Julius visits friends, goes to museums and concerts, vacations in Europe. He attends a poetry reading at the 92nd Street Y. Everyday activities, all.

The significant travels occur, however, via the interactions of the quotidian and his mind, an intellect at once solid in its urbanity and restless in its isolation. Julius summons a palimpsest of connecting and conflicting histories. Some of these concern the oppressed, like the slaves interred in the African burial ground near Wall Street, or the Moroccan clerk at an Internet cafe who gives his perspective as a Muslim intellectual. Others involve the forgotten: a statue in Chinatown, erected in

honor of a 19th-century antidrug activist, now collecting pigeon droppings; a Liberian refugee, sitting in limbo in a detention center in Queens. Most of the histories, however, are of the often memorialized Mahler, Nietzsche, Alexander Hamilton, New York City police officers killed in the line of duty who live on either in the work bequeathed to us or in the myths constructed around them after their deaths.

Cole's writing is assured, his ideas are well developed, and his imagery is delicious: a bus is "like a resting beast," public chess tables are "oases of order and invitations to a twinned solitude," and in an ailing friend's room Death hovers "with its cheap suit and bad manners." In places Cole's prose recalls W. G. Sebald's, or the young James Joyce's in "The Dead." And his talent for juxtaposing the past and the present turns this book into a symphonic experience: a disabled person on the subway sets Julius thinking about a Yoruba creation myth; this connects with a book his patient wrote about Cornelis Van Tienhoven, the brutal settler of New Amsterdam, and the horrors inflicted on the Native Americans in subsequent centuries; this segues into thoughts on skepticism about global warming, then partisan politics, then Idi Amin, then racial representation in the film "The Last King of Scotland" and other media, until finally Julius considers his own place among it all. Thus he decides to visit Brussels, with the vague notion of finding his aging German grandmother, his remaining link to his maternal past.

Plot developments like this one can at times seem perfunctory. When Julius gives up on finding his grandmother, we're left with the impression that his trip was mostly an excuse to meditate on the differences between Europe and America. Other times, metaphors may seem too capacious, or references too ponderous. And while this book will disappoint some who require plot twists or a character's epiphanic

transformation, Cole need not worry. His readers will be those who understand that all stories are interconnected, that literature is not mere entertainment, and that art is nothing if not an extended conversation spanning eras, nations and languages.

The novel's importance lies in its honesty. Characters make declarations that may seem untenable to some readers, though these characters are not zealots. One genteel European who spent her life practicing medicine in the United States describes America as a "terrible, hypocritical, . . . sanctimonious country." The Native American author who wrote about Van Tienhoven finds it "a difficult thing to live in a country that has erased your past." An Ivy League academic wonders whether choosing the circumstances of one's death is not only more dignified, but also simply right. In a cafe, a young philosopher with a taste for egalitarianism believes that Israel has no title to its territory in Palestine, reasoning that its claim is only as strong as his is, as a Moroccan, to Spain: Now how would it be if we invade the Spanish peninsula and say, Our forefathers used to rule here in the Middle Ages, so it is our land. . . . It makes no sense.

Nevertheless, his perception of being American changes harshly when he discovers the dark side of American society which refers to the aspects unidentified and dislocated with. These aspects include racism and the lack of interest on the part of the American society towards African culture. Needless to say, he introduces to his past in Africa in several times and admits that he has decided to keep the good memories about this part of his life. Unfortunately, his relationship with his family is practically inexistent, particularly with his mother, and, for this reason, he feels distant from his roots.

Time and space are tangled, and while new places are created, they are always fluid and traces of past routes are not erased. Julius' ability to see these past routes is what makes him at home in the world. The spatial configuration and the expectations illuminates the limited mobility of Julius experiences in Brussels. As a result of the hostility towards immigrants, Arabs and Africans especially, Julius conscious of abstaining from going to certain places, and this inhibits his mobility. Whereas Julius personifies the cosmopolitan idea of being "at home in the world".

In the second chapter of this thesis I explored how time and memory serve as individual and collective constructions of reality. In *Open City* Julius' memories of his own past are 'not only layered with the historical past of the United States, but also extends to the historical past of the world. I explored how the repetitive way in which the novel introduces stories of Julius' interlocutors and history of geographical sites displaces Julius' present. These stories, I found, represent the voices of memory, that contribute to the doubleness of the novel in that the way Julius represents himself *to* himself reflects the way certain stories are not included in the collective consciousness. The novel presents us with a view of the past that dislocates the present, and I argued that this makes Julius understand that there are things in his future that haven't reached him yet. Thus, I conclude that Julius does indeed inhabit an in-between space.

This contradictory relationship between these two lands has important consequences for Julius and especially for the creation of his own identity. His objective and his desire is precisely to be able to reconcile these tensions as we have proved. He remembers his grandmother, who was German, a lot and, especially, the good times they shared in Africa. This nostalgic feeling towards his grandmother

makes him travel to Belgium to try to discover if she is still alive and if it is possible for them to recover their relationship. However, it is impossible for him to get some information about her and gives up the idea of seeing her again. On the contrary, it is in Europe where he has an opportunity to meet some people with different cultural backgrounds from his who project an image of America based on stereotypes and clichés. For the first time, we see how Julius feels forced to defend and dismantle these prejudices against American society. Furthermore, he also has the chance to experience blackness in Europe and to discover that racism is not something exclusive of America but rather a universal problem.

The migrant as refugee in many ways has become the paradigmatic figure for humanity today. Yet it's a figure that cannot be read as universal—the refugee always emerges from a specific history and place. Mobility and migration have long been part of what we could call the human condition. People have moved for countless reasons. They are also part of a longer history of people migrating, fleeing religious persecution, and seeking safety.

Of course, migration isn't always forced. People who move for educational and employment opportunities, among other personal reasons. The circumstances, however, under which so many people move today are tied to violence and threats to safety. The migrants' memories are often either excised or forced to assimilate into these narratives. Thus cosmopolitan citizenship offers a way of talking about the crises presented by globalization and mass migration, the anxieties of citizenship as tied to the nation-state, and how and what is remembered.

The trend registered by the fiction analyzed in many of the essays in this special issue describes an emergent diasporic narrative. Rather than being held

hostage by the past, refugee narratives have acquired a looser sense of place, one that is less territorial, thus gaining a new mobility within memory as the refugee or migrant changes location. Recollections of displacement are part of this dynamic but are not simply recollections of the past. Understood within the palimpsest of the refugee's or migrant's current place and time, they serve to direct fiction toward a more cosmopolitan future.

In *Open City*, Julius' hybrid identity as half Nigerian, half German is firmly established. However, I argued that he does not seem to identify with these labels all of the time, which contributes to the cosmopolitan ideal of being at home in the world. I proposed that it is in his encounter with Farouq, that Julius' subjectivity is "discursively produced". By viewing Julius and Farouq as doubles, I saw that what has been claimed by several to be an elitist literary cosmopolitanism in Julius, also contain elements of a vernacular cosmopolitanism that Farouq champions. This means that by placing himself at the intersections of national and transnational histories that Julius does, leaves him anxious of who he is, and where he belongs.

Race is a very important factor in identity construction in *Open City*. The protagonists do not only construct their identities around their Nigerian nationality and race, but class is important as well in the process of assimilation into American culture. Julius is successful because of his studies and professional status as a psychiatrist. He came to the United States for education, managed to prosper, and integrate well into American culture.

In the beginning of *Open City* Julius speaks about his Nigerian past and identity occasionally, but the focus lies on his encounters with other people and their stories and his own experience with race and racism in the United States. For the most part he rejects the construct of blackness in the United States and is irritated by

the enthusiastic behaviour by some African Americans towards Africa in the novel, thus rejecting a diasporic identity. However, he is not consistent in his behaviour and participates in certain aspects of a black code in the United States. Moreover, he also identifies with African Americans when he thinks about their slavery background. His rape of Moji when he was younger leads him to repress his Nigerian identity and detach himself from places and people. His only focus appears to be New York City.

When he comes back to America and becomes aware of the difficulties to reconcile this relationship with Africa, he increases his pilgrimages through the streets of New York so as to see if he can at least give a chance to his relationship with America. These pilgrimages turn into an introspective journey in which he starts to think who he really is and how he should define his own identity. It is precisely in one of his numerous walks when he is brutally attacked by some Afro-Americans. We have identified this moment as the convergence of both his trip to Europe and his introspective journey. At this point, he knows that there is nothing he can do to reconcile his dilemma and that there is no way to reunite Africa and America.

Julius's dilemma is in fact a question of national identity which he does not fully identify himself being as African or American. This problem is something that not only affects him but also millions of people. In America, there are many immigrants who have been accepted and who have found a place in this land to forge their lives and achieve their goals. Nevertheless, it is also necessary to stress that at a social level, they still feel they are not fully tolerated because of some remaining racial discourses, and that this situation creates a tension which affects the way they perceive and trace their national identity as is the case of Julius in *Open City*.

This problem leads to another question which makes us think that perhaps it is time to start to think about redefining nationalism and the basis on which it has been constructed. The spread of nationalism in the 19th century brought new ideas and different ways to justify imperialism and therefore, colonialism through racial discourses. The aim of this new conception was to defend that Western civilization's duty was to civilize other lands such as Africa. In order to expose these usual preconceptions it would be convenient to consider and define the question of national identity from a transnational perspective which would respond to the postcolonial nature of our current society.

Cole strategically constructs Julius's history and character so that they are with "many nodes of interconnection" nodes consisting of memory, history, experience, travel, books, art, and music that range transnationally and across temporalities. The novels examined in this issue address the costs of mobility and migration. The late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century migrant is usually a refugee, who is forced out of their home. Here, the past is not only temporal but also spatial. Literature can be an archaeological act, one that unearths and articulates memories of past experiences and homes, while also allowing migrants to position themselves as part of the present and future of their new homelands. Africans for their privileges and others try to bond on the basis the common factor Africa. However, because of the influence of his Nigerian identity, a full, long-term assimilation into American culture is not possible for Julius. Gradually he then realizes that Nigeria is the place where he belongs and where his roots are.

However, when Moji confronts him, he realizes that he has been a villain in her life. Even though he does not react to her accusations and appears to continue his life in a similar manner as before, the bird metaphor at the end of the novel suggests a

possible change in his identity construction towards an acceptance of his African and Nigerian identity, and encounters with enthusiastic African Americans who have a mythical image of Africa they want to share with anyone who comes directly from the "motherland". Thus, Julius has positive and negative encounters with members of the historic diaspora.

Finally, we have seen that Julius has to confront a difficult situation at the end of the novel, when we discover the testimony of a girl that he presumably forced himself on her many years ago. Even though we expect him to react and try to deny the facts or just make the effort to defend himself, he does not say anything because he wants to protect himself so as not to reopen certain scars from the past which will be very harmful and which he is not prepared to endure, taking into account that he is already confronting an internal conflict which seems not to have a satisfactory answer.

In conclusion, I propose that both New York and Brussels indeed operate as "open space" that are transnational zone. Julius, being the urban pedestrian as well as a well-trained psychiatrist gives us the inside stories of the history and immigrants whose experiences establish the transnational nature of open spaces. The novel itself is a "transnational novel" indicative from its title "Open City" that allows the reader to look into the global figures who crosses multiple borders, while transgressing their physical location only to find a space to create new identity. Thus the novel is the montage of multiple stories we get to hear from Julius's perspectives that refer to both the positive side and backlash of open space as transnational contact zone. Therefore, the novel can be called a multilayered critique of "transnationalism", immigrants' crises in open space as well as the idea of contact zone.

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Anexos

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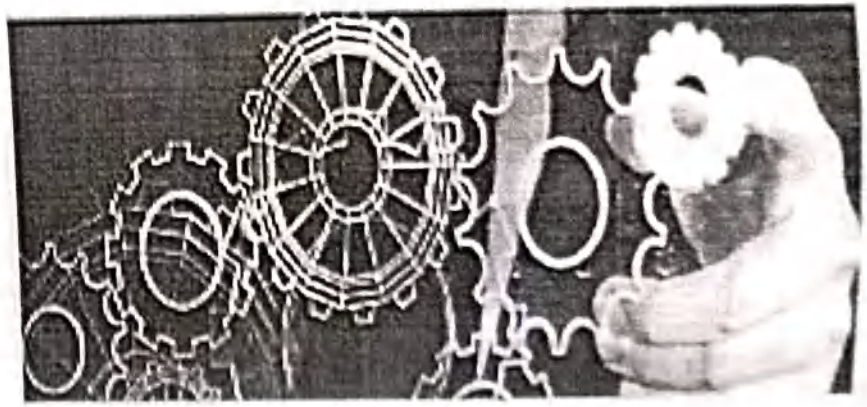

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An Ethnic Study in Priyank's Am Dead But My Heart Beats (gallery/68-nov-033.pdf)

Barriers of Thoughts in Sudeep Nagarkar's *Sorry You are Not My Type*

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ract

Sudeep Nagarkar's *Sorry You are Not My Type* redefines friendship, affection and uation through the protagonists. He picturizes about human mentality which has some hidden res. How the motifs of human mind moves to longings and settles down on repression and ntly, takes turn into the brutal way, when it occupies the unrevealed stage. It causes vital strains eir relationship. Emotionally it visualizes the personality of adults, their conflict nature which s them to misread their boom companion, beloved and affinity of their relationship, moreover, they produce new meaning of recent trends and they deconstruct the society according to their wishes.

y words: Desires, Jealousy, Repression, Unconscious, Unresolved.

Every human personality is based on their inner thought, attitude and how they approach ers in such a way. Sudeep Nagarkar's novel sketched various shades of personalities, who totally differ m their individuality. The broad minded Vikrant is aware of upcoming struggles and how to manage m intellectually, Anamika makes herself as a free bird, at the same time she plans to save her from the sles through her hidden ideas, Yuvi lives in the bliss which is the combination of sweetest music and his eet - heart Kashish. They sail their friendship and VAYU (musical band) smoothly till Vikrant leaves off m the stage to arrest his metro – girl with whom he is in love without knowing who she is. After realizing s blunder he tries to convince them by telling the truth. When he receives the text from Yuvi that,

> *Dude, what happened to you? I did not expect this from you. Anyway, we have left the college premises. The show has been cancelled.* He did not know how to react. He felt guilty and called Yuvi to apologize him but Yuvi's cell was unavailable. He walked back alone helplessly. All he could do was to wish that things would fall in place once again" (SYNMT 75 - 76).

Vikrant always tries to unite them and keep their association in bliss. Without the basic ethics no one

serve their amity for long time. If they fail to release inconvenient element from their relation, they e more difficulties which turns to step away from their limit and push them into desperation works to erase an evil element between Yuvi and Anamika but, it does not work when they lost the phy of music festival because of Anurag and Anamika's break up. Anurag wants to take revenge on ka for her disagreement with his relationship. Vikrant tries hard to discharge the swelling of their nship but it seems very difficult to handle, because of their unbalanced thoughts. It makes them to go ong grave path.

> Anamika's sour relationship with her boyfriend had cost them big time! It was probably going to be the last performance of their lives. Rajhans College had lost compatition and trophy too. Yuvi did not bother to wait for the results and left with his girlfriend. Vikrant was speechless and didn't know how to react while Anamika feared it was going to the end of their band VAYU! (114).

A good friendship should be healthy and have a better understanding between each and every one. Vikrant and Yuvi warned Anamika to stay away from Anurag for her goodness, but she has some thought about her relationship and she conveys her mentality to Anurag. "Guys, I told you that I this phobia and I cannot overcome it. I think Anurag's company will save me from ragging. I do not to be a victim, especially when I know so many people are dying to rag me (36). She uses him to escape the ragging group and she thinks he is the best one to save her from them because he is the president dent council in their college. Vikrant is unable to believe what she is doing and he does not know how nage the upcoming struggle whether he would support for Yuvi or Anamika. It spoils the health of their e slowly. Anurag is not aware of her phobia. He loves her from his heart, but she is not like him. She ble to find the true vibes of love like Anurag, but she finds that vibes from Yuvi who takes care of his ed Kashish. "She felt a slight tinge of jealousy that at such critical phase Yuvi had Kashish by his side she did not have anyone who could understand her feeling" (119). She do not want to express her because she knows very well that it would destroy their love.

> Anamika had expected at least her friends to understand her. She wanted to hug Yuvi and tell him that she was not her fault. She wanted Yuvi to stand by her and fight against Anurag. But nothing like that happened instead Yuvi blamed Anamika. Vikrant told her to leave and assured her not to worry as he would handle the situation. The only person who could convince Yuvi was Vikrant. Anamika left the class room Vikrant suggested while he tried to calm him down (117).

Whenever Vikrant tries to make the situation better it turns worse unexpectedly. He loves his friends e wants to reunite them for their goodness. "He desperately wanted Yuvi and Anamika to re-unite once

ge just prayed that this break up will not lead to the end of their band" (120). Yuvi did not want a's friendship again because he wants to stay away from his mental stress which insists him to take e on Anamika for her fame more than him. It raises jealousy and infatuation on Anamika.

> But he was more upset because of the love that viewers showered on Anamika. Wherever we went to perform, guys and girls would go crazy for Anamika and that brought a sense of insecurity in Yuvi. He was the lead and wanted more appreciation but that did not happen. Not because he lagged somewhere in his performance but because Anamika was the more popular of the two because of her hot looks. It killed Yuvi from within and made him behave badly with Anamika (127).

His conscious mind did not allow him to deliver this truth to Anamika because he thought about and their long life of love. "Vikrant explained, 'Kashish was the one rescuing factor in his life. Had been present with him in his difficult hour, he would have gone insane' " (127). In this mental torture ded to stay away from Anamika. She also sensed his infatuation and aware the love between Yuvi shish. Whenever he tries to hide consciously, it tries to come out unexpectedly and unknowingly. pects of human psyche struggles between conscious and unconscious judgments about someone or ng.

Yuvi could not analyze what he thinks about himself he is not able to understand what was going in d. He needs to interact with someone about his mind but he could not because he feared what would next. Freud insists to cure this mental disorders,

> By investigating the interaction between conscious and unconscious elements in the mind. (...) that the repressed fears and conflicts which are causing the problems are brought into the conscious mind and openly faced, rather than remaining 'buried' in the unconscious. This practice is based upon specific theories of how the mind, the instincts, and sexuality work (BT-97).

His buried thoughts repress him continuously. He is unable to find any way for the relaxation from elings. In this depressed state of mind he walked into the sea and finally he was rescued by security ey went for a day trip to Daman which was arranged by Vikrant. He planned to re-unite his friends tiny planned it in another way to destroy their friendship through Yuvi's mentality. He is not in his ousness because he drinks so heavily to step away from Anamika. His unresolved repression evolves ally when he takes his favorite drug 'marijuna'. Freud insisted, "This is the idea as *repression*, which 'forgetting' or 'ignoring' of unresolved conflicts, unadmitted desires, or traumatic past events, so that re forced out of conscious awareness and into the realm of the unconscious" (BT-98). The battle

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conscious and unconscious mind. Yuvi forwards into serious footpath. Freud considered this
laying process as *sublimation* which has promoted the repressed thoughts into grandeur or noble things.
ready to attain his unresolved factors as a fulfilled one. By facing the fear of death, under the effect of
llusion' and the repression of unconscious, Yuvi abused Anamika. He has stated his reason for this
avior.

> I wanted to live my life just as I wished. The fear of death changed me completely. Now I wanted to fulfill all my fantasies because facing death had made me realize that we never know what will happen the next moment. Later that night when we went to look for Anamika I was not at all in my senses. When I saw Anamika alone yesterday on the beach I decided to strike a conversation with her and break the barriers that lied between us (179).

Yuvi delivered the truth to Vikrant and Sanaya to come out from his guiltiness. He mistreated
amika and her friendship. He could not digest that what has happened to Anamika because of him. He
nders himself to the cop's custody. Anamika did not point out him to the police because she did not
t to destroy her friendship. She said to Vikrant, " 'Because I loved him I never told him about it as he
in a serious relationship with Kashish. Heck, he did not even see me as a friend so how could I have told
" (193). She wasvinjured mentality, doctors suggested to make her to feel the true love from someone
only she would recover slowly otherwise it will become a nightmare to her every day. She was saved
the love and care of Anurag who changed totally form his past insistent and want his Anamika back. He
dy to dedicate himself for her.

When Kashish has come to know about this the way Yuvi has treated Amanika she was broken. With
broken heart she sent a message to Yuvi " 'I leaving you, not because I have stopped loving you but
ause I do not want a husband like you, a father like you under whose arms a girl cannot be safe. Sorry
u are not my type. Bye forever Yuvi. I wish you good luck'" (187). When he received this from her he
ized that there is no second chance, he lost his music band, friends, love and his future life. Vikrant's
forts have become utterly waste and he was puzzled to approach them in two different way.

Vikrant tried to save the morality of friendship with peace, affection, and the support of judgment
t it was filled up with bitterness, envious, misinterpretation, dishonesty, futility, and untrustworthiness.
rant has the responsibilities to make them happy but their ignorance demolished the beauty of friendship.
is blessed with true friends but unconsciously he lost them. "To love somebody is not just a strong
ling; it is a decision, a judgment, and a promise. Unknowingly, Yuvi had broken them all" (191). Yuvi
forgotten to handle his relationship with care. Their complicated thoughts and desires have brought them
this critical stage. "All relationship should come with a precautionary statement: 'Handle with care'
erything was a mess and things were getting complicated with each passing day" (113).

Vikarant understood everyone mutually. He knew the meaning for a true friend, Sudeep stated, "If ...look up the meaning of 'friend' in the dictionary, you will find that friend means a person with whom ...has a bond of mutual affection who guides us through loss and pain he had tried to be such a friend to ...and Anamika"(125). But all his efforts turned useless. Yuvi played a crucial role by ignoring the efforts ...love of Vikrant, Anamika and Kashish. "Relationships are like lemons, sweet and sour" (130). He is not ...y to taste the three by accepting the situations so it spoils everything.

There is no way for together. Their unwanted desires lead them to face the cruelty of life even ...gh they struggles for smoothness. When the brutality takes vital place, all the morality, trust and peace ...stroyed between their relationships. "A broken piece of thread can never be joined back without a knot" ...). Everyone understands the reality after the storm. Ajay K Pandey has experienced in his first novel ...*are the Best wife* that, *"It is easy to make friends but difficult to keep them" (43).*

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African American writings are illustrating the life, sufferings, and struggle of the group of people who are discriminating by their physical appearance. They have worked to the whites in all the ways which are fulfilling the needs whites in both ways physically and mentally. Whites were treated blacks heartlessly. They didn't imagine blacks are also the human beings and they too have some desires about their life but those were not accepted by the white community. The blacks were not oppose their master in any way they should be obedient to them. They were not allowed to get their education, own their lands, and get their identity. If they do something for that that would be considered as a sin and they were punished so harshly.

After the long years of slavery blacks were understood their rights and raised their voice against their masters to get their identity. It evoked the Civil Right Movement in United States (1954-1968). They were faced so many obstacles to get their individuality. During the emergence of the Civil Right Movement blacks were educated by themselves day by day they were writing down their emotions into their works and they were described their miseries, struggle, and their social equality. After the American Civil War black community had had their rights but not entirely. It created the platform for another problem called racism which was raised the mental stress among the black people because they were headed by another battle. African American writers were pointed out the domination of whites in their works. Most of the female writers also expressed their opinion about the state issues and how they handled the critical situation during their slavery and mentally, how they were disturbed by the whites. It had lead them to speak about the feminine prosperity through their pen which provoked men to think about the feminine quality is also equal to them.

Maya Angelou was one of the famous female writer who had earned certain responsibility among the society. Most of her works were dealt with the theme of feminism and the secret desires of woman in the dominating culture. Her autobiographical works were considered by her life journey and her struggle for the civil rights of black community. Her poems had clarified the suffering woman who had faced all the agony under the slavery of whites. In her poem *Still I Rise* had explained about her dare to rise from the suppression. Her verse are very simple but her comparisons and observations are captured the hearts of her readers. She started her first stanza, "You may write me down in the history, /With your bitter, twisted lies, /You may trod me in the very dirt /But still, like dust, I'll rise." (Angelou)

She had come to say about the historical considerations for women which had so many restriction and had been following by them for long time but now they are opened their eyes to question against their ideology. Simone de Beauvoir stated in her *The Second Sex-"Woman" as other,* "History is not an immutable "fact" but a reflection of certain attitudes, preconceptions, and injustice."(Beauvior)

They have been argued for the injustices which had made in history. When they were turned against the historical injustices, the dominating societies were ready to destroy them but Angelou said them, she will rise like dust when they had trod her in the dirt.

She pledged them that she will rise like dust. They can't control the dust according to their wishes. Dust would cause some dangerous things to who stands against it.

She is continued questioning them, do they upset by her sassiness? Why they are looking so gloomy? She answered herself for the followed lines of second stanza that she walked like that she have got oil wells in her living room. By seeing her

sassiness they had expressed their gloomy face which is going to face the moral problem. Even in those critical situations she promised them that she will rise, "Out like moons and like suns, / With the certainty of tides," (Angelou) No one can tolerate the rising sun and moon. Likewise the certainty of suns and moons, she will rise with the springing of hopes which have motivated her highly. She had such a rays of hope to emerge against them.

We can't explained about the sufferings of black people simply, but she had ready to face the upcoming boldly. She don't let herself as a broken woman with bowed head and lowered eyes in front of the heartless people. Through the cries of her soul, the death explanations of her sufferings and the longings of her desires, the armful shoulders would fall down like the teardrops. They had weakened by her soulful tears which has an unexplainable worries and desires for the peaceful life. She always wanted to fly like a free bird but she has to rise from the obstacles. The society has denied to give her the rights because of her birth as a black but whatever it may be the conditions she is ready to stand strongly. No one can break her decisions, she will rise again and again in any symbol of certainty. She wanted to show her power which has equal strength to men. She would like to feel the freedom without any discriminations.

No one can evaluate the secrecy of woman. They have numeral untold desires. They have imagined that their desires are equal to gold which is under the earth. When her enthusiastic has made them to feel unpleasant, Angelou has laughed that she has got the gold which has taken from the backyard of her own thoughts where all her secret desires have buried. "You may shoot me with your words, / You may cut

me with your eyes, / You may kill me with your hatefulness, / But still, like air, I'll rise." (Angelou)

When her superiority has taken its place they have felt awful and they shoot her with their words, cut with their eyes, killed with their hatefulness. Here we can see the classification of inferior and superior between men and women. Beauvoir considered this in her "Facts and Myths", "These disciplines reveal indisputable "essential" difference between men and women but provide no justification for woman's inferiority. They all take woman's inferior "destiny" for granted." She has felt that no matter whatever they did she will rise like air. The word 'air' has widen the eyes of readers because we know the power of air which makes us to feel its softness as well as its harshness. She is ready to destroy the dominating mind like air.

From these all she doesn't want to lose her feminine for the sake of maternity. They has surprised by her feminine. "...the woman who is transformed into a symbol of "life" and in the process is robbed of all individuality." Beauvoir made this statement in her *The Second Sex.* Beauvoir used the word "life" to identify motherhood. But they have realized her individuality as a woman so she has felt that her feminine has reached its dwelling. She has started dance like that she has got the diamonds. It has made her to feel, she has attained the purpose of her birth. "...That I dance like I've got diamonds / at the meeting of my thighs." (Angelou)

When she has realized the purpose of her birth she will rise out from the huts of history's shame, from the past which has the root of pain. History has some ethic qualities of women which has been dominating all over the world. Elaine Showalter pointed out in her *Feminist Criticism in Wilderness*, "History has not included female

experience. Thus, history is inadequate to understand woman's experience." Through the dominating mentality of men these ethics have created the strong pain among the female society. It put them into darkness. Finally she has compared herself to Black Ocean which has indicated her fear about the nightmare. With the gift of grace from her ancestor she will rise from those terrific events because she is the one and only dream and hope of the slave to lead them to step away from the slavery. "... I'm Black Ocean, leaping and wide, / Welling and swelling I bear in the tide, / Leaving behind nights of terror and / Fear / I rise...." (Angelou)

Through her poem she has wanted to break all the barriers of women. Her selection of words, comparisons and the usage of similes and metaphors are mind flowing. She has put all her sufferings and desires into her simple lines. Elaine Showalter said, "Literary identify of a black American poet is forced upon her by the trends of the dominating group." According to Beauvoir, Angelou's words are the result of her situations not her character. She has suffered a lot during the domination. To escape from the domination she wants liberty so she decides to rise from all those evil elements. She has well understood the saying of Beauvoir, "If a woman can support herself, she can also achieve a form of liberation."

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Certificate

This is to certify that N. BHUVANESHWARI, M Phil SCHOLAR, ST. MARY'S College participated / presented paper entitled

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Dr. I. Xavier Beski Arockiaraj
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Eat or be Eaten: A Postcolonial Study of Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Petals of Blood*

A Dissertation submitted to

St. Mary's College (Autonomous)

Thoothukudi

affiliated to

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in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the award of the Degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN ENGLISH

by

JANISH S.

(REG. NO. 19MLEN06)

RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

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SEPTEMBER 2020

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **Eat or be Eaten: A Postcolonial Study of Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Petals of Blood*** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is a work done by Janish S. during the year 2019-2020 and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled **Eat or be Eaten: A Postcolonial Study of Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Petals of Blood*** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is my original work and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

S. Janish

JANISH S.

THOOTHUKUDI

SEPTEMBER 2020

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PREFACE

Ngugi wa Thiong'o is a leading Kenyan writer who apparently writes about the injustices of the dictatorial government at the time. His works provide an analysis of the social and economic situation in modern Kenya, ruthless exploitation of man by man, and also gives a picture of the social and moral consequences of this exploitation. Through the study of Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Petals of Blood*, the dissertation entitled **Eat or be Eaten: A Postcolonial Study of Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Petals of Blood*** draws an understanding of a transition from colonialism to neo colonialism in Kenya after independence. It is necessary for the Kenyans to come together and fight for the welfare of the nation and eliminate the corrupt politicians and bourgeoisie of independent Kenya. The peasants and the worker community become aware of their social status and the importance of their toil in post colonial Kenya.

The dissertation consists of five chapters. The first chapter, **Introduction** throws light on the origin of African Literature in general and Kenyan Literature in particular. It also brings out the biographical details of Ngugi wa Thiong'o and his unique contribution to Kenyan Literature.

The second chapter entitled, **Colonial Transformation** analyses the transformation that takes place during colonial, anti colonial and in the post independent periods. In doing so it traces how a primitive Ilmorog village transforms into a new Ilmorog Town, a change from rural economy to market economy.

The third chapter, **Betrayal** focuses on various levels of betrayal, especially the betrayal by the post colonial regime. It throws light on socio-political betrayal, capitalist

betrayal, and religious betrayal by politicians, businessmen, and the so called religious people. It also discusses how the above said elite group betray individuals leading to the betrayal of the whole society by stepping into the shoes of the imperialist power which in turn leads to national betrayal.

The fourth chapter, **Constructive Violence: A Liberative Force** deals with how violence is used as a liberative force to achieve complete liberation. It sketches violence as a cleansing force for the people which redeem them from their inferiority complex.

The fifth chapter, **Summation** sums up all the important aspects dealt in the preceding chapters and justifies the title **Eat or be Eaten: A Postcolonial Study of Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Petals of Blood.***

The researcher has followed the guidelines prescribed by MLA Handbook Seventh Edition for the preparation of the dissertation.

Chapter One

Introduction

Literature reflects the sensibility of a nation, its people, culture, tradition, politics etc. Now a days literature is used as a tool or even can be described as a powerful sword in mirroring the political disillusionment and social predicaments of one's nation. Particularly, the countries which suffered under the grip of colonial rule used literature effectively to express their sufferings and discontent. Postcolonial environment is also crafted wistfully by various writers. Hence literature can rightly be described as the mirror of the society.

The term African Literature refers to a comprehensive and creative literature from Africa. Nobel Laureate Nadine Gordimer believes that "African writing done in any language by Africans themselves and by others of whatever skin colour who share with Africans the experience of having been shaped, mentally and spiritually, by Africa... and who have Africa centred consciousness" (Hellmann 253). African literary studies prove to be a fast-growing subfield of postcolonial studies. It becomes one of the largest emerging disciplines in cultural and literary studies over the last thirty years. African literature may be classified into three distinct categories such as traditional oral literature of Africa, literature written in indigenous African languages and literature written in European languages.

Africa in pre colonial times developed distinct oral literatures of its own. Oral literatures of Africa were in the form of prose, verse or in the form of proverb. It was generally described as orature. It flourished in Africa during the absence of widespread literacy. This verbal art had a utilitarian purpose of providing entertainment as well as instruction. They helped to explain the creation of universe, the essence of the activities of God and human beings and their intra and inter

relationships. In fact modern African writing arose out of association between West and East Africa, a contact which was both historical and experimental in dimensions.

Compared to other African literatures, East African writing in English is new but its presence in the major literary history is very little in comparison to other regions. The reason is that East Africa is the smallest of all African regions both in size and population and hence it was overwhelmed by larger regions such as West Africa and South Africa. While all the other regions of the continent have been in contact with Europe since late sixteenth century and thus developed tradition of culture and writing in European languages. East Africa was colonized relatively later than others. Colonial institutions were established only in the late phase of imperial expansion on the African continent. Until the period after World War II, English did not emerge as a language and literature in East Africa.

Only after World War II writers of East Africa started writing in English. Until then they used African languages including Arabic, Swahili, Ambaric and Somali. Finally, when a distinct East African literary tradition emerged in the 1960s, writers unlike their West African and South African counterparts were still firmly located in the region in terms of their education and outlook. Until recently, East African literature lived under the shadow of the regions' colonial past. In historical context East African literature was broadened from the establishment of colonial rule in the region in the 1980s to the renovation of democratic institutions in almost all the East African countries. East Africa comprises of Kenya. Kenyan Literature emerged when a number of African writers produced works that centered on the African experience. It undertook an effort to broaden the understanding of East African culture. It took an African perspective and served to promote a truly national culture. The two prominent themes that characterised the literary works produced in the first years of

independence were the clash of Western and African cultures, and the response to colonial injustices by adopting the setting of the Mau Mau rebellion.

The nation called Kenya did not exist a hundred years ago; it consisted of independent tribes before the beginning of the twentieth century. Today, the descendants of these tribes comprise most of the nation's population. They outnumbered the descendants of immigrant populations from Asia and Europe whose ancestors were Arab slave traders, Asian traders and railway builders, and British colonialists and settlers. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the British occupied the country, naming it British East Africa. Julia Stewart has referred to country as the "winter home for aristocrats" and "the brightest gem in Britain's cluster of colonies" (n.pag.). In 1920 it was declared a colony.

After World War II it was in Kenya, the politics of decolonization were most twisting and violent. Kenya had the only white settler population in the region. It was active in politics and determined to use its power to maintain European supremacy. The settler's motto was that Kenya was a white man's country. On the other hand the Kenyan's thought that Kenya was a black man's country. They were aggravated by the leisurely pace of legislative reform which resulted in the formation of nationalist parties to agitate for change. The most prominent of these was the Kenya African Union which was formed in 1946. The Mau Mau uprising began in 1952, with young men entering the forest and attacking the white farms and institutions associated with the white rule. In 1952, the colonists declared a state of emergency in Kenya and arrested those who involved in Mau Mau uprising. This struggle came to an end in 1959 and within five years Kenya became independent in 1963.

Kenya is a nation of numerous languages, cultures, races, religions, and tribes. The main languages imported into the country are English from Britain and Arabic,

Hindi, Punjabi, and Urdu from South West Asia. English was the official language and the language of instruction in the education system in Kenya. Swahili, also known as Kiswahili occupied an important position in the country; the language was not only widely used in the eastern region of Africa but also was the national language for Kenya and Tanzania.

With the colonization of Great Britain the English Language was introduced to Kenya in 1895. At the time of colonization Swahili had been established as a trade language in most parts of the Swahili Coast, and it was also used in education. The British reduced the influence of Swahili and made English as the medium of instruction in Kenyan schools. In Kenya both English and Swahili were recognized as the official languages. English was spoken as the primary language in areas such as media, government and schools. As a result, almost all Kenyans who had educational background knew English, to a certain level.

Kenyan literature used oral or written modes of transmission. The nation continued to pass on the indigenous, orally transmitted literature, some of which were collected by the researchers who translated it into English. Kenyan literature is treated as a part of Commonwealth literature and became part of the heritage comprising a body of literature written in the official language of the British Empire. The development of Kenyan literature was influenced by the East African literature and the Publication Bureau, founded in Nairobi in January 1948. It supported young authors to write in English or in the vernacular languages. Few Kenyan authors made use of the vernacular languages. For example, Henry Kuria and James J. Mbotela wrote in Swahili, while John S. Mbiti in Kamba. Kikuyu writers made use of English for their literary production. Kikuyus are the most significant and numerous nationality of Kenya. One of the striking features of African novels is that "it is a

genre developed as a particular body of imaginative discourse primarily occupied with the modes of resisting the role of western cultural hegemony in determining African states of consciousness." (Pandurang 1) It is an effort of protest that can be witnessed in the writings of almost all African authors especially of the post colonial period.

Resistance in modern African literature is related to colonial and postcolonial theory. Postcolonial theory is the most effective theory to examine the biased reciprocal relationship of the dominant and the dominated, the colonizer and the colonized. The term 'postcolonialism' started to acquire more significance from the 1970s especially with the advancement of controversial discussions upon the difference between the hyphenated 'post-colonialism', and the nonhyphenated 'postcolonialism'. The conventional hyphenated 'post-colonialism' has simply been taken to refer to a historical period of time that followed the end of colonial enterprise. On the other hand, the non hyphenated 'postcolonialism' encompasses critical approach distinguished by the body of ideas it involves. These ideas are mainly related to the policy of anti-colonial resistance adopted by postcolonial literature in an attempt to reconstruct the past and racially misrepresented history of the colonized.

Therefore, postcolonialism is built around the concepts of resistance, subversion, opposition and difference. It "focuses on an exploration of the ways in which the dominated or colonized culture can use the tools of the dominant discourse to resist its political or cultural control" (Ashcroft et al. 5). Postcolonialism which is rooted in colonial power, oppression, exploitation and prejudice, developed from the history of strained cultural relations between colonies in Africa and Asia and the Western world.

Postcolonialism has been defined as a literary term but it is also a political strategy not only to challenge the colonial presence in the colonies but also to deconstruct the colonizer's different forms of knowledge. It is the knowledge which the colonizers keep fossilizing in the minds of the colonized through cultural, economic, and political installation. Postcolonialism aims at breaking the shackles of not only economic, political, and social, but also the cultural subordination. Thus, postcolonialism in the strict sense of the word is a set of subversive discourses for 'the Other,' (the third world). This world has been excluded, inferiorized, alienated, marginalized, exploited, oppressed, suppressed, raped, looted and plundered by the superiority of the first world. Ashcroft and others explains in *Post-Colonial Reader:*

> Post-colonial theory involves discussion about experience of various kinds: migration, slavery, suppression, resistance, representation, difference, race, gender, place, and responses to the influential master discourses of imperial Europe such as history, philosophy and linguistics, and the fundamental experiences of speaking and writing by which all these come into being. (2)

Postcolonial African literature is an approach to understand the African psyche, the physical and other parameters of African life. It represents the African intellectual response to their experiences of colonialism and neo colonialism. The rich traditions of African continent, the trials and tribulations of contemporary African life induced by socio political and economic experience of colonialism and its agonizing neo colonial aftermath, have been given detailed expression in African literary texts. African literary figures like Wole Soyinka, Eskia Mapahele, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o have made a massive contribution to African literature. The writings of these writers helped

in familiarizing the 'African Consciousness' in Europe and America. Writers of this era play the role as an artist and political activists.

Thus, Postcolonial literature tries to focus on how the non-European literatures such as Asian, African, South American, and their cultures have been marginalized as an effect of colonial rule. It also tries to find modes of resistance, recovery, and reversal of their 'own' pre-colonial pasts. That is, this literature seeks to critique a specific historical 'event' that is, the colonial rule while looking forward to a just, socially egalitarian world order. It is a literature of resistance, protest, and expectation.

'Postcoloniality' depicts resistance, negotiation, and cultural assertion that countries adopt to deal with increasing neo colonial interference and control exerted by the 'developed First World' nations. Therefore 'Postcoloniality' is a set of practices that seeks to negotiate a history of colonialism, and the always imminent threat of neo-colonialism in the economic, cultural, and social fields. Thus the advent of cultural nationalism, religious fundamentalism, tribalism, and regionalism in Asian/ African nation constitute social strategies in the face of globalization. Helen Gilbert's definition of 'postcolonial' in his *Post Colonial Plays: An Anthology* captures the diverse outline of the term:

> The term indicates a degree of agency, or... a programme of resistance, against cultural domination; ... signals the existence of a particular historical legacy ... a stage in a culture's transition into a modern nation-state; [or] to suggest a form of co-operation into Western cultural economies ... 'postcolonial' has become a convenient ... term to describe any kind of resistance, particularly against class, race, and gender oppression. (214)

In *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction,* Leela Gandhi says that it is due to the link between poststructuralism and postmodernism to Marxism that we have postcolonialism (25). Postcolonial theory can be said to have originated in the mid-twentieth century texts of Franz Fanon, Aime Cesaire and Albert Memmi. Anticolonial writing, nationalism, resistance, anti-Westernization, and cultural identity in colonized nations have been integral to the writings of Kwame Nkrumah, Gandhi, Julius Nyerere, Kenneth Kaunda, Amilcar Cabral and other leaders from colonized nations from the end of the nineteenth century.

One of the most persistent concerns of Kenyan literature is violence generated by colonial injustice in independent Kenya through unaltered colonial structures and institutions. Post independent Kenyan novel reflects disappointment of writers with African reality. Political and other forms of corruption are scrutinized by these writers in their fictional renderings. Kenyan literature concerned with themes including urbanization, love, marriage, unemployment, crime and violence, prostitution, the corruption of political leaders, the neglect of the rural population by the ruling elite, and the relationship between Africa and Europe among others. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o is a major name in African literature whose literary works bravely exposes the vulgarity of the political rulers in the present. Ngugi's works aims at a revolution among the citizens against the political injustice.

As Gikandi asserts, Ngugi conceives his own identity as a writer, in relation to how his family lived during colonization, in a state of marginality. Ngugi says: "I grew up in a small village. My father and his four wives had no land. They lived as tenants-at-will on somebody else's land … Just opposite the ridge on which our village was scattered were the sprawling green fields owned by the white settlers." (qtd. in Gikandi 4). Ngugi is a novelist, dramatist, and theorist, whose works covers

the period from early 1960s to the present. He has been a central figure in the establishment of modern African literature. He is regarded as a preeminent postcolonial literary nationalist by his admirers and critics of his work. Like many contemporary writers who emerged in the 1950s and 1960s, Ngugi has a fundamentally ambivalent conception of postcolonial Africa. Much of his writing explores the possibility of African restoration and postcolonial revolution. His work includes a discourse of tragedy and despair. He depicts postcolonial Africa as a place ripe for restoration and renewal. In Ngugi's work, the longing for postcolonial restoration and revolution seems invariably accompanied by a discourse of failure and impossibility. He continues to be a great innovator and cultural agitator.

Ngugi was born in 1938 in Limuru in the Gikuyu Highlands of Kenya. His birth name is James Ngugi which he later changes. His father worked as a labourer on the estate of an African landowner. Ngugi's mother was one of his father's four wives, and Ngugi was one among twenty eight children in the family. After his primary school education at independent Kenyan schools, Ngugi attended Alliance High School, an institution that had many similarities to his fictional Siriana, with its western-biased curriculum and Christian teaching. When he was doing his high school, most of his family members were involved in the Mau Mau uprising and the resistance movement. During the Mau Mau struggle, Ngugi's parents were arrested and his stepbrother was killed by the government forces.

In 1958, Ngugi moved to Uganda to attend Makerere College. It was the only institution in East Africa at that time which conferred degrees. At Makerere, Ngugi married Nyambura, with whom he had five children. The conference of African Writers held at Makerere in June 1962 proved to be very helpful to Ngugi. He met for the first time other African literary figures of significance. They were Chinua Achebe,

Gabriel Okara, Christopher Okibo, Wole Soyinka and many others. Ngugi accepted that his readings of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Peter Abraham's *Tell Freedom*, and George Lamming's *In the Castle of My Skin* were instrumental in motivating his reading of West African, Caribbean and South African Literature.

During his undergraduate years, he wrote his first novel, *Weep Not, Child*. Ngugi wrote "The Black Messiah" in 1961 and over the next four years revised the manuscript that was published as *The River Between*. He also edited the student creative writing journal, *Penpoint* in Makerere, and wrote newspaper articles for various Nairobi newspapers such as *Sunday Post, Sunday Nation, Daily Nation*.

After a brief period as a journalist in Nairobi, Ngugi went to Leeds University in England to take an M.A. There he associated with radical fellow students and moved in circles that encouraged critical thinking on political, social, literary, and academic issues. It was at Leeds that his vague ideas about individualism and community began to take concrete form, usually out of conversations with radical students and lecturers. He discovered the works of Frantz Fanon, especially *The Wretched of the Earth*, which laid the foundation for Ngugi's mature thought. He spent much of his energy working on his novel *A Grain of Wheat*.

Ngugi left Leeds in 1967 and took a job as a lecturer at Nairobi University. In protest of the administration's poor handling of a crisis between the student body and the university government, he resigned his post in 1969. He took a job at Makerere, where he helped to reorganise the syllabus from traditional British structure to the one based primarily on African Literature. In 1970, Ngugi moved to Evanston, Illinois, to teach at North Western University. He returned to Kenya and to a job at the University of Nairobi in 1971, eventually becoming Chair of the English department.

He took it as his project to reorganise the focus of the department, and to place Kenya, East Africa, and Africa at the centre of the curriculum.

After the publication of *Petals of Blood* in 1977, which took him six years to complete, Ngugi changed his name from James Ngugi to Ngugi wa Thiong'o. During his school days he learned about the Gikuyu values and history and underwent the Gikuyu rite of passage ceremony. Later he made up his mind to reject both Christian and his Christian name James Ngugi. He changed his original name in 1967 from James Ngugi to Ngugi wa Thiong'o. To him, the name James Ngugi was a sign of colonialism while the name Ngugi wa Thiong'o was in honour of his Gikuyu heritage. His name Ngugi wa Thiong'o means Ngugi, son of Thiong'o. Since the late 1980s Ngugi has taught at American universities. He continued to write and to work with organisations promoting freedom and equality in Kenya.

For Ngugi's radical politics, he had a troubled relationship with the Kenyan government. In 1977, the Kenyan government banned all performances of Ngugi's play *I Will Marry When I Want*, and Ngugi himself was imprisoned without charge for a year. International human rights groups such as Amnesty International pressured and secured his release. During his imprisonment he produced a draft of the novel *Caitani Mutharabaini* on pieces of toilet paper in prison. This work was later translated into English as *Devil on the Cross* in 1982. Ngugi decided to give up English and to write in his native tongue only. It is considerable to note that *Devil on the Cross* is the first modern novel to be written in the Gikuyu language.

Even after his release, Ngugi continued to face creative and political persecution from the authoritarian regime. After the release of his novel *Matigari ma Njiruungi (Matigari)* in 1986, the Kenyan government was so enraged by his satirical account of a freedom fighter searching for his family in post-independent Kenya. All

copies of the book were prevented from sale and destroyed between 1986 and 1996. In 1989, he went to the United States, where he continued to publish works by becoming a lecturer at various universities including Yale.

He continued to publish collections of essays and novels and his work is still in progress. He also edited the Gikuyu language journal *Mutiiri*. Continuing his devotion to language and culture, in 2002 he accepted the position of director of the International Center for Writing and Translation at the University of California, Irvine. He remained committed to the importance of education; therefore University teaching had always become a part of his life. He has written many works in native language that has been translated into more than thirty languages. His acclaimed new novel *Murogi wa Kagogo*, translated by him as *Wizard of the Crow,* appeared in 2006; it is regarded as his masterpiece. Ngugi's longest novel, *Wizard of the Crow*, describes the dictatorship in a fictional African state resembling Kenya. The novel is poignant, showing a world that lies in a state of heightened security after bombings in Nairobi, New York, and elsewhere.

Ngugi's personal experience informs his creative and theoretical writing, and it plays an important part in much of the criticism about his works. The traumatic events of his life in many ways paralleled what we might call Kenya's national trauma, particularly its colonial and neo colonial narratives. Ngugi is a writer, whose home thoughts were often written abroad. Ngugi's novels *Weep Not, Child* and *The River Between* were written in Uganda, *Matigari* and *A Grain of Wheat* was written in England. *Petals of Blood* was written in England, America, the Soviet Union, and Kenya, and *Wizard of the Crow* in America. *Devil on the Cross* was produced in Ngugi's homeland but within the walls of a maximum security prison. The location of the act of writing may account in part for the fondness for home and anguish of exile

and return, so prevalent in his fiction. His memoir *Dreams in a Time of War*, which appeared in 2010, provides much insight into his early life.

Ngugi's essays, published in his influential collections *Homecoming, Writers in Politics, Decolonising the Mind,* and *Moving the Centre,* have been instrumental in shaping the debate on culture, language, and politics in Africa. Arguably, his essays have been more influential in the cultural politics of postcolonial Africa than his novels and plays. But Ngugi would probably not accept any separation of his theoretical work from his fiction. In his introduction to *Homecoming*, he asserts that the essays collected in the book were "an integral part of the fictional world of *The River Between, Weep Not, Child,* and *A Grain of Wheat*" (xv).

Ngugi is recipient of many honours including Lotus Prize for Literature in 1973, and the prestigious Nonino International Prize for Literature in 2001. In 2009 he was also shortlisted for the Man Booker International Prize. He has also won National Book Critics Circle Award for *In the House of the Interpreter* in 2012, Nicolas Guillen Lifetime Achievement Award for Philosophical Literature in 2014, Park Kyong-ni Prize in 2016, *Grand Prix des mecenes* of the GPLA 2018, for his entire body of work in 2018.

He has also written plays; *The Black Hermit* (1963), *This Time Tomorrow* (three plays, including the title play, "The Rebels", "The Wound in the Heart" and "This Time Tomorrow") (c.1970), *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* (1976) , *I Will Marry When I Want* (1982). His essays titled "Homecoming: Essays on African and Caribbean Literature, Culture, and Politics" (1972), "Writers in Politics: Essays" (1981), "Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of language in African Literature" (1986), "Moving the Centre: The Struggle for Cultural Freedom" (1993),

and "Penpoints, Gunpoints and Dreams: The Performance of Literature and Power in Post-Colonial Africa" (1998).

His Memoirs includes, *Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary* (1981), *Dreams in a Time of War: a Childhood Memoir* (2010), *In the House of the Interpreter: A Memoir* (2012), *Birth of a Dream Weaver: A Memoir of a Writer's Awakening* (2016). He has also written some nonfiction like; *Education for a National Culture* (1981), *Barrel of a Pen: Resistance to Repression in Neo-Colonial Kenya* (1983), *Mother, Sing For Me* (1986), *Writing against Neo-Colonialism* (1986), *Something Torn and New: An African Renaissance* (2009), *Globalectics: Theory and the Politics of Knowing* (2012). Ngugi's latest creations include *Remembering Africa* (2009) and his autobiography entitled *Dreams in Time of War* (2011).

Weep Not, Child (1964) is the most autobiographical of Ngugi's novels. It focuses on the period at the end of World War II and examines the causes of the Mau Mau struggle. The novel portrays a society that is oppressed by loss of its livelihood and the consequent militant reaction to these humiliations. Njoroge is the protagonist who is a bright student, a self-centred youth with mission-school education and messianic ambition. His hopes are destroyed when his brothers' involvement in Mau Mau forces him out of school. His father Ngotho has religious attachment to the land of his ancestors taken from him by Mr. Howlands. Ngotho is the only a tenant farmer who works for the White settler Mr. Howlands. His son, Boro, who had fought against the British in the World War II, returns home embittered by his experiences like the death of his brother Mwangi in the war, and the loss of their ancestral land. He rejects the passive attitudes of the elders and resolves to join the Mau Mau guerrillas. Jacobo is a betrayer who is killed by Boro. Ngotho offers himself to the authorities and confesses to the murder. He is tortured and dies. Howlands is killed by Boro and

finally he surrenders. The novel depicts Ngugi's major themes like land, religion, leadership, and the travails of a people struggling against colonialism.

The River Between (1965) is Ngugi's first written novel, but it was published after his *Weep Not, Child* (1964). Like Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, it focuses on the conflict between Christianity and traditional beliefs. It also displays how colonialism creates situations that can destroy traditional societies. The novel mainly displays the conflict between two cultures on the two sides of the river. The river is also symbolic because it stands for the conflict between the Christians and the non-Christians, the natives of Kenya.

In *A Grain of Wheat* (1967), Ngugi challenges the reader by using different voices within the narrative as different characters. They relate their views of the story, though the controlling narrative is in the form of the omniscient third person. The dislocated chronology is most striking in the novel. Kenyan Uhuru, or Independence Day, is the centre of the novel. The narrative repeatedly switches to different moments in the past not only in chapters but also in between paragraphs. Most crucially, it means that the day of Uhuru itself is inextricably linked with Kenya's painful and violent past, where courage and betrayal have been evident in equal measure. The novel is an important retelling of history from an African perspective, directly challenging British colonialism in Kenya by projecting the resistance to it which led up to independence. In this novel the Mau Mau movement is sympathetically portrayed as a band of courageous freedom fighters, rather than as insurgents or terrorists. The novel describes the decline in imperial idealism as well as the brutality of the British military regime in Kenya in the face of resistance.

Ngugi's *A Meeting in the Dark* (1974) is a story about the effects of Christianity on African values and the resultant conflict that finds expression through

the main character, John. Ngugi in this novel traces John's psychological torment. John is torn between a strict puritanical Christian father and liberty to express him. The setting is the Emergency period. This is the time when Mau Mau war was raging. Ngugi depicts in John and his parents the impact of colonialism, which involved the forcing of Africans to adopt Western religion and education without firm values that would sustain them in the society.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Devil on the Cross* (1980) written in Gikuyu is the more remarkable one in his life. It was originally titled in Gikuyu as *Caitaani Ḥultharaba Ini*. It first appeared in Gikuyu in 1980 and later in English in 1982. When he was in prison, he wanted to express his emotions regarding the neo colonial exploitation of ordinary Kenyan people. The novel was written on toilet papers. Ngugi as a sensitive writer was worried about the corruption that prevails in the Kenyan society. He believed that capitalism is a systematic robbery of peasants and workers. It is a robbery protected and sanctified by large courts, parliament, religion armed forces, police and educational institutions. Indeed, the novel artistically renders how the Kenyan bourgeois elite exploited an army of workers, peasants, petty traders and students. The Kenyan capitalists are described as the thieves, robbers, hypocrites and criminals.

Ngugi's *Matigari* (1989) as a novel echoes Kenyans deeply. It is partly because he wrote in his native Kikuyu, and has received scant attention outside Kenya. It has been written as an allegory. After Matigari, the main character emerges from the woods, he finds that his country has been sold, that his new leaders have been corrupted, and that John Boy Junior, the son of Settler Williams's cook, has taken over his house. Matigari then sets off on a quest for truth and justice. He asks students and teachers, and shopkeepers, shepherds and priests where he can find them.

No one can tell him, so he decides he has to take back his house, and his country, himself. Partly, *Matigari* is a mystical journey and partly an antineocolonial tract, woven into Matigari's powerful voice. He is an unmistakable incarnation of both Christ and Moses, who has risen to lead his people out of darkness. *Matigari* is both a great story and a powerful metaphor for what is needed in African politics today. Matigari tirelessly seeks honesty and equality, truth and justice in the society. That may be how Ngugi dreams of going home as a hero and messiah, making one last attempt to bring down the systems he's fought against all these years. From reading his work, there can be little doubt that Ngugi, too, dreams of emerging from the woods to roam his country again, as defiant and free as Matigari.

Ngugi's latest novel, *Wizard of the Crow* (2004) is an ambitious, authoritative, comic novel set in the fictional Free Republic of Aburiria. The novel is an outcome of an attempt to sum up Africa of the twentieth century in the context of 2,000 years of world history. *Wizard of the Crow* dramatises the corruption and power struggles between the dictator-state and the people. Ngugi unfolds a battle for the souls of the Aburirian people, between a dictator and an unemployed young man who embraces the mantle of a magician. In this magnificent work of magical realism, Ngugi reveals humanity in all its endlessly surprising complexity.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o's fourth novel *Petals of Blood* describes the inequality, duplicity, and betrayal of peasants and workers in post-independence Kenya. It reveals social and economic realities of postcolonial Kenya. As Gakwandi in *The Novel in East Africa* puts it, "No East African novelist has been able to ignore" these realities (186). Many of the events depicted in the novel are based on the historical and social fact. The novel is a negative indictment of the corruption and greed of Kenya's political, economic, and social elite who, after the struggle for freedom from

British rule perpetuate social injustice and economic inequality that were a feature of colonial oppression. The corrupted social elite have not returned the wealth of the land to its people. In addition of criticising this neo-colonialism, the novel is also a bitter critique of capitalism and its destructive, alienating effects on traditional Kenyan society.

This political novel also can be considered as a detective story. In the town of Ilmorog of north-central Kenya three prominent industrialists have been murdered, and four suspects of the murder are questioned by the police. These four are the protagonists of the novel, whose interrelated stories are recounted against the background of Kenya's past and present. The shifting timeline of the novel reinforce the sense of dislocation and disorientation of the villagers who now struggle against the indignities of the postcolonial world.

The publication of *Petals of Blood* disturbed many of Kenya's leaders when it appeared in 1997, but the government did not formally denounce the novel. However, less than a year after it appeared Ngugi was imprisoned for his play *I Will Marry When I Want*. For that work makes even more explicit comparison between post-independence Kenyan leaders and British rulers. At the launching of *Petals of Blood* in July 1977, Ngugi bluntly explains his motive for writing the book in his *Writers in Politics*. He confesses:

> ... I came to realise that Kenya was poor, not because of anything internal, but because the wealth produced by Kenyans ended in developing the western world... Their aid, loans, and investment capital that they gloat about are simply a chemical catalyst that sets in motion the whole process of expropriation of Kenya's wealth, with, of course, a few leftovers for the 'lucky' few...This was what I was

> trying to show in *Petals of Blood*: that imperialism can never develop our country or develop us, Kenyan. In doing so, I was only trying to be faithful to what Kenyan workers, peasants and workers have always realised as shown by their historical struggles since 1895. (Ngugi 96-97)

This public display of resistance to the established political order of Kenya must have contributed to Ngugi's detention without trial six months later. Earlier in October 1976, Ngugi had publically criticised the Kenyan Government in an article in the *Daily Nation* for cramming *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*. It was a radical play written jointly by Ngugi and Micere Githae Mugo. Thus, the year 1977 forced dramatic turns in Ngugi's life and career. Since his novel *Petals of Blood* painted a harsh and unsparing picture of life in neo colonial Kenya, it was received with more emphatic critical acclaim in Kenya and abroad.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o's biographical and literary assessment can be concluded with the words of Mala Pandurang:

> Ngugi wa Thiong'o is one of Africa's most prolific intellectual activists. A versatile novelist, playwright, essayist, journalist, film maker and academic, Ngugi has inspired an entire generation of Indian Postcolonial scholars by his undeterred commitment to the processes of cultural and linguistic decolonisation; his consistent interrogation of the ambivalent position of the postcolonial writer in English; his persistent call for a radical reinterpretation of Kenyan 'nationalist' history; and his insistence on the power of the story as a weapon against multiple structures of oppression. Ngugi has led the way in questioning of the epistemological criteria of Western scholarship, and

the pressers of international capital and neocolonial forces on cultural formations within the third world milieu." (11)

Ngugi's contemporary literary icon of the 20th century, Chinua Achebe, is widely regarded as Africa's best novelist in modern times. His narrative style and techniques have given rise the African art of the novel. Achebe's landmark classic novel, *Things Fall Apart* (1958) is the most widely read African novel, inside and outside the African continent. It is an overwhelming portrayal of the clash between traditional tribal values and the effects of colonial rule. It also deals with the tension between masculinity and femininity in highly patriarchal societies. Achebe believed that the writer's contribution should give the readers a usable past, to recover their dignity that they are deprived of in the face of a colonial culture. He wanted not to deny that colonization had changed his homeland deeply but to claim that, despite all this, there were profound continuities with the pre-colonial past to draw on. His notable novels include *Things Fall Apart* (1958), *No Longer at Ease* (1960), *Arrow of God* (1964), *A Man of the People* (1966), and *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987). He was awarded Commonwealth Poetry Prize, an Honorary Fellowship of the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1982, a Foreign Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2002, and the Nigerian National Order of Merit. It is the Nigeria's highest honour for academic work. He was also awarded the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade, the Man Booker International Prize 2007 and the 2010 Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize. He was appointed Goodwill Ambassador to the United Nations Population Fund in 1999.

Another Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is also one among the new generation of African writers who is widely recognized and admired. Adichie's works are primarily character-driven that interweaves the background of her native

Nigeria and social and political events. Her most acclaimed novel *Purple Hibiscus* (2003) depicts the life experience of Kambili and her family during a military coup. Her latest work *Americanah* (2013) portrays the Nigerian immigrant life and race relations in America and the western world. Adichie's works have been met with overwhelming praise and have been nominated for and won numerous awards, including the Orange Prize and Booker Prize. Her notable works includes *Purple Hibiscus* (2003), *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006), *Americanah* (2013), and *We Should All Be Feminists* (2014). She was awarded Mac Arthur Fellowship in 2008.

Nadine Gordimer is one among the apartheid era's most prolific writers. Her works powerfully explore social, moral, and racial issues in a South Africa under apartheid rule. She has won Nobel Prize in Literature for her prodigious skills in portraying a society interwoven with racial tensions. Her most famous and controversial works were banned from South Africa for she daringly speaks out against the oppressive governmental structures of the time. Her novel *Burger's Daughter* deals with the struggles of a group of anti-apartheid activists, and this novel was read in secret by Nelson Mandela during his time on Robben Island. The Nobel Prize winner, Nadine Gordimer has brought a significant contribution to the development of both South African and Commonwealth fiction. The novel entitled *The Conservationist* (1974) gave her international breakthrough. Nadine Gordimer was involved in the anti-apartheid movement. She was awarded Booker Prize in 1974 and Nobel Prize in Literature in 1991.

Ben Okri is an influential Nigerian novelist, poet, and short-story writer who used magic realism to convey the social and political chaos in the country of his birth. Ben Okri spends his childhood both in England and in his native Nigeria. His young experience greatly influenced his future writing. His highly acclaimed novels *Flowers*

and Shadows (1980) and *The Landscapes Within* (1981) reflects the devastation of the Nigerian civil war which he himself observed. His later novel which met with equal praise is *The Famished Road* (1991). It tells the story of Azaro, a spirit child, which is a fascinating blend of realism and depictions of the spirit world, and won the Booker Prize in 1991. His other notable works are, *A Way of Being Free, Starbook, A Time for New Dreams, The Freedom Artist, Incidents at the Shrine, The Age of Magic, Infinite Riches, Songs of Enchantment, Flowers and Shadows, The Landscapes Within, Stars of the New Curfew.*

Ngugi's *Petals of Blood,* the novel selected for the present study is set in Ilmorog. Once desolate and forgotten place is plunged by the new Trans-Africa highway, and Wanja's discovery of Theng'eta, a once traditional brew, into the twentieth century. Therefore, the present moment of the story is set in the transformed New Ilmorog filled with horror and intrigue. Structured as a detective story the novel opens with the investigation by Inspector Godfrey about the deaths of three influential members of the society, Kimeria, Mzigo and Chui. Munira, the school teacher; Abdulla, a shopkeeper and ex-freedom fighter; and Karega, an untrained teacher turned trade unionist; Wanja, injured in the fire are under suspicion for the murder. When the villagers suffer due to drought, Karega helps the villagers to arrange a board for the purpose of seeking representation in the parliament. On the way, Abdulla's adopted boy Joseph becomes sick. When they asked for help from many corrupted individuals including the town priest who turns them away, they gets disappointed. Before they can find safe accommodation, they are confronted by Kimeria, a local businessman who abuses his power, and rapes Wanja. Later they also find their MP, Nderi wa Riera to be corrupt and he is just a puppet with no authority. Their journey to Nairobi to find their MP to sort out their problem of drought and

poverty and demanding better condition for the people of Ilmorog ends in disappointment. But they find charitable donors to begin improvements in Ilmorog with the help of a lawyer who wants to take their case to court.

Despite the failed mission to the city, the village enjoys some sense of renewal with the arrival of the long-awaited rain. They enjoy by consuming Theng'eta brew and the main characters confess their past. Abdullah reveals that he fought in the resistance with Karega's brother, Nding'uri, and that they were both betrayed by Kimeria. Karega tells of his love for Mukami, Munira's sister, and her suicide after her father's disapproval of their union. But following the period of renewal and harvest in Ilmorog, arrives the threat with the intrusion of the corrupt outside world, epitomised by the city, and the cancerous damage within the community itself.

Karega realises that the people have lost the most with the great changes to Ilmorog. Many villagers, including Njuguna, have been forced off their land and into degrading jobs. A new tourist centre has opened up in town, as well as a shantytown for the poor. As a result of this knowledge, begins to organize the workers at the brewery. Munira turns to drink, and then to religion, becoming a member of an extreme Christian cult. The details of the murder of the three brewery directors become clear that it is Munira who set the house on fire. To this he gives the explanation that he wanted to burn down Wanja's whorehouse to save Karega from Wanja's immoral influences. Nobody knows except Wanja that she has already stabbed Kimeria before the fire actually broke out. Despite all has become apparent, the novel ends with several notes of hope. Joseph based on the values of his adopted brother visits Abdulla and expresses his ideals of constructing a new Kenya. Wanja is pregnant with Abdulla's child. Karega learns that his mother is dead but also that the

workers of Ilmorog are planning a rebellion. All this exemplifies the possibility of the rebirth of Kenyan peasants and workers in building New Kenya.

The dissertation titled Eat or be Eaten: A Postcolonial Study of Ngugi wa Thiong'o' *Petals of Blood* is divided into five chapters to include three main issues like Colonial Transformation, Betrayal, and Constructive Violence as well as an introductory background on Kenyan Literature and biography of Ngugi wa Thiong'o and a conclusion summarising all the chapters and also analyzes the findings of the research project. The first chapter details Ngugi's development as a writer, and elaborates the key concepts and theoretical contexts which shape the dissertation as a whole. While Chapter two highlights the colonial transformation that happens socially, politically, economically, and psychology during colonial, anti colonial, and post colonial times. Chapter three explores the betrayal by corrupt officials like businessmen, politicians, and religious personalities in the post-independent period. Chapter four negotiates the concept of violence used as a constructive force. The final chapter summarises the previous chapters and analyzes the findings of the research project, evaluating the significance of to African Literature in general, and the novel in particular.

The next chapter emphasizes how the degradation which was once caused by the white imperialists during colonialism got into black imperialists who take power after Independence. It discusses about Ilmorog's alteration from a rural home of peasants into a sprawling industrial capital, the very seed of class division that reaches its greatest heights resulting in its degradation.

Chapter Two

Colonial Transformation

The writing subject of Kenyan Literature includes the relationship of the white colonialists with the native inhabitants of Kenya and the responses of the Kenyan people to the invading socio-political orientations of the colonial officers. The works of Ngugi wa Thiong'o occupy a prominent position among such writings. Ngugi's *Petals of Blood* intends to capture and critically analyse the socio-political changes in postcolonial Kenya. Postcolonialism provides a rich literature through which socio-political degradation and developments have been recorded.

Petals of Blood depicts a long period of time before and after independence including pre-colonial feudal clan-heads, the work of Christian missionaries, the railway, the First and the Second World wars, the Mau Mau upheavals, the post-independence capitalist system. It also portrays the trials, death and sufferings of many peasants and those who fought for political independence of the country and the ones who enjoyed the fruits of freedom. As James Ogude notes: "Ngugi is obviously trapped in the Christian moral vision that he has appropriated to explain the nature of the capitalist world. This moral stance also agrees with his epistemological outlook and historical sense, which defines people in terms of good and evil, patriots and traitors, fighters and liberators" (123). Ngugi's depiction of modern Kenya is a place dominated by corrupt businessmen and politicians who have quickly forgotten the high ideals of the revolt they waged to expel the Britishers. The main characters come to terms with the harsh disappointments of modern Kenya.

In *The Growth of the African novel,* Palmer comments on the novel that "It focuses mainly on the disintegration and disillusionment caused within the indigenous African society by civilization through the introduction of foreign or strange

educational, political and religious systems by white colonialists" (68-69). It depicts the dislocation and disorientation of once proud Ilmorog community struggling against the humiliation of the vicious urban elite public officers. The New Ilmorog is complicated with the disoriented lives surrounded by the inhuman nature of bourgeois public officials like Kimeria, Chui, Nderi wa Riera and others who embody the vices of capitalism.

In mentioning the effects of colonialism, the better condition of Kenya before colonialism deserves attention. "To the learned minds... the history of the Kenya before colonialism was one of the wanderlust and pointless warfare between peoples. The learned ones never wanted to confront the meaning of colonialism and of imperialism" (237). Before the arrival of the colonizers, native people had a simple and comfortable life, "cattle were wealth- the only wealth. Was it not the ambition of every real man, especially before the white man came, to possess cows and goats?" (21). Kenyans could grow their crops anywhere before the colonial rule. They were happy before the arrival of colonizers, and could earn their life by themselves working on their own lands and grazing.

Animals and goats were the wealth for the natives. There was often a debate as to whether crop or goats were the real wealth before the arrival of the White men. For some consider cattle and goats as the wealth, whereas for some, fields of different crops such as millet, yams, potatoes, sugarcane or banana were more important. But later the same crops were sold for one head of goat. For some, cattle were the only wealth because they were exchanged during marriages as property. Many hoped to get a goat because they sold their daughters for goats and not for crops. For others goats were not the wealth, instead the soil and the crops worked by a man's hands were wealth.

Most parts of the African continent were colonised by colonial or imperial powers from Europe. The colonial masters altered the socio-political structure of the African communities and also the people in the process of colonization. Socio-political decadence like corruption, violence, injustice, cruelty, exploitation, and hatred were prevalent in many African nations as the direct consequences of colonialism. The British imperial policies have been responsible for the collapsed socio-economic and political transcendence in countries like Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda, and Kenya.

While criticising colonialism and its effects in Ilmorog that marks the transformation of the village, Ngugi stresses the importance of the issue of land. During colonization, Kenyans lost their land to the foreigners. However, once the colonizers came, the natives lost their properties, even, "people sold their daughters for goats" (22). In their struggle for independence, the main thing they were fighting for was to reclaim their land. Land depicted their heritage. It was the most treasured asset among Kenyans. Selling the land is considered as an act of a traitor. After the colonization, people were deprived of their own land. They became workers in the lands, which once belonged to them. Ngugi asserts in the novel: "The land seemed not to yield much and there was now no virgin soil to escape to as in those days before colonialism" (11). The colonizers exploited the lands of the native people.

Kenyans were not allowed to own land during the colonial rule. It is the British government in Kenya and East Africa as a whole owned most of the land. The conversation among the native villagers shows the real face of the colonizers and the distortion colonizers caused in their life:

> Look at white people: they first took our land; then our youth; only later, cows and sheep. Oh no, the other side would argue: the white

> man first took the land, then the goats and cows, saying these were hut taxes or fines after every armed clash, and only later did he capture the youth to work on land...To cultivate his fields and also to look after the cows. The foreigner from Europe was cunning: he took their land, their sweat and their wealth and told them that the coins he had brought, which could not be eaten, were the true wealth! (22)

Muturi, a character of the novel, expresses the destructive effect of colonizers explicitly:

> You forget that in those days the land was not for buying. It was for use. It was also plenty, you need not have beaten one yard over and over again. The land was also covered with forests. The trees called rain. They also cast a shadow on the land. But the forest was eaten by the railway. You remember they used to come for wood as far as here, to feed the iron thing. Aah, they only knew how to eat, how to take away everything. But then, those were Foreigners - white people. (99)

Ngugi refers to the first white colonist Lord Freeze-Kilby, who wanted to change the wilderness of Ilmorog into a civilized one. In the name of Christian pacification, he made many experiments on the herdsmen. He employs force, aggression, and oppression, on one hand, and religion and education, on the other. Munira explains that:

> Cambridge Fraudsham came to the scene. Before we had any time to know him, he changed our lives. Fresh from the war, he already had firm notions how an African school had to be. Now, my boys, trousers are quite out of the question in the tropics....And no shoes, my boys, except on the day of worship: the school did not want to turn out black

> Europeans but true Africans who would not look down upon the innocence and simple ways of their ancestors. At the same time, we had to grow up strong in God and the Empire. It was the two that had rid the world of the menace of Hitler. (34-35)

Whites came to settle in Ilmorog and they introduced strange things, including food and motor car in Ilmorog.

During the colonial period education and religion are described as powerful tools of western civilization not just in Kenya but in the entire Africa. White men came to Africa as missionaries with the hidden agenda of earning profit. Different people came with different purposes by carrying different things with them such as missionaries carried the Bible, soldiers carried the gun and the administrators carried coins. Karega tells his students how the colonizers stole their lands, and how they used bible to get the lands of the native people.

> They used the Bible to steal the souls and minds of ever-grinning Africans, caps folded at the back, saying prayers of gratitude for small crumbs labelled aid, loans, feminine relief while big companies are busy collecting gold and silver and diamonds, and while we fight among ourselves saying I am a Kuke, I am a Luo, I am Luhyia, I am a Somali... and... and... there are times, Joseph, when victory is defeat and defeat is victory. (283)

Many natives accepted this new religion. The missionaries also helped many people to regain their faith in Christianity to which Munira's father was an early convert. Waweru believed that Church was a kind of cultural organization which destroyed envy and brought unity and harmony among people. Waweru blamed his son for joining the "mikora, who go on singing Ka-40! Ka forty! And challenged the

white men for a duel" (120). Munira reminded his father about workers like Luo, Gusii, Embu, Kamba, Somali, Luhyia, Kikuyu etc. who worked on his father's farm without any ill feeling between them.

Without the active support of religion and the concurrent education policies, the colonisation of Kenya could not have been possible. It is hard to overcome this enslavement of the mind, and the psyche. There is a contradiction between colonialism and its religious ally, the Christian Church. While the basic doctrine of Christianity is love and equality between men, of which colonialism was an integral part was built on the inequality and hatred between men and subjugation and exploitation of the black race by the white race. One being a Christian ritualistically imitates European ways of life and out rightly rejects all African customs. The primitive rights of the Kenyan people have been denounced by the Church and it also condemns beautiful African dances, images of African Gods, thus robbing the people of their soul.

In an attempt to demonstrate the ideological domination over the colonized countries the colonizers introduced English education in the colonized countries. It was a logical effort to enslave the psyche of the people and make them accept their colonial dominators. The school education taught the children about the Empire of the admiration and obedience to white powers without raising any questions. Every morning and evening the children were made to salute the British flag along with the martial sound of the drums of the school band. In the chapel prayer was offered to the Maker as "Wash me, Redeemer, and I shall be Whiter than snow. We would then pray for the continuation of an Empire that had defeated the satanic evil which had erupted in Europe to try the children of God" (35). Thus, the white men had come with Christianity, civilization, the Bible, education, the coins and the gun.

In the early 1950s the Mau Mau rebellion in Kenya emerged as a nationalist and anti colonial armed resistance against the British colonial state. The movement named itself as the 'Kenya Land Freedom Army.' The whites nicknamed the movement as 'Mau Mau', an absurd name to obscure its aims otherwise it will be clear as the resistance army's name. Mau Mau war is seen as the ultimate expression of Kenya's anti-colonial struggle against the colonizing oppressor. The Kenyans still uphold a few traditions even after colonization. When it rains, the villagers of Ilmorog dance and rejoice while performing ancient rituals, which were performed by their forefathers. Some communities in Africa believed that before they ate, the Gods had to eat first. Therefore they threw food on the ground to show that they were feeding the ancestors before taking the first bite.

Ngugi represents the process of social transformation and various revolutionary deeds. Most importantly an international highway through Ilmorog marked the transformation of the village. All these were the sites of modern life and changes in Africa. The creation of an African continental highway quickens the process of invasion and ruin. This highway connected other countries of Africa including Zaire, Nigeria, Ghana, Morocco and others. But the Africans had no faith in the Europeans and they were suspicious of their purpose and intent. Unless the Europeans are benefitted by it they would never build a road. Despite facing hardships the peasants and herdsmen fought for years against the material interests of Europeans.

The railway line which joined Ilmorog with Ruwa-ini is one among many signs of colonial rule. To feed machines and men at Ruwa-ini, wood, charcoal and wattle barks from Ilmorog forests were carried in train which resulted in deforestation. The two rails were removed and a road stood there after the task was

accomplished. The road is a symbol of collective struggle of the African people, and their unity. Moreover the road became an easy way for international capitalist robbery and exploitation. It had brought trade and prosperity to the area. The Trans-Africa road that links Nairobi and Ilmorog to many cities of the African continent is one of the famous and unique developments in Africa. It becomes the means by which the rich can increase their wealth at the expense of the poor. Ngugi says, it is a symbolic tribute to those,

> Who, witnessing the dread ravages of crime and treachery and greed which passed for civilization, witnessing too the resistance waged and carried out with cracked hands and broken nails and bleeding hearts, voiced visionary dreams amidst sneers and suspicions and accusations of madness or of seeking path-ways to immortality and the eternal self-glory of tyrants. (311)

So, it is a sign of the partial achievement of the vision and also of the emptiness and failed promises.

The colonial administration had alienated the people from their fertile land and uproots various African tribes, particularly the Gikuyu, the Masai, the Nandi and the Kamba in semi-dry and infertile lands. This land led to widespread protest which at first was very peaceful and later become militant. The Mau Mau helped to restore these lands to the Africans. The people's demands were legitimate. They hoped that once the colonial rule is over, they would get their lands back by their own government. But the people were disillusioned by their government of Kenyatta. The government made various agreements with western countries. In order to set up industries or urban facilities for tourists more and more land was taken away from the people. In *Wilderness into Civilized Shapes*, Laura Wright compares *Petals of Blood*

and *Heart of Redness*, by South-African Zakes Mda, and asserts that "[b]oth novels deal very explicitly with the potentially devastating effects of capitalist-driven development of the land" (22).

After colonization, colonizers make the colonized feel the colonist to be civilized, intelligent and rational. They see themselves as inferior. This is related to the psychological impact of colonizers on the colonized. Frantz Fanon, one of the remarkable postcolonial writers, asserts that not only the political and economic changes mark the end of colonialism but psychological changes too are involved in it. So, as McLeod asserts in *Beginning Postcolonialism* "freedom from colonialism comes not just from the signing of declarations of independence and the lowering and raising of flags" (22).

Ngugi also emphasizes the social transformation by which the social system has completely dismantled. Young men and women had left for cities. The land was left to the older people, who were not much interested in the opportunities created after independence. They were concerned more in multiplying their cattle. Though they suffered hardship in village and the curse of God, they preferred their traditional life. Urban people lived differently in contrast to the villagers. There is a glaring contrast within the same country which became worse after the end of colonial rule. In village the life of people was hard. The roads were rough. Most of them were illiterate. Because of drought and diseases, peasants and cattle suffered. Peasants faced shortage of clean water and lack of jobs.

Kenya after independence is depicted as a barren and drought-stricken part, where peasants and farmers struggled for survival. Politicians had left them to their fate. Post independent Kenya is described as an independent country infested by foreigners and traitors and the true natives who had sacrificed their lives for the land

were abandoned and neglected. Such harsh injustice in post-independence Kenya is exposed in *Petals of Blood*. It also exposes the colonial ties, capitalist greed and empires which were built on the sweat and blood of the people.

The "village-turned-city", Ilmorog during the postcolonial period is a place that was deserted by everybody. Except for wrong reasons nobody liked to visit it. But Ngugi gives life to the place through number of immigrants such as Godfrey Munira, Karega, Wanja, and Abdulla. All the four central characters are disturbed by their experience of the degenerative values of the metropolis. To regain the sense of identity and the loss of wholeness they retreat to Ilmorog. In doing so, they become catalysts in the transformation of a rural village into a commercially viable town, which in turn swallowed up by the capitalist greed of the city. The neo-colonial economic policies continually influence the rural population which is already devastated by colonial rule and a war of independence.

Ilmorog is a small rural community where life of the people is ruled by archaic beliefs, habits and ties. When industrial core was established, it gets transformed into a place that was inhabited by businessmen, prostitutes and addicts where ordinary people struggled to protect their land from foreign organizations. In the novel the process of change begins with the arrival of Abdulla and his donkey with a cart. Abdulla, a disabled hero of the national struggle, sets up a small store-cum-bar where Wanja works as a barmaid. Abdulla later joined by Munira and Karega who had also contributed to the economic and social change of the society. Severe drought plays a major role in providing an opportunity for capitalist invasion in the village. This changes every aspect of village life that not only affects its present but its future too. In Ilmorog the process of industrial and commercial terror symbolically begins with the disaster of an aeroplane crash which takes away the life of Abdulla's donkey.

Ilmorog is described as a barren, unappealing, and unprogressive rural community with broken mud walls and a tin roof with gaping holes and more spiders' webs and the wings and heads of dead flies. It is no wonder teachers refuse to come to Ilmorog and those who came "ran away at the first glance" (7). Even the young people of Ilmorog are happy to run away from the community:

> Our young men and women have left us. The glittering metal has called them. They go, and the young women only return now and then to deposit the newborn with their grandmothers already aged with scratching this earth for a morsel of life...The young men also. Some go and never return. Others sometimes come to see the wives they left behind, make them round-bellied, and quickly go away as if driven from Ilmorog by Uhere or Mutung'u. (9)

The elderly folk in the village comment "Who would want to settle in this wasteland except those without limbs- may the devil swallow Abdulla- and those with aged loins- may the Lord bless Nyakinyua, the old woman" (7). It is therefore evident as Abdulla's lame leg symbolize that the only young people who stay in Ilmorog are the spiritually maimed ones. To hide himself from the competitive capitalist society Munira is staying in Ilmorog. Ilmorog is described as "a 'deserted homestead', 'a forgotten village', an island of underdevelopment which after being sucked thin and dry was itself left standing static, a grotesque distorted image of what peasant life was and could be" (220).

The journey to the city results in rapid development and evident transformation in Ilmorog which is suggested by the symbol of rain. Inspite of all joys and happiness that came with the arrival of rain, people still doubted about what would follow, whether it would be favourable or not. Their doubts are, therefore,

justified as the capitalists move into Ilmorog with their industries, roads, banks, shops, factories, hotels, breweries, and estate management. The old small village of Ilmorog is irredeemably destroyed by the change that comes with modern civilization.

From a rural community the village gradually transforms to an urban city with the appearance of industries and economic activities. After independence transformation takes place in Ilmorog by the presence of an aeroplane, and the costly cars. Old Ilmorog begins to die gradually when the long arm of Nairobi's bourgeoisie is reaching out. Class division reaches its greatest heights with the metamorphosis of Ilmorog from a rural home of peasants into a widespread industrial capital. The very extreme of property acquisition and ownership is seen in Chui, Mzigo and Kimeria; all three directors of the Thengeta Brewery Ltd., and Nderi wa Riera of the KCO Holdings.

The growth and development of the community completely changes the communal way of living of the people of old Ilmorog and bring the individualistic, class and exploitative style of living that come with capitalism. The New Ilmorog consists of Cape Town which was the residential area of the farm managers, County Council officials, public service officials, the managers of Barclays, Standard and African Economic Banks, and other servants of state and money power. The other was called New Jerusalem, a shanty town of migrant and floating workers, the unemployed, and the prostitutes and small traders in tin and scrap metal. Between the New Jerusalem and Cape Town there was All Saints church which was then led by Rev. Jerrod Brown. Also somewhere between the two areas Wanja's Sunshine Lodge was located which was almost as famous as the church.

The change affects the entire community. It affects everyone in Ilmorog including Abdulla, Wanja, Munira, Njuguna, and Nyakinyua whose death is as a

result of the change that has come to Ilmorog. She could not reclaim her land that was taken away from her by the bank. Munira becomes a religious fanatic. Abdulla loses everything, including his donkey and bar. He becomes a road-side seller of oranges. Karega becomes a trade union activist, who involves in organizing workers and the masses to restore the lost African societal values. The change affects Munira psychologically, spiritually, economically, and physically. Munira explains:

> Indeed, changes did come to Ilmorog, changes that drove the old one away and ushered a new era in our lives. And nobody could tell, really tell, how it had happened, except that it had happened. Within a year or so of the New Ilmorog shopping centre being completed, wheat fields and ranches had sprung up all around the plains: the herdsmen had died or had been driven further afield into the drier parts, but a few had become workers on the wheat fields and ranches on the earth upon which they once roamed freely....The peasants of Ilmorog had also changed. Some had somehow survived the onslaught. They could employ one or two hands on their small farms. Most of the others had joined the army of workers who had added to the growing population of the New Ilmorog. But which New Ilmorog? (332-333)

In alliance with international finance capitalism this bourgeois class is rough against characters such as Abdulla, a freedom fighter who during the Mau Mau fighting for liberty was maimed and he is disillusioned by the result of the Uhuru; that is the independence of Kenya. Others like Karega, Munira, Nyakinyua and are also victims of even greater exploitation by the class of property owners. Karega who is expelled from school is unable to survive the oppressive capitalist Kenya. Wanja is a type of character who represents the most ruthlessly exploited class of women in

Kenya, in order to survive she turns out to be a prostitute and searches for self-fulfillment in motherhood.

Ilmorog gets transformed "from a deserted village into a sprawling town of stone, iron, concrete and glass" (313). The innocent inhabitants are deceived by their leaders. Bank loans were made easily available to the farmers for agriculture and cattle breeding activities.

> Progress! Yes, development did come to Ilmorog. Plots were carved out of the various farms to make a shopping centre. Shops were planned and people were asked to send applications for building plots to the city council. A mobile van-African Economic Bank came to Ilmorog and explained to the peasant farmers and herdsmen how they could set loans....Only one condition: payments had to be regular. Easy. It was a year of hope. (318)

Economic deprivation of peasants and workers is explicit after the advent of colonialism and capitalism in Ilmorog. The African landowners and African businessmen in partnership with multinational companies gave only meagre wages of which the peasants and workers were obliged to live. The African landowners and colonialists become richer while the native people of Kenya become poorer. It was as if a curse of God had fallen on them. Munira tells to his friends:

> In my mind I now put this wretched corner beside our cities: skyscrapers versus mud walls and grass thatch; tarmac highways, international airports and gambling casinos versus cattle-paths and gossip before sunset. Our erstwhile masters had left us a very unevenly cultivated land: the centre was swollen with fruit and water sucked

from the rest, while the outer parts were progressively weaker and scraggier as one moved away from the centre. (58)

The peasants and workers didn't acquire any comfort or economic gains from Independence. It is the loyalists, whom Ngugi calls 'home guards' were the beneficiaries of Kenya's Independence. Foreign investment which brought capital into the country extracted large profits in which the masses had no share. That is, Ilmorog is a physical manifestation of the contradictory presence of poverty and capital in Kenya. Thus the ills of the colonial state are simply reproduced in the postcolonial state. For instance, the new hero of political independence, Kimeria is the one who betrayed Abdulla and Nding'uri during the Mau Mau war.

After being governed by the native ruling elite the political, social and economic situations of the nation happens to get worsen. The leaders of the new post colonial government perpetuate their associations with the outgoing colonizers, and consequently marginalize their native people. The elite are portrayed as both government officials and businessmen who violate the villagers of Ilmorog in both passive and aggressive ways. It leads to disillusionment of the masses who hopefully await the postcolonial ruling class to recover the nation of the colonial evils. However the new ruling elite are a hidden version of the colonial oppressive and exploitative government.

Ilmorog is transfigured with the arrival of capitalism. New Ilmorog has taken the place of old Ilmorog. The ruling class gets changed. Loans are provoided only to the landlords. They starts to carve the plots to construct shopping centres and rob the land of the natives.. For different purposes African Economic bank was ready to give loan to people. A Farmer's Marketing Co-operative, Dairy Co-operative and others make a start in the region. Overall, the progress brings much value to land. The rich

people possess everything, even the slums where workers and peasants lived were theirs. With the American directors and shareholders many international organizations had their business side by side in Kenya. Trade and partnership prospered in New Ilmorog. As Karega observes it not only happened in Ilmorog but it was quite commonly shared by the other places he had visited all over the republic of Kenya. The old things in Ilmorog had been demolished. Even the authorities forced people to demolish their old houses and look for places on rent which were owned by the persons of authority. Karega speaks of the age-old exploitation of Africans:

> We people... we built Kenya. Before 1895 it was Arab slaves disrupting our agriculture. After 1895 it was the European colonist: first stealing our land, then our labour and then our wealth in the way of cows and goats and later our capital by way of taxation... So, we built Kenya, and what were we getting out of the Kenya. We had built on our sweat? (342)

The monstrous industrial growth or progress demand more sweat but give very little in return. To make room for different projects a number of peasants were driven off from their land. Ironically such companies had African managers or directors or a few locals who owned only a few shares. The management did not allow workers to unite. They divided them into different groups based on the tribe, religion and according to the place of work. Wanja rightly described the present situation as "This world... this Kenya... this Africa knows only one law. You eat somebody or you are eaten. You sit on somebody or somebody sits on you" (345). Wanja became a prostitute after having experienced the harsh reality and felt much more free and powerful, because she has made people fight for her.

The picture of postcolonial Kenya and Africa is evident through the character of Wanja. The story of Wanja tells the story of Kenyan people, especially the Kenyan women. Govind Narain Sharma says that Wanja "is the spirit and earth of Kenya, humiliated, exploited and ill-used" (qtd. in Killam 302). Eustace Palmer also points out that,

> The drought is also political, spiritual, economic and emotional, as with Wanja who, yearning after a release from barrenness, becomes restless and moody in proportion to the aridity of the environment. The drought generally refers to the people's deprivation of all those things that should make life meaningful (qtd. in Killam 273).

Wanja suffered the impact of oppression while she was working as a barmaid. When Munira meets Wanja he thinks that "How could a city woman so dirty her hands? How could she strap a tin of water to a head beautifully crowned with a mass of shiny black hair" (37). Her situation shows the condition of all oppressed women in the cities. Women working as a barmaid are not only affected psychologically but also physically.

Ngugi ridicules people like Nderi wa Riera, an MP of Ilmorog. Earlier he was a man of the people who advocated reforms in and outside the parliament. He was famous for his fight for the socialist cause, abolition of illiteracy and unemployment, nationalization of the major industries, land ownership, and the formation of the Federation of Pan Africa. But after getting enough recognition and power he became a materialistic businessman moving away from his social cause. But being an advocate of the African culture he changes the European names of his companies to native ones such as Uhuru, Wananchi, Taifa, Harambee, Afro, and Pan- African. He took the

name Nderi wa Riara which was rooted in the African culture by giving up his earlier foreign name David Samuel.

Capitalism transforms the landscape to one of decay and decadence where people begin to feed on each other. Few blacks allied to the forces from Europe and rob the sweat of others and deny them to grow. The new Ilmorog has been reduced to a dehumanized landscape of "...neon- lights; of bars, lodgings, groceries, permanent sales and bottled Theng'eta; of robberies, strikes; lockouts, murders and attempted murders; of prowling prostitution in cheap night clubs; of police stations, police raids, police cells..." (227-228). Subsequently, this led to the death of cultural and traditional values and brought the social, moral, and political decay and disintegration of Ilmorog community.

Indeed it was the same European system that had made Africans acquire the benefit of education. The system also helped them to study laws which were meant to help people. In the past people were against slavery and they only prayed with the true god within them. They fought for it and shed their blood. But after independence they became contemptuous and murmur at the new priests. With the help of some natives they now try to destroy all the principles of the white men that were imposed by their own men.

Imperialism and capitalism were introduced not just by whites but also by the blacks who were the first blow to Ilmorog's pride, joy, and unity. Ngugi explores former features of the rich African culture, heritage, folklore, and mythology, fertile oral tradition and the roots which subsequently form the cultural identity of Africa and contrasts it with the world of native leaders turned colonisers. Through re-discovery of the past and also the present he tries to restore the cultural identity and diversity of African society. He focuses on the modern development which is

characterized by different social evils such as inequality, murder, betrayal, corruption and injustice etc. Thus colonialism has badly affected the coherent African culture and life. Ngugi intends the transformation of Ilmorog as a metaphor of the moral decline of Kenya from the high hopes of post-independence to the business corruption and thuggery. The innocence and wisdom of the village is contrasted with the political opportunism, religious hypocrisy and widespread civility of modern Kenya.

In *Daughters of Moombi: Ngugi's Heroines and Traditional Gikuyu Aesthetics,* Charles Nama rewrites Ngugi's point of view that "the unequivocal liberation of African lies not on westernization but in the resuscitation of traditional and cultural values that have been an intrinsic part of the people's lives from ancient times" (140). According to Ngugi, no revolution is final to guarantee an exploitation free society. Only through ceaseless struggle the post-colonial Kenyans can resist neo-colonial domination and true freedom can be achieved. Ngugi was not against the transformation. But he rejected the idea of progress at the cost of the displacement of tradition and degradation of human life. But everything was changing rapidly. Hence, Ngugi goes on to question the oppression which is still going on. Irrespective of disparities, he attempts to rediscover the past and tries to restore its unique identity.

The third chapter deals with the drawbacks of colonialism and neocolonialism in Kenya through the exploration of the theme of betrayal. Colonialism has had its harsh effects on the lives of the individuals. As a result characters are involved in the act of a private betrayal or public betrayal. The impact of revolution is so intense that they are deprived of their compassion and are compelled to betray individuals leading the whole society by taking over the imperialist power. The individual betrayal leads to the betrayal of the communities which leads to a national betrayal thereby perpetuating neo-colonialism.

Chapter Three

Betrayal

The external factor of foreign invasion, and their control over the colonised, and the internal factor of collaboration with the external threat are responsible for the present situation of Kenya. Formerly, Kenya was under Western slavery and the slave trade was in ascendance. It makes only little difference. The interplay between the external threat and internal collaborators after independence is the greatest problem in Africa today. Kenyans started ruling their people after Independence. Later on the Kenyan politicians exhibit the corrupt and selfish tendencies of the colonialists on their own people. As far as the common people are concerned, before independence they were hopeful that their country would be better off when handled by their native Kenyan people. But their hopes were shattered with their self-rule.

The whole system becomes corrupt and lot of corrupt activities pops up in the post independent Kenya. As the politicians become corrupt, and selfish, interested only in what concerned them, it is not wrong to say thousands of Kenyans who had sacrificed their lives during the struggle for independence only died in vain. This encouraged the second phase of African writing, which Arthur Ravenscroft has referred to as "Novels of Disillusionment". The excessive corruption and maladministration of the native leaders of African countries gave rise to these novels.

Betrayal is a major issue in *Petals of Blood*. The problem of betrayal of the masses in the postcolonial African community can be understood in the context of the social revolution, which is based on the class struggle. Kenyans expected that they would be liberated from all negative aspects of the colonial rule after independence. Their hopes got shattered as the hard earned political independence ended in vices like neocolonialism, corruption, nepotism, dictatorship, and repression. In many

countries of the African continent, the same situation prevailed. Ngugi opposes the post independent system which is tyrannical and corrupt. African countries entered a new era after independence called "Black Imperialism". While many of the African leaders were against imperialism and colonialism, they failed to recognize the existence of a new form of imperialism that is the "Black Imperialism" which they have created. Black imperialism is the exploitation of Africa by Africans, usually by top government officials, and businessmen in the form of betrayal. In this context, in *The Growth of the African Novel*, Eustace Palmer comments thus: "It has twice been exploited and destroyed, once by the white imperialists and now by their successors, the Black imperialists" (78).

These people behave in the same way as their former white counterparts. Most of the African leaders on the top position kept their money in Western banks. They also occupied a position in the list of the rich leaders of the world. They continued the same process started by their former masters. The departure of the white man from their land, had not solved the problem of the land, nor brought about any desired change in their lives. The whites continued to betray the Kenyans even after independence by covertly using the native leaders. In Nairobi, the whites continued to own big hotels, industries and factories while they gave petty jobs to the Kenyans. However crimes, betrayals and the oppression which were the hallmark of colonial rule were re-enacted even after freedom. The only means to overcome this corrupt situation is for the people to unite to find a way to face the black imperialist oppression.

On the economic front, an opinion survey in most of the African countries would reveal that over fifty percent of ordinary blacks would say they lived better during the white rule and they would not mind returning to that era. In this aspect,

Capitalism can be viewed as a demonic power that crushes every aspect of human life in the post independence Kenya, starting from social to political. The chosen people confront higher levels of betrayal. G.D. Killam states that "*Petals of Blood* presents artistically the betrayal of independence movement and its impact on others. He also makes an earnest plea for the creation of a cultural liberation struggle fostered by peasants and workers" (69).

The power of the corrupt officials usurped the village economically and politically. The peasants had no other option than to lose their land and ended up being homeless, landless and alienated. The power hungry public officials had power and wealth in their hands and deceived the entire community. In the name of development they further alienated the peasants from their land. In a neocolonial society, women had become vulnerable victims to the hungry bourgeoisie. The innocent villagers of Ilmorog were like the little flowers that are prevented from seeing the light by the huge tree symbolizing the neo colonial oppression.

The independence movement had been betrayed by the international capitalists. Though the war was solely fought for the peasants and workers, they had been further alienated from the land which is the source of life. The entrepreneurs who were in league with international capitalists suppressed the poor. The Europeans had confiscated the Kenyan lands which had a far reaching effect on the Kenyan people. Theme of betrayal is carried forward by indicting the wealthy landowners as well as the politicians who capitalize the miseries of others and perpetuate economic inequality and social injustice. During the process of its transformation from a rural village to a new industrial Ilmorog, destruction of rural peace and dignity of the community of Ilmorog also took place.

The Kenyans were forced to live in unlawful residence of Europeans' farms providing free labour in return for some grazing and cultivation on the settler's land. They were given a particular piece of land in the bush to get it ready for the European landlord to cultivate it. After a period of time, they were driven off from the land which were given to them, and were shown other virgin land to clear it for cultivation. This process went on and on. They were made to pay taxes in the form of goats. Old Mariamu's youngest educated son, Karega tried to set things right in neocolonial Kenya, but Old Mariamu continued to live life as a squatter. This throws light on the plight of the Africans who are first alienated from their land by colonialists and later by a class of African landlords. All the women, men and children still were weighed down by imperialism.

The chief source of the betrayal of the village seems to be urban migration. The attraction of the young generation of wealthy life in Nairobi has forced them to abandon their families. They left old people to suffer in the village. Though the young were keen on earning money for their families their indifference to the betrayal of their traditional and cultural values, and their indifference to the socio-political betrayal of their own community are repulsive. Njuguna's plight well portrays this: "His sons had gone away to European farms or to the big towns. Daughters he had none: and what use were they nowadays? Old Njogu, after all, had several and they had only brought him sorrow instead of goats" (11). These people had to be contented with their small huts and over small family labour.

Various levels of betrayal are explored in the novel. Modernization was supposed to bring necessities closer to communities and it should bring development to the place. But in Kenya, most rural communities lacked proper roads. Their children studied under trees and never saw the interior of a class room. There were no

hospitals in rural communities; they had to travel for miles to reach the nearby hospital. The government did this not out of lack of funds, but out of greed.

The socio-economic betrayal includes the betrayal of "Old Ilmorog" by the Kenyan government in general and by the MP, Nderi wa Riera, in particular. The Ilmorog delegation on their journey to Nairobi witnesses the generalised betrayal of the countryside and the city. The distortion of traditional and communal values including the corruption of the community by capitalist investment results in the betrayal of the Ilmorog community from within. Socio-economic betrayal of Ilmorog is evident from Munira's first visit to the community with an intention to reopen the school, where he immediately encounters an environment of decay and neglect. This can be seen as the first evidence of socio-economic betrayal by Nderi wa Riera. As an MP, he is only concerned with the votes of Ilmorog at elections and he ignored to meet the social and economic needs of remote areas such as Ilmorog. "They had heard of him during the last elections. He had visited the area to ask to be given votes. He had made several promises. He had even collected two shillings from each household in his constituency...." (22).

One such instance of betrayal is the transformation of Old Ilmorog into New Ilmorog. Though the transformation appears to be progressive, as it transforms rural area into a town, the rapid development of Ilmorog has largely affected modern Kenya. Gradually, the progress leads to destruction of the old values, symbolised by Mwathi's hut that is destroyed. Those who hesitate to work on the farms of whites, had to sell away their lands and other property to keep going with the lives. By selling their land and property towards the end they joined the very labouring class. Slowly the farmers are lured into taking out loans with the African Economic Bank. They are persuaded that they can easily repay: "Not in one lump sum. Oh no. Paying back

would also be spread over a number of years. No steady farmer need ever feel the pinch. Only one condition: payment had to be regular. Easy. It was a year of hope." (318).

When the farmers are not able to pay back their loans, the banks foreclose their properties. The old woman, Nyakinyua urges the people to go to the city and seek justice. Nobody could understand what is happening to them. Munira is now unable to answer the queries of the people. "How could a bank sell their land? A bank was not a government, from whence then its powers? Or maybe it was the government, an invisible government, some others suggested.... What kind of monster was this bank that was a power unto itself, that could uproot lives of a thousand years?" (327).

The field of business was dominated by the Europeans even after Kenya attained independence. They directed the Kenyan Ministers and others in high positions. The case of Theng'eta Breweries points to this situation. It was Wanja and Abdulla who popularized Theng'eta as a drink in Ilmorog. But it was not easy for them to compete with larger concerns which controlled the economy in Ilmorog. Corrupt officials like Chui cancelled the licence for brewing Theng'eta by Abdulla and Wanja. And Mzigo and Kimeria became the shareholders and directors of the new Theng'eta Breweries. But the company was owned by an Anglo American International Company. Both Wanja and Abdulla initiate the commercialization of the traditional sacred liquor, by selling Theng'eta to the surveyors of the Trans Africa Road. Their business crashed down and petty shopkeepers were evicted. Both Wanja and Abdulla become unemployed, as they were forced to sell their business to the newly created Theng'eta Breweries.

The Trans-African road becomes a symbol of capitalist betrayal. The arrival of the new road marks the destruction of the pastoral street. The Trans-African Highway which is built dividing the village wipes out the old priest Mwathi's place to the ground. More than development, the Highway reveals the social and economic exploitation of the multi-national companies. New constructions were erected in Ilmorog overnight. Uta Maduni, a cultural tourist centre was created not only to attract the tourists and get dollars from them, but also to serve as a centre for smuggling gem stones and ivory plus animal and even human skins. It became a centre for robbing the country and human assets. As Robson rightly observes: "It becomes famous well beyond the walls of ridge and plains. The feverish, growth of the city witnesses a church, a police station and a distillery. The peasants are reduced into easy bank loans and find their lands taken from them" (104). Capitalists betrayal markedly began, when they moved in with their lands, factories, distilleries, estate agencies, the old and traditional Ilmorog was immensely destroyed. The bewildered peasants loose their lands and become helpless workers.

Ngugi exposes the corrupt politicians who betrayed the people and do not take any steps in eradicating poverty and the problem of unemployment. These betrayers who stole money from the people were called as 'greedy bellies'. They cared little about the betrayed people. People suffered a lot in the postcolonial Kenya, as they suffered during the colonial period. As the colonial transformation had completely changed Ilmorog, socially, politically and psychologically not in positive mode, leading to its degradation, people did not get any benefit from the government. The leaders who came to power after independence in Kenya betrayed those who fought against colonial power. The regime after independence had not transformed anything.

People like Kimeria, Nderi wa Riera, Chui and Mzigo are the symbols of oppression and betrayal, being agents of imperialism. They did not do anything for the sake of freedom but they were the ones who enjoyed the fruits of Uhuru. The bourgeoisie readily applied the principle of divide and rule of the British for their personal advantage in order to betray the working class. Corruption and exploitation had crept in the political realm. Even the MP is corrupt and indifferent to the sufferings of the people. The politicians in Kenya became rich and lived in palatial buildings in the cities. Like other politicians, Nderi invests the money he collected from his constituency for a water project as shares in companies and in buying lands and houses. Because of his corruption, and indifference to the people's plight, he becomes a disreputable politician. For the citizens of Ilmorog, whose sons "knew no world outside Ilmorog: they thought of Kenya as a city or a large village somewhere outside Ilmorog" (Varma 98). This relates the appearance and the progress of capitalism with a national frame.

The traitors who prosper after independence like Kimeria, Mzigo, Chui and Nderi ride on Mercedes Benzes, own thousands of acres of land and housing estates. They also win breweries, visit expensive night clubs and exploit women. The resources of Kenya are underutilized as a result of the corrupt system. Karega rightly comments: "How, now, how could the young, the bright and the hopeful deteriorate so? What there no way of using their energies and dreams to a purpose higher than the bottle, the juke-box and sickness on a cement floor?" (123). Nderi engages in crooked activities like smuggling stones and young women for foreign brothels, thereby misuses his position at the Parliament. He is just interested in gaining votes of the people and not in providing measures. Rev. Jerrod Brown who governs the religious sphere, heads the church but he is a charlatan in belief and practice.

While drought reduces the village to desperation, the people of Ilmorog march to the capital to get help from their 'son', Nderi wa Riera, their MP. The journey is an eye opener for the people of Ilmorog as they meet betrayer in sequence in the decadent environment of Blue Hills. They first seek help from the Rev. Jerrod Brown. Like many of the national bourgeoisie, his estate is well protected by security guards and guard dogs. Instead of helping Joseph who is not feeling well, he leads the delegation in prayer and then sends them away unattended. He offers spiritual help to those who are in need of physical help. The people of Ilmorog are confused with the sheltered and protected wealth of the national bourgeoisie. The fortresses of private capital only neglect the rural Ilmorog. As a Christian, Rev. Jerrod Brown doesn't know about his duty. When the people sees the Christian name their hearts filled with hope that he must have a soul of goodness filled with mercy and kindness. But he betrays them with religion.

When the Ilmorog delegation decides to seek the help of Raymond Chui, the former student leader of Siriana School, Munira feels too self-conscious to request aid from him. In fact he ran away when a red- lipsticked lady with a huge Afro-wig faints in front of him in Chui's doorway, because of his dirty appearance. They are arrested and interrogated by Hawkins Kimeria, even before they enter the third estate. Kimeria is a person who exposes the exploitative nature of his own class and its capacity for betrayal, while discussing his relationship with the Ilmorog MP, Nderi wa Riera:

> We used to have our little differences.... Now, we are friends. Why? Because we all realise that whether we were on that side of the fence or this side of the fence or merely sitting astride the fence, we were all fighting for the same ends. ... We have one or two businesses together.... We are all members of KCO. Some of us have even been

> able to borrow a little - shall I say thousands - from the money collected from this tea ceremony. (183)

Kimeria is the most exploitative of the national bourgeoisie. He is both the seducer of Wanja and the murderer of Karega's brother, Ndinguri. He also betrays Ole Masai, and Abdulla. He is a cold-blooded man who mercilessly uses the vulnerable situation of the Ilmorog delegation to further exploit Wanja: "Now that fate has brought you to my house, I shall not let you go until you have lain, legs spread, on that bed. Remember you are no longer a virgin. Think about it. The choice is yours to make, and freedom is mine to withhold or to give. Go." (186). Kimeria threatens her saying that they can't leave that place until he lets them go. He can have them all arrested and charge with the offence of trespassing in Blue Hills. In order to save Joseph and others from the harm promised by Kimeria, Wanja is forced to degrade herself.

The lawyer defines the dimensions of the neocolonial betrayal which stretched from Africa to the Southern States:

> We forget that it has always been deaf and blind to human woes. So we go on building the monster and it grows and waits for more, and now we are slaves to it. At its shrine we kneel and pray and hope. Now see the outcome... dwellers in Blue Hills, those who have taken on themselves the priesthood of the ministry to the blind god ... a thousand acres of land ... a million acres in the two hands of a priest, while the congregation moans an acre! ... Meanwhile, the god grows big and fat and shines even brighter and whets appetites of his priests, for the monster has, through the priesthood, decreed only one ethical code: Greed and accumulation. (195- 96)

Thus every member of the Ilmorog delegation struggle with "the monster" symbolised by capitalists. They are unable to grasp the full dimension of its terror.

Later on the collective experience of the MP's betrayal of their community opens their eyes to the corruption of the neocolonial system. Nderi wa Riera represents the corrupt political situation. After getting elected as Member of Parliament he never cares to know about the welfare of his constituents. The system which offers him shares in large companies corrupts him and he switches over from the socialist stance. He starts a cultural organisation named KCO which under the guise of tribal unity promotes ethnic divisions:

> He, Nderi wa Riera, was convinced that Africa could only be respected when it had had its own Rockefellers, its Hughes, Fords, Krupps, Mitsubishis... KCO would serve the interests of the wealthy locals and their foreign partners to create similar economic giants! (223)

Nderi wa Riera was once truly a man of the people. But later he wants to prosper in an easy way so in association with foreign-owned companies he banks on Ilmorog's remoteness and becomes busy with dictatorships thereby betraying the innocent peasants. Formerly he was a champion of putting a ceiling on land ownership, nationalization of major industries, abolition of illiteracy and unemployment. Now he had sold his principles and has made his investments in land and also holds connections in the tourist industry membership in special clubs.

Unlike Kimeria, it is hard to expose his true nature as he is disguised as a "man of the people". He makes efforts to disguise betrayal. In an attempt to legitimize his exploitative nature he has an African name. He openly lies to the people of Ilmorog about a planned trip to Ilmorog to investigate "farming problems". He loosely praises everyone he talks. He prepares answers before questions: "As a

politician, Nderi had learnt that no enemy was too small, and no incident was too insignificant to be careless about and ignored, unless with calculated deliberation" (213).When Nderi meets the delegation in Jeevanjee Gardens, his speech at first attracts the hungry, jobless members, and the proletariat. Still he fears of public exposure of his plan of betrayal. Nderi wa Riera also makes attempts to instigate the villagers against the intruders. He accuses Munira, Abdulla and Karega for being rebellious and also blames them as responsible for Ilmorog to become an island of underdevelopment. He blames the "foreigners" for the difficulties in Ilmorog, and exiles Munira, Abdullah and Karega. Instead he promises to head the delegation by himself. In order to hide his betrayal he blames those who are capable of questioning him.

By denouncing Christian names and blond wigs he seems to champion 'Black authenticity' but he uses this as a good cause to conceal smart selfish politician's betrayal of fundamental black interests. He does not extend any help to the villagers. He replies mercilessly thus: "Now, I want you to go back to Ilmorog. Get yourselves together. Subscribe money. You can even sell some of the cows and goats instead of letting them die. Dive deep into your pockets" (218). This reveals that in helping the Kenyans, the politicians could not rise above their petty nature. Ilmorog's difficult journey has become worthwhile as publicity from newspapers brought enough food to fill the donkey cart. Publicity also attracted the opportunists, who continue to betray the poor through their greed for their own benefit. In Robson's words, "the intervention of national bourgeoisie through figures of Kimeria, Chui, Mzigo and Nderi had accelerated the level of political struggle by integrating Ilmorog into the infrastructure of neocolonial state" (143).

During neocolonialism many exploitative measures were taken in the field of education. Cultural and educational institutions are tools for mental slavery as they are used to perpetuate mental captivity in the postcolonial state. In Siriana, Chui and Munira have been together as school boys. Chui leads a strike against Fraudsham, the head master of the school and makes sure that the latter is sent to overseas to complete his education there. In the succeeding generation, Karega leads a strike against Fraudsham. The strike becomes fruitful when Fraudsham was expelled and Chui was made the headmaster. Chui turns out more European in his attitude than Fraudsham. Chui betrays his people as he does not want to learn anything African including history and literature. First Karega and his contemporaries organized strike against the white Fraudsham and later against the Black Chui.

Educational betrayal began with the infusion of colonial education of which Mzigo and Chui are part of it. Chui's leadership as a student rebel at Siriana School is lured by political power and material wealth. With this temptation he heads the education sphere. Cruelly forgetting the needs of Ilmorog, Mzigo uses his position as "school-inspector" to enhance his own fortunes. As the head of the education bureau for Ilmorog and other nearby districts, he never wants to pay a visit to the school. But along with his salary he enjoys other personal benefits for being a manager and supervisor of the schools in the district. Karega and others demand that African literature and African history must be taught in educational system to know about themselves and also about their environment. They criticise an educational system that teaches them about white snow, spring flowers, fluttering by icy lakes which were encouraged by Chui.

Ngugi also was concerned with the problems of religious betrayal. The betrayers use religion as a tool to oppress workers. Religion in the present state does

not offer anything significant to lessen the problems of the masses. Instead it only offers spiritual help for their physical problems and diverts the attention of the people from the oppression. Rev. Jerrod Brown is one such religious person who preaches everything doing nothing. He gives a long lecture about God and his compassion but sends those who ask for help empty handed. Ngugi strongly condemns this kind of religion. Under the guise of help to poverty-stricken areas like Ilmorog, Reverend Brown uses religious conviction as deception to accumulate wealth and power.

As a wealthy landowner and respected elder, Munira's father, Ezekieli Waweru stands for this kind of Africans who for the sake of money betrayed their brethren. Waweru is a man who propagates Christianity because it is rewarding to him and his family. At the time of Kenya's struggle for independence, Reverend Waweru has taken refuge in the religion, denouncing all anticolonial activities. For instance he reproves Mau Mau oathing rituals as the devil's work. Munira as a small boy has noticed workers praising Lord and singing to the Lord with greater conviction and more holiness. Their spirituality is not of a show, but of their real belief in the presence of heaven. It is in one of their meetings that Munira felt trembling of the heart and consciousness of the enormity of sin he had committed earlier, the feeling which he had not got from his father's words.

The government continues to betray the village of Ilmorog. Instead of sending aid they send tax collector, followed by two parasitical impostors who are aptly named "Fat Stomach" and "Insect", the agents of Ilmorog's MP, Nderi wa Riera. "Fat Stomach" blames the "lake people" (Luo) and an Indian communist (likely Pio Gama Pinto) for the drought, in order to distract the villagers from Nderi's betrayal of Ilmorog. Women of Ilmorog chase these opportunists out of the village with anger and frustration.

With the changes in the political and economic landscape, Ilmorog gets transformed by the betrayal of its people by their elected officials, by their business community, and by their leaders. The hopes of the Kenyan people are betrayed. Betrayal of hopes of the individuals leads to their disillusionment and made them as betrayers. Thereby neocolonialism binds people worse than colonialism. Munira, Karega, Abdulla, and Wanja come to Ilmorog to escape the past and the demanding city life where they experience various levels of betrayal which transformed them as betrayers in their own ways. Their betrayals resulted not only from neocolonialism, but from their personal weaknesses as well.

The betrayal of the new capitalist Ilmorog corrupts both Wanja and Munira. Wanja "... was seized by the devil spirit of brewing and selling and counting and hatching out more plans for the progress of her trade/business partnership with Abdulla" (320). Contrary to her communal spirit, Wanja's gets obsessed with the profits of Theng'eta which is a new betrayal. It is result of several factors such as her personal loss of Karega, her descent into self-hatred for having destroyed her own child, and her broken family background combined by her father's betrayal of the "Mau Mau" Revolution. Wanja is not merely a victim. Her role as a capitalist betrayer is later expanded by her Sunshine Lodge. Wanja attempts to become as successful as any of the national bourgeoisie, equivalent to any Kimeria, Chui, or Mzigo as revenge for her victimization. Karega criticises her choice to join the national bourgeoisie: "Whatever you are, you have chosen sides. I don't hate you, I don't judge you... but I know that we cannot fight Kimerias by being them... by joining them... we can't beat them at that game...." (389).

Wanja's grandparents acted alone to defend the land. Not even Wanja supported Nyakinyua when she tries to fight back after her land was taken. Only after

the death of the old woman, Wanja in a fit of self destruction tries to redeem the land. In despair, but also in a conscious thought to survive, Wanja reverts to her role as a prostitute to get the land back. Wanja's betrayal of community comes from many sources including her bitterness for having been abandoned by Karega, and commercialization of Theng'eta. This leads to her adoption of the philosophy of "eat or be eaten" as justification for her prostitution. Her philosophy is an outcome of her lack of faith in the future, and her disillusionment of the present, post independent Kenya. Her victimization made her a betrayer. She is weakened by family background and betrayal of the community.

Munira's betrayal is evident in earlier part of the novel. By joining the strike at Siriana School and by seeking a pagan wife, who does not share in their religious beliefs, Munira has "betrayed" the class and religious interests of his family. Although the parasitical family environment has alienated and isolated Munira, he has clear insight into the environment of neocolonial betrayal. And as a result of Wanja's betrayal, Munira becomes a Christian and retreats into a private world to seek redemption. As the relationship between two parties has been an intimate one, the implications of betrayal are especially painful. Such experiences of betrayal trigger feelings of rejection, abandonment, and aloneness. Munira's choice to continue to betray Ilmorog is a result of this rejection. His alienation from the community leads to his spontaneous acceptance of fanaticism, which in turn results in the attempted murder of Wanja. As a religious fanatic, he becomes a victim of false consciousness. In an attempt to save Karega's soul and punish "Satanic" Wanja, he torches her sunshine Lodge. Munira as a victim chooses to punish another victim, Wanja instead of the true betrayers of nation like Chui, Kimeria, Mzigo, and Nderi.

Except his journey to Nairobi, Abdulla withdraws to his shop and later his Theng'eta bar. He temporarily gets profits from economic invasion of his community, and does not fight it. He gets infuriated only, when he is reduced to an impoverished role as street vendor, or his commitment to Wanja despite her degradation as prostitute. Though he is an exile from his own community, he is not alone in his betrayal of his adopted community. Abdulla, having lost his donkey which he considers as his 'other leg' and having lost his business to the 'progress' in Ilmorog, he feels his dreams have reached an end. The permission to manufacture Theng'eta is withdrawn from Abdulla and Wanja who start a small bar and the license given to Kimeria, Chui and Mzigo. To escape from tragic personal experiences at home, Munira and Karega seek refuge in Ilmorog. Like Abdulla, Karega too is guilty of betrayal. With his abandonment of Wanja during her crisis points his personal betrayal. Karega's betrayal is the least compared to other protagonists. However, all of these characters have insight into their betrayals.

Karega is haunted by the betrayal of the student hero, Chui. Abdulla is haunted by the betrayal that happens to Nding'uri. Karega's brother and Munira's childhood playmate, Nding'uri was hanged by the Europeans for he takes part in the Mau Mau liberation struggle. Karega's brother Nding'uri was believed to have deprived brother Ezekieli of his right ear as a punishment for preaching against the Mau Mau movement in Church. Abdulla states: "I wanted to go deep deep into the country where I would have no reminder of so bitter a betrayal" (304). As the people are not able to return their loans in time, the lands of Nyakinyua, Wanja and others are about to be auctioned by the African Bank. Wanja and Abdulla decide to sell their joint new building to Mzigo to overcome this difficulty and redeem the land. In order

to save the land and to maintain their independence of spirit, they are ready to sacrifice their property.

It is hard for them to withstand this condition. The lawyer is murdered by taking him from a big hotel to several miles from Blue Hills and shooting him and leaving for hyenas to eat. This is the plight of those who go against the corrupt political authorities. Abdulla who fought for Independence becomes seller of oranges, sheepskins and mushrooms by the roadside to tourists. In Ilmorog not only Abdulla is maimed but everyone. Abdulla is maimed physically but everyone retain maimed souls. Whereas the corrupt religious figure, Rev. Jerrod Brown becomes the head of the New Anglican parish community in Ilmorog, and owner of many cars. This implies that those who comply with capitalist ideals are rewarded and live luxurious lives and those who are against are made to suffer.

Kimeria, Chui, Mzigo, Nderi wa Riera, Rev. Jerrod Brown, and Munira's father belongs to a typical class that are completely indifferent to the cry of the people. Chui is the Kiswahili word for "Leopard". The very name itself brings images of the "night- prowlers of the jungle". The MP, the Hon. Nderi wa Riera means "vulture son of air" (Triester 268). Strictly speaking he lives a vulture like existence. He lives high above the people, increasing their miseries and feeding on the near dead people. The peasants and workers of Kenya are exploited; they only get meagre wages, and very poor housing. Unemployment affects them more than anything else. In addition to this, peasant class women are doubly exploited and oppressed.

This is a general third world problem. In fact, these workers, peasants and women are the nerves of income, and they form the most important element in Kenya. Though they produce the entire wealth that feeds, clothes, houses everyone in the society and also that are exported out of the country, they do not get even the barest

minimum of that which they produce. It is not the peasants and workers who are benefitted by what they produce. Thus, the middle class can be called as parasitic class that feeds on the workers and peasants. The elite in power grab hold of the state of the Ilmorog community with their tentacles thereby depriving its natives of enjoying any benefits in their own land.

Cultural imperialism blinded these Africans and as a result their children became victims of their narrow, snobbish beliefs. This is illustrated from the failed love between Karega and Mukami. Mukami's father led his daughter to suicide because he thought that he belongs to a respectable family that could not approve of an alliance with a family like Karega. Mukami was full of lively rebellious spirit. She gets beaten up for joining the children of squatters in stealing plums and pears from her father's fruit farm. Munira's father does not allow her daughter to have friendship with the children of squatters. Wanja's father could not allow making friendship with a boy whose family was poor and irreligious.

Men like Rev. Jerrod Brown and Ezekieli Waweru represent the hypocrisy of religion. These people pretend to be men of God, but they too like their industrial counterparts are a part of bourgeoisie. The dominance of black imperialism over the common man is evident through these characters. These betrayers also undermine the earlier struggle of the common man. Ngugi is highly ambivalent in his attitude to Christianity. Christianity an organised religion is corrupt and hypocritical. Besides acting as an agent of imperialism, Christianity exercised a highly disruptive influence on African life. It alienates the African from his own culture. Through the characters of Ezekieli Waweru and Rev. Jerrod Brown, Ngugi strongly disapproves of Christianity that is used as a tool to oppress the people.

By switching over to Christianity for material gains, Waweru betrayed the cause of freedom struggle. In the costume of a priest, Rev. Brown, is not different from the politicians. By defying the spirit of the freedom struggle, Munira's father takes the side of the British for which he is given large tracts of land. "It is an irony of history, or, for him, a manifestation of the mysterious ways of the Lord, that the new tea estate was in Tigoni, the very area Waweru's father had cited as the one act of colonial theft..." (111). According to Waweru, there is a need for unity between politics and religion because "it is in harmony with God's eternal design" (113). He conceals his selfishness by using the name of the Lord. On the other hand, Rev. Brown has totally unchristian qualities. Through their character, Ngugi brings to light the fact that religion which does not understand the real nature of the social problems is ineffective. It is this religion that threatens the unity of the workers. Karega clearly comprehends the threat of religious movement: "Karega knew that this too was to be fought. He would often quote the verse 'Give unto Caesar' to show the separation between the secular and the religious struggles... But inwardly he knew that religion, any religion, was a weapon against the workers!" (363).

The black imperialism prevails in the country where the elite continue to exploit the masses, peasants and proletariats. Just like the Trans-Africa Highway that divides the Ilmorog community into two, both symbolically and geographically, the population of post independence Kenya divided into those with power and those who are powerless. It is the working class represented by Munira, Karega, Wanja, Nyakinyua, and Abdulla is exploited to the core. But the exploited rise up to bring down the exploiter by following the same method which they had used once to bring about the political freedom from the clutches of the coloniser. Thus *Petals of Blood* details two levels of betrayal; the personal betrayal of the four protagonists, and the

political betrayal of the parasitical national bourgeoisie who abuse and exploit those they have sworn to protect. The white people utilized the disunity of the black people. In this case not only the Britishers are to be blamed but also the Kenyans are to be blamed. If the Kenyans had maintained 'strong unity' the situation would have been very different. Therefore, postindependence scenario is not absolutely free from the influence of colonial era. Under the dictatorial rule of imperialism and neocolonialism, the people of Kenya have been subjected to physical and spiritual subjugation. As Ngugi says "first it has been external factor of foreign invasion, occupation and control but now the internal factor of collaboration with external threat...western slavery, slave trade under colonialism, now neocolonialism...the storm repeats itself, in a more painful way under neocolonialism" (Uwasomba 96).

Violence is a direct cause of betrayal. In the post independent Kenya, the ruling elite who favours capitalism continues to benefit at the expense of the masses. In a revolutionary struggle against neocolonialism, the masses have realised the pretence of their masters. If they want to achieve total liberation they must take part in rebirth and revolution. Thus they chose to change their attitudes so as to defeat and overcome systems that are not of any good to them. If this complete liberation is attained, it will not only bring freedom and total independence from neocolonialism, but also brings a new Kenyan identity. It will lead to a new Kenya and a new future.

Chapter Four

Constructive Violence: A Liberative Force

In the words of a critic in *African Literature: Basis and Structure, Recent Commonwealth Literature*, "The African writers have also expressed their resentment against the corruption in the independent African states, and they have protested against the authoritarian forces which are trying to misuse the freedom gained from the colonial powers" (Pratima 113). Ngugi wa Thiong'o describes postcolonialism as the fortune of one depends on the misfortune of another. The exploitations, sufferings, tears and the pains of the colonized are the source of the colonizers' fortunes and riches. This is true in continent like Africa which has a unique cultural heritage with distinct past. Along with the African land, the white people and their collaborators also captured and devastated its culture and history. African land was plundered to the extent that its mineral wealth and brainpower was drained. This situation prevailed in every part of the African continent. With the wake of Independence in Kenya, the people were disillusioned with the new government. The new leaders promised a paradise but they did not keep their words of promise. Instead they provide a government immersed with bribery, corruption, violence and murder. Hence throughout Africa's history, Africans struggled to reject forces of domination from the time of slave trade by Europeans, throughout the colonial period, to the neocolonial era of post independence.

In the lives of the African People, the anticolonial struggle was a great event. All African masses and leaders expected a lot out of the struggle. As a result of this big revolutionary experience, the masses hoped that their living conditions would improve. African leaders offered various promises. Africans hoped that decolonisation would bring radical changes in the society. But unfortunately the

condition of the African population did not improve but only got deteriorated after independence. This deterioration is due to the fact that the anticolonial resistance had covered the class conflicts between the bourgeoisie and the ordinary people. The new political leaders proved to be incapable of providing moral and civil leadership and also they are unequal to the challenge of nation building. This results in the emergence of counter-resistance movements in postcolonial Africa.

There is difference between liberation and independence. Independence means, to be politically free whereas liberation means socially, economically and culturally free. So there is a need for the people to execute violence externally and internally to be free from domination of the outsiders culturally, politically, socially, and economically. Kenyan people struggle for their liberation from their own men. The lives of the Africans have been dedicated to resist colonial powers and the imposition of the outsider's culture, imperialism and neocolonialism. Thus the early 1960s saw Africans' struggle against various forms of domination, injustice or exploitation. Their resistance to the rule of others has emerged as the core theme of modern African studies.

As stated in *African Literature in English: East and West*, one of the preoccupations of the postcolonial African literary artists is "Opposition and dissent in African writing in English have been directed outwardly against the external forces of neocolonialism, and inwardly against the governments and social processes of the post-independence regimes, many of whom have been accused of acting simply as agents for those external forces". (Griffith 172)

For Frantz Fanon, colonial oppression is inextricably linked with physical resistance, which is linked with the material conditions of the oppressed. Fanon states that resistance was born at the moment when the Africans knew "they are not

animals". The natives start to "discover their humanity; they begin to sharpen their weapons to secure its victory" (*The Wretched of the Earth* 8). Concerning the national struggle, Fanon as a pioneer of resistance, continues the process of struggle sharpening tools, both physically and rhetorically.

Resistance can be described as a kind of action which undermines, or challenges subordination and thereby produces equal relations. In *Imperialism, Race and Resistance,* Barbara Bush defines resistance as "any action, individual or collective, violent or lawful, covert and overt, that is critical of, opposes, upsets or challenges the smooth running of colonial rule." (16). After their political Independence they want to be socially, culturally and economically free and independent which can be pronounced as true liberation.

To attain this kind of liberation, Ngugi wa Thiong'o uses violence with a constructive attitude. *Petals of Blood* is set in post independent Kenya where life in postcolonial Africa is characterised by a great deal of political disillusionment and social corruption. The village Ilmorog is transfigured by the arrival of capitalism burying old Ilmorog. They could not tolerate the destruction of hope by betrayal, hypocrisy, and corruption of their leaders. The people reached their extremity and raised the protagonists to resist the destruction. Echoing the views of Fanon, Ngugi considers there is no other way than violence for the decolonization. Violence can redeem the people of their inferiority complex. Imperialism, in its neocolonial form cannot destroy the fighting culture of the African peasantry and working class. Ngugi suggests redemption through violence as a constructive force to correct the neo-colonialist society.

Practise of violence to protest the injustice and oppressive social order is constructive violence. Walter Benjamin says of this as "the fight for the oppressed

past" (396). Kenya has a long history of violence and struggle before its independence in 1963. Gikuyu peasantry waged an armed struggle against the British colonial forces called Mau Mau revolution. This is an instance of constructive violence. It was a war that changed the fate of Kenya and many other countries under British rule. It has also touched the popular imagination of the Kenyans. It is for the first time the peasants and workers of Kenya were confronting a highly sophisticated country with a long military history. This situation prevailed until Kenya was finally independent in 1963. This continued even after the independence, again Kenya had to fight with the same situation holding different slogans.

Ngugi believes at the outset that violence begets violence. When they are continually betrayed by the bourgeoisie and the corrupt officials, the helpless people can do nothing but protest. To establish their right they use the only means of violence. Fanon's views influences Ngugi. Like Fanon, Ngugi demands 'constructive violence' rather than destructive or positive forces for decolonization. Ngugi in his essay 'Mau Mau, Violence and Culture', written in 1963 and published in his 1972 essay collection *Homecoming*, he declares: "Violence in order to change an intolerable unjust social order is not savagery: it purifies man. Violence to protect and preserve an unjust, oppressive social order is criminal, and diminishes man" (28). According to Fanon violence acts as a cleansing force, purifying man. He also held the view that anticolonial violence has a political and moral, as well as a psychotherapeutic purpose. As a believer of Fanon's views, Ngugi asserts violence as a means for the oppressed to assert sovereignty over both their land and their lives. The oppressed should successfully fight against imperial violence.

The new Ilmorog has been a land where the natives are marginalised due to the economic and political betrayal of the power elite. Ilmorog was one of the greatest

natural beauties in the world and was rich with its oral traditions. As time passed by Ilmorog was conquered by European settlers and colonialists who exploited it and even after independence it continued to remain ravished economically. The natives were disillusioned of their hopes and dreams as they hoped for the best to happen after the independence. This disillusionment triggered them to fight to bring back their glorious past.

Ngugi's characters protest against the chaotic change that resulted after colonisation. They oppose the changes imposed on them by the white colonizers or the African neo colonizers. Karega rightly says:

> Kenyan people had always been ready to resist foreign control and exploitation. The story of this heroic resistance: who will sing it? Their struggles to defend their land, their wealth, their lives: who'll tell of it? What of their earlier achievements in production that had annually attracted visitors from ancient China and India? (81)

For them, the neocolonial state denies Africa of its progress and development. So they wish for democratic Africa of peasants and workers who can widely spread the heroic struggles of people in other undeveloped countries. The defeat of imperialism and neocolonialism is their primary concern. The elites who own everything betray the poor by introducing loan schemes to seize their land by unjust means. This leads the peasants and workers to form trade union to fight back. Karega's arrest provokes the workers of the trade union to break the police station demanding his release: "The crowd was getting into an angry, threaten mood... Workers were waking to their own strength. Such a defiant confrontation with authority had never before happened in Ilmorog" (6).

In *Concept of History*, Walter Benjamin states that "the tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the 'state of emergency' in which we live is not the exception but the rule", and "In the Kenyan context, the exceptional state of the Emergency, the Mau Mau war becomes the daily state of emergency of the repressive neo-colonial regime" (198). Historically, Africa has gone under various movements of resistance such as Mau Mau resistance, Pan-Africanism, Negritude and so on. These movements aimed to restore African cultures and traditions and thereby gaining political and economic independence. Mau Mau political resistance movement is one of the prominent movements across the globe. Mau Mau revolution is the best example of African's resistance to colonialism. Almost all the African countries are influenced by this revolution and it becomes a key for African resistance. Ngugi, in his *Homecoming*, asserts: "To most Africans Mau Mau in fact, was a heroic and glorious aspect of the mainstream of the African nationalism... Mau Mau violence was anti injustice, while violence was to thwart the cause of justice" (27-28).

The Mau Mau rebellion is also an attempt of violence to liberate Kenyans from colonization. In the early 1950s, the Mau Mau rebellion becomes active in Kenya as a militant African nationalist movement. It is a nationalist and anticolonial armed resistance against the British colonial state. Although Mau Mau revolution had to face many obstacles such as the split between KCA (Kikuyu Central Association) and KAU (Kenya African Union), finally it grew into an important force in the history of Kenyan's resistance to colonial power. The 'guerrilla movement' named itself as the 'Kenya Land Freedom Army'. The white settler population in Kenya labelled them as "Mau Mau". Though it aims complete liberation, Mau Mau has succeeded only in elevating new ruling elite. It replaces the white oppressor with the black ones.

According to the views of Fanon, rebellion is to be considered as violence against violence. Though the rebellion failed, the Kenyans try to liberate themselves. And in this way they try to construct themselves. From this point of view, Ngugi's attitude to violence is constructive. Dedan Kimathi, a great Mau Mau leader took on mythical proportion of Ngugi and many Kenyans who sets to fight back. To liberate themselves, Mau Mau leaders like Ole Masai, Kimathi who fought for liberation of Kenya favours violence. Abdulla is also a Mau Mau rebel. The four protagonists, Abdulla, Munira, Karega, Wanja take violence as a collective way to rebuild their society. Wanja arrives at Ilmorog in order to heal the wound in her soul caused by her own act of killing her child. Again she is subjected to continuous betrayal, which turns her to be violent. Wanja's philosophy towards violence is that, "You eat somebody or you are eaten. You sit on somebody or somebody sits on you." (345)

To destroy evil, Munira burns down Wanja's 'Sunshine Lodge'. According to Munira, Wanja is an evil doer, who is destroying Karega. So he wants to save and purify Karega by burning down Wanja's house. This violent action can be considered as constructive as it saved Karega. This act is also constructive because this is the first time Munira acted actively and thereby he recreates his identity. "Fire" itself is a symbol of violence in this novel. Burning of Wanja's 'Sunshine Lodge' symbolises the death of evil deed. When Munira burns her brothel the fire actually purifies Wanja. This is an act of constructive violence. It is true that any revolution is not possible without action or violence. Rebellion happens when the people shout against the tyrants and show their anger in violent actions.

Karega, a more enlightened rebel, is keen in destroying the evil system by leading a workers revolution. He is arrested for being a 'communist at heart'. But he believes in anti-violence, for which he is guilty of inaction many times. He denies

personal killing: "I don't believe in the elimination of individuals" (366). Karega helps the trade union and devotes himself to the unity of workers. He keeps on searching for a lost innocence, hope and faith and opposed Wanja's philosophy. He believes that being one of the violators one cannot not prevent violence. He assures that there must be other way to a 'new world' devoid of betrayal and violence. He feels that there should be change in the system not in the individuals. True liberation of the Kenyans is possible only in the hands of society of workers and peasants of Kenya. Only they can bring change to the system and liberate the Kenyans. In doing so, in a way he supported constructive violence. He says that with guns, swords and organizations, they can change the condition of their oppressors.

Fanon regards violence as an act of liberation and an act of re-creation. As violence frees us from the existence of being oppressed, he esteems liberation as a cleansing and regenerative force. Actually, Fanon's ideology is a commitment to violence as a positive constructive force. Following the ideology of Fanon, Ngugi gives political front to peasants so that they can unify and be able to speak for their own self. For instance in *Petals of Blood*, people of Ilmorog on their journey to Nairobi which is a symbolic journey to 'Bethlehem' speak for themselves is also an act of violence. This violence is a constructive violence that stirs the heart of the oppressed with the hope of liberation and their identity. Their Journey to Nairobi is used as a powerful symbol of constructive violence. Their journey brings about an awakening change to fight the unfair and corrupt order. The constructive violence of the community and continuous struggle against the native oppressors establishes a new civilization which need to be preserved.

Their symbolic journey "toward Bethlehem to be born" refers to the rebirth of Kenyan people. The villagers decide to represent their problems to their MP, Nderi

wa Riera, by going to Nairobi. Their journey would be unsuccessful if the Ilmorog delegation did not turn to violence at the end. The agitated crowd shouted on addressing Nderi: "These are the people who are misusing our freedom" (219). They flew sticks, stones, and orange-peels aiming at their hypocritical, irresponsible MP. Their resistance become well known to the countrymen with the newspaper story. Within three hours, they were flooded with donation of food. So violence saved their day.

Abdulla is a Mau Mau fighter, who is maimed physically, while the other exiles were affected in their souls. He is an introvert Mau Mau fighter who fought for the country which totally betrayed him. The independent Kenya has failed to take care of the fighter who sacrificed his family and land for the country. He himself gets rehabilitated. But when the same person Kimeria, who betrayed his friend during Mau Mau also involved in spoiling his business and his earning, he starts to rebel. He is determined to take revenge on Kimeria for whom he loses one leg. He wants to avenge the death of his friend, Nding'uri and save Wanja from his claws by killing Kimeria. In his motive for fighting to liberate people socially as well as economically, he says: "To redeem the land: to fight so that the industries like the shoe- factory which had swallowed his sweat could belong to the people: so that his children could one day have enough to eat and to wear under adequate shelter from rain" (164).

Nyakinyua, Wanja's grandmother finds fault with the fellow Africans. She tries to fight back by gathering peasants of Ilmorog to fight it out that her land would never be settled by strangers. She says, "I'll go alone... my man fought the white man. He paid for it with his blood... I'll struggle against these black oppressors... alone... alone..." (328). She fights with determination against the forces that have deprived her of her heritage. She made all efforts to resist the encroachment of the

oppressors. Nyakinyua points out the focal point between the local exploiters and their foreign collaborators and leads their fight. But many people do not have interest or courage to resist and she is forced to "fight back... alone". Because of the reluctance of others to support her, unfortunately her fight ends in failure. So the African society is transformed into a capitalist society with all the problems of prostitution and social inequality. Though she can't get her land back while she is alive, Wanja redeemed the land on the day of sale. This is the prize for her determination to fight back.

When Munira takes his students out in the field, encounters a worm eaten flower through which the metaphor of exploitation is evident. In his explanation to the children, he states that such a flower "cannot bear fruit". And consequently he urges the students to "always kill worms", in this case worms are symbolic of capitalists and politicians who continue to exploit the peasants and decline their growth. The peasants like "the worm-eaten flower" are socially and materially deprived by the exploitative elite. The act of killing those worms suggests constructive violence, as it is meant for the destruction of the betrayers.

Karega is a spokesperson for Ngugi's socialist behaviour. Through Karega, Ngugi shows that in traditional African society, socialism was a natural way of life and calls on the African society to go back to its former way of life. Imperialist capital becomes the real enemy in Africa. That's why in *Wilderness into Civilized Shapes: Reading the Postcolonial Environment*, Laura Wright suggests that the attempt to regain a pre-colonial past is out of reach. That's obvious in what Karega wished for, that a new hybrid life in Ilmorog could mean a good life on this wholly new world (36). To change the status quo, Karega becomes a trade union agitator who mobilizes the workers and the peasants to rid the society of exploitation. Karega's union

activities have politicized the workers and they are ready to show rebelliousness and disobey their greedy employers. This can be seen in the last part of the novel, indicating that the struggle continues "La Luta Continua". It affirms that the coming together of the peasants and the workers in a united and collective manner against their exploiters will liberate them from the present state of misery and poverty.

At first nobody desired to take part in rebellion. But when the exploitation reaches its height and the people are deprived of their own land they start to rebel. Munira was also haunted by the need to breakout from the situation. Instead of being a passive spectator he wants to do something. Finally he too desired to establish a 'secular new world' with the inspiration of divine feeling, which prompts him to violence. Munira's act of burning 'Sunshine Lodge', the common place for Kimeria, Chui, Mzigo, the neocolonial agents, is similar to the repetition of his early life, throwing the sin, and corruption into fire. In earlier days, moved by some truly spiritual personalities, he has felt the need to confess and to be cleansed by the Lord. So he built an imitation of a house assuming it to be a sinful place and burnt it. He feels that he is truly purified by fire.

As the inspector rightly suspects, Abdulla, Munira, and Karega has a very good justification to murder Kimeria, Chui and Mzigo. The problems of Ilmorog may not lessen with the deaths of Chui, Mzigo and Kimeria but it brings back the spirit of the struggle, which is being undermined by the negative forces. Karega knows that there is no one time solution for these problems that is why he says:

> The system and its gods and its angels had to be fought consciously, consistently and resolutely by all working people! ... Tomorrow it would be the workers and the peasants leading the struggle and seizing

> power to overturn the system of all its preying bloodthirsty gods and gnomic angels.... (409)

After some years the people rose in unison against their exploiters. People should fight against the forces of oppression and should not let them enfeeble the force of unity that won them their independence. They should be prepared to recapture the spirit of the struggle down the ages, only then they can get an independent future.

To this deplorable state of affairs in the postcolonial state in Kenya, the workers should respond by resisting the postcolonial leadership's naked robbery. Kenya's history has never just been a narrow story of victorious oppressors, but it can be characterised by the heroic resistance of ordinary people. As Karega, says: "The true lesson of history was this: that the so-called victims, the poor, the downtrodden, the masses, had always struggled with spears and arrows, with their hands and songs of courage and hope, to end their oppression and exploitation" (360). Thereby he creates the necessity of revolt and revolution. The possibilities of revolt can be seen in those who are eagerly waiting for revolutionary transformation within the society. Constructive violence can be seen in Karega's revolutionary activities. Karega, after organising the peasants to march to Nairobi, he moves on to build a union. For better wages and better working conditions, he organises strikes in the industrial world. The formation of a revolutionary movement seems to suggest that, whether they are peasants or workers in factories they committed themselves in revolutionary activities along with Karega.

The protest of Karega can be seen at the beginning of the novel, when he says "Disband yourself... disband the tyranny of foreign companies and their local messengers! Out with foreign rule policed by colonized blackskins! Out with exploitation of our sweat!" (6). In spite of the oppression, exploitation, and sufferings,

the native people still hope to gain their liberation. Their belief in rebellion is aroused especially by Munira, Karega, Nyakinyua, and Abdulla. Munira asserts that "I can't speak for everybody- but it seems that there is still enthusiasm and a belief that we can all do something to make our independence real" (12). And, "a few had to die for freedom" (60).

The courage and belief of Karega is evident throughout the novel. In every case he strongly struggles for the freedom of his country, and tries to motivate native people, especially children, because he believes that the hope of Kenya lies in the hands of the children. Only the children who form the future generation will get their own people liberated by resistance. Hence resistance aims to fight against the existing system by reconstructing alternatives, and making it outdated.

> Here is our hope... in the new children, who have nothing to prove to the white man... who do not find it necessary to prove that they can eat with knife and fork; that they can speak English through the nose; that they can serve the monster as efficiently as the white ministers; and therefore can see the collective humiliation clearly and hence are ready to strike out for the true kingdom of black god within us all. (200)

Nyakinyua and Abdulla's stories of Mau Mau battle enlivens in Karega the sense of the past, and also gives him the sense of pride. Ngugi attacks capitalist greed and also calls for a revolution against this injustice. As part of the community, the central characters are involved in individual adventures against the external forces. They possess a strong determination to change the present anarchy and always hope for ultimate liberation. But the incidents from their past life always haunt them.

Munira, disillusioned by the new development at Ilmorog and also of lost love of Wanja, devoted his energy to social change with confidence. His burning down of

Wanja's whorehouse symbolizes the death of capitalism. Karega believes that the murder of individuals is not of much significance within the system. But Karega along with Munira and Abdulla is confined on suspicion of involvement in a murder in which he had no role. His revolutionary spirit has not diminished regardless of his imprisonment. He has received consideration from people for his revolutionary activities.

Karega never stops teaching his students about the honorable resistance of Kenyan people. To restore his dignity as an African and also to replace the kind of alienating education provided at Siriana by the colnial educators such as Fraudsham and Chui, he desperately searches for an alternative education as an African. Through his character, Ngugi reflects the belief and hope of Kenyan people for liberation, which has never died. To awaken the revolutionary spirit of the Kenyans, Karega explicitly depicts the history of Kenya. According to Karega, the oppression of black people is an undeniable fact. He mentions how his people resisted against colonizers: "That our people fought against the Arab slave raiders is a fact: that the Akamba people built formidable defences against them even while trading with them in ivory is a fact. That our people resisted European intrusion is a fact" (294).

He believes that Kenya has an honourable history of resisting those who want to colonize their land. He says "That Kenya people have had a history of fighting and resistance is therefore a fact." (294). He thinks that the children of Kenya must be aware of the things that deformed them yesterday, and are deforming them today. They must also look at the things which formed them yesterday, that will creatively form them into a new breed of men and women in future. Karega, Hawkins, Abdulla and Munira are spokespersons for Ngugi's socialist solution.

In spite of all the hard conditions the colonized people never stop to fight. The story of Nding'uri shows their protest: "Why do you oppress black people? Why do you take our land? Why do you take our sweat and ruin our women? Johnnie boys, red men, say your last prayers to your gods" (264). Their enthusiastic song also proves their love for the freedom: "Our flag. It is of three colors, rightly sang the poet: Green is our Land; Black is black people; and Red is our blood" (63).

Similarly, in the postcolonial African society, there is a call for an international struggle to achieve democratic, egalitarian society in Kenya. In Kenya, the slogan "Eat or be Eaten" becomes effective. In order to lead a wealthy life without any sufferings and to keep men under her control, Wanja opens 'Sunshine Lodge':

> It has been the only way I can get my own back on Chui, Mzigo and Kimeria ... I go with all of them now ... I play them against one another. It is easy because I only receive them by appointment ... each wants to make me his sole woman ... As for me, it's a game ... of money ... You eat or you are eaten. (348)

The governments and global financial institutions made the people believe that especially in developing countries; globalization will definitely improve the lives of the people throughout the world. It will help individuals to march on the road of prosperity. It promises harmony between the people of the world, and a better tomorrow for those who will be benefited from this greater economic sufficiency. But in fact it makes the situation worse than before.

According to Cook and Okenimkpe, the character sketch of Hawkins is based on the real-life Kenyan activist Josiah Mwangi. Hawkins analyses the political condition of Kenya after freedom:

> ... I look back on the wasted chances, on the missed opportunities: on the hour, the day, the period, when, at the crossroads, we took the wrong turning.... We could have done anything, then, because our people were behind us. But we ... chose to flirt with the molten god, a blind, deaf monster who has plagued us for hundreds of years.... Now see the outcome ... dwellers in Blue Hills, those who have taken on themselves the priesthood of the ministry to the blind god . . . a thousand acres of land . . . a million acres in the two hands of a priest, while the congregation moans for an acre! (195)

Because of his reformist efforts in Parliament, Hawkins is assassinated. This teaches Karega a lesson that Parliament is also one such elite institutions which do not offer any relief to anyone from the neocolonial exploitation. The reformist stance of Hawkins has close affinity with Ngugi's own political views. Being confident he states:

> They are bound to fail. Can't you see: we, the workers, the poor peasants, ordinary people, the masses are now too awake to be deceived about tribal loyalties, regional assemblies, glorious pasts... No... it is too late, Wanja. . . we shall no longer let others reap where they never planted, harvest where they never cultivated, take to their banks from where they never sweated. . . Tell them this: There are a million Karegas for every ten Kimerias... The workers and the peasant farmers of Kenya are awake. (387-88)

Karega refuses to stay back with Wanja as he feels that Wanja is now more with these unscrupulous trios (Chui, Mzigo, and Kimeria) so he leaves her lonely. It is after her union with Abdulla she feels guilty and plans to invite all the three directors

separately to her place without each other's knowledge to take revenge for their betrayals. It is evident from her confession to the police officer that when she was receiving the last person, Kimeria she saw her place being set on fire and she passed out on seeing it. But Ngugi narrates the thing which Wanja hides. It is that she kills Kimeria before seeing the flames and all the evidences of it has been burnt by the engulfing fire. Her act of violence towards the betrayers proves her to be rebellious. Munira's act to save Karega is not just by "passive obedience to the law but active obedience to the universal law of God" (394-95). Therefore in the end when Munira is imprisoned, he condemns his father of taking on oath not for the national liberation struggle but of taking "an oath to divide the Kenya people and to protect the wealth in the hands of only a few." (405). That is why he denounces them saying that their actions have nothing in accordance with their preaching.

At the end all the peasants and workers turn out to be rebellious. However the death of the three capitalists who are the agents of imperialism: Chui, Kimeria, and Mzigo in the fire are symptomatic of the final destruction of their base. Eustace Palmer claims that

> A violent death seems to be a logical and well-deserved conclusion to the fortunes of the three African directors of the Theng'eta Brewery, but that it should be brought about by a fire started in a moment of inspiration by a religious fanatic seems a melodramatic contrivance which takes a remarkably serious work back to the level of the detective thriller. (297)

The novel ends with a strong hope of a proletarian revolution, as there is the realization on the part of the Kenyan workers and peasants of the possibilities of overthrowing international capitalism and its neo- colonial agents. Karega, the trade

union protagonist in the novel, shows the path of people's liberation struggles. And Joseph, the orphan, who turns into "a tall-youth" is also committed to the struggle motif. Abdulla's adopted son, Joseph assures his father that he will strive for the liberation of Kenya. Joseph, at the threshold of a new beginning, learns more from Abdulla. Taking part in the second strike against Chui at Siriana he tells Abdulla: "When I grow up and finish school and university I want to be like you: I would like to feel proud that I had done something for our people. You fought for the political independence of this country: I would like to contribute to the liberation of the people of this country" (403-04).

The news of the mass movement of workers at Ilmorog is revealed by the young girl Akinyi, who met Karega in jail. She reveals the revolutionary movement which ensured the defeat of the exploiters and victory of workers. She tells Karega the news she heard of the shooting down of a very important person in authority in Nairobi, gunned down by "Wakombozi - or the society of one world liberation" (408). This man is no other than Stanley Mathenge from Ethiopia who comes "to complete the war he and Kimathi started" (408). Karega suddenly turns hopeful that there will be number of people who will join him in his mission, he states: "... it would be the workers and the peasants leading the struggle and seizing power to overturn the system of all its preying bloodthirsty gods and gnomic angels, bringing to an end the reign of the few over the many and the era of drinking blood and feasting on human flesh." (409). Karega foresees the glimpse of the upcoming struggle: "Tomorrow. . . tomorrow. . .' he murmured to himself 'Tomorrow . . .' and he knew he was no longer alone" (410). Ngugi presents through Karega that socialism is a natural way of life in traditional African society and for a prosperous and happy life in present.

Karega's hopes are rekindled by the renewal of a promising and prosperous "tomorrow" as conveyed to him in his prison cell by a girl, Akinyi, who has been sent by the workers with food and news: "They are with you. . . and they are. . . we are planning another strike and a march through Ilmorog." (408). He believes in a new kind of Kenya to be born out of struggles to be launched by the peasants and workers all over the country. He imagines the dawn of a new world: "the kingdom of man and woman ... enjoying and loving in creative labour" (409).

For the dawn of a new order, 'creative labour' is very much needed. It specifies peoples' liberation struggles on the one hand and a sense of faith in fate on the other. It seeks to deal with the law of God, the law of the state and the socialistic goals. The native people in their collective wisdom and power are the true liberators. In Karega's absence, Joseph is likely to lead these struggles. Both Karega and Joseph are committed to a humane and socialist order of a promising "tomorrow." Thus *Petals of Blood* depicts the flowering (petals) of a new egalitarian and just order brought about by struggle, violence and sacrifice (blood). The notion of violence is also present in the title of *Petals of Blood.*

Hence the Kenyan workers and peasants realise the possibilities of overthrowing international capitalism and its neocolonial agents. There is a strong hope of a proletarian revolution. It makes clear that imperialism can never develop Kenya. Ngugi tries to make Kenyan workers and peasants realize their historical struggles since 1895. In the present scenario people are divided into number of sectors: "some take the side of the people in a struggle and others sell out to foreign interests while still others stood precariously on the fence?" (398). Like Ilmorog's delegation to Nairobi, strikes at Theng'eta Brewing Company and student struggles at

the Elite Siriana School, it is important to perform collective action to empower ordinary masses to resist oppression.

In order to escape from the real enemy of Africa, the natives have to move back to their past immediately so that they can protect themselves from the exploitation of the society by the imperialist capital. The struggle against this greedy and corrupt community will continue until all the evils will be abolished from the nation on the whole. The bright future for Kenya will come only at the end of a long and arduous class struggle. Since there is no visible enemy to fight against, it is difficult to fight; still the people have to fight back.

By means of constructive violence, Ngugi exposes some optimism. In the violent act of purification all the protagonists actively take part and provide silent support. The future generation with the spirit of purification and courage from their ancestors who involved in freedom fighting and social revolution, are born to restore the serenity in Kenya. Through Joseph who belongs to the younger generation, Ngugi tries to suggest that Kenyans have to be free from outsiders politically, economically, and socially through external and internal violence so that they can make a 'new world' for themselves. Like fire that burns the sins, constructive violence will destroy the corrupted, rotten society and there is a hope and promise for the rebirth of a new Kenya. Thus resistance and reconstruction of the colonised is an act of liberation. And liberation is a product of resistance. It is attained when the people get the right to control the means of their physical, economic, political, cultural and psychological being. The desperate acts of the oppressed against their oppressors are represented by their individual acts of violence.

Chapter Five

Summation

Resistance and representation are the ideas that surface repeatedly in postcolonial literature and theory. The present study focuses on Ngugi wa Thiong'o's use of resistance as a method of literary representation in his interpretation of postcoloniality. The Introductory chapter provides the background to the study and gives an introduction to African literature. It also gives a brief introduction to Ngugi wa Thiong'o and his works. It states the research problem, an overview of the dissertation and justification of the study. These are followed by research design, and at the end chapter synopsis is discussed. It aims to highlight the importance of the novel as well as about African writings.

Though Africans had a long tradition of poetry and drama, novels have become the principal literary genre in the African continent consequent to colonisation. The historical reality of the continent gets reflected in African novels. African novels have undergone many phases. According to the change in the historical circumstances, the background and context of the novels have considerably changed. The writers' commitments to the cultural retention of the continent have influenced African literary creativity. Thus the origin of African novels is chiefly associated with colonialism. The efforts of the Christian missionaries in introducing western education in the colonies also became a crucial factor in the development of the novel as a major literary genre. In the making of African indigenous novels, the Bible and other religious texts also played a crucial role. Many African novels are motivated by the creative potential of the Bible and its affinity with many of the African oral traditions.

Postcolonial writings constitute a revolt by the colonially marginalised against the imperial centre. Since 1960s postcolonial writing is a new centre by which African writers exhibit their rage against the corrupt and corrupting African elite. It is hard to find an art for art function of literature in Africa, as the people of Africa have been experiencing prosecutions, suffering and oppression under different regimes during the precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial African regimes. Ngugi wa Thiong'o is one among the heroes in the area of African literature, who is well known for his condemnation of the colonizers or the neocolonial elites. The thematic issues that have been dealt by Ngugi represent the reality in almost all African nations, since most African nations have more or less similar experience of colonization, postcolonialism and now neocolonialism. In the novel under study he exposes the ills of the society. The novel affirms that coming together of peasants and workers in united and collective manner against their exploiters will liberate them from the present state of misery and life of poverty.

The subject of interesting writings in Africa includes the way and manner the Whites related with the Black people, their various levels of reactions and response of the black population to the invading socio-political values during the colonial era. Thus, the study examines the socio-political development in postcolonial Kenyan society, and the relationships that exist among Kenyan citizens, especially between the rich and the poor, the government (ruling class), and the governed (masses). In spite of the transformation and change in the socio-political setting of the State, there is a continuous occurrence of violence, injustice, corruption and disintegration that forms the themes of contemporary Kenyan literature.

It is very important to analyse the pre independence socio-political status to understand postcolonialism, and contrast it with the era immediately preceding the

attainment of political and territorial independence. Postcolonialism is a vast field that constitutes the activities of the State, the economic, socio-political values of the citizens, the reactions and responses of the State apparatus, and the activities of the public to the self-rule at the end of colonialism. Ngugi wa Thiong'o captures this scenario in his novel *Petals of Blood*.

A renowned, multifaceted and prolific African writer, Ngugi wa Thiong'o has been known for his commitment to the emancipation and upliftment of the peasant and labour communities of his country. For the decolonization of the Third world countries he has made many unrelenting attempts. He began his writing career in English. After writing five novels in English he has changed his mind that he should write only in Gikuyu, his mother tongue. He is well known for his novels, plays, short stories and essays. His fictional and nonfictional works have brought the Kenyan literature in English into the limelight. He has made major contribution to the African language with his foundation of Gikuyu language journal *Mutiiri*. Ngugi is one of the most significant and rebellious writers of Africa. The disparity between the wealthy few and the massed poor are increased by the neocolonial political, economic and social structures. Ngugi criticises Africa's withholding of this disparity. He is equally critical of Africa's self-betrayal, and he finds it to be a strong contributing factor in Africa's current demise. Ngugi condemns corruption and greed of Kenya's political, economic and social elite who after attaining freedom from the British rule are wilfully squandering the wealth of the nation. They perpetuate social injustice and economic inequality that were the features of colonial oppression.

Along with criticizing neocolonialism, he also criticizes the system of capitalism and its destructive and alienating effects on traditional Kenyan society. He explicitly compares post independent Kenyan leaders and British rulers and examines

the betrayal by the postcolonial regime and their struggle that helped Kenya achieve its freedom. The situations of postindependent Kenya have been dealt in the novel *Petals of Blood*. On behalf of the masses, the entire novel is a condemnation of the government. His assertions about the disadvantages of the independent government in the novel made the government angry.

The novel under study depicts the transformation of a society due to Western education, capitalism and urbanization. Africa is a place where social relationship is influenced by colonialism, industrialism, urbanization, and also Christianity. The chapter entitled **Colonial Transformation** deals with two types of transformation, one resulting in contact with the natural interactions of cultures; the other the outcome of deliberate policy. Ilmorog gets transformed into a proto-capitalist society with all the attendant problems of prostitution, misery, and social inequalities. Class line divides new Ilmorog. There are many Chuis, Mzigos and Kimerias in New Ilmorog who are the agents of imperialism. They control the important spheres of life in Ilmorog. This can be seen in the directorship of Theng'eta Breweries and Enterprises Ltd. This enterprise once belonged to Wanja and Abdulla but the government through its agents handed it over to a multinational corporation.

Wanja, who rises from her position as a barmaid to economic independence and womanhood is forced back to the humiliating status of a prostitute because in New Kenya nothing is obtained free, "You want it, you pay for it" (332) and the slogan becomes "eat or be eaten". The degradation of Wanja is the most effective symbol of the economic deprivation and ruthless dispossession of the peasants in Ilmorog. In the precolonial Africa, the position of African woman in the society was of high value. But colonization made their position insignificant. Prostitution is the

solid proof for the place of African woman that became marginal during colonialism and after independence.

The town's transformation from a deserted village into a magnanimous town of stone, iron, concrete and glass, gives the picture of the disintegration of the unified social values that have informed social and economic interactions in the community, where nothing was for free. That is why Wanja attributes the changes to the fact that the present Kenya knows only one law, "Eat or be Eaten". Ngugi uses social transformation as a means to cross examine the tragic effects of modern capitalism. The advent of imperialist economic planning restructures the mode of production. Therefore transformation in human and social relations in postcolonial societies takes place.

The chapter entitled **Betrayal** gives details about various levels of betrayal retained in the postcolonial period by their own countrymen. Through strong resistance and great sacrifice, African people tried to achieve freedom. But Africa's freedom is merely an illusion because the black rulers are the puppets of the White. They exploit their fellow Africans. By means of corruption and their selfish motives, the leaders became cruel dictators and exploited their own innocent people. They forget the real heroes of the freedom and their sacrifice. Africa's pains and troubles are doubled with globalization, tourism and foreign policy. The situation did not change even after the African nations achieve their independence:

> Ever since African countries acquired flag independence, most of their economies have experienced retarded and low levels of growth and many times negative growth. The ruling elites in most of these countries have been similar in their incompetence, short-sightedness,

and continued failure to recognize the factors that hinder growth (Mwaura 8).

The colonial power does not end with the departure of the British colonizers. The educated elites and middle class people reconstitute the colonial regime and exercise power over their own people by taking over the political and economic controls from the colonizers. During decolonization period they are the voice of the nation. But after that instead of being the voice of the nation they betray the ideals of the nationalist liberation struggle and the hope of the people by fully embracing imperialist capitalism. Their skin is black but their mask is white. For instance, the M.P. in the novel takes sides with transnational companies in tourism business. He buys the land from the peasants with the capital he gets from the foreign investors and transforms Ilmorog into a tourist centre where tourists from outside come for young prostitutes. He is concerned only with the development of business but does not mind to modernize agriculture.

The marginalized peasants and workers are the principal actors in the anticolonial struggle. But in contemporary Kenyan history these two classes are on the brink of disappearing. In the form of transnational corporations and international development organizations, the imperialist powers intrude and manifest themselves. The national elite and the bourgeoisie sanctioned these organizations which give loans to the peasants and encourage them to do various kinds of big scale farming with machines, imported fertilizers and paid labour. They also persuade the workers to sell their plots and invest in commercial businesses instead. However the peasants accumulate debt as they were unable to produce agricultural products at the expected level. The bank thus confiscated their land. Once the land was stolen by the colonialists during the colonial time, again this is the second robbery of the land.

Hence the peasants are disillusioned with independence as it does not secure their land against foreign intruders. Since they have no control or power, their lives have been neglected by the government.

Education is presented cynically in *Petals of Blood*. Munira is a teacher who lacks strong abilities to guide his pupils. Instead of emphasizing his own beliefs he prefers to stand back. He prefers the children to be taught politics and things which are "facts", rejecting the claims of others that the children should be taught more about being African. Only when the Africans are united and be aware of their duty to their people, they can have real freedom from all evils. But now the African leaders exploit the natural resources and human powers of Africa by helping the foreigners. Indeed, Ngugi emerges as a true spokesperson of the miserable conditions of Africa. *Petals of Blood* is a cry for the helpless peasants and workers of Africa who have lost all that they had. The pains and problems of Africa were further added with tourism and globalization. Because of the influence of the colonialists the young generation become misfits and misguided.

With the advent of capital investment in Ilmorog, one can witness economic deprivation of peasants and workers. They are forced to live off the slave wages of African landowners and African businessmen in partnership with multinational companies that have recently taken over Ilmorog. The deprivation of the peasants of Ilmorog contrasts sharply with the wealth of colonial settlers and African farmers. Independence does not usher in any comfort or economic gains for peasants and workers. It is the same group of loyalists, whom Ngugi referred as 'homeguards' emerges as the beneficiaries of Uhuru. Ilmorog is, therefore, a physical manifestation of the contradictory presence of poverty and capital in Kenya. Thus the ills of the colonial state are simply reproduced in the postcolonial state. For example, Kimeria,

who betrayed Abdulla and Nding'uri during the Mau Mau war, is the new hero of political independence. Through Waweru, the landowner, and his father Brother Ezekiel, Ngugi demonstrates that the exploitation of deprived peasants and workers becomes a family business.

It is hard for the people of Ilmorog who are mainly peasants to compete with the business insights and expertise of the capitalists. They painfully lose their lands and inheritances, and finally, disintegrate into labourers. For example, Abdulla becomes a roadside orange seller. The bewildered Mau Mau rebel, Abdulla ironic to his past heroism runs a wine shop. The only female character that is given voice is Wanja. Her marginalization is ambivalent. It is clear that Ngugi uses Wanja as a representative of thousands of Kenyan Women. Wanja symbolises Kenya itself that suffers under the oppression of a new disease, the deadly neocolonialism.

The young generation has become the victim of corrupt politicians and false promises given by them. To ward off the bourgeoisie and the black imperialists who are threatening the survival of the unfortunate poor, Ngugi calls for unity of the Kenyan people. Only the honest and committed union of people can make true democracy as possible. Lack of support by the fellow natives discourages some courageous ones, like Nyakinyua, who are determined to fight all forces of capitalism and exploitation. Ngugi regards that the most genuinely revolutionary class in the Third World are the poor peasants. In fact, Ngugi hopes for a good future for Africa.

When the hungry peasants come to his office in Nairobi, Nderi finds it hard to believe. He rather thinks as if someone is plotting to bring him down from his position. As an MP, he is supposed to work towards the development of Ilmorog. It is his duty to equip the town with social facilities such as school, healthcare centres, as well as infrastructure facilities. However, he never returns to Ilmorog, after being

elected. The luxuries in Nairobi make him forget about his hometown and the people who vote for him as their representative. Only a few kilometres away from the capital, Ilmorog remains without even proper schooling for a long time. The road leading to Ilmorog is also badly damaged. There arises a question, if one is not making any contribution towards the development of the people he represents then what is the point of being an MP.

When life becomes difficult, in search of work, the young men and women migrate to nearby cities. Among all these weakness of Capitalistic Democracy the worst of the political set up is that the people do not even remember the name of their MP. This is because of the fact that the MP does not know anything about the people of his constituency nor do the people. Munira says the people can only hear about the MP during elections. He had visited the village only to ask for votes and had given several promises. This makes clear that the public officials, especially MPs, make a lot of pledges even collect some money from the poor peasants until they are elected. But once they assume power they usually don't get time to think about the people who elect them.

Mzigo as a school inspector does not do his duty properly. Mzigo does not know anything about the problem that arises when teachers refuse to work in the school due to lack of proper facilities, and students return to their villages, to help their parents. After attaining a post, the public officials confine themselves in big cities and towns. They never care to see the work being done at rural areas. And their perception of work is limited only to the office environment. But in spite of widespread corruption and misgovernance in the country, there are some who would like to build their country. For instance, Munira's life would have been better off if he

chose to manage his father's business, but his commitment to stay and work with the forgotten people shows his willingness to build his country.

The shameless deeds of the government are another instance of corruption of the government elites. Even by the time Ilmorog is hit by a severe drought and people flee their homestead in search of food, the government send tax collectors. Usually tax is collected by the government from people so that it can be used to fulfil basic facilities for the residents from whom the money is collected, especially when they are in need. But the hard hearted tax collectors come to collect money from the people who are hungry and those who find it difficult to meet their daily needs. In the neocolonialist system of governance, the officers feel that as their stomach is full, others also may not be hungry. KCO, Kamewene Cultural Organization is the other means of collecting money from the poor with a pretext of creating peace and harmony among the rich and the poor. Anyone who comes to attend the meeting of the organization is expected to come up with twelve shillings and fifty cents. This also indicates that if it fetches them money the corrupt officials do not even hesitate to sell the peasant farmers alive.

Ilmorog has been reduced to a mere shadow of its former self. As the progressing assurance of the city has declined, its young, energetic and youthful population had leached away and Ilmorog was inhabited only by elderly men and women. Commercialism corrupts Ilmorog's new found unity. Therefore, using modernization and commercialization as a pretext, the imperialists disrupt the peaceful way of existence of the people and build a hell for the people of Kenya. By distinguishing between the Western bourgeoisie and the colonial bourgeoisie, Ngugi calls for a revolution in Kenya to ward off those evils. Karega's politicising of the factory workers at the end in Ilmorog reconstitutes the budding of collective unity and

worker solidarity. The Kenyan peasants and workers end up with the realization that they can overthrow international capitalism and its neocolonial agents with a strong hope of a proletarian revolution.

The chapter entitled **Constructive Violence: A Liberative Force** justifies the use of violence as a constructive force. In Africa, political independence could not bring about freedom, equality, self rule or sovereignty for the people. The suffering of African people has turned from bad to worse with the process of decolonization. The corrupt behaviour of African government elites is chiefly responsible for the imperialist ideology to take root in Africa. With continuous betrayal the people understands their necessity to be organised so that they can get a strong sense of nationhood and always work towards the development of their country. The cooperation of the workers and the peasants is mandatory to unite regardless of their religious inclination, ethnic background, skin colour, and educational level, in the struggle to overthrow the system that supports only the world of the eater and the eaten. Africans recognise the need for the rejection of the system of eating on other people's labour, eating of human flesh and drinking human blood and realise communism is a natural way of life for the poor people of Africa.

Petals of Blood throws light on injustices that bedevilled post independence Kenya, and the effects of such injustices on the masses. Ngugi suggests the masses not to succumb to their miserable situation but to rise up and shake off the effects of post colonialism. The native bourgeoisie maintain their power through hegemony and control of the colonial power. Whereas the victim always remains a victim regardless their land is independent or not. This is the cruel reality of neocolonial Kenya. To achieve real freedom one needs to be both independent and liberated. It is not easy to remove this unjust process. There is need for force to be applied. Hence violence used

for better reason might not be considered as mere violence but as constructive violence.

Violence is the result of loss of confidence in the ability of the elite to build a successful society along the lines of capitalist ideology. This creates the possibility of progress and liberation in the cultural and economic spheres. The proletariat condemns the bourgeois philosophy and practice, as manifested in international capitalism and thereby rejects neocolonialism as a practical way of life. To liberate themselves from the present state of bondage and life of misery and poverty, the peasants and workers should come together in a united and collective manner. The renewed struggles of the people against oppression and repression implemented by local colonialists are to be appreciated.

Resistance in the novel begins with Mukami. In protest against imperialism she commits suicide. Karega is another rebellious character who opposes the system of schooling which is aligned with the interest of the colonizers. He tries to inculcate in the mind of the students the idea of freedom, the need to move against neo-colonialism. He believes that even little children should learn about the need to liberate their country from capitalism. But he faces strong resistance from the principal Munira, that the students should learn only facts not propaganda. No child is too young to think about liberation. It is the only way the young generation can truly experience himself as they rejects, cries and assimilates to discover himself. There is a need to teach the children to hate those things that prevent them from loving and love all those that make it possible for them to love freely. In this case it is well clear that the movement for liberation is a necessity, not an option for the people of Africa in general and Kenya in particular. By using little children as an example, he is

indirectly teaching everyone, including the youngsters and the grownups that they should unite to liberate their country from imperialism.

That some peasants cannot accept the system of robbery is evident in their voice of protest. Nyakinyua is one of them who even at old age fights with strong determination against imperialism. Due to this the old woman gets sick and dies. But before her death she confesses that she prefers to be buried on her own land even though it is auctioned for sale to the imperialists. From this it is understood that the fight against imperialism should be indiscriminate. The people should protest against the government and other agents in the system as well. Using the characterization of the old woman, Ngugi teaches the people of Kenya, that it is time to all Kenyans to free their country or the land that has been systematically occupied by the imperialists. In doing so he tries to show that liberating the country should be the work of each and every citizen of the country.

By means of constructive violence, Ngugi finally exposes some kind of optimism. In the violent act of purification, all the protagonists actively take part and provide silent support. The future generation with the spirit of purification and courage from the parents involved in freedom fighting and social revolution are born to restore the serenity. These are represented by following the arson, Wanja's pregnancy, Joseph's school rebellion, Karega's fate in renewed strikes and protests in Ilmorog. Like fire that burns Wanja's Sunshine Lodge, constructive violence will burn down the corrupted, rotten society and there is a hope and promise for the rebirth of a new Kenya.

Due to Ngugi's over-riding faith in his vision of resistance, he shows in the end of the novel that revolution already taking place in the minds and hearts of the people rather seems imposed on the text. Ngugi offers this thin hope through Akinyi's

meeting Karega in jail and assuring him that he is no longer alone. There are many others to accompany him in his revolutionary spirit. It sounds quite optimistic. As Max Horkheimer observes, "Enlightenment, understood in the widest sense as the advance of thought, has always aimed at liberating human beings from fear and installing them as masters. Yet the wholly enlightened earth is radiant with triumphant calamity" (1).

The title of the dissertation Eat or be Eaten is a call for resistance and revolution, 'you eat or else you will be eaten'. Either one has to take the lead or one's own life or else it will be lead by others regardless of its result, which may be of good or bad. After realising it the Kenyan people try to resist the oppressors of their own place. Eat or be Eaten may not suit the colonial government but it well suited the postindependent government since all belonging to the same community some take the lead and starts to oppress their own people. Though this is unimaginable, this becomes the case not only in Kenya but in every part of the world. Where until they attain Independence they have a strong sense of unity that they belong to same country and they are brothers and sisters, but this feeling of brotherhood disappears soon after their attainment of independence. Before the attainment of independence as the power is in the hands of colonial authorities their only target is to be independent from the colonizers. Their focus changes after independence and they only target to attain wealth and power. And they begin to think only of their own benefits and in what way they can obtain wealth and power without any little concern about those who fought for their independence and helped them in their liberation from other country men.

As Eat or be Eaten is the philosophy of the animal Kingdom, there becomes a stage when there would be no difference between animals and human beings as both

fight for their lives irrespective of the sufferings of others. But in order to attain true liberation, where all are treated equal and benefitted by the government, there is a need for violence to be taken in hand. As violence is used for a positive cause it may not be considered bad. People have the right to protest against their government if they find it to be against their common interests and threaten the safety of the people. Of course the people of a nation have the right of rebellion and revolution. The storming of the Bastille symbolizes the French Revolution when people rose up to exercise their right of revolution. Though Kenya has come a long way in its journey toward democracy, still it has a long way to go. There is a need to exercise tolerance among the different segments of the society, while the political actors need to show political goodwill in guaranteeing that the implementation and execution of these new policies are done without disruption.

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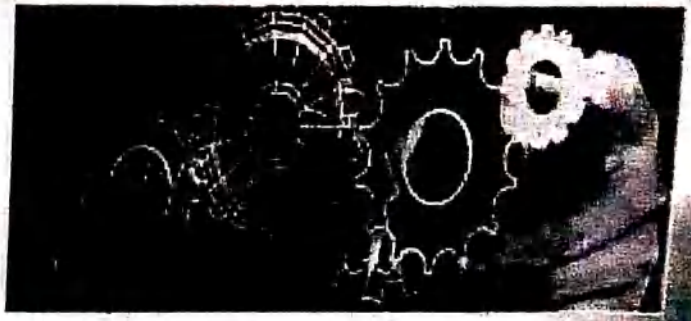

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Culture of Hegemony: A Study of Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions*

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Abstract:

Hegemony is the domination of one social group over others. This paper focuses on the hegemony of the Whites and the Africans by questioning the colonial and native patriarchal ideologies. The manifestation of European language and religion plays an important role as cultural hegemony seeks to diminish the native tradition. Slaves learned that they could not speak their native language freely. The oppressors made constant effort in controlling the consciousness of the colonised people. The colonizers eradicated the local cultures of their colonies and imposed new ideologies on native people. Tsitsi Dangarembga's novel, *Nervous Conditions* deals with the dual suffering of women; as they are suppressed by African patriarch as well as by the Whites in Southern Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. Zimbabwean culture suppresses women. British impose its culture on the natives that leads to the forgetfulness of their native language, Shona, and they attempt to speak English. This paper also studies the hegemony of two cultures, the clashing cultures of Rhodesia, and Britain. As a type of oppression, cultural hegemony developed as a consequence of African enslavement by Europeans.

Key words: Domination, hegemony, leadership, power, subordination.

The influence of patriarchal tradition and colonial rule in the African cultural history leaves each individual to search for their voice in the society of hegemony. According to Stuart Hall, hegemony is the "framing of all competing definitions of reality within the dominant class's range bringing all alternatives within their horizons of thought. The dominant class sets the limits-mental and structural within which subordinate classes 'live' and make sense of their subordination in such a way as to sustain the dominance of those ruling over them" (333). Power, dominance and leadership are the three main characteristics of hegemony. The dominance may be economic, familial, political or military. In African society, hegemony is seen as a cultural power employed by authorities rather than a power of force. The theory of hegemony is based on Marxist theory of ruling class and working class. The dominant class controls the cultural structures of the society and delivers it to the working class.

In Zimbabwe, colonial rule was first instituted by the British South African Company of Cecil Rhodes. The white invasion ends in the exploitation of the Zimbabwean land. The white settlers in Zimbabwe brought the racial attitudes of the south with them. This led to the enslavement of blacks in the area. Women suffered from double oppression including patriarchal and colonial hegemony. Patriarchal domination is prevalent not only in Africa but also in other parts of the world, where men continues to dehumanize women.

Tsitsi Dangarembga takes the title of her novel *Nervous Conditions* from Jean-Paul Sartre's Preface to Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) where Sartre argues about the situation of the natives in a colonized society which is in a nervous condition. According to Milena Bubenechik, "*Nervous Conditions* is an exemplary novel of insidious trauma induced by colonial oppression and discrimination" (Bubenechik 5). In *Nervous Conditions* Tsitsi Dangarembga presents her characters in a society where they need to adjust themselves for survival. The aftermath of colonization and globalization shaped a new African society with all its internal conflicts. *Nervous Conditions* locates cultural hegemony during postcolonial period. According to Clifford,

> The culture concept accommodates internal diversity and an "organic" division of roles but not sharp contradictions, mutations, or emergences ... Groups negotiating their identity in contexts of domination and exchange persist, patch themselves together in ways different from a living organism. A community unlike a body can lose a central "organ" and not die. All the critical elements of identity are in specific conditions replaceable: language, land, blood, leadership and religion. (338)

In African countries their traditional, cultural practices increase the illiteracy of women. The status of Shona women depreciated under colonial role. Before the colonial period, women served in powerful position. Their illiteracy deprives women of participating in social activities. They are ignorant of their social rights. Women were denied education in school. Only the boys had the right to receive education as they were considered superior in all aspects. Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous conditions* focuses not only on the colonial oppression but especially on sexual discrimination. Women have to endure both colonialism and patriarchy. It is Nhamo, Tambudzai's elder brother, who is given the chance to attend the school. Nhamo reminds Tambudzai, her younger sister that she should forget her dreams about education. Nhamo considers himself higher than Tambudzai because of his gender. Gender discrimination makes Tambudzai feel lower than Nhamo in the male dominated Rhodesia. Tambudzai's father also holds the same opinion of Nhamo is evident when he tells,

> My father thought I should not mind. "Is there anything to worry about? Ha-a-a, it's nothing," he reassured me, with his usual ability to jump whichever way was easiest. Can you cook

> books and feed them to your husband? Stay at home with your mother. Learn to cook and clean. Grow vegetables. (15)

Tambudzai tries to oppose patriarchal influence in her family by acting against her father's advice to remain at home. In order to provide her school fee she grows her own maize and sells them. Gender discrimination has annoyed Tambudzai very much that she fails to feel sorry for the death of her brother. She says: "I was not sorry when my brother died. Nor am I apologizing for my callousness, as you may define it, my lack of feeling. For it is not that at all" (1). Instead she finds it a better chance for her to be educated. Her coldness towards her brother's death is a sign of breakdown in social relations and cultural values under the pressure of colonisation. Tambudzai remembers how her brother refused to carry his own luggage and made Tambudzai to carry it. He also oppressed her emancipation by putting an end to Tambudzai's attempt to grow maize in order to provide with school fees.

As Tambudzai wins scholarship to the Sacred Heart convent school, her mother warns her of assimilation to English culture, but Tambudzai decides on attending the school, which she thinks to be able to make an intellectual woman out of her. As Geoffrey V. Davis remarks, "The convent school, which segregates black and white girls, promotes an even more obsolete form of English middle-class culture than the mission school, because it promises to elevate middle-class girls to cultural nobility" (345).

Oppressed people were forced to interpret the religion of the oppressor. European Christianity perpetuates white supremacy and oppresses the African people. The African representatives of English culture including Babamukuru have lost their traditional Shona culture entirely. Babamukuru, the African patriarch uses his power in order to control his family and imposes Christian English culture on them. He interprets this religious conflict within his extended Shona family; because his brother did not get married formally in church. The enforced Christian marriage encroaches upon Shona culture through these African patriarchs as the working class people depends on the economic support of missionaries. The belated wedding of Tambudzai's parents evidences that their marital affair has been illicit since their elopement about twenty years ago. Consequently, Babamukuru forces Tambudzai's parents to have a Christian wedding at church. This is too awful for Tambudzai and her family. He holds Tambu's parents in ridicule before others by enforcing European rules and conventions. Thereby he challenges the Shona culture of Rhodesia. Moreover, Tambudzai believes this wedding to be an act of stupidity that questions her own legitimacy when she remarks.

> The whole business reduced my parents to the level of the stars of a comic show, the entertainers. I did not want to see them brought down like that and I certainly did not want to be a part of it. So I could not approve of the wedding.... I had to think about it, about the fact

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> that I did not want to go to that wedding. A wedding that made a mockery of the people I belonged to and placed doubt on my legitimate existence in this world. (163).

The patriarchal colonial rule sought to maintain its hegemony by electing African men who received colonial education. Babamukuru is torn between his desperate attempts to maintain a traditional Shona family and simultaneously applying the Western Christian values in them. Tambu's father, Jeremiah is well maintained by the colonial system. Colonial authorities deprived him of his ancestral lands, thus making him incapable of providing for his family. And he depends wholly on his brother's financial support. Jeremiah loses his authority in family as father of his children. When Tambu's teacher, Mr. Matimba helps her with selling maize and keeps her money in safety for her school fees, Jeremiah complains that he is trying to take away his child because it deprives him of holding his authority. He also mistreats his wife who never complains. Dangarembga connects male suffering under the colonial system with the men's inclination to oppress women in their families.

Babamukuru and his wife, Maiguru are equally educated still Maiguru has no voice at home. Babamukuru oppresses his well-educated wife, Maiguru. Maiguru has her own job; still she struggles to cope with the oppressive social situation. She has to give away her entire salary to her husband for the sustenance of her husband's relatives. She is unable to stand up for herself and speak for her daughter against her husband. Inspite of her European education, Maiguru has to fulfil the traditional expectations of an obedient and good wife. Caught in her desperate situation she helplessly laments, "I am not happy. I am not happy any more in this house" (175). The oppressed women are often characterised by silence in the novel. Female characters refrain from expressing their opinions. Patriarchal hegemony maintains that all women, regardless of being illiterate or educated are supposed to be submissive at home in Rhodesia. Though Maiguru is oppressed by her husband she feels that she needs a man to protect her and give her a sense of value. Maiguru ingests her pride and remains a silent woman.

Nyasha unlike Tambudzai is very courageous and possesses European hegemonic behaviour. She defies her father Babamukuru and the patriarchal structure of Rhodesian society. She does not want to fall a victim to male authority. She tells Tambudzai:

> It's not England anymore and I ought to adjust. But when you've seen different things you want to be sure you're adjusting to the right thing. You can't go on all the time being whatever's necessary. You've got to have some conviction, and I'm convinced I don't want to be anyone's underdog. It's not right for anyone to be that. But once you get used to it, well, it just seems natural and you just carry on. And that's the end of you. You're trapped. They control everything you do. (117)

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Dangarembga comments on Babamukuru who condemns her own daughter as a 'whore'. He makes her a victim because of her femaleness. This is similar to Tambudzai's victimisation in her home where she is denied education, Nyasha is denied freedom. She states her indignation against sexual injustice that is fundamental to colonialism, "what I didn't like was the way all the conflicts came back to this question of femaleness. Femaleness as opposed and inferior to maleness" (118). Nyasha is accused for her femaleness. This accusation would not have happened if she were a male like her brother, Chido, who is always late to home flirting with girls. She is twisted by physical as well as emotional breakdown due to the harshness of her father.

The dominance of colonizers over the language, educational system, and identity formation leads to the commotion in the individual's native identity. The colonizers institute their own educational system in the settler colonies in order to impose a new culture, a new language, and a new way of life, which promotes the supremacy of West and its culture. The natives, especially those who attend the white schools think that the whites are going to civilize them. A good image of the colonizers is shaped in their mind which makes it difficult for the leaders of emancipation movements to disillusion them. Tambudzai's notion of the colonizers is a good example of this phenomenon, "They (the whites) had come not to take but to give. They were about God's business here in darkest Africa....It was a big sacrifice that the missionaries made" (103). There are many references to the gradual forgetfulness of Shona in *Nervous Conditions*. For instance, Maiguru tells Tambudzai that her children who are educated in white schools "...don't understand Shona very well any more, and have been speaking nothing but English for so long that most of their Shona is gone" (42).

Nyasha finds fault with the whites for all their troubles and says that no longer she considers what the whites teach her. She tells Tambudzai:

> 'I don't want to do it, Tambu really I don't, but it's coming, I feel it coming.' Her eyes dilated ... They (the whites, the missionaries) have done to you and to him? Do you see what they have done? They have taken us away. They've deprived you of you, him of him, our selves of each other. We're grovelling ... I won't grovel. Oh no, I won't. I'm not a good girl. (200)

Through her novel *Nervous Conditions*, Tsitsi Dangarembga cross-examines diverse issues of hegemony, both patriarchal and colonial. In post colonial Africa every human being is in search of a solution to their existential condition due to colonial patriarchy that is conferred by the whites. Babamukuru in the novel *Nervous Conditions* is an exponential figure of Patriarchal and Colonial hegemony who imposes their dominion over the people of Zimbabwe. It may be of any gender either male or female; blacks are subjugated by the whites who continue to dominate them as subordinate social group.

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NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CONTEMPORARY THEORETICAL POSITIONS IN LITERATURE

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Organising Secretary

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Disintegration of the Women Stereotype: A Thematic Study of Sefi Atta's *Everything Good Will Come*

A Dissertation submitted to

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MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN ENGLISH

by

MISSBA S.

(REG. NO. 19MLEN07)

RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

ST.MARY'S COLLEGE (Autonomous)

(Re-accredited with 'A+' Grade by NAAC)

THOOTHUKUDI

SEPTEMBER 2020

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **Disintegration of the Women Stereotype: A Thematic Study of Sefi Atta's *Everything Good Will Come*** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is a work done by Missba S. during the year 2019-2020, and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled **Disintegration of the Women Stereotype: A Thematic Study of Sefi Atta's *Everything Good Will Come*** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is my original work and that, it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

THOOTHUKUDI **MISSBA S.**

SEPTEMBER 2020

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PREFACE

Sefi Atta was one of the greatest eminent writer among the Nigerian writer. She greatly touches the plight and travails of the female gender in the society. She writes her novel with some social issues what she has undergone in her life. Through the study of Sefi Atta's *Everything Good Will Come*, the dissertation draws an understanding of the unavoidable influence of the culture and society and how the people were living their own life towards the modern culture. Through the life journey of the female protagonist, Enitan, the author addresses the notion of home and homeliness and the individual's search for true relationship in her own land. The exposure to two different cultures bewilders them and creates conflict regarding self and identity formation which marks them impotent to completely belong to either culture. They are found tattered between two disparate cultures that pull them in two opposite directions. Enitan deals with the feelings and aspiration of young adolescent girls who work hard to be accepted as part of the Nigerian community because of the gender stereotypical prejudices people.

The dissertation consists of five chapters. The first chapter **Introduction** says about the significance of African literature, and the contribution brings out of writers towards in African literature. The brief introduction of Sefi Atta and her notable works has also been discussed.

Chapter two entitled, **Stereotypes as Normal** analyses the position of Men and women in Nigeria and the culture which is followed by the people. It highlights the culture difference between Yoruba and Igbo culture and also reflects the image of men

and women in the society, among other things, foregrounds how men have been mirrored by Atta, evincing the implication of her portraitures as the African woman and child, particularly her radical feminist stance.

The third chapter, **Feminine Amity: The Liberating Force** highlights the facts of female relationship as well as the important incidents which have been traced as the significant events in the life of Enitan. It foregrounds the healing powers of female bonding, which allows women to overcome prejudice and survive, to enjoy female empowerment, and to extend female friendship into female solidarity that participates in nation building.

The fourth chapter, **Disintegration of Stereotypes** deals with the problems which was faced by the protagonist Enitan and her friend Sheri. It analyses the growing up of a child from adolescence to adulthood. It also discusses how the various forms of growth gives awareness to the heroine about her environment which affects her.

The final chapter sums up all the important aspects dealt in the preceding chapters.

The researcher has consistently referred to and resorted to the guidelines prescribed by MLA Handbook 7th Edition for the preparation of the dissertation.

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

Literature has been described in several ways, at first Literature is seen as the totality of all works of imagination which project the life of people. Eyo, Mufaya and Foy has define Literature as a body of written or oral works such as novels, poetry and drama, which use words to stimulate the imagination and unique vision of life of a reader, which means that Literature is a creative universal form of expression which addresses the emotional, spiritual, and intellectual concerns of human beings. Again, Literature is described as any creative, factual or imaginative work about people and what they have done, believe, and have created or willing to create. It displays the man in his society by trying to explain human experience and conducts, indicating the past and present, while peering into the future. Onukaogu and Onyerionwu has seen literature as "An imaginative act whose expression is dependent on words and through the use of imagination, he selects, orders, interprets life experience, employing words as a basic tool" (79).

Literature has become a true element for cultural globalization, especially for Africa whose literature has been worthless and denied by Western critics. It is the demand that African literature does not aspire to ideological universalism; which they claim to be peculiar reserve of the Western works, to the exclusion of works from other races. African literature usually refers to a comprehensive, complex and creative literature of and from Africa.

African literature is mainly classified into three distinctly and widely accepted categories traditional oral literature of Africa, literature written in indigenous African languages and literature written in European languages. Traditional oral literature of

Africa may be in the form of prose, verse or proverb. It is generally described as orature. Orature flourished in Africa primarily in the absence of widespread literacy and was handed down to the generations through memorization and recitation. The contents may differ in length ranging from single sentence formulation such as proverbs to epics which has to be performed over a period of time. This verbal art had a utilitarian purpose of providing entertainment as well as instruction. They served as the medium to explain the creation of universe, the essence of the activities of God and creatures and their intra and inter relationships. Oral folklore was employed to restore faith in group values and discourage anti-social tendencies.

The span of African written literature is nearly five thousand years. The antecedents of African written literature can be traced to hieroglyphic writing of ancient Egypt. African literary works are also available in native African languages like those of Yoruba and Hausa in West Africa; Somali and Swahili in East Africa, Soho and Zulu in Southern Africa.

However, with one or two exceptions most of African written literature is in European languages especially English, French and Portuguese. Francophone African literature and Lusophone African literature are nevertheless not extensive as Anglophone African literature. This can be ascribed to the fact that though Africa was colonized by several European imperial powers, British annexed various parts across the length and breadth of Africa beginning from Egypt, Uganda and Kenya in North Africa, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Nigeria in West Africa; Zambia, Botswana and South Africa in the southern part of Africa. It is usually referred as the modern African literature i.e. dominant African literature. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o in *Decolonizing the Mind* (1986) chooses to describe them 'Afro European literatures'.

Modern African writing arose out of association between West Africa, a contact which was both historical and experimental in dimensions. One of the striking features of African novels is that, it is a genre developed as a particular body of imaginative discourse occupied with the modes of resisting the role of western cultural hegemony in determining African states of consciousness. This strain of protest can be witnessed in the writings of almost all African authors especially of the post-colonial period. The writing during the post-colonial era (between 1960 and 1970) is usually referred as post-colonial literature. In this era, many African nations gained political independence from their colonial rulers and a considerable volume of African written literature in English was authored during these post-colonial times. Thus, post-colonial African literature is a mode to comprehend the African psyche, the physical and other parameters of African life. It symbolizes the African intellectual response to their experiences of colonialism and neo colonialism. The rich traditions of African continent, the trials and tribulations of contemporary African life induced by socio-politico-economic experience of colonialism and its agonizing neo colonial aftermath permeates in African literary texts.

African literary giants like Wole Soyinka, Eskia Mapahele, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o made colossal contribution to African literature. The writings of these writers helped in familiarizing the 'African Consciousness' in Europe and America. Writers of this era were artists cum political activists. These works reflect the sense of euphoria at the birth of independent nations. These writers of African ancestry were committed to restore faith of people in themselves and society that is 'decolonizing the mind'. An important touchstone in post-colonial African literature was achieved when Wole Soyinka received Nobel Prize for literature from Africa. It represented the West's acknowledgement of Nigerian literary extraordinary. African literature also received

momentum when a series on African writers was published by Heinemann Publishers. African English literature is now well-recognized and African works like Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is a classic that is approved in the syllabi of the Universities in the West.

The compositions of Nigerian writers like Chinua Achebe, Ben Okri and Wole Soyinka are often pervaded with a sense of dismay and pain at the state of Nigeria during the colonial and post-colonial era. The writings provide anthropological information about Nigerian life and serve as windows into their cultures. Nigerian literary works act as a medium to reflect the thoughts of the nation and tend to rekindle long submissive and often humiliated culture and society. Initial post-colonial Nigerian literature celebrated Nigeria's much awaited independence from the political domination and cultural servility rendered to the country by its colonial masters, the British. But this 'tryst with destiny' was short-lived as Nigeria was engulfed in inter-regional and inter-ethnic violence and corruptions of a neo-imperialist nation state. This transformation from pre-independence hope and faith to post-independence pain and disillusionment is painted vividly in various Nigerian/African literary outputs.

Leading figures in Black literature vehemently oppose the 'hijacking of Africa' by western colonial powers. Prominent personalities of African literature try to awaken the spirit of nationalism and advocate the evolution of black identity. They promote self-rediscovery and stimulate faith in long concealed native beliefs and traditions. Hence, these authors have also acted as spiritual and cultural guide of their communities. Literary artists like Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Christopher Okigbo and John Pepper Clark were referred as 'quartet of Nigerian literary scene' in the post-independent times. They were brilliant and self-assured writers known for their reformist views and perceptions about Nigeria and Africa.

The torch of Nigerian literature was reassigned to the hands of second generation poets like Odia Ofeimum and Nigi Osundare and authors of the level of excellence in skills such as Biyi-Bandele Thomas and Ben Okri. Ben Okri received the Bookers Prize, in 1991 for his novel, *The Famished Road* as, "It was a beautifully written and moving novel which conveyed Nigerian peasant life in a changing world" (59). Themes like corruption, military excuses, nationalism often feature in his novels. However 'the tradition of protest' through literature is slightly subdued in his works. This is more explicitly registered in the texts of Achebe and Soyinka. Nonetheless, his essay "The catastrophe now facing Nigeria" is an attempt on Nigerian politics. It was a reaction to Nigerian political crisis that emerged after 1993 election results. He restraints from portraying any 'overt' preference or prejudice regarding any tribal community, party or geo-political area of Nigeria. Thus, almost all the Nigerian literary artists question and challenge the 'too-modest' representation of Africa as cultic and mystifying land; a dark continent; a formless area of life devoid of human significance. Instead their works highlight the trepidation of a new born nation that is undergoing a painful process of conversion from a colonial to neo-colonial to wholly self-determining nation.

In this slowly renovating Nigeria, people are facing various challenges in their day to day life. Life is a bundle of challenges for all people all over the world and Nigerian women has to face a multitude of problems like poverty, sexism, racism, gender inequality, polygamy, infringement of reproductive rights, domestic violence and intimidation by patriarchal practices. Since time immemorial womenfolk have been forced to confront challenges and accept impositions thrust upon them by society, customs and traditions and men. All over the world in every social setup, women have been assigned lower and subordinated position compared to men over the years and

they had been groomed to accept this relegated position. This degenerated status is so deeply etched in a woman's psyche that she performs her duties, functions and obligations without demanding any recognition and rarely shows a spirit of rebellion. She chooses to be an embodiment of love, docility, patience and sacrifice.

Female subordination has been the set feature of Nigerian society. On one hand she is expected to participate in the cultivation of land, preparation of food, home education of children and other matrimonial matters. But on the other hand, she is coerced to accept ignominious position both at home and society where all the important socio-economic and political decisions are taken by male elders of the community. However in recent times the status of women in African countries has been undergoing a rapid change. Access to western education; exposure to western culture; awareness about the benefits of education; urbanization and active participation in various sectors of employment resulted in financial independence and ushered emotional-mental well being. It also helped her to gain identity of her own and realize herself as a human being capable of learning and earning. This female empowerment upgraded the position of Nigerian women, curbed female enslavement to a certain extent and encouraged her to try her forte in various male dominated initiatives. All over the world, various human endeavors including creative writing had been a male bastion as:

> In patriarchal western culture . . . the text's author is a father, a progenitor, a procreator, an aesthetic patriarch whose pen is an instrument of generative power . . . Moreover, his pen's power is not just the ability to generate life but the power to create a posterity, to which he lays claim. (Gilbert and Gubar, 6)

This has been a regular feature in western literature and so in African and Nigerian literature.

A cursory glance at the Nigerian literary development from pre-colonial to post-colonial period aptly pinpoints the main heritage in the African literature. Male authors like Chinua Achebe, Amos Tutola and Wole Soyinka generally deal with themes exclusively about male concerns and interests. They usually depict women tied to patriarchal authority and situated in uncomplimentary roles. Most of African/Nigerian literature targeted male audiences and therefore women characters are often ignored, portrayed as helpless and shown operating within male defined parameters.

Widespread illiteracy among women due to cultural impediments coupled with early education to Nigerian men provided Nigerian male a head start over women. This male bias in education was promoted during the colonial period and hence is partially responsible for cutting off women from the written word. Moreover, the notion of patriarchy in the Nigerian cultural milieu, the restrictive gender roles as daughters, wives and mothers, the conventional reticence of women automatically makes them take the backseat. Furthermore, African women lack conducive environment needed for creative writing. Nigerian women face the constraints of both time and space, neither do they have the luxury of having a room for themselves where they can write in solitude and privacy nor the time needed to indulge in reflective and introspective thinking. The obstacles of African women are further accentuated by the indifferent attitude of the government. Finally support and other incentives needed to boost the morale of budding young writers, both male and female, are in a small amount provided by the Nigerian government.

Generally the government neither welcomed nor promoted home produced works especially those written by black female writers. However, 1960's and 1970's Africa/Nigeria witnessed the emergence of female writers. The year 1966 was a landmark year in the history of African literature. *The Promised Land* by Grace Ogot was the first novel by a woman to be published by East African Publishing House. *Efuru* was the first novel, written by a woman, to be published in the prestigious Heinemann African Writers Series. Thus, 1966 marked the advent of contemporary female writing in African fiction. These female writers like Flora Nwapa, Mariamma Ba, Ama Ata Aidoo, Gracce Ogot, Efua Sutherand, Buchi Emecheta represent the dawn of black female literary writing. This breakthrough by women writers on the Nigerian literary scene is well expressed by Gloria. T. Hull in the editorial introducing *The Black Scholar:*

> One of the most dramatic changes in the literary world over the last decade has been the blossoming of a large corps of female writers, poets critics. It is not that black women writers did not exist prior to this period, but the black literary scene had historically been a male preserve. (2)

The select 'Coming-of-age' novels have been studied and analyzed by various critics. Some of the selected novels are treated by some Western as well as some African critics as children's literature. For example, in her Representing Africa in Children's Literature (2008), Vivian Yenika-Agbaw examines the image of Africa and gender issues, represented in West African children's literature. Yenika-Agbaw analyses and sometimes at least refers to more than one hundred and twenty five books that represent six genres. These are concept books, folk tales, poetry, biography, short stories and novels. These books are authored by Africans, African Americans and whites. The main

purpose of the book is to understand the image of African people in children and young adult literature.

Nevertheless, all female writers' basic thematic concern is to express solidarity against the marginalization of women and celebrate women's capabilities. Their works mark a scathing opposition to women's alienation, dislocation and displacement. Female literary writers expose the most erotic bias in male literary tradition and attempt to erase the invisibility of Nigerian/African women in the literary scene. Flora Nwapa is generally hailed as the mother of African female tradition in fiction. She was one of the first woman writers to challenge the orthodoxies of male literary representation. Her path breaking novels like *Efuru* (1966), *Idu* (1970), *One Is Enough* (1982) and *Women Are Different* (1986) mirror the issues that concern women like marriage, the importance of children in marriage, her roles at home and family and the need for economically independence among women. The brutalities and tragedy of Nigerian Civil War is reflected in her work *Never Again* (1975). Igbo society along with its customs and traditions is also portrayed in her works. She also pioneered the 'New African Women' in *Efuru* (1966)-the foremost and boldest deviation from the stereotypical image of women essayed in African literature. Through her works she emphasizes the necessity for women to be economically, emotionally and mentally liberated. Mariamma Ba, is another Senegalese women writer who crusades for the valorisation of women power. Her novels *So Long a Letter* (1979) and *Scarlet Song* (1981) exhibit the yearnings of African women. She empathizes against the social injustice and indignities inflicted on women. Most of the protagonists in her novels are crushed under the inexorable grip of religion and religion sanctioned practice of polygamy. Ama Ata Aidoo of Ghana is yet another female writer who is committed to the cause of the blacks and their betterment. Aidoo's works exhibit her deep resentment

regarding the influences of western culture on African consciousness. Her novels are an indictment against the various ills of race, colour, gender that plague an imbalanced society. She is equally sarcastic about the hypocritical African who blindly apes the west. Thus, the novels of Flora Nwapa, Ama Ata Aidoo touched upon the situation of women in African countries.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichi born in Engu, Nigeria in 1977. She is a Nigerian author focused on identity in her life and writing. Her work extremes mostly of Biafran war during the late 1960's. Race as an idea she had to navigate and learn. So in her famous work *Americanah* an exploration of a young Nigerian encountering race in America has been explained and it was selected by The New York Times as the one of "The 10 best books of 2013". Ishmael Beah was a Human Rights Activist and appointed as first Advocate for Children who affected by war. At first he wandered as a refugee and later rescued by UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund). Zadie Smith was a British author who won number of awards and best seller after her debut novel "White Teeth". She was known for her treatment of race, religion, cultural identity with eccentric characters in her novels.

One among the African women writers was Sefi Atta. Sefi Atta was born on January 1964 in Lagos, Nigeria, in a family of five children. Her father Abdul-Aziz Atta was the Secretary to Federal Government and Head of the Civil Service until his death in 1972 and she was raised by her mother Iyabo Atta. She attended Queen's College, Lagos and Millfield School in England. In 1985, she graduated with a B. A. Degree from Birmingham University. She qualified as a Chartered Accountant in England and as CPA in the United States, where she migrated in 1994. She earned an MFA from Antioch University in 2001. She is married to Gboyega Ransome-Kuti, a medical doctor, son of Olikoye Ransome-Kuti and they have one daughter, Temi. Atta's

Lagos-based production company Atta Girl supports Care to Read, a program she initiated to earn funds for legitimate charities through staged readings. She currently divides her time between Nigeria, England and the United States.

Atta graduated from the creative writing program at Antiocah University in Los Angeles. Her short stories have appeared in literary journals such as *The Los Angeles Review, Mississippi Review* and *World Literature Today.* Her articles on Lagos and Nigeria have appeared in publications such as *Time* (magazine) and *Liberation.* Her books have been translated into several languages. Her first novel, *Everything Good Will Come,* won the Wole Soyinka Prize for Literature in Africa.

Atta is a living writer. She is a prize-winning Nigerian author and playwright. Her books have been translated into many languages and her radio plays have been broadcasted by the BBC and her stage plays have been performed internationally. Her other novels include *Swallow* (2010), *A Bit of Difference* (2013) and *The Bead Collector* (2019). Her short-story collections include *The Engagement* (2005), *News from Home* (2010), *The Cost of Living* (2011), *Haguel auf Zamfara* (2011), *The Naming* Ceremony (2012), *An Ordinary Legacy* (2012), *Last Stand* (2014), *Renovation* (2018), *Drama Queen* (2018), *The Death Road* (2019) and *Sefi Atta; Selected Plays* (2019). Sefi Atta's radio plays include *The Engagement, BBC Radio* (2002), *Makinwa's Miracle, BBC Radio* (2004) and *A Free Day, BBC Radio* (2007). Sefi Atta has also done screen plays such as *Leaving on Your Mind,* quarter-finalist for the American Zoetrope Screenplay Competition (2009) and *Valid,* finalist for the We Screen Play Diverse Voices Lab (2019).

She has received awards which include the BBC African Performance Award, Second Prize (2002), Zoetrope Short Fiction Contest, Third Prize (2002). Red Hen

Press Short Story Award, First Prize (2003), BBC African Performance, Second Prize (2004), PEN International David TK Wong Prize, First Prize (2005), Wole Soyinka Prize for Literature in Africa (2006) and Noma Award for Publishing in Africa (2009). Sefi Atta was also shortlisted for Macmillan Writers Prize for Africa in 2002 and Caine Prize for African Writing in 2006. She was also a finalist in Glimmer Train's Very Short Fiction Award in 2003.Atta was on the jury for the 2010 Neustadt International Prize for Literature and a judge for the 2019 Caine Prize for African Writing.

A critical study of her works, Writing Contemporary Nigeria: How Sefi Atta illuminates African Culture and Tradition, edited by Professor Walter P. Collins, III, was published by Cambria Press in 2015. Jane Bryce, an important scholar on African literary studies, selects seven novels published since 2000 by women writers from Nigeria. One such novel was Sefi Atta's *Everything Good Will Come* (2005). Jane Bryce explores how these women writers set out to rewrite 'the script of national identity construction' of African women who are different from the previous generations.

Swallow by Sefi Atta is another novel published in 2010. *Swallow* weaves the stories of two women intricately together in a vivid, unforgettable portrayal of Tolani's subsequent journey of self-discovery. It is the mid-1980s in Lagos, Nigeria and the government's war against indiscipline is in full operation. Amidst poverty and tight rules and regulations, women especially must sacrifice dignity and safety in order to find work and peace. Tolani Ajao is a secretary working at Federal Community Bank. A succession of unfortunate events leads Tolani's roommate and volatile friend Rose to persuade her to consider drug trafficking as an alternative means of making a living. Tolani's struggle with temptation forces her to reconsider her morality and that of her mother, Arike.

With Sefi Atta's characteristic boldness and vision, *A Bit of Difference* (2012) illuminates the complexities of our contemporary world. At the age of thirty-nine, Deola Bello, a Nigerian expatriate in London, is dissatisfied with being single and working overseas. Deola works as a financial reviewer for an international charity and when her job takes her back to Nigeria in time for her father's five-year memorial service, she finds herself turning her scrutiny inward. In Nigeria, Deola encounters changes in her family and in the urban landscape of her home and new acquaintances who offer unexpected possibilities. Deola's journey is as much about evading others' expectations to get to the heart of her frustration as it is about exposing the differences between foreign images of Africa and the realities of contemporary Nigerian life. Deola's urgent, incisive voice captivates and guides us through the intricate layers and vivid scenes of a life lived across continents.

The story of a brief friendship, *The Bead Collector* (2018), reveals one Nigerian mother yearning amid legacies of conflict and uncertainty to help build her country from home. A new military regime has been in power for six months, but rumours are spreading that a countercoup is imminent. At an art exhibition in the affluent Ikoyi neighbourhood, Remi Lawal, a Nigerian woman, who runs her own greeting-card shop, meets Frances Cooke, who introduces herself as an American art dealer, in Nigeria to buy rare beads. They become friends and over the next few weeks confide in each other about their aspirations, loyalties, marriage, motherhood and Nigeria itself, as hospitable Remi welcomes the enigmatic Frances into her world. Remis husband, Tunde, naturally suspects Frances like any American in Lagos of gathering intelligence for the CIA, yet she is unconvinced. Cynical about the country's unending instability, and alienated by the shallowness of the city's elite, she willingly shares her views with Frances. But the February 13 assassination of General Muhammed prompts Remi to reconsider one

particular conversation with her new acquaintance in a different light. Her discouragement overcome by a reawakened sense of patriotism begins to doubt that the bead collector is whom she claims to be. With her signature subtlety and wit, Sefi Atta recasts the international espionage tale by bringing the intrigue and politics of family life to the fore.

Everything Good Will Come introduces a new voice in contemporary fiction and is also coming-of-age novel. It is 1971, a year after the Biafran War and Nigeria is under military rule-though the politics of the state matter less than those of her home to Enitan Taiwo, an eleven-year-old girl tired of waiting for school to start. *Everything Good Will Come* charts the fate of these two African girls, one born of privilege and the other, a lower class "half-caste"; one who is prepared to manipulate the traditional system while the other attempts to defy it. In the fraught, newly independent state, Enitan endures heartbreak, abuse and rape, while trying to build a better future for her. The novel also illuminates conflict within Nigeria, between its Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo ethnic groups, most of which stemmed from the Biafran War. Praised for its compelling and sympathetic portrayal of the postcolonial African country, the novel has won several major awards, including the Wole Soyinka Prize for Literature in Africa.

At the beginning of the novel, Enitan is in her mid-teens. She has grown up entirely in Lagos, Nigeria, a country that forces women to internalize patriarchal norms in society and politics. Enitan has always been skeptical of the disproportionate power afforded to Nigerian men. She grows up in a broken household, torn between a strict, highly religious mother and a manipulative and avoidant father. At a young age, she loses her brother; the tragedy causes such trauma to her parents that they prohibit her from participating in most activities that her peers enjoy. Enitan's confinement brings out a rebellious side. Her first act of rebellion is to leave home each Sunday to

play with her neighbour, Sheri. Enitan learns that Sheri is considered "yellow", because her mother is a white English woman and her father is a Muslim. Sheri and Enitan share rebellious characteristics, though Sheri is particularly mischievous around boys. Besides sharing many interests, the two girls bond over the taboo nature of their relationship.

Their friendship builds as they continue to defy Enitan's mother by seeing each other. The girls are forced to separate. Enitan is sent to school abroad to receive a better education than that offered in Lagos. Her father, an educated lawyer, wants the bets for her and hope she will take over his firm once she has finished school and proves herself as a lawyer. Once Enitan leaves, she keeps in touch with Sheri by writing letters, back and forth about school, boys and when they will meet again. They reconnect one winter when Enitan returns to Lagos for the holidays. They decide to attend a party put on by some other teenagers in the area. At the party, Enitan grows anxious that something bad will happen as everyone drinks heavily. She walks out of the party and stumbles upon a brutal rape scene. Three men have strained Sheri and take turns raping and verbally abusing her.

The image of Sheri's rape affects Enitan's ability to allow herself to trust men. The aftermath of Sheri's rape leads to a partial termination of their friendship and Sheri being sent to the hospital due to an attempt to give herself an abortion. Several more years pass. Enitan goes back to Lagos to live with her father and work as his legal assistant. She starts a romantic relationship with Mike, a visual artist. One day, she encounters Sheri and the two young women reconcile. Sheri relates that she is now the secret lover of a Muslim officer in the British army, who provides her with financial support. Sheri professes her belief that life is about playing any games that are necessary

to ensure stability and prosperity, she rejects the notion that one must eventually settle with a husband, arguing that marriage strips women of individuality.

Enitan gradually becomes closer with a man called Niyi Franco, who is separated from his only child who was taken away by his ex-wife when they moved to Britain. Enitan and Niyi het married. Initially, Enitan relishes her married life, feeling very secure with Niyi. However, their relationship becomes strained when she repeatedly resists his orders. The two also struggle with fertility, becoming more certain, as time goes on, that they will not have a child. To her surprise, Enitan becomes pregnant. Despite the fortunate turn of events, she and Niyi drift even further apart over irreconcilable differences. Enitan also feuds with her father, who continues to pressure her to fit into the mould he has created in his mind. One day, she learns that her father has been arrested for speaking out against a Nigerian politician. His detainment compels her to become an activist herself. After one demonstration, she is thrown in jail overnight.

While still pregnant, Enitan connects with an all-women feminist organization that fights for sexual equality in Nigeria. Niyi scorns her for putting herself and their child at risk, pressuring her to stay home and become a domestic worker. Niyi's lack of concern for Enitan's beliefs and Enitan's remains politically active. She looks forward to fighting for women's right to choose their futures for themselves and to develop identities that are not controlled by men.

Female assertiveness in *Everything Good Will Come* also has to do with economic independence. Enitan, Sheri and Grace reinforce the belief that women assertiveness can only be achieved when they hold the purse strings. Enitan, owing to her Western education, finds out that women need to be economically independent if

they want to carve a name for themselves. Either with Mike or Niyi, Enitan resend the idea of being depend on a man and she is ready to pay the price this attitude calls for. Imbued with this economically independent spirit, she has advised Sheri to drop Hasan, the Brigadier, caters for Sheri's needs that one understands the significance of Enitan's advice. Similarly, Grace lives on her being a journalist.

Sefi Atta's *Everything Good Will Come* has surveyed gender issues. Another striking outcome of this investigation into Sefi Atta's language is the assertiveness of female characters, an attitude which is to be construed as a deliberate attempt of the novelist to portray her female characters as dynamic and ready to break the patriarchal shackles of the male-dominated setting of the novel.

In the next chapter I am going to say about the impacts which changed the life of men and women towards their culture and how they adopt themselves towards the society with some changes in and around the world.

Chapter Two

Stereotypes as Normal

Nigeria is a home to over two hundred and fifty ethnic groups and over fifty languages. However, the three most dominant tribes in the country are Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo. The Hausa dominates the northern region of Nigeria, the Yoruba dominates the South Western region and the Igbos dominate the South Eastern region. Religious differences also endorse the strong divide between different regions of Nigeria. The Hausas are predominantly Muslim. The Igbos are mostly Catholic Christians and Yorubas are split from Christians to various denominations and Muslims. The different tribes of Nigeria operated as separate states with little interactions with each other until its unification and colonization by Great Britain in1914. During the colonization of Nigeria by Great Britain, local tribes were used to govern their regions and the British government served as the central power. The Hausa has excelled in the military field and made up most of the colony's military force. Since the trade capitals and oil reserves of Nigeria are located in the South, the Yoruba and Igbo naturally excelled in education and trades. The balance of power was well-regulated by the British so there were little ethnic conflicts.

After Nigeria gained independence in 1960, the balance of power was maintained through elections and a democratic approach was given to all national issues. However, the situation became volatile with back-to-back military coups that were led mostly by corrupt Hausa military officers. The coups also generated ethnic violence between the different groups and tension was high. In an attempt to rule its own region, the Igbos declared them independent from Nigeria and named the south eastern region of the nation Biafra. Since most of Nigeria's valuable natural resources lay in the new "Biafra", Nigeria refused to recognize the newly formed country, which led to war between Nigeria and Biafra. The war

lasted from 1967 to 1970, claiming about three million civilian and military casualties. At the end, the Biafran state was eradicated and discontinued. This is why "Biafra" carries a negative connotation in the books.

Currently, all tribes of Nigeria are functioning in a cooperative manner though underlying tension still strains the relationship. Although members of the different tribes interact freely all over the nation and equally share political powers, the clear division among the tribes leads to civil unrest and rebellion.

Women are defined in terms of domesticity. And this liking for family life makes them more emotional, but they sometimes dictate their stand. The lexical innovation, mental football to foreground the intelligent way in which a woman solves her problem, tricks everybody and gets what she wants. Whatever she needs, she plays along with the man until she gets it. This coinage together with the figurative expression, Phoosch! (onomatopoeia) that comes before it describe the astonishing and sudden way in which a woman carries out and achieves her plans. The item 'score' depicts the level of determination a woman exhibits when she sets out to do something which she eventually accomplishes with fortitude. This authorial ideology depicts the fact that even when a culture prevents the woman from 'speaking' openly and exerting her power, she does it silently and wisely, and asserts her position.

The expression, woman wrapper, a Nigerian innovation for a man who is controlled by a woman, is used by the author to illustrate the powerful position of women: how they control men and make their place known. This neologism is used to encapsulate Sheri's assertion of her position in the house, which makes her husband apprehensive. Just as a woman ties her wrapper into the shape and style she desires, so she is able to manipulate her man the way she wants. The ideological position is that women like Sheri, through subtle

ways, assert their individuality as members of the society. Since the culture does not want to 'hear' her voice, she ideologically silences her husband, places him in a likely position of a 'woman wrapper.' This position, according to the text is dreadful for the man. In fact, Enitan's husband is scared of being addressed as a 'woman wrapper,' probably because of his wife's affirmation of her stand even playfully. The expression signifies the author's projection of a woman who through quiet argument asserts her womanhood. And her assertion, however, increases her husband's apprehension of losing his position as the head of the family.

Atta uses birth, mother and motherhood to illustrate a woman's virginity and womb. Motherhood means maternal parenthood while birth mother may be described as somebody's biological mother. One can say that the writer does not want to mention the word 'virginity' and 'womb.' That is why she invents new words to describe them. These words birth mother and motherhood are therefore neologisms which are existing lexical stock in English language. However, the assertive nature of women is made manifest when her 'birth, mother and motherhood were taken away from her ...and she wasn't thinking of tearing her clothes off and walking naked on the streets' (300). In essence, the lady dictates her position, a position of leaving a responsible life even after experiencing rape from the opposite sex. The ideological disposition is that after a rape scandal, which may probably short change some people's future, Sheri decides to live a normal life. She still works towards accomplishing her future goals. She does not want the rape scandal to ruin her future. That is why the author defines her as a strong person. In essence, a dehumanizing act like rape does not prevent a strong woman from being assertive then.

The independent nature of a woman is also expressed in the fourth example. For instance, the figurative expression (onomatopoeia) hush illustrates a woman's meditation on peoples' advice against leaving her husband. It indicates that her mind is already made up.

Since peoples' advice does not change her mind, she takes a bold step, leaves the man because he likes pontificating to her at all times. The writer's use of the phrase 'internal sabotage' conveys the intrusion of people's advice in Enitan's personal decision. However, after all the hush and internal sabotage, Enitan courageously takes a step forward, the way it suits her. Apparently, the author portrays a culture that permits a husband to do what he wants under the cover of marriage but limits a woman, a culture that encourages women to always be subservient to men. Enitan rejects such docile and submissive life style by leaving Niyi, her husband. By leaving her husband, she reorganizes the cultural matrix that women are at the mercy of men. Despite the fact that Niyi did not do anything to her, she believes that she cannot achieve all she wants in life by living a subservient life. She therefore, intends to empower herself and rise to the position of bettering her lot.

The assertive nature of woman is portrayed in the loaned items, Obirin Meta! And Alaiye Baba! Evidently, Obirin Meta is an expression which means 'three times a girl.' From the Yoruba culture where it is copied from it is linked to an individual who does extraordinary things, and most times things that are considered creepy. The author, in an attempt to regain power from the male folk, describes the lady also as Alaiye Baba. Alaiye Baba is a Yoruba expression for male, which translates as master of the earth. As the author uses it to describe the woman, she tactically withdraws the attributes of Alaiye Baba and assigns them to a woman. This expression, Alaiye Baba connotes negativity and incongruity in Yoruba culture. Evidently, the author depicts Enitan's assertiveness by describing her with the above borrowed items. Such loaned expressions showcase a woman's natural propensity to gain her place in the society. From every indication, this predisposition of a woman is sometimes seen and described as bizarre and unusual by society. These lexical expressions, therefore, point at Enitan's self-assured, forceful and weird character which the society believes is manly.

In another instance, Yetunde, a Yoruba name which means 'mother has returned' is used to portray the assertiveness of Enitan in the text. She rejects Yoruba's cultural practice on naming where names connect the giver, the receiver and the event that informs the giving of names. This is solely to dislodge a practice where women are not involved in name giving. Invariably, such an act is to ascertain her place in society. Enitan decides otherwise and gives her daughter another name which she believes suits her better. Based on the context, she wants her daughter to live her own life without having it attached to anyone's. By implication, her husband could have planned giving the assumed name to the child, hence the woman's strong decision. In essence, despite the global gender ideology that is assumed to project woman as being subordinate to man, this authorial ideology, through the use of some lexical features, projects women as bold figures who can dictate their place in society. It also portrays the woman's inclination towards her culture; otherwise she could have taught of giving her daughter an English name.

On the other hand, since the use of English by African writers is an instance of culture contact, the language cannot adequately express African thoughts, expressions and religious beliefs, especially in giving names; Atta therefore attempts to solve this linguistic burden by maintaining a selective fidelity to her mother tongue. To express certain cultural experiences and differences, Atta makes use of some loan words, especially from Yoruba. She sometimes provides English equivalents for the Yoruba words to avoid the effects of the semantic obstruction that some non-Yoruba readers might experience. The novelist may have used this strategy in order to advertise the richness of the lexical repertoire of her indigenous language Yoruba. Again, she seems to have used the un-translated words to reveal her own African culture and thereby silence the Western culture.

Sunny, a brutal man who constantly cheats on Arinola, yet behaves piously. When his dissipation with another woman results in the birth of Debayo, he keeps the details away from

his family for years; when the son Arinola has for him eventually dies, he accuses Arinola of neglects, particularly for taking the boy to a church instead of a hospital. Arinola's justification never pacifies him:

> Your father wouldn't forgive me, kept talking about hospital. Why didn't you take him to hospital.... Hospital can't take sickle cell out of a child, hospital cannot make a dying child live. I am not an ignorant woman. There isn't a mother in the world who wouldn't believe that faith can heal her child after medicine has failed... (173)

Sunny's alienation and unforgiving attitude result in Arinola's hypertension, yet he keeps spending more time in the arms of other women. When the court eventually dissolves their marriage, Sunny refuses to obey the court's injunction to transfer one of his houses to Arinola, still insisting, after ten years, 'Your mother.... can wait.... After what she's done, bad mouthing me all over the place, trying to get me disbarred...' (111). When the divorce paper found by Enitan catalogues Sunny's bestiality:

> A neglectful and uncaring attitude; withheld housekeeping allowance; on several occasions did not return home and gave no reasonable answer as to his whereabouts; influenced her (Arinola's) child to disregard her (Arinola); disrespected her church family; made wicked and false allegations about her sanity; colluded with his family members to alienate her; caused her much embarrassment and unhappiness. (277)

Analysing Sunny, Enitan lets out: 'Guilt never did show in my father's face.... It was how he'd driven my mother to distraction' (150). Ironically, Sunny still engages in the fight against the oppressions caused by the military rule, complaining openly about its lawlessness. He, in fact, chooses to be imprisoned for his ideals. Sunny, undoubtedly, reminds one of

Eugene in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus,* who also behaves cruelly to his family, but fights injustices caused by the Military government. No other character succinctly captures these contradictions in Sunny's personality like Arinola, 'Too bad for your father. He can't keep a family together, now he wants to save his country?' (220). Unfortunately, just like Nnu Ego in Emecheta's *The Joys of Motherhood* who sacrifices her comforts for her family's well-being but dies ignominiously, Arinola is later found dead in her solitary home.

Niyi represents another perspective of the macho male who believes in absolute submission of women to men, as well as separation of duties. He believes the kitchen remains the female sphere, hence refuses to lend helping hand to Enitan, claiming 'he was totally inept inside kitchens. His favourite trick was to feign panic attacks by the door, clutching his throat and keeling over' (183- 84). As a domineering husband, Niyi bosses Enitan around, even as he sees any disapproval of his views or actions as a challenge to his patriarchal authority. He, at a point, calls Enitan aside and announces, 'Better watch what you're saying. Next thing, they'll be calling me woman wrapper' (182). Niyi's statement reinforces "those ideas of masculinity which insist that to be a 'real man' including the dominating and controlling of wives" (Cousins 109- 10). When Enitan refuses to take to his advice that she should bother less about her father's incarceration, he engages her in a four-month cold war and even refuses to congratulate her on her thirty-fifth birthday. Niyi bothers less about the psychological effect of his actions on his pregnant wife because 'what he wanted was a surrender... he was a man who believed in absolutes...he would break my (Enitan's) heart for my own good' (250). Before their divorce, Enitan captures their condition of living and her agonies during this period, 'Our home was ridiculous.... Silence had become noisy.... I wanted to tell him that a heavy plug had settled at the base of my womb... that I was finding it difficult to sleep on my belly at night' (239- 40).

Brigadier is a Casanova as he delights in 'collecting women as young as his daughters' (103), not minding the psychological effects of his action on his retinue of wives. As one of Brigadier's multiple, sexual partners, Sheri is expected to obey some rules: tying up her head anytime she goes out, and spending most of her time at home, cooking and preparing for his visit. When Sheri fails to abide by his rules, Brigadier raises his eyebrows, and even engages her in a physical fight, 'Telling me I'm a whore for going out....Raise a hand to hit Sheri Bakare...' (169). Portrait of Sheri's uncle shows a vicious man void of human sympathy. Under native law, Sheri's uncle inherits every property and money left by his deceased brother. He also complains bitterly when he discovers his brother's family has converted part of the only house left for them to a cafeteria, and so he takes the family to court, demanding their immediate ejection.

Sheri and her relationship with Brigadier Hassan for instance, kitchen martyr describes Sheri, in the context of the text, as the ideal woman for Nigerian men. Her beauty indicates her consideration as an ideal woman. In spite of her beauty and ability to do things, Sheri ends in the kitchen as a martyr. A martyr is a sacrificial victim. Martyrdom means the suffering or dying for a cause. This reveals the unfair reality of society. Ideologically, the woman is portrayed as a 'sufferer', 'victim', in the hands of men. Evidently, the author projects a culture that mandates the woman to be in the kitchen always for the man. Therefore, 'kitchen martyr', a coinage, means a woman who suffers or sacrifices herself to cook for a man, the superior gender. Coinages or neologisms are newly coined words resulting from the prevailing sociolinguistic experience of people in a particular culture or custom. However, Brigadier Hassan's position as an army officer also contributes to the title given to Sheri as a kitchen martyr. This is because most military officers in Nigerian contexts are womanizers; they exploit every woman that comes their way. However, the

author tries to foreground the view that cooking is not meant for women alone as it is practiced by most Nigerian cultures.

The view of the manipulation of woman is made manifest in the use of the word recruit. The author foregrounds the exploitation of women in the hands of men. Ideologically, the author condemns such self-effacing socio-cultural practice: Brigadier Hassan's wives are aware of their husband's numerous girlfriends and yet they plan to 'recruit' another wife for him. The author, however, pictures a cultural practice that is evident in the Northern part of Nigeria. By implication, the society does not frown at the polygamous nature of man but sees a woman's extra-marital or pre-marital sexual affairs as taboos. The lexical item to recruit, which means to enroll, connects the Brigadier's behavior with his wives interest: an interest based on the shared cultural ethos to unquestionably accept the husband's womanizing disposition, and to help in connecting him to other women. Therefore, the author uses the act of criticizing to illustrate the negative portrayal of Sheri as an object of 'fun' in the hands of Brigadier Hassan.

The culture is based in which women are made to naturally depend on their male counterparts. Such ideological positioning projects the woman as a docile and passive observer in a world ruled by man. Evidently, the author's representation of male chauvinism is drawn from the society which provides materials for the composition of her art. The powerlessness and the disadvantaged position of women, as expressed by the author, are encapsulated in the lexical items going out and staying in. This metaphorical presentation of the inconsistent nature of women is encased in the ideological sentiment that women are objects which men, the powerful of society, manipulate, at will.

The derogatory synonyms; played with, tossed around, fingered, dismembered and discarded describe women as objects that are exploited by men. Women, especially the

beautiful ones such as Sheri are maneuvered by men like Brigadier in the satisfaction of their sexual desires. The synonymous expressions capture, in an intriguing manner, the image of an object being toyed with. Among the worst, in terms of exploitation, are the beautiful ladies. By implication, women are not just dependent on men but can be fiddled with, exploited and got rid of by the superior group (man) at will. This is projected in the text by the type of restriction Sheri suffers from her sugar daddy, the Brigadier. Probably, because of the culture, as presented by the author, she does not see anything wrong with the way the Brigadier treats her, restricts her movement and narrows her life.

Sefi Atta uses the terms holy water and cleansing to project the religiousity of Arin. Apparently, these synonyms indicate the devout nature of this woman after her daughter's friend Sheri was raped in the company of her daughter. When the outcome of the rape is made public, Arin, Enitan's mother, believes that 'deliverance' should be carried out on her daughter. The cleansing is to stop her from associating with girls such as Sheri and to shield her from rapists. Since Sheri's father does not allow the cleansing, her mother forces her to drink the holy water for the same purification. Arin's belief in the efficacy of holy water and cleansing foregrounds her religiosity.

They joined a church and renounced Anglicanism explain how some women demonstrate their religiosity by consolidating with a religious group and disengaging from another. Possibly, the authorial ideology behind the use of these antonyms is to lay bare the flexible and emotional nature of women when they are depressed. In essence, some mothers can relinquish everything they have to save their child or children and most importantly when the child is an only son. This is probably because of the sociocultural conception that a male child consolidates a woman's stand in her husband's place and the premium most Nigerian men place on male children over female ones. Arin's affiliation with a new religious group showcases her identity and where she wants the society to locate her. She feels the former

religious group does not cater for her 'spiritual' needs. Therefore, she seeks solace in a new one. The writer projects a culture that illustrates the unstable nature of some women in choosing a religious group. The emotional insufficiency of women in handling problems may be attributed to it.

In another instance, the antonyms 'a church' and 'a cult' showcase the predilection of women to align to a religious group as a place of solace and refuge from harsh realities of troubling marriages. A church is a denomination or a branch of the Christian religion while a cult simply means a group of people who share the same religious or spiritual beliefs regarded by others as misguided or false. The author's description of Arin's religious group as a church and a cult respectively, foregrounds the confused state of women especially when they are troubled. Arin's weakness in handling her marital problems exemplifies the exhibited trait of most women in a marital crisis.

Trait of seeking solace in a religious group is mostly evident in barren women or women who are in search of a male child just like Arin. This is in consonance with the cultural view on the "nothingness" of a childless woman or a woman without a male child in the traditional African setting. Arin, in search of a place in her marriage joins the group and sees it as a church but the writer sees it as a cult, something evil. This is why the writer describes the group (cult) as one of those that take your money and give you fear. Apparently, the group collects her money and increases her fear so that she does not leave them. In the bid to save her son which consolidates her marriage, Arin, just like some women in such problem, desperately stays in the group, hoping that her problems will be solved one day.

Correspondingly this ideology is also made manifest in the author's use of church gowns and the velvet caftans to make reference to a woman. The antonyms illustrate Arin's fashionable days. The phrase, church gowns foregrounds her new religious affiliation while

the velvet caftans project the old group she disengages herself from. From the text, we understand that Arin's husband is not troubled. Empirically, the ideological difference that exists between men and women is exposed, indicating that women are not strong enough emotionally. This illustrates the socio-cultural attachment of a woman's success in marriage to her ability to bear male children.

Other male characters that maltreat women in the novel include: Enitan's London boyfriend who takes advantage of her naivety, deflowering her, but later claims she is frigid like other Nigerian women in bed; Mother of Prisons' husband who cannot keep a job due to his indolent nature, yet eats gluttonously, shamelessly relying on his wife's income for the family's upkeep, while lying to everyone that he takes very good care of his family; Mike Obi who cheats on Enitan not too long after he has succeeded in making love to her; Demola and his friends who rape Sheri, culminating in her barrenness as she attempts to kill herself with a hanger after discovering she is pregnant; Mrs Williams' husband who divorces her for always attending parties and other meetings; Peter Mukoro who cheats on his wife; a houseboy who murders his female employer, leaves her body indoors and uses her car for taxi services; a man who throws acid into his lover's face; and a man who molests a female child hawker.

Indeed, there are many indices to suggest that Atta's novel is a catalogue of atrocities often perpetrated by men against the female folks, showing, among other things, how African culture has helped in certain areas to maintain patriarchal hegemony, while also revealing radical ways to ending female subjugation. In what appears to be some of her conclusions on the various categories of men, Atta, through Enitan, identifies the following strands: 'beaters, cheaters, lazy buggers and the so-called decent ones who no one would encourage a woman to run like hell from' (249).

The image of the male gender offered by Atta certainly engenders one fundamental question, which, in turns, births other similar questions. This is germane as one observes that Atta has embraced the Western radical feminists' prescription in ending women's subjugation, contrary to the beliefs of some notable African scholars and theorists who have theorised African women's issues in their rejoinders to feminism. Will it, therefore, be out of place to assert that Atta has, either deliberately or inadvertently, injuriously dealt with certain essential issues. First to be identified here is the issue of bride price and other marriage processes in Africa, which Atta discreetly demonstrates her denunciation for. This is evident in Enitan's and Niyi's disposition to the whole processes during their traditional marriage. Perhaps, Atta's position is in recognition of the repressive nature of certain aspects of the African culture, and, in this case, the abuse and bastardisation of the bride price practice, yet Sotunsa has shown that the practice is not to be regarded as a negative culture as it is actually meant as a token of the value of female children, and of husbands' love for their wives.

> Again, considering the actions and inactions of many of the principal characters in the novel, which ultimately result in proliferation of divorce as a viable way of ending stifling unions, one is tempted to ask: Is Atta recommending divorce/separation as the only pragmatic way for women to escape dysfunctional marriages (or relationships), and ensure self-realisation and assertion, bearing in mind that 'marriage (is) a form of imprisonment'. (Cousins 104)

Are motherhood and the traditional roles of women as nurturers and care-givers now an aberration, considering Arinola's negative perception of having more than one child, and Enitan's vehement disdain for the kitchen and her frequent reference to it in negative terms, even to the extent of asking her mother-in-law, 'Don't you feel lonely in here, ma? Isn't the kitchen the loneliest room?' (181).

The assertion and self-realisation are not possible until a woman breaks away from her man, considering that Sheri and Enitan could not attain their goals as long as they are still with their lovers. Nwapa's question," 'Are there no women in Africa today who can say: To hell with men and marriage. I don't want to have children. I want to be free to do just as I please'?" (530) Are men wholly responsible for women's repression considering how women, across time and cultures, serve as custodians and executors of the various barbarous acts against other women, evident in the victimisation of Arinola by her husband's mother? Is the fact that housekeepers normally run away from Arinola, after her divorce, not a confirmation that she is lacking in certain areas. It has been conceived with the African and, perhaps, Anglo-American females in mind, to the exclusion of African males.

Certainly, all well-meaning individuals will be interested in the questions raised, considering the fact that apart from the marriages of Uncle Fatai, Sheri's father, Niyi's parents and Grace Ameh, which lack intense exploration, virtually all other relationships in the novel suffer shipwrecks. But then, even the ones 'standing' raise some dust: Uncle Fatai's marriage is intact because the wife is a state judge who is free to do whatever she likes; Sheri's father has two wives that cannot vociferate their concerns explicitly as they would then have to worry about their husband's mother who goes tough on anyone that destabilises peace in her son's house; Niyi's parents are still together because his mother has 'swallowed her voice from the day she married' (180); Grace Ameh's marriage endures because she is in full control of her home. Atta, undoubtedly, betrays what Kehinde and Mbipom describe as '"anti-sexist sexism" in her narrative (14).

The next chapter discusses how the female bonding enables the women to overcome divergences and challenge the oppressive situations.

Chapter Three

Feminine Amity: The Liberating Force

Females desire to enrich their life with their close friends and they are not able to forget their close friends and common persons whom they have come across the way. Atta also identifies the enriching force of friendship for women in her works. Sheri and Enitan are the backbone for her writings but she has traced many incident in her works. How they handle the situation is an interesting fact. Atta has described Enitan as only daughter for her parent when on the final stage Enitan came to know that her father was having extra marital affair and also he has a son for sharing her property, it was not accepted by Enitan and her mother but at last Enitan does not show any bad face towards him and she taught him as her brother. This hard situation makes a bad opinion about male gender but she cannot hold anything wrong. Here are some incidents in which how Sheri and Enitan face their own problems and how they find solution for their problems.

The first challenge Sheri and Enitan face is to grow up in a politically unstable Nigeria and cope with the constraints related to the chaos that the army sets up in the country. The journey from colonialism to independence does not seem to provide freedom to the Nigerian people who face another form of imperialism through the military. In fact, the army becomes a patriarchal institution that terrorizes and oppresses its own people. Enitan denounces the political instability in Nigeria, where soldiers overthrow governments. She states,

> I knew that our first Prime Minister was killed by a Major General, that the Major General was soon killed, and that we had another Major General heading our country. For a while the palaver had stopped, and now it seemed the Biafrans were trying to split our country in two. (9)

Living in such turmoil intensely affects Sheri and Enitan's lives as they witness what is happening in their country. They try to adapt to this difficult condition as best as they can in order to survive.

The situation causes much anger and frustration as despair and hopelessness settle in most people. This pessimistic description is what Nigeria has become after many years of yearning for independence. The novel presents a recurrent image of military men killing each other and civilians as well, destabilizing the country. This chaotic and desperate situation causes a social deprivation that affects the lives of many innocent people. Throughout the portrayal, politicians fail to manage the transition from colonialism to independence, and they therefore endanger the security and peace of their citizens. Working for their own interests and motivated by the wish to get rich, they compete for power and put both the country's economy and people in danger. Atta's book criticizes the African elite that inherits the colonial power but ultimately fails its own people. Instead of soothing the pain and healing the wounds of people who suffer centuries of slavery and colonialism, they seek their own empowerment. Through corruption and greed, they defer the dreams of a nation hoping for a better future.

The second difficulty Sheri and Enitan encounter relates to their religious differences; however, they understand early that their bonding is more important than these differences. Thus, they carefully distinguish their friendship from their respective Muslim and Christian beliefs. This decision saves them clashes of points of view. This silent agreement gives a solid foundation to their friendship and even reinforces their relationship, thereby helping them avoid falling in the trap of most Nigerians. Indeed, religious tensions are very rampant in Nigeria and often threaten the stability of the country. The open-mindedness allows Sheri and her family to invite Enitan to join them to celebrate Eid, for the end of Ramadan. Both Sheri's invitation and Enitan's acceptance reveal their degree of tolerance and how their friendship works to unite them even with controversial problems. Enitan feels completely at home and enjoys the food

and festivities, and more importantly, she does not question their religion but instead respects it. This rich experience demonstrates their commitment to female bonding since the feast itself is a reflection of female solidarity. In fact, this gathering of women including Sheri's stepmothers, her sisters and sisters-in-law reveals how women join their efforts to cook, entertain and provide a sense of wellbeing for their families and guests. Sheri and Enitan's friendship extends to this female unity in which all women present at the reception.

The third difference between Enitan and Sheri lies in their ethnicity or tribe; however, Atta proves that these differences do not always generate conflicts or constitute a handicap to developing relationships. Through the friendship of a Yoruba girl, Enitan, and a Hausa girl, Sheri, Atta's novel demonstrates that the essence of a relationship does not reside in the origins or cultural background of the people involved, but on their degree of commitment and how they care for one another. The reserve calls for more understanding and unity between tribes in order to avoid civil wars like the Biafran war, showing the friendship between Sheri and Enitan as an example of sisterhood and encouraging other women to follow this example in order to save the country from the catastrophe of another war. The terrible social and political consequences of the Biafra war on the country and its people do not need to be repeated. Atta's novel contrasts the commitment to female friendship of Sheri and Enitan, who work on tribal and ethnic differences, with the lack of such commitment by the proponents of the civil war, who fight over the same differences.

The capacity invites Nigerians to focus more on national unity than on controversial issues that threaten the stability of the country. In the novel female friendship is a factor of unity that overcomes these divergences; men's relationships fail to do the same. For instance, one friend of Enitan's father, Uncle Alex, too conscious of his ethnicity, prefers to end their friendship rather to discuss openly the tribal issues. The narrator explains, "The day the Civil War broke out, he delivered the news. Uncle Fatai arrived soon afterward and they bent heads

as if in prayer to listen to the radiol" (9). As an Igbo, Uncle Alex chooses to fight for his ethnic group rather than advocate the unity of the nation. He finally joins the war and is killed.

Enitan reports her father's comments about him: "Sometimes I heard him talking about Uncle Alex, how he'd known beforehand there was going to be a civil war, how he'd joined the Biafrans and died fighting for them even though he hated guns" (10). Sheri and Enitan grow up during the civil war and experience the impact through the violence, the atrocities, and the political instability that follows. Enitan reflects, 'My father would ask me to hide under my bed whenever we had bomb raid alerts' (10). The men fail to overcome divisions or even find a common ground that might avoid the war and save their friend. However, the girls have a good understanding of the matter, and they follow a different path from that which causes the war. This awful experience of the war teaches a valuable lesson and invites the community to work on differences.

The fourth problem between Sheri and Enitan resides in their personalities; while Sheri is very open and provocative, Enitan is reserved and shy. Sheri's manners and harsh language attract Enitan to her, and Enitan definitely needs an opportunity to escape the loneliness of her desolate home. Their encounter gives Enitan the chance to fight her shyness and claim her selfhood. She asserts, 'From the beginning I believed whatever I was told, downright lies even, about how best to behave, although I had my own inclinations' (7). Therefore, the friendship liberates her, opens her up to the world outside her home and frees her voice. Moreover, Enitan's very conservative upbringing contrasts with Sheri's, who grows up in a very liberated household where her grandmother, Alhaja, teaches her to face troubles and fight back. This strong woman represents a good inspiration to Sheri, who matures under her shadow. As an independent woman who runs her own business, she teaches Sheri valuable lessons of creativity and empowerment. This powerful mother figure nurtures not only her children and

grandchildren but it is also a symbol for a whole community. Alhaja's upbringing makes Sheri as a powerful woman and she able to face various challenges. .

Sheri and Enitan build and develop their friendship; however, although neighbours, they have to fight adversity before they can become friends. In fact, Enitan's mother does not share her daughter's open-mindedness about religion and ethnicity and therefore does not allow her to play with the Bakare children. Nevertheless, determined to befriend Sheri after they first meet, Enitan challenges her mother and allows her bonding with Sheri to grow as they learn to know each other. She remembers, 'Sunday morning, after my parents left, I visited the house next door for the first time… …against my mother's orders, but it was worth knowing a girl my age in the neighbourhood' (26). Indeed, this initiative makes it possible for both Enitan and Sheri to develop a rare form of female friendship that survives various difficulties. When Enitan defies her mother for the sake of female bonding, she clearly demonstrates her sincere commitment to female friendship.

She reflects, 'Had I listened to my mother, that would have been the end of Sheri and I, and the misfortune that would bind us. But my mother had more hope of squeezing me up her womb than stopping our friendship' (43). Her choice pays off because Sheri offers her the nurturing, caring, and counselling her mother fails to give her. This decision opens up her mind and helps her face challenge. Their friendship starts when Sheri asks Enitan a simple question, 'Do you have a best friend? No… …Then, I will be your best friend' (16). Sheri takes her words seriously and makes a sincere commitment to the bonding. They share joys and sorrows and communicate through letters during the school years, when they are apart in different schools. Enitan asserts, 'Over the years, Sheri and I exchanged letters, sharing our thoughts on sheets torn from exercise books, ending them love and peace, your trusted friend' (51).

The friendship challenges not only differences but distance as well, which instead of pulling them apart unites them, generate and feed the sisterhood. This experience of female bonding extends to a form of female solidarity through Enitan's meeting other girls of different backgrounds in boarding school. Living on their own, they form bonds that transcend differences and this experience enriches Enitan. The lesson of female unity transcends religious and ethnic differences since these girls have different cultural backgrounds. Atta's novels share the same views about educating women to give them a chance of economic freedom and enough awareness to liberate them from the burden of oppression. Moreover, they both see female friendship as a facilitator toward the realization of this financial independence and an opportunity to nourish the hope of female unity.

Female friendship heals wounds for Sheri and Enitan, they both suffer from estranged mother-daughter relationships. Again, female friendship prevails over mother-daughter relationships and proves its healing powers through the positive impact Sheri and Enitan have on each other's life. Enitan's mother is too demanding and does not provide much nurturing to her daughter, and Sheri does not have the chance to know her mother. Although her grandmother loves and cherishes her, Sheri may still feel the absence of mother love. Despite the fact that Sheri does not seem to miss her mother, her absence may unconsciously affect her. The lie about her mother being dead and the sudden discovery of the truth may impact her even more. Sheri explains, 'My mother is not dead. My father told me she was, but the truth was he took me away from her' (171). This situation causes her an emotional problem because she does not know how to feel about the life or death of a mother who never attempts to reach her. She observes, 'The person who never came to look for me. That isn't a real mother' (171). The absence of her mother, her grandmother does her best to fill in the gaps and she protects her against any potential jealousy from her stepmothers and prepares her to face the world. Sheri's mother is white, Sheri has a light-skinned complexion; her physical appearance does not bother

Enitan and certainly does not effect on their friendship. Sheri's mixed race does not create an identity problem since she considers herself to be black despite her apparent physical difference, even though it costs her the mockery of school children.

The bonding between Enitan and Sheri allows them not only to survive estranged mother daughter relationships but also to share confidences about their future ambitions, and to discuss the restrictions on women's power in a politically unstable country. While planning their future, Sheri reminds her friend of her limitations as a woman in a patriarchal society when Enitan states her wish to be president: 'Oh, women aren't presidents' (31). More realistic and mature, Sheri advises her friend not to dream because in a country where military men and politicians compete for power, there is no place for women. Sheri's realism does not mean that she believes in female submission; on the contrary, she sees herself as capable as anybody, men and women. However, she takes advantage of her grandmother's wisdom and analyzes the political situation of her country. Atta explains, Sheri Bakare was another challenge. She is not a character that shows up often in literature and feminism dismissing her.

The friendship between Sheri and Enitan proves to be a learning experience for them and leads them not only to discover and experiment with their womanhood but also to understand the .danger that exists. Enitan's seclusion does not allow her to know anything about sexuality, unlike Sheri, whose grandmother gives her a proper sexual education. Sheri becomes Enitan's advisor and encourages her to explore her womanhood and herself. It is not until the age of fourteen that Enitan discovers her own sex, and her discovery is due to the encouragement of her friend. It strengthens their bonding because the scene when Sheri witnesses Enitan's intimate moments with herself brings more confidentiality and trust in their relationship. She learns from her friend what she has never learnt from anybody else, including her own mother.

The pathetic and dirty description is the desolate image of rape. It transforms Sheri from a joyful and lively girl to a helpless woman who is physically and emotionally wounded. Enitan does not understand the reality about rape. She actually condemns Sheri and considers her to be responsible for what happens. She does not condone Sheri's decision to play with the boys instead of staying with her. Their different personalities play a key role in the decisions they make. While Enitan's shyness does not allow her to integrate the group, Sheri's open mindedness urges her to get involved. However, the rape represents a crucial period in their friendship filled with regrets, sorrow, pain, blame and separation. Indeed, Enitan blames Sheri for hanging around boys all the time during the picnic:

> Yes. I blamed her. If she hadn't smoked hemp it would never have happened. If she hadn't stayed as long as she did at the party, it would certainly not have happened. Bad girls got raped. We all knew. Loose girls, forward girls, raw, advanced girls. Laughing with boys, following them around, thinking she was one of them. Now, I could smell their semen on her, and it was making me sick. It was her fault. (65)

Enitan fails to understand that Sheri chooses to play with the boys, but she does not choose to be raped. She keeps the same judgment on her friend until another female friend she meets in London comes to her rescue when she makes it clear to her that, 'nothing a woman does justifies rape' (74). From then on, Enitan develops a better understanding of her friend's predicament and sympathizes with her. She comes to realize that the boys took advantage of Sheri's friendliness and open-mindedness when they raped her.

Atta's novel demonstrates the primacy of female friendship over men and women's relationships since women run the risk of getting raped like Sheri. Although women may also abuse other women, and not all men cause such pain to women, Sheri's experience teaches a

valuable lesson and urges her and her friend to be more careful in their relationships. The book denounces women's rape and points out that even women like Sheri who sympathize with and befriend men do not deserve to be raped; just because women who associate with men do not make them immoral and responsible for being raped. The lack of a fair judgment renders women more vulnerable since men are not punished for their crimes. Sheri's case did not go to court because the lack of fairness discourages women from filing lawsuits. Raped women fall victim not only to those who abuse them but also of the system that fails to provide them a fair trial. The system thus, becomes an accomplice to the rapists who may be encouraged to repeat their acts and also puts the security of its female citizens in danger. Atta's novel disagrees with and fights against the following statement, 'Bad girls got raped' (65), and sensitizes women like Enitan so that they do not fall into the trap of believing that women are somehow responsible.

Sheri's ordeal does not end with the rape since she gets pregnant and has a self-induced abortion in which she loses both the pregnancy and any hope of future motherhood. This painful experience greatly impacts her by endangering her life through a precarious and risky abortion and making her barren in a society that values children. This illuminates the dangers that loom around teenage girls, who despite their wish to experiment with their sexuality also run the risk of getting raped. The two friends learn it the hard way, and Sheri's apparent maturity does not save her from boys' trick. Sheri's abortion almost costs her her life. Later, she reflects, 'What did I know? Taking a hanger to myself, with all the biology I studied. I still thought I had a black hole inside me. So, which single man from a normal family would have a person like me?' (102).

Sheri feels hopeless because she realistically understands that African men primarily marry in order to have children. Enitan supports her view: Better to be ugly, to be crippled, to

be a thief even, than to be barren. We had both been raised to believe that our greatest days would be the birth of our first child, our wedding and graduation days in that order.

> A woman may be forgiven for having a child out of wedlock if she had no hope of getting married, and she would be dissuaded from getting married if she didn't have a degree. Marriage could immediately wipe out a sluttish past, but angel or not, a woman had to have a child. (102)

This is the sad fate of African women whose destiny is closely related to motherhood. Another Nigerian writer, Buchi Emecheta, deals with this theme in *Joys of Motherhood*, in which Nnu Ego loses her role as senior wife and is finally repudiated by her husband because she does not have children. When she remarries and gets a son, she attempts suicide when he dies only days after his birth. Sheri chooses not to get married because she knows the reality and does not wish to suffer the same consequences.

The traditional African society expects women to be not only mothers but also mothers of male children likely to help in the fields. Modernity has not changed this expectation since male children are expected to continue the family lineage whereas girls marry and bear their husbands' name. The rape also impacts the friendship somewhat since Enitan and Sheri both avoid talking openly about the situation. Enitan asserts, 'She didn't come back to my house, and I didn't visit her either because I hoped that if we pretended long enough the whole incident might vanish' (66). Fate also seems to lead the friends along different paths; while Enitan goes to England to pursue a Law degree, Sheri indulges in modelling and becomes a Beauty Queen.

They resume of their friendship on the first day they meet again because they have never stopped seeing themselves as friends. Enitan remember, 'It was like finding a pressed flower I'd long forgotten about. Her smile was less broad; her pink gums seemed to have disappeared' (95). Once the misunderstanding disappeared, Sheri and Enitan resume their

friendship with more strength and vision since they have become more mature and independent. This new togetherness fills them with joy and allows them to take care of one another's matters carefully. Their ability to work on differences saves their friendship and gives them a chance to comfort and nurture each other. They trade the roles because Sheri, was more mature and supportive.

The rape impacts Sheri's life in various ways that change her. Besides rape and its consequences, Sheri also faces oppressive experiences from her boyfriend, a Brigadier, who constantly abuses her. Aware of their first misadventure with men, Enitan advises Sheri not to let him oppress her. She wants to keep her friend from being a victim in dating a rich and older man who already has two wives. Sheri finds herself totally dependent on the Brigadier, who dictates her life. In so doing, she not only loses her freedom to move freely but also spends all her time in the kitchen cooking for him. Although Sheri does not want to depend on the Brigadier, her father's death puts her in a delicate economic situation. She reflects,

> Want? I beg you, don't talk to me about want. When my father died who remembered me? Chief Bakare done die, God Bless his family. We didn't even know where our next meal was coming from, and no one cared. Not even my uncle, who took all his money. (101)

Brigadier abuses and oppresses Sheri by regarding her as an object in his hands. Even though she is aware of the prejudice to which she is subject, Sheri sees the relationship as an opportunity to survive and save her family as well. She is ready to accept the injustice because she does not have a choice, although her voice has been silenced, which makes Enitan really sad. Enitan observes, 'I remembered only that she was the most powerful girl I knew, and then she wasn't anymore, and I became disappointed with her' (102).

The rape and her father's death urge Sheri to develop survival strategies. Unwilling to indulge in a marriage in which she may suffer because of her inability to have children, she dates a married man who already has children. She also knows that the Brigadier can satisfy all her financial needs even though she has to trade her liberty of movement and action. Atta's novel denounces the sugar daddy system in Nigeria, where married wealthy men keep beautiful young girls like Sheri in bondage. Although these men take care of all the financial needs of the girls, they exploit them in many other ways by using them as tools to show in private meetings or travels. Enitan reflects, 'Sheri was the Nigerian man's ideal: pretty, shapely, yellow to boot, with some regard for a woman's station. Now she was a kitchen martyr, and may well have forgotten how to flaunt her mind' (105).

Sheri's Brigadier claims to be a good Muslim and urges her to wear to cover her head, although he commits open adultery to everybody's knowledge. Their beauty draws the attention of influential men who end up abusing them. Enitan worries about her friend's condition, urging her to refuse such subjectivity by emphasizing the oppressive aspects of the relationship. Enitan's strong determination to liberate Sheri of this oppressive relationship moves her to help empower her through economic freedom. She encourages her friend to start her own business in order to liberate herself from the burden of oppression and provide for herself. 'You're bright, you're young, and this man is treating you like his house girl' (36).

Due to Enitan's sensitization, and the violence of the Brigadier, Sheri soon realizes her worth. She finally packs up and leaves him because she will not allow him to beat her. She claims, 'Nobody hits me. You hit me and I will hit you back' (170). Through this relationship, Sheri has suffered not only domestic violence but lack of freedom as well since her boyfriend did not allow her to go outside. This form of oppression causes not only corporal damage but also psychological and emotional imbalance. Because she has been dependent on him financially, he thinks he can treat her as he wants. Fortunately, Enitan understands the source

of the problem and saves her friend in time. As a result, Sheri not only liberates herself from patriarchal oppression, but she also becomes more confident than before as she explores her inner qualities.

When Sheri starts a catering business on Enitan's advise, she soon understands that she does not have to spend her days cooking for a man who does not even show up to eat. From now on, she will cook in order to make her own money, but not to please anybody. Sheri's bonding with Enitan saves her because it gives her the push she needs to wake up and believe in herself. She will not be cooking for a man who beats her, but for her own economic development. She transforms the patriarchal obligation of cooking into an economic industry that liberates her. The success of the catering business empowers Sheri, who finds financial independence that provides her with a sense of security.

Enitan helps her friend face and overcome her challenge; likewise, Sheri also plays a key role in Enitan's life. These mutual exchanges and assistance make their friendship stronger since each helps the other face difficulties. Sheri pacifies Enitan's pain when the latter suffers two betrayals on the same night. After her father confesses of having a bastard child, she runs to her boyfriend's room and finds him with another woman. This heart-breaking experience severely affects Enitan, who suddenly discovers the infidelity of the men in her life. In the custody of her father after her parents' divorce, she has only had respect and admiration for this man, who even influences her own career since she works hard to become a lawyer like him. However, the discovery of his adulterous life renders him unworthy in her eyes and causes her tremendous pain. Enitan reports the confrontation she has with her father:

> He straightened up. Yes, he said. Debayo was his son, four years younger than me. He lived in Ibadan. So did his mother. No, they were never married. He was

> in medical school there, finished last year. He was born a year after my brother died. (151)

The deception and pain urge her to face this man whose vulnerability she just discovers. For the first time, she understands an important aspect of her mother's suffering by having to cope with the escapade of an adulterous man.

Enitan finally goes to Sheri's house where she gets the nurturing care which she needs to recover from this painful experience. After Sheri offers her the support necessary to heal this wound, Enitan realizes the power of female friendship that allows her to escape a potential nervous breakdown. Sheri calms her pain and provides her with the care and security to help her face the challenge. The women support each other through difficult times. Enitan rescues Sheri from her abusive relationship, and Sheri comes to Enitan's aid when Enitan finds out about her father's philandering. Sheri's support contrasts with the betrayal and deception these men impose on Enitan. From this experience, she learns to be very careful with men since her own father has deceived her.

Although Sheri starts a catering business, Enitan faces a cooking issue with her husband and in-laws who urge her to cook constantly. Unlike her friend who enjoys cooking, Enitan does not like the kitchen and the tradition that links it to African women. Sheri warns her about the fate Nigerian society reserves for women, who whatever their level of education, are expected to cook for their husbands and their families. She reflects,

> Maybe you don't know this because you were raised by your father, but let me tell you now, to save you from unnecessary headache in the future. Forget that nonsense. Education cannot change what's inside a person's veins. Scream and shout, if you like, bang your head against this wall, you will end up in the kitchen. Period. (104)

Enitan learns this lesson the hard way, she finds herself in the kitchen cooking for a very extended family. The situation frustrates her, but she soon realizes that is what everybody expects of her. Her anger overflows when her husband refuses to help or even cook and serve himself. Here is Enitan's answer when he asks her to serve his brothers: 'Well, why can't you ever get them drinks for once?... ...Why can't you go to the kitchen? What will happen if you go? Will a snake bite your leg?' (187). This answer irritates him, especially in front of his brothers, and he feels humiliated.

Enitan's father has raised her in Western culture in which almost everybody eats in fast food or other restaurants; however, this habit conflicts with the African tradition in which women cook food for their family. Enitan is split between the tradition in which she lives and the modernity she embraces. She challenges the patriarchal institution that transforms women into kitchen martyrs.

Enitan resists this form of patriarchy that keeps her a prisoner in her own kitchen. She complains, 'Someone ought to call a national conference for diet reform. The day an African woman can prepare a sandwich for a meal that will be the day. I've spent the whole day in that bloody kitchen' (213). Despite her tremendous efforts, her husband does not appreciate the cooking and even makes the following remark, 'The trouble is. . . You are not a domesticated woman. You just don't have that. . . that loving quality' (214). The attention in the issue of cooking, because women like Enitan have started to complain and reject this custom. Nevertheless, this tradition is deeply rooted in African culture, and even those who disapprove have to comply when the situation demands it. Even Enitan knows that whatever the reason of the gathering, guests have to eat, and despite her revolt she will not serve them restaurant food because she understands that this would violate the rules of hospitality according to the African norm.

Sheri comes to her rescue whenever necessary by helping her cook for her in-laws because she realizes her friend's misfortune. Enitan's mother-in-law expects her to cook since that is exactly what she does. Very docile and dependable, Mrs. Franco is the prototype of the traditional African woman who takes care of the slightest need of her men: her husband and sons. She fails to form a bond with Enitan or develop female solidarity with her because they don't have the same domestic standards, not to mention the same stand on women's emancipation. Enitan's mother-in-law, Mrs. Franco, was a challenge too. She may be put with but she gets sympathy from her sons and husband because she is obliging. She also sets standards that Enitan cannot meet. The kitchen issue keeps bothering Enitan, who realizes that as long as she is married, she will have to cook for her husband's relatives. This form of patriarchal oppression is the fate of African women, and as Sheri says, education cannot save Enitan from this duty because even if she can afford servants, she still has to do her own part of the cooking.

Enitan relates, 'My father immediately published a statement in the Oracle, saying he would continue to petition until Peter Mukoro's release. I worried about my father's safety, given that under Decree Two, any arrest could be justified' (192). He was sent to jail for defending his client and his imprisonment seriously affects Enitan, who while pregnant lives with constant anxiety and keeps his law firm operating. The arrest of such eminent personalities for no apparent reason demonstrates the lack of security in a country where anybody can be sent to jail according to the whim of the military. The army endangers the foundation of democracy and freedom of speech since any statement can be seen as an offense to the government. The arrest of Mr. Taiwo makes Enitan experience first hand the oppression the political instability creates in Nigeria. Hopeless and without any clue about her father's whereabouts, Enitan lives with despair and fear for his life.

The lack of safety goes along with economic hardships. Although a lawyer, Enitan cannot afford to live on her own and is compelled to live in her father's house since the political instability has also ruined the economy. This situation causes hopelessness to the young woman, who feels lost and worthless. In these feelings, she is not alone. When a whole generation of educated young adults depends on their parents to survive, education offers few expectations, but the economic situation in Nigeria does not have much to offer. However, the hardship comes Sheri and Enitan stick to one another and use their bonding as a positive force to challenge the difficulties. Enitan states, 'She was my oldest friend, my closest friend. We had been absent friends, sometimes uncertain friends, but so were most sisters and she was the nearest I'd coming to having one in this place where families were over-extended' (211).

Sheri and Enitan actually reinforce their relationship and mind their own business when they realize the limitations of their power on politics. They refuse to let the situation in their country lead them to total despair but instead try to live a normal life. Both Sheri and Enitan have suffered other forms of male-controlled oppression from husbands, lovers, in-laws, or just from a system that supports this form of domination. They face different persons, which try to conquer them, but they refuse to be overcome and fight back in order to regain their freedom. This refusal to accept defeat energizes them and gives them enough strength and courage to cope with the political upheaval and unrest in their country where the military oppresses people.

Enitan discovers a form of female unity, Grace Ameh, a journalist she meets when her father is arrested. As a reporter, Grace faces a dilemma, the obligation to inform her readers but also the fear of being arrested for doing that. Despite her fear for her own safety, she decides to keep on doing her job. The meeting of the two women brings positive changes in their lives as Grace supports Enitan emotionally and advises her on what to do concerning her father's arrest, and Enitan not only provides Grace with interviews to keep her journal open but also joins her cause in an attempt to sensitize people to injustice and eventually request the liberation

of detainees. This common determination leads them to prison, where they spend many hours just for attending a meeting. This painful experience not only allows them to better understand the inadequacies of the political system but also to strengthen their relationship because they share something they will never forget. Enitan's arrest while trying to liberate her father gives her an opportunity to comprehend the policy behind these acts.

Enitan and Grace's journey in prison also allows them to make the acquaintance of a group of women who try to adapt to their situation as best as they can. Enitan describes the experience,

> There were twelve other women in the cell they threw us in; fourteen of us in a space intended for seven, with ventilation holes on an area the size of an air-conditioning unit. There was no air, no light. My pupils widened in the dark. Outside crickets chattered. Mosquitoes buzzed around my ears. The women lay on raffia mats, overlapping each other on the cold cement floor. (265)

These women develop survival strategies that help them cope with their difficult situation and refuse to be impressed by the cleanliness of Grace and Enitan. On the contrary, Mother of Prisons, the woman who dictates the rules in the cell, tries to bully them, not because she is mean but because she needs to express herself and show some authority in order to remain calm and stable.

She asserts, 'You're no better than me. Not in here. We sleep on the same floor, shit in the same bucket. I'll deal with you in a way you least expect if you insult me. Any of my girls here will deal with you in a way you least expect' (266). Deprived of liberty, she provides herself with some form of freedom by becoming the leader of the group and imposing her own rules; however, Grace and Enitan soon discover her frailty when she emotionally breaks down and finally tells them her story. She painfully explains how the military keeps women in prison

without a trial. This confidence breaks the ice between the women and creates a sudden bonding that allows them to discuss and exchange ideas. When all women lay on the ground trying to find some sleep, they realize that for now they all share the same fate with no distinction between lawyers, journalists and housewives. This awareness coupled with the consciousness of them all being women unites them and clears differences. This experience teaches a lesson of female unity between women, who although hopeless, join efforts in their struggle for survival. Conscious of their common predicament, they strive to resist their oppression by forming bonds and helping each other. Grace and Enitan cannot do much to help liberate these women, they sympathize with them, understand their misfortune and become aware that alongside men who get arrested every day, women also have their share of the problem.

Enitan faces a great challenge in her marriage because her husband wants to restrict her freedom of movement. Indeed, he does not tolerate her involvement in the movement that petitions for the liberation of prisoners, including her own father. Enitan tries hard to cope with the challenge, but when she finally understands that her husband is restricting her liberty, she packs up and leaves with her new-born baby. Even though Enitan's anger and frustration about the kitchen issue is well known, her decision to leave her husband while the reception organized for the initiation of her baby is still going on seems somewhat surprising. The author comments about the ending, 'I thought it gradual, rather than sudden'. The fact that a lot of people have taken issue with the ending means that I failed to demonstrate that in the story. The timing was prompted by her husband forbidding her to join the political group. She still wanted her daughter to be given the proper rites and so she waited until the naming ceremony.

Nonetheless Enitan's departure allows her to regain her liberty. She now has the freedom to be more involved in the women's group for the liberation of both men and women. Reflecting on her decision to participate in the petitions, Enitan argues,

> I could not wait. There were babies who stayed in their mother's wombs too long. By the time they were born, they were already dead. There were people who learned to talk on their death beds. When they opened their mouths to speak, they drew their last breaths! (328).

This participation is the only solution which she finds to the patriarchal domination and political instability that suffocate her. She decides to fight back and refuse to be silenced. She had a difficult choice to make between her marriage and her freedom, and she chooses her freedom. When she realizes that her husband is compromising her liberty, she makes the deliberate decision to leave him because she will not allow anyone to bully her.

Her feminist instinct urges her to fight for her liberty and not let anyone, including her husband, manage her own life. Moreover, her filial obligations compel her to initiate a desperate attempt to help her father. She then sees the petitions as an opportunity to liberate prisoners and then joins even if it costs her marriage. Sheri supports her decision and helps her face the challenge of separation and raising her baby as a single mother, and they both overcome patriarchal oppression. Like Sheri, then, Enitan reclaims her freedom and becomes a liberated woman. She reflects, 'rich man wants to own your future, poor man wants to own your past' (307). Their refusal to be conquered makes them fight back, stand up for themselves but for their community as well.

The next chapter is to analyse the growing up of a child from adolescence to adulthood. It also discusses how the various forms of growth gives awareness to the heroine about her environment which affects her.

Chapter Four

Disintegration of Stereotypes

Feminism in Africa was been born out of the marginalization and oppression of women and the specific texturing by interconnections with a variety of class, ethnic, religious, sexual status and other divisions, within and across African borders and the African diaspora. It has also been drawn on the evolution of feminism outside the continent. The 'third generation' of contemporary Nigerian authors retain a home within a lineage of Nigerian writing, engaging with and re-inscribing Yoruba, Nigerian, diaspora and female identities without stepping out of the home of those identities altogether. Their writings provide a composite portrait of emerging Nigerian women who are educated, career oriented and strong willed, while being wives, mothers and daughters. Qunta says,

> The African woman of the rural area is portrayed a little more than a slave, who goes about her tasks with silent acceptance. She has no past and no future, given the inherent backwardness of her society . . . She never speak for herself but is always spoken about. (11)

Everything Good Will Come (2005) suggests recasting the female identity in a third world patriarchal Nigeria which was once reeling under the repercussions of Civil War. This novel brought her fame and inclusion in the list of Nigerian authors who narrate their motherhood from the diaspora. *Everything Good Will Come* focuses on relationships and self-discovery that lead to the formation of strong feminine voices against the backdrop of the larger social factors which collide to stifle women's freedom of choice. The comparative study of male and female experience in Atta's novel does not buy the established ideologies regarding women portrayal which generally belittle women experience and achievements.

Sefi Atta describes the oppression and subjugation of women in the pronouncedly patriarchal Nigerian society in her award-winning novel *Everything Good Will Come*. She exposes the way patriarchy has relegated women to the background. Not only does patriarchy hinders women from making their meaningful contribution to the development of the society, it also results in a moral degradation of women.

Enitan dreams of being viewed as equal in society. She comes across many types of women and with each one, she tries to further her cause for female empowerment. Atta weaves seamlessly through the relationships Enitan has throughout her life to portray a subtle, gradual shift that results in a whole new outlook by the end. *Everything Good Will Come* chronicles Enitan's life from being an innocent little girl of Sunny and Arin, who is better known as Mama Enitan, to the period when she is in a bid to liberate herself from the clutches of oppression. She abandons her turbulent marriage with her oppressive husband, Niyi Franco.

Sunny in his marriage to Mama Enitan cuts the figure of a typical African husband who strongly believes in relegating his wife to the background. Their quarrels become so incessant that they later separate. The acrimonious separation culminates in Mama Enitan's development of hypertension: My parents separated while I was in school in England . . . A squabble began between them, over ownership of property and over me. My mother vowed to have my father disbarred. Instead, she developed hypertension and said my father had caused it. (70)

Sefi Atta lays emphasis on the psychological trauma and the untold embarrassment Enitan experiences as a result of her parents' avoidable separation. On the day of her convocation in London University, she poses separately with her parents: "My graduation day ended in silence. I posed separately with either parent, and then vowed that they would never involve me in their arguments again" (92).

The same scenario unfolds during her traditional engagement ceremony with Niyi Franco. During the ceremony, her parents argue and her mother stoutly refuses to sit beside her father. Mama Enitan later explains the reasons for falling out with her husband. These include his neglectful and uncaring attitude, making of malicious and spurious allegations against her and colluding with family members to alienate her, thus causing her much embarrassment and sorrow.

Everything Good Will Come dwells extensively on how many women endure bad marriages and can go to any length to save their marriages from breaking down. Irretrievably, all are in the bid to confirm with the norms of their patriarchal society and to avoid the stigma that is attached to divorced women. Several female characters such as Enitan's mother-in-law, Toro Franco, Enitan's childhood and bosom friend, Sheri Bakare and Mother of Prison who make striking comments on marriage in general and also about their failed marriage in particular. Enitan says:

> We marry anybody for marry sake, love anyone for love sake and once we love them, we forsake ourselves. Make the best of it, till they die or till we do. Look at me. Everything, everything in that house I bought, and I was sending money to my parents in the village, sending money to his parents. . . Then like a fool, I was telling everybody that it was my husband who was providing, you know, to boost him up. (271)

Enitan, who can be likened to a radical feminist during her teenage years, experiences a dramatic transformation in her marriage and complains bitterly on how her husband treats her like a personal servant. He does things in the house haphazardly, much to Enitan's chagrin. Enitan's husband, Niyi Franco's attitude bears the hallmarks of a typical African man in his marriage. Mutual respect is absent in the so-called monogamous marriage. The woman is

burdened with a series of domestic chores to battle with on a daily basis. Niyi Franco's attitude becomes so intolerable that Enitan decides to separate from him.

In *Everything Good Will Come,* Sefi Atta gives a catalogue of instances of the oppression and subjugation on a downward trajectory which Sheri's life takes as a result of her being raped by Damola Ajayi in a party. The raping results in an unwanted pregnancy which necessitates her dropping out of school. She later has a troubled marriage with Brigadier Hassan, an unrepentant polygamist and a chronic womanizer. Sheri's unscrupulous uncle, who helps himself to get her father's inheritance, further compounds her woes. She describes the untold hardship the family experiences following her father's untimely death: "When my father died, who remembered me? Chief Bakare done die, God bless his family. We didn't even know where our next meal was coming from, and no one cared. Not even my uncle, who took all his money" (96).

The men cheat on their wives and future partners with impunity. Ironically, they expect absolute faithfulness from the other party. This motif runs through Sefi Atta's *Everything Good Will Come*. Enitan's father breaks his marital vows with his wife by having a love child, Debayo Taiwo, out of wedlock. He conceals this from his wife for many years and reveals it to Enitan when he wants her to meet him. Enitan's first serious relationship is with a man named Mike. She loves him greatly and strongly believes that the relationship is altar-bound. She feels terribly disappointed when she pays him a surprise visit one day, only to meet another lady named Obatala, with whom he has been having a clandestine love affair. Following this singular incident, the relationship breaks down irretrievably, much to Enitan's charge in. When her relationship with Mike is over, she later courts and marries Niyi Franco. The tempestuous marriage makes her miserable. The narrator captures succinctly how the patriarchal nature of the country and by extension, the African continent, discourages the women from protesting: "In my country, women are praised the more they surrender the right to protest" (177). This

underlines how the patriarchal nature of the African society is ingrained in the women, who invariably, hands this over to their daughters.

Everything Good Will Come, also examines the growth of a child from adolescence to adulthood. Through these various forms of growth the heroine becomes aware of her environment and how it affects her. It also seeks to explore how these dimensions help in shaping the vision of the woman. The female characters in the novel are very assertive and utilize all means available to them to affirm their individuality. The various dimensions are the child's growth, education, social awareness and fight for one's rights among others.

At the age of eleven, Enitan is a naive, ignorant, inexperienced child. She has been nurtured by her patriarchal father who showers her with love, thereby making her mother appear evil to her. She lives in their house as a hostage under her father and their gardener Baba. Her mother is a total distant person as she says, "my mother never had a conversation with me. . . The mere sound of her footsteps made me breathe faster" (22). Ironically, it is from her father that Enitan learned of female liberation. Enitan's father tells her, "if she asks where you learned such nonsense, tell her from your father and he's for the liberation of women" (24).

As the story progresses, Enitan becomes more and more aware of herself which helps in unveiling the central tenet of the novel which is self-discovery and assertiveness. Most of the things that would later change Enitan's perspective on things came from her friend and next door neighbour, Sheri. Sheri lives in total freedom from her parents. She sleeps and wakes when she likes. She reasons on her own unlike Enitan's reasoning that is conditioned by her father and mother. Sheri thinks of becoming an actress while Enitan's father insists Enitan must read law. The following conversation between Enitan and Sheri reveals of how children perceive things that would later shape their lives:

I want to be something like . . . like president.

Eh? Women are not presidents.

Why not?

Our men won't stand for it. Who will cook for your husband?

He will cook for himself.

What if he refuses?

I'll drive him away.

You can't she said.

Yes I can. Who wants to marry him anyway? (25)

This conversation later helps in shaping Enitan's life. Later she becomes aware of the political landscape of Nigeria and how it affects the woman. Sheri is exposed to things higher than her age. Sheri dissuading Enitan from her dream of becoming the nation's president is an example of patriarchal brainwashing of the woman. Sheri's role as Enitan's friend cannot be overemphasized. These lead to greater transformation in Enitan, "her meeting with Sheri . . . is of great significance, as it marks her transition to an entirely new stage of life" (68). Enitan is naive and ignorant. All efforts made by Enitan's mother to stall this relationship with Sheri failed. The father asks: "What is this? She can't make friends anymore. You're her mother, not her junior" (40). Enitan's father imbued in her a revolutionary spirit: "anyone who bullies you beat them up" (42). Armed with her father's instruction, Enitan at the Royal College became wiser and experienced. She met girls from different backgrounds and knew more about them.

> I learned also about women in my country, from Zaria, Katsina, Kaduna who decorated their skin with henna dye and lived in *purdah;* women from Calabar who were fed and anointed in fattening houses before their weddings; women

> who were circumcised. I heard about towns in western Nigeria where every family had twins because the women ate a lot of yams, and other towns in northern Nigeria, where every other family had a crippled child because women married their first cousins. None of the women seemed real. They were like mammy-water, sirens of the Niger Delta who rose from the creeks to lure unsuspecting men to death by drowning. (39)

At Royal College the girls learned more about their families. This also equipped Enitan on what she will face later in life. This stage of growth shows the primacy of education in the life of a girl child. At school they are free from their parents. Enitan developed feelings for Daramola. We notice that it is Enitan who made moves into this relationship, not Daramola, thereby changing the traditional African patriarchal beliefs that it is only the man that can woo a woman. Atta holds that the woman could go for the man of her choice and make the relationship work. All the fantasies about Daramola vanish like a mirage when Enitan learns that Daramola is not real and he was also one among them who raped Sheri. Sheri is raped, devalued, ruined and is robbed of her womanity and pride. This event changed the life of Sheri. It sharpened Enitan's horizon for a better perception of the world. She began to ask some questions about existence: "Sheri had gotten pregnant from the rape. Didn't a womb know which baby to reject? And now that the baby had been forced out, how did it look?" (73). It is important to note that rape is fast becoming a global trend which if not checked will do great harm to the feminine psyche. In *Everything Good Will Come*, Atta attributes rape to poor parental background, peer group influence and moral and societal decadence. She indicts parents for failing in their duties.

However, all the realities that Enitan encounters in her journey to adulthood is that they are very revealing and add to the total statement of the novel which aims at exposing the social realities which women face daily. In London, Enitan had become aware of her sexuality: The

first person to tell me my virginity belonged to me was the boy who took it. Before this, I'd thought my virginity belonged to Jesus Christ, my mother, society at large. My boyfriend . . . assured me that it was mine, to give it to him (77).

The school provides the opportunity which the home denied her. She now knows her virginity belongs to her and not to Jesus Christ. Studying law also exposed her to world politics. She joined the Nigerian Student Community in London. This social and political awareness equipped her with political consciousness which she exploits to her advantage. On politics she says: "Politics in our country was a scuffle between the military and politicians" (81). She further says our democracy "had been a more debauched democracy: champagne parties, embezzlements" (81). She blames the failure of the nation to advance positively on the men whom she says "were given to the acts of cowardice" (82). Because of these acts of cowardice, the nation had sunk into the vicious circle of poverty and the people have become cynical "none really cared. Soldiers go. Soldiers come" (85).

Back to Nigeria and equipped with the knowledge which education offered her, Enitan is ready to make choices and accept the consequences which come with them. She enters into a relationship with Mike Obi, an artist and later discovers that he is fake. She later reunites with Sheri who is also a mistress to Hassan, a Military General and they began to recount their experiences. When Enitan asked Sheri if Hassan was treating her well, Sheri is quick to say "which one of our men really treats women well" (103).

At some point Sheri's advice to Enitan becomes useful: "now, where I differ from most women is, if you lift your hand to beat me, I will kill you, God no go vex" (107). Armed with this assertive spirit, when Mike fails Enitan, she abandons him. When Sheri complained of Hassan, Enitan is quick to advise her "drop him . . . you don't need him"(132). When Sheri

thinks otherwise, Enitan cautions her "you are young and this man is treating you like a house-girl" (138). Sheri's suffering is blamed on polygamy and the estonia tenet which promotes it.

This Estonia is the issue of male progeny which allows the man to value the male children more than the female ones. Enitan's mother Ariola suffers when she could not give birth to a male child in order to fulfil the society's ideas of motherhood. When she could not, her husband sneaks out to have a male child outside their marriage and Ariola is kept in the dark for over twenty years. This shows how morally debased the men have become. Enitan's father has other children outside the home and none of the family members knows of it. Florence argues that:

> The Nigerian woman's primary role is that of procreation, of having babies and yet male babies. But society does not only expect her to have as many babies as fertility makes provide, she is expected clearly and unambiguously to have as many male children as possible. In other word having male children is the signal achievement through which she can raise her head high and feel a real sense of fulfilment. (108)

As Enitan continues to learn and comes to terms with the stark realities of the woman's problems and the experiences in her home; the need to move out of this patriarchal space becomes expedient. She confronts her father thus:

> Show me one case, I said. Just one, of a woman having two husbands, a fifty-year-old woman marrying a twelve-year-old boy. We have women judges, and a woman can't legally post bail. I'm a lawyer. If I were married, I would need my husband's consent to get a new passport. He would be entitled to discipline me with a slap or two, so long as he doesn't cause me grievously bodily harm. (141)

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In polygamy women are placed in antagonistic position each fighting to prove she is worthy of her dowry. This Enitan says must go. The new woman marries for love and not to satisfy society's dictates. As she points out: "wives are not always in agreement" (145). Both Enitan and Sheri must come out of the limited space. Sheri for instance revolts against Hassan: "Raise your hand to hit Sheri Bakare, and your hand will never be the same again. Stupid man" (169). When Enitan queries, Sheri explains thus: "He wants me to have nothing except what he gives me. He says he will take it all back. I said take it! All of it! I did not come to this place naked" (170).

Sheri is no longer the naive girl who must wait for big Hassan; she moves out of his life and realizes her worth and individuality. As both women experience failures, Enitan soon realizes that she had to pitch tents with her mother and not her father anymore. Her mother advises her: "never make sacrifices for a man. By the time you say look what I've done for you, it's too late. They never remember" (173). Enitan now understands what her mother was saying. She notes that "I know that she hurt because of the sacrifices she'd made in her marriage. I really understood why she turned her mind to church with such fervor" (177). Enitan's mother lives her life for her husband and now she has lost all, as Enitan puts it: "In my country women are praised the more they surrender their right to protest. In the end they may die with nothing but selflessness to pass on to their daughters; a startling legacy . . ." (177).

Enitan's mother resorts her to the church as an escape mechanism. Indeed the church helps to cushion the effect of Enitan's mother plight and failed marriage. Enitan sees her own marriage to Niyi as an escape from an overbearing father: "I did not shed a tear over leaving home" (178). Enitan will be a wife but not a domestic one as dictated by her society. Her mother-in-law is always in the kitchen cooking while her children lousy about the house. Enitan once asked her "don't you ever feel lonely in here Ma? Isn't the kitchen the loneliest room?" (181). Niyi on the other hand loved and protected his wife, but at the same time would wants

to protect his male ego that he is under the control of his wife. He pleaded with Enitan "better watch what you're saying. Next thing they'll be calling me woman wrapper. Woman wrapper, was a weak man, controlled by his woman" (182). Niyi is a typical African man who is governed by ego rather than reason.

In marriage, Enitan begins to see things clearly and differently too. She began to notice the predicaments of the woman. She becomes enlightened and imbued with a revolutionary spirit. She becomes more assertive and refuses to play second fiddle. Respect for her must be reciprocal. She says:

> In my 29 years no man ever told me to show respect. No man ever needed to. I had seen how women respected men and ended up shouldering burdens . . . and the expectation of subordination bothered me most. Obey him without choking on my humility like a fish bone down my throat. (184)

Enitan has grown up; she knows what is good for her; she is no longer a naive docile girl who must hide once a man is around. Disobeying a man's orders according to her, does not translate to disrespect, but if the man wants her respect and obedience, then he must earn them.

Atta explains that a woman respecting a man or obeying him is her human right and human rights would amount to nothing until the rights of husbands are threatened. Modern women should see themselves as modern wives who must assert their individuality and not live like their mothers. At a point Enitan begins to educate the women by conscientizing them of the need to know their rights which also include serving their husbands; "the women should not serve their husbands food" (196). This according to Enitan is a mild form of domestic protest. Atta is not calling on women not to feed their husbands, but they should not serve them like gods. Atta is not bothered about what the society will say because, "if a woman sneezed in my country someone would call her feminist" (197). According to Atta, "She would continue

to tear every notion they had about women" (197). This will not be easy but she will continue: "I would not let go until I am heard" (198).

When Enitan complains to Sheri about Niyi's attitude towards her: "the man behaves as if I'm his personal servant" (204), Sheri replies "show him sense jo" (205). Sheri plays a very important role in Enitan's life. She is bold and courageous too. When she chooses to leave Hassan, Enitan commends her "Sheri didn't need any man. I was there when she walked out on her lousy Brigadier . . . I envied her freedom" (207). The woman must be economically independent. When Sheri left Hassan, she concentrated on her business, "within a year of starting her business she was able to buy herself one of those second hand cars . . . and after two years, she was able to rent a place of her own" (207).

Activism is another dimension of feminism in this novel. Atta is of the view that if women come together, they could fight for the common goal of the women and the society at large. "A group of army wives had founded a program for women in a village. They promised to train the village women to eradicate infant dehydration" (211). Here Atta calls on women to adopt female friendship, bonding or sisterhood as these would be one of the ways they can win the war against inequality, tradition and all other patriarchal dictates. Once this is achieved the advancement of women in the society would be achievable.

When Enitan's father is arrested, she did not allow his business to fall; she filled the void. She joined uncle Fatai to fight for his release and the release of others. Activism is a dimension of feminism that has not been adequately explored. Enitan has to suffer incarceration as a price for activism. She is ready to give up her life for the survival of her society, in spite of her pregnancy which she would not want to lose. Though her mother did not support her fighting for her father, Enitan is determined to fight on. Her mother says "not for a man who . . . showed me nothing but wickedness" (219). In another instance Ariola Enitan's mother

argues that "too bad for your father . . . he can't keep a family together, now he wants to save his country" (220). All these did not discourage Enitan. It is at this point that she meets Grace Ameh a journalist and human rights activist. Grace Ameh writes for the *Oracle Newspaper.* Ameh uses this paper to enlighten the public on the evil of military dictatorship and as a medium to fight oppression. For Enitan, the fight to save her father would not come from the kitchen; "how can I decide what to do about my father from the kitchen" (245). If the woman must fight for her right and that of others, she must move out of the kitchen space. The kitchen has become a destructive metaphor limiting the woman from actualizing her dreams.

Besides the kitchen, there is the man "Come to think of it, how can I decide with a mini Idi Amin sitting right there in my home" (245). Marriage as construed by the society is an autocratic institution as symbolized in the metaphor of "Idi Amin." This autocratic and tyrannical empire ruled by the man must be challenged and this can only be done through activism. African women have always participated in political activism. Grace Ameh and Enitan remind the reader of the strong activist like Margaret Ekpo, Fumilayo Ransome Kuti, Queen Amina among others who were at the fore front of political activities that culminated to Nigeria's independence. Consequently, the self-conscious in literature is often regarded by the male elites as an individual who is corrupted by Western Civilization, even though Ikot Abasi women's war of 1929 annuls this argument.

Grace Ameh inspires Enitan as the latter continues to tap from her experience. "I visited Grace Ameh again, hoping for some impartial advice on what to do about my father" (250). Ameh encourages Enitan to fight on not minding what the society is saying. The society would always silence the woman telling her to "The usual pressure. Shut up and face your family" (252). The society sometimes back its effort to silence the woman with scriptures: "A woman who doesn't talk too much is a gift from the Lord" (Ecclesiastes 26: 14b). Ameh tells her "I don't subscribe to that" (252). For silence, has become another form of patriarchal domination

which Atta explores in this novel. Grace Ameh advocates that women must speak out against injustice and oppression in their society because silence is not a female virtue, but rather a covert way of destroying humanity. Ameh's activism inspires Enitan with a fearless spirit and Enitan becomes very vocal. Ameh admonishes her to use her voice, "Yes, yes, but you have a voice, which is what I always try to tell people. Use your voice to bring about change" (251).

A woman must align with other women, because standing alone, the women becomes another victim. Ameh invites Enitan to join a Rights group-"There are people who are involved in the campaign for democracy, human rights and civil liberty organizations" (252). Enitan and Ameh attend the first meeting and they are later arrested by the oppressive instruments of the state and are subsequently incarcerated. In the detention cell, Enitan meets other women, some of whom their minds are lost and have become insane; Do-Re-Mi and Mother of the Prison are insane. Grace Ameh and Enitan are released the following day. These experiences remain stamped in Enitan's mind. She continues her life smiling: "It was good to be reminded that everyone, smiling or not, had overcome adversity" (285). Enitan has overcome many adversities and she emerges stronger from all of them. Enitan fought until her father transferred the estate to her mother. She fought for his release from detention; she remained strong even when she lost her mother; she continues to fight for her family: "I've always said, men fight for land, and women fight for family" (289).

Joining the Human Rights group Enitan becomes a campaigner not only for women, but for the well being of the nation. "With the military in power without a constitution, there was no other recourse besides protest, peaceful or violent. I was thinking of my country, which I'd done nothing for" (294). With this at the back of her mind, Atta seems to be refuting the argument of the antagonists of feminism in Africa that women are more concerned with sectional interests that affect only women. Enitan joined the fight for democracy, rather than fighting only for the women shows that the African woman has transcended sectional

limitations. The salvation of the nation through the multiplier effect, will in turn lead to the salvation of the woman. Enitan has become so bold that she could shout on military dictatorship to "Get out of my house! Get out of my country!" (294). Enitan's activism pays off with the release of her father from incarceration.

In order to understand why and how feminine writing emerged, it is essential to have a clear knowledge of the patriarchal language and its hegemonic power. One has to have a clear idea of the use of language as a weapon for political aims, for domination. Therefore, it is necessary first to take a look at Lacan's theories on entering the symbolic order which is the entrance into the patriarchal discourse. After realizing how this phallocentric structure works, how it dominates and controls all aspects of human life, then it would be easier to find means to deconstruct. This is when women would know where to turn to, in order to base t/heir own language on. After acquiring that knowledge, women would realize that they should go back to the pre symbolic stage, step outside the realm of language and start anew.

To start from the beginning, one should turn back to the stage Lacan calls the 'Real'. This is the stage that an infant goes through just before it enters the language. The 'Real' is important because it is the stage in which there is no law, no patriarchy, no domination. It is also important since it is the stage that women should go back to in order to find their own language. The significance in the 'Real' is that, there is only union and wholeness. All demands are met. There is no lack, no absence. Everything is there. However, as soon as the child begins to speak, she comes across absence for the first time because it is the realm of language and according to Lacan, "language is always about loss or absence. We need symbols to fill the absence: you only need words when the object you want is gone" (Klages, 2001). So words are symbols for what is not there. The first lack that a child encounters is the mother's penis, hence the fear of castration. Thus, the infant is separated from the mother. The fear forces the child to renounce the mother and from then on: "All pleasures will be substitutive, for sexuality

consists of the pursuit of metaphorical alternatives to lost felicities: indeed, desire in Lacan is nothing other than the drive to linguistic substitution" (Ellmann, 19). This substitution leads to the concept of otherness. Since language is based on differences in the Saussurian sense, when the infant enters the symbolic order, she begins to perceive the world in terms of differences. Therefore, the structure of otherness and the structure of lack coexist in the symbolic order. Consequently, since the self is always defined in relation to the other, there is the possibility of a never-ending lack.

According to Lacan, "the most important other in the child's life is the mother" (Klages, 2001). Therefore, it is when the child realises the mother's lack and experiences the fear of castration that the father becomes an important figure, "a function of the linguistic structure" (Klages, 2001). The father becomes the Law that separates the infant from the mother. Thus, when the child discovers the language, she discovers the father. She enters the symbolic order and becomes a subject. Submission to the rules of the language is submission to the Law of the Father. Both the symbolic order and the law of the father are patriarchal. It is at this stage that the child recognizes sexual differences: "To achieve subjectivity, the infant has to be conscripted into the lexicon of kinship, in which its identity as a child, son or daughter, is determined by its difference from other subjects" (Ellmann, 16).

This theory takes us to the concept of the phallus, which is the best signifier to prove the patriarchal, dominating, hegemonic nature of language. The other, in a Derridian sense, is the centre of the system-the centre that everyone wishes to reach but cannot because it is the unattainable like the God. As Mary Klages indicates, this centre is also called the phallus "to underline even more the patriarchal nature of the symbolic order" (2001). It is the governing principle of the whole structure. It is the signifier of the difference between the sexes and as such it stands "for all the differences that structure the symbolic order" (Ellmann 19). Since it is the centre and all the differences are defined in relation to it, everything related to women is

defined with regard to the phallus as well. Therefore, the father and his penis have the central role in the system of language which consequently affects all other systems and discourses: "The phallus is the kingpin in the bowling alley of signification: knock it over, and all the other signs come tumbling down. It takes the place of God as the absolute guarantee of meaning" (Ellmann 19). Hence the patriarchal discourse that subordinates, exploits and abuses women: "As women enter language, learn to name themselves, so they are put in their place within the social order of meaning . . . There is masculinity and there is its absence" (Morris 113-14).

It all starts with defining the self with the mother's lack, and from then on woman is regarded as the one who lacks, who needs to be fulfilled and be completed. She is the one that is weak and incomplete: " 'Man' is always the positive term (the norm) and 'woman' the 'other'" (Morris 115). Language puts women into this position, and since it is the basis of all other systems, women had to change the language:

> For women the Symbolic means awareness of the self as a subject constituted through an alien-because logocentric and phallocentric discourse, which depends on pre-ordered naming and categorisation. Entry into this state thus destines woman to a position in which she is linguistically marginalised, rendered inactive or mute in speech as well as in social signification. The only way to overcome this verbal suppression is to speak through a language not dominated by the phallus. (Foster 66-67)

Thus, women had to create an alternative language, a language of their own to re-establish their position as women. This is why feminine writing emerged in the first place:

> Language, many claim, plays a crucial role in defining and maintaining a 'man's world' while delineating and enclosing 'women's place'. In trying to

> move beyond that confining place, many women are attending to and changing the verbal realities of their daily lives. (Mcconnell/ Ginet, Burker, xi)

Women's movement for a new language started with the daily language and reached its peak in literature because through literature it reached a wider audience.

It was impossible for women to raise their voice and talk about their problems, their subordination by men, using the language of men: Many women writers find the forms and 'the oppressor's language' they've inherited inadequate to their expressive needs. To try to create alternative modes of expression, women are experimenting with new forms of writing and speaking. Language is seen as both problematic and potentially powerful in the development of alternatives to political, aesthetic, and intellectual traditions shaped by and for men. Women should use that power by creating a women's language in order to fight against those male traditions. Up to this time, women had been defined and positioned by men through men's language. Therefore, "we have to invent a woman's word. But not 'of' woman, 'about' woman, in the way that man's language speaks 'of' woman. Any woman who wants to use a language that is specifically her own, cannot avoid this extraordinary, urgent task: we must invent woman" (Leclerc 74).

Thus the growing up of the female child from adolescence to adulthood is examined. The various forms of growth help in shaping the heroine and other women in the novel. From the simple, ignorant and naive girl, Enitan grows to become the speaking voice for the voiceless people. She could take decisions that affect her. She becomes solidified through education and her relationship with other women like her mother, Sheri, Grace Ameh and her mother-in-law.

It is said that woman can achieve her dreams if she moves out of any space that limits her aspiration. It is also worthy to note that Atta blames the problem of the woman on both man and the woman as both of them are culpable. Atta presents women who are formidable

and who would not allow any circumstances to subvert the actualization of their dreams. The novel aims at thus cultivating a moral lesson on the Nigerian girl child to develop an independent mind.

Chapter Five

Summation

Sefi Atta is one of the most engaging writers in the latest wave of Nigerian authors. She lives in a different places in United States, England and Nigeria. Her works have garnered many literary awards. She is one of the great line of female Nigerian Writers. Her works have been published widely on the African continent. Her works focus on the situations in which Nigerians have found themselves, harmoniously poetic and bitingly frank. She is an engaged writer who tackles the issues of Nigerian culture and tradition so on. Never shying away she demonstrates no shame in fore fronting some of the more difficult and shameful aspects of Nigerian society.

Atta's insights into the roles and treatment of women, neocolonial government structures, patriarchy, 21st century phenomena such as Nigerian peoples and the role of geography and place in characters' lives make her works some of the most indelible offerings across contemporary African fiction. She has been publishing for over a decade, and her works are widely disseminated. Atta writes across the genres perhaps explains some of the lack of literary criticism of her works. *Writing Contemporary Nigeria: How Sefi Atta Illuminates African Culture and Tradition* is the first aggregate of literary critique is selected works of Sefi Atta.

Atta's novel focuses on a number of scenes which put the challenges, before her female characters, of living in relation to prescriptive regimes for gender and sexuality; and also the various assimilations and complicities, as well as difficult attempts to appropriate norms, resist, and reconfigure their understandings and experiences of sexualities into more agentive shapes. Through the notion of respectable womanhood as mediated through sexual behaviour and the proper conduct of the female sexualised body that certain modes of female behaviour premised

on the margins as deviant or unrespectable are necessary correlatives of the socially-preferred propriety that operates in the Nigeria of the novel. The improper thus not only has the potential to subvert limits placed on proper female sexualities, but to disrupt as unjust the very properties of the proper, and propriety.

Every community has its own specific ways of life. African people admire their culture and tradition as means of survival in life. The culture has functioned effectively in modern African Literature by giving it not only deep and solid root but a concrete and relevant background and settings. The culture and tradition were formed in material dimension which has been used in literature to disabuse minds about colonialism and its justification. It draws the world to understand and to admire the culture of African people.

In *Everything Good Will Come*, Atta implicitly encourages women to work on differences in order to overcome obstacles and challenges to their friendship. Through the successful bonding between Enitan and Sheri, who have different tribal, ethnic and religious backgrounds, Atta addresses the perpetrators of the Biafra war, a secessionist conflict that opposed the South eastern provinces of Nigeria to the federal government from July 6, 1967 to January 13, 1970.

With some relations women were exposed as an object of exploitation and as religious person to illustrate women as assertive. The contemporary and coming generation of female need to give a fair representation of men, while addressing the various issues affecting women. There is a compelling need for a more realistic portrayal of men by female. She has examined the socio-political and economic realities of the Nigerian state. It represents the period of mid, Eighties and the late Nineties, which is parallel with the story of the protagonist Enitan. She appropriately shows us the crisis, which has been experienced at the time not only in the public

circle but also in the domestic circle. She also depicts the alienation between the government and the peoples as well as individual people.

The changes of identity in her empowerment and enlightens her path. Asserts, female solidarity changes her into a more secure and authoritarian woman who breaks up her marriage for the sake of her individual freedom. Although different from her friend Sheri, she too acquires strength and comfort. Unlike Enitan, Sheri has always had a strong sense of self that makes her journey somewhat easier, despite the male challenges she had to face. However, though their lives are full of hardships, both Enitan and Sheri, thanks to the female friendship they build and transform into female solidarity, succeed in overcoming and empowering themselves at their community.

The female friendship helps Enitan and Sheri face and overcome the different patriarchal challenges in their lives. Indeed, their bonding helps them heal the wounds of political instability and patriarchy in general in a country devastated by its own elite. A gloomy description of a Nigerian society facing greed and corruption, war and political unrest. However, female friendship as a potential saviour because of its ability to work on differences and its soothing and healing powers.

Enitan and Grace give more shape to their project of involving women in the liberation of prisoners since Enitan has more time and freedom. Their decision to work for the liberation of husbands, brothers or fathers provides more awareness to the community and also looks less threatening to the military leaders because initiated by women. This new bond brings about more consciousness in women, challenges the government and efficiently contributes to the liberation of prisoners including Enitan's father. It provides them with hope and arms them with courage and determination to face their many difficulties. This sisterhood generates

solidarity among women and works to awaken and motivate them to join the struggle for liberation.

Female bonding extends to female solidarity, thereby involving more women and having a positive impact on the community as well. Although not all women Atta describes in the novel are involved in female unity, each of them faces a form of male oppression. The similarity of their experiences demonstrates that the common fate they share relates to their gender. As each fights her own defeat, Atta's novel presents female unity as a solution likely to bring salvation. Enitan learns from her mother, her mother-in-law and the various women she meets that her empowerment comes from her friendship with Sheri and the female solidarity she develops with other women. Her journey to womanhood transforms her from a shy girl into a strong and independent woman able to face any challenge.

In marriage, she did not allow her husband to rule her as a cattle herdsman. In the final analysis, though it took her time to get pregnant, she is not bothered, but she eventually gave birth to a baby girl. Sheri walks out of the space that limits her vision and aspiration. Enitan moves out of the overbearing influence of her father and her husband, Niyi. Marriage is no longer a safe haven for women, who instead suffer from various forms of oppression through this male-controlled structure.

Enitan's departure not only liberates her but also strengthens her friendship with Sheri while they were left on their own with no parents. Although the absence of Sheri's mother seems not to affect her, her father and grandmother's deaths left her vulnerable. The feeling of being abandoned by her own mother makes her feel bad and rejected; however, she strives hard to challenge the difficulties and survive. She clings to her friend in an attempt to fill the gaps in her life and takes care of Enitan's baby as if it were her own. Although she cannot have

children, she has a natural instinct of a mother because she is used to taking care of her sisters and other babies in her family.

Enitan finds herself parentless when her father gets imprisoned and her mother dies. Her mother's sudden death adds to the already painful situation of her father's arrest. In addition to Sheri's perpetual help, their neighbour Mrs Williams also takes charge by offering to help, thereby revealing another form of female solidarity. Left without parents, Sheri and Enitan nurture each other and try to complement the lack or absence of parents. As each tries to be there for the other, their friendship develops, grows and provides them with more confidence and trust. Aware of the missing gaps in their lives, they support each other emotionally and let their friendship stimulate them.

Women can achieve their dreams, only when they move out from their space that limits their aspiration. Atta blames the problem of the woman on man and woman as both of culpable. Women who are formidable and who would not allow any circumstances to subvert the actualization of their dreams. She makes a clarion call on women to come together to fight for the common goal of the woman and society. She argued that every work of art must not be didactic, from the Nigerian girl to develop an independent mind towards her life.

Finally Enitan transforms into a naive girl but now fully matured and makes decision that affect her and not minding the consequences of such decisions. She becomes a speaker for voiceless women. When her father is arrested she came upon rise her father's law farm to next level and she over-come many problems during her pregnancy from society and relations. She joined activism for her father and uncle, to release from the prison. She is ready to give up her life to survive in the society. It is almost right to say that woman can achieve her dreams if she moves out any space that limits to her aspiration.

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A Demon Transformed as an Angel in Ajay K Pandey's *A Girl to Remember*

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Abstract:

Every living being in the world whether it is an animal or human, have two sides in their, one is good which can be consider as an "Angel" and another is an evil which is known as "Demon". Demon is an image of a protagonist in the novel "*A Girl to Remember*" by Ajay K. Pandey. He discusses about the importance of human feelings and emotions. All men and women have two different personalities, one is positive and another is negative. The negative plays the vital role in the society, because currently the society is filled with self-centred by nature. These people live for their own needs or comforts and are not ready to serve for the society. The mentality of the people is fully pressed with their obsessions. For instance, family has become nuclear, and their children, who are living far away has adapted according their working place culture. The intimacy between the family members, the culture and the tradition also has reduced and changed. Due to this change, parents could not accept their children as a moderate person and changed in generation wise too. In recent times women are consider as a doll, which used to play with their feelings and emotions.

Key words: Gender, Society, Importance of Family and Relationships.

Gender is constructed in an individual, interactional, and structural ways to create an environmental constraints and opportunities that usually value men more than women. Gender is the term first used by Ill Mathews in 1984 in her study of the construction of femininity. Gender is a social constructed term which

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Cultural and Colonial Victimisation in Buchi Emecheta's *Second Class Citizen* and *The Joys of Motherhood*

A Dissertation submitted to

St. Mary's College (Autonomous)

Thoothukudi

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in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the award of the Degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN ENGLISH

By

RUFINA MARY M.

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RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **Cultural and Colonial Victimisation in Buchi Emecheta's *Second Class Citizen* and *The Joys of Motherhood*** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is a work done by Rufina Mary M. during the year 2019-2020, and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

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EXAMINER

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled **Cultural and Colonial Victimisation in Buchi Emecheta's *Second Class Citizen* and *The Joys of Motherhood*** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is my original work and that, it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

Rufina Mary.M

SEPTEMBER 2020 **RUFINA MARY M.**

THOOTHUKUDI

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PREFACE

Through the study of Buchi Emecheta's novels, *Second Class Citizen* and *The Joys of Motherhood*, the thesis gives a detailed exploration on the impact of entrenched cultural beliefs and the overwhelming colonial supremacy that reshapes one's identity. Through the female protagonists Adah and Nnu Ego, Emecheta voices against the subjugation of women in the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial era. Emecheta describes the dilemma of African women in accepting and assimilating with the two contradictory cultural and religious beliefs which overpowers them often. Emecheta projects the various attachments that restraint the personal growth of the female characters who tries to satisfy the need of the others. Amidst all such clashes, Emecheta gives importance to the passions and desires of the women who tries to form a personal identity breaking away from the society

The thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter **Introduction** observes the history of African Literature, its tradition and an epigrammatic description of African writers. It also gives a short biography of Buchi Emecheta, her works and her contribution to the development of African Literature.

Chapter two entitled, **Developmental Trajectory** records the style of Buchi Emecheta by elucidating her experiments with bildungsroman genre. It also analyse the transformation of female characters as a daughter, wife and mother. It list out the various features of bildungsroman novels and its existence in Emecheta's novels.

The third chapter **Culture and Colonialism** mirrors the real hardships that Africans face as a citizen on their native place and as an immigrant in coloniser's world. It traces out the cultural and religious beliefs of Igbo tribe and the overlapping colonial influences that deform the African heritage leading to a cultural friction.

The fourth chapter, **Quest for Identity** sketches the significance of identity and the several conception of identity attributed with men and women. It portrays the changing identity of Africans during pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial era. It highlights the characters search for a personal identity which brings happiness and elevates their status in the society.

The final chapter sums up all the important aspects dealt in the preceding chapters.

The researcher has followed the guidelines prescribed by MLA Handbook 7th Edition for the preparation of the thesis.

Chapter One

Introduction

Art is a step from what is obvious and well known toward what is arcane and concealed. Literature upholds the human spirit. It gives intellectual enlightenment and aesthetic pleasure. The relation between aesthetic and literature is intimate. Literature is a form of human expression. It addresses emotional, spiritual, intellectual concerns of humanity. Literature emerges from people's values, their views of life, their aspirations and the kind of life they wished to live. Literary works express a series of events in people life. It provides growth, strengthens the mind and stimulates the ability to think.

African Literature helps the people to know more about their culture and history. It uplifted the cultural bond in native people and also informed the outsiders about their African tradition. The African writers recreated the past by not only providing entertainment and aesthetic satisfaction but they also amplify their horizons and generate the social awareness and sense of liberation. African Literature also depicts the changes that happened in Africa. Its presents powerful pictures of the prevailing tendency towards corruption and degeneration by exposing forces such as social, political and economic corruption, incompetence, snobbery, greed and hypocrisy by giving poignant portraits of misery, poverty and degradation.

Africa, a massive continent have been subjugated to the colonial influences of he English, Portuguese, French, German, Dutch and numerous other colonizers and nvaders. Africa consists of nearly 3000 distinct ethnic groups. As Smithe says, Within these 3000 ethnic groups there are over 1000 separate languages spoken with ore than 50 major languages, which are Arabic, Swahili and Housa"(1). The largest

continent of the planet is divided into North, West, East and South Africa and each part has its own well structured literature both oral and written.

The Oral literature has many forms like poems, proverbs, riddles which conveys every tribes own myths, legends and stories in the form of dramas, songs and folktales. The tradition of telling stories, singing songs were generally considered to be oldest forms of literary activity that have existed in human society. It became an integral part of the particular society and they played a major role in all social occasions like initiation, celebration of birth, wedding and death. Many ancient languages did not possess the art of writing and their culture were preserved and passed to other generation through native singers and narrators. In Africa this method of narration were known as 'griot' and 'babalawo'.

The earliest written African Literature is found in the Northern Africa. Written literature has its existence only after the invasion of colonial rule. The white missionaries initiated the usage of printing which helped them to circulate translated Bibles and other religious books. The writings of West Africa are heavily influenced by Islamic writings. The Eastern African writings also reflect the Arab influence. Africa before colonial rule had vast number of ethnic groups and each community developed different oral literature. These traditional oral literatures of Africa were in forms of prose, verses and proverbs called as Orature. It flourished in Africa and was handed down to others by recitation and memorization. At beginning the African literary works were written in native languages like Yoruba, Hausa, Somali, Zulu, Amharic, Swahili and Sotho. However some of this works were also written in European languages specifically in English, French and Portuguese. This attributed to the fact that Africa was colonized by several European imperial powers. As Pandurang states that African novels "is a genre developed as a particular body of

imagination discourse primarily occupied with the modes of resisting the role of Western cultural hegemony in determining African states of consciousness" (3).

European influences had its impact at first in South Africa, which consists of languages like Zimbabwe and Sesotho. Thomas Mofolo was considered to be the earliest and greatest writer of this region and he uses Sesotho language. His writings possessed Christian moral ideas. Mofolo's *The Traveller of the East* (1934) is a story about Fekisi who seeks the Christian ideal giving up his tribal way of life. Xhosa, the next important language from South Africa had its own prominent persons like Tiyo Soga who translated the Bible and John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim Progress*. This works is also one of the earlier influences for South African writers.

In West Africa, three Nigerian languages called Yoruba, Ibo and Hausa were greatly influenced by colonizers. Many greatest works and writers emerged from West Africa. Out of this Isaac Thomas is considered to be the first Yoruba writer and his work *Life Story of Me, Segilola* is centred mostly on Lagos. Daniel Orowole Fagunwa, a Yoruba writer intends to give moral values to his readers under the influence of Christianity. He further used folk tales and fantasy from Yoruba tradition. His works were *The Forest of God* (1949) and *Expedition to the Mount of Thought* (1954) and his work *The Forest of a Thousand Demons*, though written in Yoruba language was translated to English by Wole Soyinka. Unlike Yoruba, the Hausa language came under the influence of Arabic language. Therefore the literature from this language was generally written in praise of Islam.

The last and most important language called Ibo had its own development and Pita Nwana a famous Ibo writer published his short novel *Omenuko* in 1935. The story of Omenuko explores conflicting loyalties and psychology of crime. The story

deals with the life of a politician named Igwegbe Odum an Ibo who is migrated to Arondizuogu. These writers were influenced by the Western novels like *Robinson Crusoe* and *Gulliver's Travels*. D.N Achara an important writer is known for his allegorical style. His best known allegorical novel is *Ala Bingo* known as 'The Land of Bingo'. In the Eastern Africa, Swahili is the best known language which was spoken in Coastal regions of Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. This language had its own verses which were sung on public occasions.

Out of the other African places, Nigeria possesses the greatest literary output. Nigeria consists of nearly 250 spoken languages and it is known for its multilingualism. During mid 1950's the rise of nationalism flowed freely in Nigeria. The decades of subjugation stimulated all tribal groups and together they seek pride and dignity. After independence from Britain in 1960, they grew in cultural and political emancipation. Amos Tutuola's *Palm-Wine Drinkard* (1952) is considered to the first major work of a Nigerian in English. This story consists of Yoruba folktales retold using Yoruba English. Tutuola in his writings blended reality with fantasy. He used Yoruba folklore material and transformed its myths in to modern versions. Other major Nigerian novelists include Cyprian Ekwensi, T.M Aluko, Chinua Achebe, Gabriel Okara, Buchi Emecheta, Flora Nwapa and Ben Okri. The works of Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, and Ben Okri portray the state of Nigeria during the colonial and postcolonial era.

These writers' through their works rekindled the nationalistic spirit and the Black Consciousness. They re-established African perceptions, thoughts, techniques and values. Soyinka's works has elegant themes which tried to create a space in between the hostile conditions. Chinua Achebe is known for his work *Things Fall Apart* (1958) where he presents the Ibo society at the wake of colonial era. As Njoku

says, "Achebe's fictional world is realistic and at times in verges on naturalism as he delves in to photographic re enactments of Ibo traditional life and cultures such as can be readily be adopted to the resources of English language"(7). Achebe's works generally portray the Nigerian consciousness of the people who tried to establish themselves among the suppression of the Western world.

Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* centres on the village of Umofia. It focuses on the stress factors imposed upon Ibo society during the growth of Christianity. His other works *Arrow of God* (1964) and *No Longer at Ease* (1960) also deal with the Ibos during colonial rule. His work *A Man of People* (1966) shows the changes in Nigeria after the departure of Britain. Wole Soyinka's works challenge people to identify positive elements in Nigerian heritage and evokes the spirit of liberation. In *The Man Died* (1971) which was written during his imprisonment he states that self liberation is the need for continental language to fight against continental problems.

One of the famous writers from Kenya, Ngugi wa Thiong'o tries to uplift the heritage of Africa in his works. Thiongo's novel *Petals of Blood* (1977) presents the Gikuyu tribe and how their calm life which was damaged due to the intrusion of Europeans. He also expresses his view regarding the growth of Christianity and how common people struggled between their traditions and beliefs of Christianity. He wishes for the people to seek goodness in traditional and colonial beliefs. He states that the lack of social awareness turned the people against each other. The other major themes generally seen in the works of these writers were Apartheid, Assimilation, Negritude and Racism.

The second generation writer, Ben Okri's famous novel is *The Famished Road* (1991). Okri used magical realism in his novels to portray the social and political

chaos of Africa. *The Famished Road* was about the life of peasant in the globalized world. His novels also touched upon the corruption, nationalism and military domination. His work expresses the painful growth from colonial era to neo-colonial era. Some of the other novels of Ben Okri were *Songs of Enchantment* (1993), *The Freedom Artist* (2019), *Dangerous Love* (1996) and *Starbook* (2007).

After independence the people faced various challenges especially Nigerian women faced troubles like poverty, sexism, racism, gender inequality, polygamy, violation of reproductive rights, domestic violence and threats by patriarchal practices. In later period the western impact ushered the importance of women education and financial independence. This chiefly helped in the significance of Nigerian woman and encouraged them to come out of their enslavement.

The initial stage of Nigerian Literature mainly from pre colonial to post colonial centred on male writers. The novels written by male writers portrayed women to be subservient. It reflected the thoughts of the society and showed how it viewed women to be a sensual pleasure and God created servants for males. The Male writers created their own stereotype for women in general. As Brown remarks that women are the "other voices, the unheard voices, rarely discussed and seldom accorded space in the repetitive anthologies and the predictably male- oriented studies in the field" (35). Even in a family the education is mainly given to the male and it increased the illiteracy of woman. The development of African woman writings had many troubles including the restrictions of gender roles and lack of financial support. The government boosted the writings of young writers. However they did not acknowledged the works of black female writers. It was during 1970's many female writers emerged. Grace Ogot's *The Promised Land* (1996) was the first novel of a

woman to be published in East African Publishing House. *Efuru* (1966) is the first novel which was published in Heinemann African Writers Series.

The growth of Feminism had its impact in all over the world including Africa. Many Nigerian women tried to overcome the role and stereotype imposed upon them. They tried to free from dominance and freely established their likings, their dreams and their thoughts. Many pursued education and expressed their emotions in writings. The first generations of female writers were of Flora Nwapa, Bessie Head, Mariama Ba, Rebeka Njau, Ama Ata Aidoo and Grace Ogot. The second generations of female writers consists of Okeye, Zaynab Alkali, Tsitsi Dangarembga, Buchi Emecheta, Akosua Busia, Case Diane, Lind Sey Collen and Leila Aboulela.

Flora Nwapa has written many novels, stories and children novels. She is also considered to be mother of black female writers. She recreated Ibo life and customs from women's point of view. Her writings questioned some cultural beliefs and orthodoxies that have been forced upon Nigerian women. Nwapa's famous novel *Efuru* (1996) is about the woman chosen by Gods. Efuru wishes to be a mother and she is respected for her trading ability. *Idu* (1969) is a novel about a woman who searches her husband even in the land of death. Her major novels like *One is Enough* (1982) and *Women are Different* (1986) focused on the issues of marriage, the importance of child and economic independence of woman. She also stated the cruelties of Nigerian Civil War in her novel *Never Again* (1975). She focused on her aim of an idealistic New African Women and stressed upon the liberation of woman both mentally and economically.

Mariama Ba, Senegalese writer focus on the valorisation of women power. Her important novels were *So Long a Letter* (1981) and *Scarlet Song* (1983) gained

her acknowledgement. This works projected the social injustice and indignities imposed on women. She explored the psychological damage done to a woman through cultural practices. The characters from her novels were crushed under the religious principles and practice of polygamy. Like Mariama Ba, Ama Ata Aidoo is a Ghanaian novelist, poet, short stories writer and playwright. Her major novels are *Our Sister Killjoy or Reflections from Black-eyed Squint* (1977) and *Changes* (1991). Her two famous plays were *The Dilemma of a Ghost* (1965) and *Anowa* (1970). Aidoo's works showed her resentment to western culture and importance of African consciousness. Her works highlighted all evil things done under the names of race, colour and gender.

Bessie Head the South African writer compared to other writers is more composite and imaginative. Her major works were *Maru (*1972), *A Question of Power* (1974) and *When Rain Clouds Gather* (1969). Most of her writings centred on Botswana. She layered out the shortcomings and contractions of post colonial Africa through her didactic novels. She revealed great empathy for children and African woman. Her works reflect daily encounters with ordinary people. Also many of Bessie Head's works were written with the influences of Mahatma Gandhi. Rebeka Njau, another female writer from Kenya focused on the conflicts between traditional values and search for wealth and power. Her first novel *Ripples in the Pool* (1975) won her the award from The East African Writing Committee Prize. Her major novels were *The Sacred Seed* (2003) is an autobiographical novel which fuses supernatural elements with social realism. *The Hypocrite and other Stories* (1977) of Njau is written for children.

Grace Emily Ogot has written many novels in English like *The Promised Land, The Graduate* (1980), *The Island of Tears* (1980) and a short story collection

Land Without Thunder (1968). These female writers portrayed a realistic picture of society and struggles of black African women. The issues of marriage, motherhood, economic independence, women's education were major themes in their novels. The second generation woman writers gave importance to the invasion of modernism and the exposure of females outside their homes.

Hoema Okeye is one of the important writers belonging to the second generation female writers. She is popular for some of her short stories and novels. Her novel *Behind the Clouds* (1982) is about a couple who fails to have children and the society blames the woman instead of the man. She penned the typical events that happen in every Nigerian house. She received prize from the Nigerian National Council of Art and Culture for two of her works *Behind the Clouds* and *The Village Boy*.

Tsitsi Dangarembga a Zimbabwe writer is famous for her novels *Nervous Conditions* (1988) and *The Book of Not* (2006). Dangarembga received Common Wealth Writers Prize for the novel *Nervous Conditions* in 1989. Her novels generally have Rhodesia as its background. In *Nervous Conditions*, Dangarembga talks about Shona family and the protagonist of this novel Tambudzai, desires to get education. Later Tambu overcomes many cultural changes and she struggled to resist the changes that surround her. Dangarembga's novel *The Book of Not* is a semi autobiographical story told from the perspective of Tambu during her studies. It is seen as a continuation of the novel *Nervous Conditions*.

Florence Oyne Buchi Emecheta a late Nigerian Ibo novelist belonged to the second generation of black female writers. She was born in Lagos, Ibuza village in 1944. Her parents were Nwa Budinke and Alice Emecheta. She also had a brother

named Adolophus. During her age many girls were deprived of education. But even against her family's resistance she attended the same school as her brother. At the time when she was eleven years old her father died. Following Ibo custom her mother lived with her brother in law. Emecheta lived as a servant in her mother's cousin house. But she pursued her education in Girls Methodist School. She got married with Sylvester Onwordi at a young age. She had her first child Chiedu at seventeen and second child Ikechukwu soon after. She worked in an American Embassy at Lagos.

Emecheta always dreamed of going to England and she convinced her husband to migrate to England. She moved to England along with her two kids against her husband's family will. Here she encounters the absolute reality of Western country which shackled her dreams. Later she got affected by her pregnancy and misunderstandings with her husband and spoiled her marriage life. At the age of 22, she faced financial problems with her five children and broken marriage. Her husband Sylvester started to blame her for his problems of Racism and Unemployment. Emecheta escaped the frustration through outpour of her emotions in a creative way of writing as her medium. She divided her real world from her fictional world to balance her life. She started her first novel *The Bride Price* and wrote about her customs. Sylvester out of anger burnt this manuscript and it ended her marriage life. Emecheta divorced him and along with her children she left him in 1966. Later she moved to a slum and raised her children as a single mother.

Emecheta managed to get a job as a Librarian at British Museum. She worked as a community worker in Camden Council. She left this job soon for taking care of her children. Due to poverty she struggled to manage with her children. Her desire to become a writer once again kindled in her heart and she gave attention to her dreams. She started working on her writing and was rejected by many publishing houses. She

wrote about her own situation of managing kids as a single mother under a poor household. Emecheta's article *Observations of the London Poor* was published in a magazine under the title *Life in the Ditch*. Writing at one side she also continued her education and enrolled in University of London. She completed her Bachelor's degree in Sociology in 1974 and Master's degree in Philosophy in 1976. After completing her studies she started lecturing in many Colleges and Universities. She enjoyed her job as lecturer and shared her knowledge in many colleges of America.

She worked as a visiting lecturer over eleven colleges in United States of America including Pennsylvania State University of California and Los Angeles University at Illinois. She also undertook the job as visiting professor in University of Calabar, Nigeria. She held a Post of Lecturer in Yale University, Connecticut in 1982. But after 1982, Emecheta became a lecturer in University of London and also became a Home Secretary Advisor of RACE. Also in the year 1992, she was honoured with Doctorate of Literature which she received from Farleigh Dickinson University. She visited many colleges in Nigeria and United States to continue her lectureship.

Buchi Emecheta's literary collection expanded and she wrote many books and 12 major novels. Her novels are *In the Ditch, Second Class Citizen, The Bride Price, The Slave Girl, The Joys of Motherhood, Destination Biafra, Naira Power, Double Yoke, Rape of Shavi, Head above Water, Kehinde* and *Gwendolen.* The themes of her novels are Womanhood, Motherhood, Patriarchy and Freedom of woman. Her novels question the traditional notions of marriage, social responsibility and the sacrifice of woman. As Brown says, "Of all the women writers in contemporary African literature Buchi Emecheta of Nigeria has been the most sustained and vigorous voice of direct, feminist protest" (35). In her writing career, she receeived many awards like 'The Daughter of Mark Twain' for *Second Class Citizen* in 1975, The Jock Campbell Prize

from New Statesmen in 1977, The Best Third World Writer Award in 1979, The Afro-Caribbean Post's 'Golden Sunrise' Award in 1977 and 'The Best Black Writer in Britain' Award in 1980.

Managing the early rejection, Emecheta managed to publish her debut novel, *In the Ditch* in 1972. Emecheta's work was the outcome of the suppressed voices of many African women. She narrates the troubles of Nigerian woman through various social evils like Polygamy, Widowhood and the troubles in Motherhood. In her novels she touches upon the racial, sexual and colonial oppression which was imposed upon women. Buchi Emecheta was greatly influenced by other writers like Flora Nwapa, Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka. Overcoming all her troubles she started focusing on her debut novel *In the Ditch.*

The first two novels of Emecheta, *In the Ditch* and *Second Class Citizen* are autobiographical. The protagonist of these stories is the replica of Emecheta. *In the Ditch* (1972) is published in New Statesman and Adah after separated from her husband with her five children continued to live in the slums of North London. Despite her own financial problems, she is ambitious and determined to live a positive life. But her jobs took away her independence. She struggles to manage with her five children, her job ad her studies. Adah as a single mother faces the oppression by the white working class and her own neighbours. She fought against this system and hoped for a better life. It was only using her positive attitude she faces both her psychological and financial problems. She wrote her work in bildungsroman style.

The Bride Price (1976) is the third novel of Emecheta. Initially this manuscript was burnt by her husband Sylvester. She recreates this work which focuses upon the traditional evils that are done to the woman and in particular she discusses the

tradition of Bride Price paid to the girl's family by the husband. The Ibo way of treating woman as a mere commodity inspired her to write this work. She discusses in detail about the marriage life in Ibo community and how money pays a vital role in their lives. The protagonist of the novel is a girl named Akunna who marries a slave descendant Chike without any Bride Price against her father's wish. She dies soon after her first child birth. And the Ibuza people believed that her decision to marry an outsider without any bride price lead her to death. They made it as a taboo and retold the story of Akunna to all generations of women who did not follow the rules of Ibo tribe in their marriage.

Her next novel, *The Slave Girl* (1977) discusses the lives of women sold to slavery. Here the women are considered to be a thing or possession that is sold and bought by men's will. It portrays the evils against the women in Nigeria. However this novel won 'The Jock Campbell Award' from New Statesman. The story revolves around a girl named Ogbanje Ojebeta who after her parent's death was sold by her brother Okolie. After struggling as a slave she manages to free from the bondage from Palagadas. Later she marries Jacob and once again she is bought by her husband and enters in to her lifelong slavery in the name of marriage.

Emecheta's next novel *Destination Biafra* (1982) is a historical novel and reconstructs the Biafra war, a great civil war in Nigeria. This war took place from 1967 to 1970 and Emecheta used this war as the setting of her novel. In the story, the protagonist Debbie Ogedemgbe an educated independent and highly spirited girl joins the army against her father who is a corrupted minister. She is conflicted by her traditional role as a Nigerian woman and her English lover Alan Grey, the military advisor. Here Emecheta projects a different Nigerian woman who comes out of her domestic oppression and fights for her nation.

The Rape of Shavi (1983) is an imaginary fable created by Emecheta. It is an allegory that explains the difference between Europe and Africa. The story is set in the imaginary country called Shavi in African Sahara. A group of Europeans escaping from the nuclear holocaust arrived in the country Shavi. The king of Shavi, Patayon and all his peoples were facing problems and they tried to resolve it. The rape of future queen of Shavi by the Europeans symbolises the future of Shavi being materialised and destroyed by the westerners. In this novel, Emecheta describes the effect of Colonialism and its evils as destroyer of all traditional values.

Her next novel *Double Yoke* (1983) is a story of Nko, an independent minded woman. Nko trust and believes in female liberation and gender equality. The story takes place in Africa and house of Nko is given importance. It also acts as the backdrop of the novel. *Double Yoke* focuses on the different perceptions of love and marriage. Ete Kamba is a man who is more traditional in his way of life, expects the same from free minded Nko. He desires Nko to be obedient, quiet and submissive. But Nko is extremely opposite from this conditions as she neglects the traditional oppression instilled upon woman. This ends with the conflict between Ete and Nko. *Double Yoke* is a journey of a love with two persons who has opposite mindset. The characters try to free themselves from the standards designated by society.

Emecheta's next novel *Gwendolen* (1989) describes the plight of black immigrants in London. The protagonist of the story is a sixteen year old girl Gwendolen. She lives with her grandmother Naomi. Her parents Winston and Sonia immigrated to England leaving Gwendolen. As a child she was abused by her neighbour and Naomi confronted him. Gwendolen suffers from childhood trauma and molestation. Later she is taken to England by her mother Sonia. Once again she was sexually abused by her father and he impregnates her. Gwendolen didn't reveal the

truth to others fearing that her father would get arrested. Later, her father is killed in a riot and she reveals the truth when her daughter is born. She enters in to adulthood with more maturity and becomes a proud mother of her daughter Iyamide. Her childhood memories shape her life with independence.

Kehinde appeared in 1994 and it is a story about a Nigerian woman Kehinde Okolo. Emecheta portrays transculturalism by depicting the life of an African woman who lived abroad along with her husband Albert. Albert leaves to Nigeria for the betterment of his life and Kehinde stays back in London due to her pregnancy. Kehinde returns to Africa after fifteen years long stay in London to be with her husband Albert. In this novel, she compares two different cultures. She faces the dilemma whether to leave her comfort for Nigeria. When she returns to her husband, she is referred as the senior wife or first wife as her husband Albert got married to another woman which is acceptable in Nigeria. Emecheta compares both cultures and introduces to others how polygamy is accepted in Nigeria. Kehinde decides to return to London as she could not embrace her native Nigerian culture. *Naira Power* (1982) is a story where Emecheta explains the corruption in the society and how affluent classes live in the city of Lagos. Despite the gender bias, she contradicts between the traditional and primitive class with the rich people. She also described the corruption in African politics.

Emecheta's *Head above Water* (1986) is autobiographical similar to her other two novels. It describes her struggle to support her family as a single mother. She completes her studies and gains a job. She also continued her writing career. In the story the protagonist has two goals to complete. Her first aim is to buy a house using the money she earned and her second aim is to become a full time writer. She struggles and finally achieves it. Her novel reflects the struggle of black woman in

London and explains her growth while writing her novel. Out of all the novels of Emecheta two novels were given prominent importance which discusses the life of a single mother who fights away the patriarchal and colonised world.

Second Class Citizen (1974) is an autobiographical work of Emecheta. Through the events that happens in the novel the author explains her life from her childhood to adulthood. Adah is the protagonist of the story which is similar to her first novel *In the Ditch*. This story describes the life of Adah before her pursuit of studies. Adah becomes the voice of the author in describing her life as an independent woman against the society and also against the male dominated world. The background of the novel is set in 1950's nearly some years after the *World War II*.

The story begins with Adah who tells that she as a girl is a disappointment to her family which expected a male child. From her birth she was neglected by her parents. Her parents respected their village in Ibuza and they hated everything that is associated with Lagos, where Adah is born. Adah's mother and other women from Ibuza happily welcomed a lawyer who represents Ibo people. Nweze is the lawyer and he tells other men about United Kingdom and Adah's father recites it to Adah and through him she learns about that country and she also desires to know more about it.

While Adah's brother was allowed to get education from the school. Adah was not permitted to attend school. Yet she strongly desires to go to school. One day she sneaks away to enter into the school and henceforth she was allowed to get education as the teacher allowed her. She continues her studies happily till the death of her father. After this tragedy, Adah's mother moves and lives with her husband's brother in a village as per customs. Therefore, Adah stays with her maternal uncle and works for them as a slave in their house. She continued her studies in Methodist School and

she gets beaten by her cousins. To pursue her higher education she attended an exam and won four years fund as a scholarship for her studies. Though Adah got beaten for her dreams she aimed at her goal and attained it. Without Struggles she continued her studies and stayed in her uncle's house.

At an early age, Adah was married to Francis after receiving her bride price. Adah hated this but she married Francis to continue her studies in Universities. Francis is depicted as a typical male character who tries to dominate Adah in each and every step and also without having a proper job he showed his anger to Adah. Soon after her daughter's birth Adah secured a job as a Librarian in American Embassy. Adah convinces Francis to move to England and soon after she follows him to her dream world along with her children Titi and Vicky even after the rejection of her father in law. She moved to England happily to get a better life.

When Adah arrived to London, she feels ashamed and dejected to see the accommodation of Francis. Even the climate of England had not helped her to calm her mind. She hesitantly started living in that place being regarded as a second class citizen. But the domestic violence continues and Francis out of his incompetency started to subordinate Adah and argued with her in every incident. Adah secures a job at a library and works as a first class citizen. During this time Francis continued his studies and lived in the money of his wife. Adah faces the truth in the alienated country of how a woman is suppressed by Racism and Sexism. Adah's faced another trouble of managing her kids in between her job. Francis neglects his duty in taking care of the children. So Adah leaves them in a day care under Trudy. Due to Trudy's carelessness Adah's son Vicky suffers from Meningitis. Adah accused Trudy, but being a white woman Trudy escapes from the charges.

Due to neighbour's jealousy Adah and Francis moved out their house and struggled to earn a shelter being determined as a second class people. Finally they boarded Mr. Noble's house and Adah is once again torn between Christian morals and customs of Ibo. Adah gets pregnant and during the child birth she stayed in the hospital. She gets acquainted with other women in the hospital and learns to respect herself. Further she promises a better life for herself and her children. She demands proper life and better dresses for them and asks Francis to earn money for himself. She decides to control her pregnancy by taking pills but Francis finds it and beats Adah for it. Due to this unwanted pregnancy Adah succumbs to poverty and suffers from severe stress in managing her family. Through her job Adah learns about other black female writers and embraces her identity as an independent black woman.

Adah decides to write novels to share her views about her identity as women. She writes a novel *The Bride Price* which tells about the practices in her Ibo tribe and calls it as her Brain child. She shares her work with her colleagues who encouraged her and Francis mocks her for her poor English. But felt pride over her work and out of jealousy Francis burns the work of Adah. She gets angry on Francis for burning her brain child. She cries over this and later decides to get divorce from Francis. She appeals to the court and leaves Francis alone by taking all five children with her. She understands the ways of life and determines to have a better life for her children and moves towards her future. Francis is portrayed as a failure being a man who could not support his family. While Adah wins as an independent Ibo woman against male society.

Emecheta's most accomplished work is *The Joys of Motherhood* (1979) which revolves around Nigeria during 1950. The story takes place in Obuli village in Ibuza and later part of the novel takes place in Lagos. In *The Joys of Motherhood* Emecheta

gives vivid description of the life of African women in Ibuza who were oppressed by the roles of motherhood and womanhood. Also there is a dilemma between the customs of Ibo and the growth of imperialistic views. The protagonist of this story is Nnu Ego who struggles in her life as a mother tormented by numerous childbirth and the novel ends with her death at the age of forty. As Robolin comments about *The Joys of Motherhood*,

> This novel emerges a bold, irreverent authorial voice that confronts traditional and new ways of life to make starkly clear what has been rendered invisible. Emecheta challenges not the fact of motherhood itself, but rather its oppressive social terms: the extraordinary expectations and sacrifices demanded of women in the name of an ideal made all the more elusive by dramatically changing times. (1)

In *The Joys of Motherhood*, a woman is judged based on her ability to bear children and her willingness to meet the needs of others. In the novel, Nnu Ego an Ibo woman praised for her virtues is married off to Amatokwu by her father Agabadi. Her father spent money lavishly for her wedding though he accepted normal bride price. However Nnu Ego could not get pregnant and she is blamed for her barrenness. Amatokwu is married to another woman and she gets pregnant soon after. Nnu Ego takes care of the infant boy and she longs to have a son like him. One day when Nnu Ego breast feeds the child to pacify his hunger, Amatokwu beats her and she is taken back to her house by Agabadi. Nnu Ego blames her Chi for her ill fortunate life. Agabadi once again marries Nnu Ego to Nnaife a washer man of Dr. Meers in Lagos. For the sake of having a baby, Nnu Ego took upon the bizarre journey with Nnaife's brother to Lagos.

Nnu Ego arrives to Lagos and enters Yaba compound where Nnaife lives in a house. The appearance of Nnaife made Nnu Ego to hate him and she often compared Nnaife with her former husband Amatokwu. But Nnu Ego respects Nnaife for giving her the identity as a woman. Nnu Ego gets pregnant soon after and she is happy to have a child of her own. She names the baby as Ngozi and started selling cigarettes and matches which she bought from soldiers on the ship. She sustains her life happily while Ngozi dies one day mysteriously. Out of anger, Nnu Ego goes to the water front of Lagos to commit suicide. She was saved by an Ibo man Nwakusor and she was pacified by everyone. They also advised her to forget her past and Nnu got regained from her loss and looks to her future.

After recovering from the baby loss, Nnu Ego once again gets pregnant and later gives birth to Oshia. She gives her full attention to the child and raises him with love. She gave up her trade for spending time with her son Oshia. It was during this time World War II broke out and Dr. Meers returned to his country. Without job Nnaife and other people started to search for job. Nnu Ego once again started selling cigarettes and matches to support her family. Nnaife manages to leave with a group of English soldiers who offered him job. During this time, Nnu Ego was driven out of her compound by some British soldiers.

Therefore Nnu Ego leaves the place along with her son Oshia and rented a house near Yoruba people. On this place, she gave birth to Adim. Here Nnu Ego was acquainted with Mama Abby who helped the family at many times. Iyawo her neighbour's wife also brought foods to Nnu Ego and Oshia after seeing them as they are suffering from malnutrition. Nnu Ego thought of returning to her father after facing financial problems. One day upon returning from the market she saw her son along with Nnaife who had returned from his job flushed with money. Using that

money Nnu Ego opened a stall and spent her time happily and she asked Nnaife to seek another job.

Few months later, Nnaife's friend announces the death of his brother in Ibuza village. Following Ibo custom the wives of Nnaife's brother belong to Nnaife and he must take care of them. Adaku, the youngest wife comes along with her daughter and Nnu Ego felt jealous in sharing her husband with another woman. Nnaife took Adaku as his wife and lived with her. Nnaife got a job as a grass cutter near railways while both Adaku and Nnu Ego got pregnant with his kids. Nnu Ego gives birth to baby girl twins, while Adaku boy baby died soon after his birth. Once again they entered in to the poverty as they had so many mouths to feed. Nnu Ego fights with Nnaife demanding more money and later prepares a conciliatory meal to pacify him. Nnaife never returned and he has joined in the army to fight in World War II.

Nnaife sends money to Nnu Ego annually and she is again pregnant with his kid and goes to Ibuza to meet her father on death bed. The senior wife in Ibuza asks Nnu Ego to return to Nnaife. When Nnu Ego returns she came to know about Nnaife's short arrival and Nnu Ego had failed to receive the money from him. Adaku's business started to flourish while Nnu Ego once again falls to poverty. Adaku leaves the house for an independent life. Nnu Ego receives some money and letters from Nnaife regarding his job in war. Nnaife returns with money and they moved to another place.

Nnaife goes to his hometown and impregnates Adankwo the first wife of his deceased brother. He married Adankwo following the Ibo custom after the death of his brother and Nnaife also marries a new wife named Okpo with whom he return back to Lagos. Oshia and Adim wishes to expand their education while Taiwo, one of

the twin daughters of Nnu Ego, is engaged to a clerk. Kehinde, the other twin runs away to marry a Yoruba man without the approval of Nnaife and Nnu Ego. Oshia leaves the house to continue his higher studies without helping his family. Out of anger, Nnaife attacks the men who belong to the Yoruba family. Nnaife was sentenced for his crime and Nnu Ego returns to the village leaving her grownup children and everyone blamed her for her ill fate. Nnu Ego felt afraid to meet Nnaife as he would blame her for her children. In Ibuza, she dies alone at the roadside without anyone near her. Oshia returns from America to honour his mother with a grand funeral. The needs of Nnu Ego was unknown to anyone she died lonely without living happily.

The 'Joys' mentioned in Emecheta's *The Joys of Motherhood* is ironical as it does not gives any joy to Nnu Ego as she dies lonely without her children. As Katherine Frank says, "The complete futility of motherhood that we find in The Joys of Motherhood is the most heretical and racial aspect of Emecheta's vision of the African woman"(479). The preceding chapter analyse the features of bildungsroman in Emecheta's novels *Second Class Citizen* and *The Joys of Motherhood*. It studies the development of female characters Nnu Ego and Adah and their journey as a daughter, wife and mother.

Chapter Two

Developmental Trajectory

Bildungsroman as a genre is used by many writers to express the protagonist state of mind from their childhood till they attain maturity. Many African and European writers adapted their novels under this genre. Most of the contemporary literature has the features of bildungsroman. It is known as a novel of formation or education of life which educates life through life itself. As Abrams says,

> The subject of bildungsroman is the development of protagonist's mind and character, in the passage from childhood through varied experiences – and often through a spiritual crisis – into maturity and recognition of his or her identity and role in the world. (229)

This genre focuses on an individual character undergoing the process of formation which depends upon the familial and educational institutions around which the character grows. This character also enters a crisis which shapes the personality before reaching the destined ending. During the course of this time the protagonist shares complex relationship with the society and hardships to hold a recognized position in the society.

The African writers used this genre by following classical European forms and they also borrowed ideology from western literary tradition by using it along with their African culture. Some of these novels fall into the category of autobiography as the writers give incidents from their own life itself. The later generation African writers like Buchi Emecheta in her works shows the growth of the female protagonists and how their characters acquire self knowledge under the Nigerian setting and their

efforts to module their lives in that society. Similarly in the African bildungsroman, the African characters were given prominent role and other European characters support the story revolving around the main characters. However some critics also misjudged the alignment of European bildungsroman with African sentiment, even though they acquired success in literary world.

Buchi Emecheta is one of the famous Nigerian writers who successfully employed African bildungsroman genre in her novels particularly in *Second Class Citizen* and *The Joys of Motherhood*. Both of her novels possess an autobiographical touch and it expresses the growth of two female characters Adah and Nnu Ego in a colonial setting. Their life from their childhood to attaining maturity is clearly structured by the author. Like Emecheta, the other female writers also use bildungsroman as the genre of emancipation. On the initial stages, the bildungsroman were only adapted to males and it focuses on the growth of a male in a society. After the emergence of female bildungsroman there came newness and the novel moved towards the formation of ideal women characters like Adah and even it portrays traditionally bonded women inside her house through the character of Nnu Ego.

Many female critics too acclaimed this genre for using female protagonist early from their childhood, education, marriage, family relations and sexuality. With the arrival of the 'coming of age' genre bildungsroman lost its characteristics. Both the genres focuses on the protagonist growth from childhood to maturity with the difference that coming of age novel is not firm but the characters in the bildungsroman novel gets maturity towards the end. The bildungsroman genre novel in general encompasses the features of Entwicklungsroman and Kunstlerroman. Entwicklungsroman is also known as development novel which deals with author's own development from childhood to maturity. Bildungsroman genre possesses some

autobiographical elements whereas Entwicklungsroman is autobiographical in nature. Being a semi autobiographical novel Emecheta's *Second Class Citizen* comes under this genre.

In Entwicklungsroman both emotional and mental appeal of the character is given importance which is evident in the life of Nnu Ego. Kunstlerroman is a narrative genre about the growth of artist's talent to maturity and success. Generally, Kunstlerroman falls under bildungsroman and it specifically deals with the growth of an artist. Emecheta's *Second Class Citizen* is a best example for Kunstlerroman as it portrays Adah's struggle and how she comes out as a writer. Though the novel possesses the characteristic features of bildungsroman it also has Kunstlerroman's qualities in it. However, the usage of bildungsroman for a female protagonist as in the novels of Emecheta differs from male protagonist in other bildungsroman novels. Also the usage of other male characters in female bildungsroman novels differs from the usage of other female characters in male bildungsroman novels. It is also noted that to express female development process the author introduces gender perspective in their novels.

The female bildungsroman is developed basically from male bildungsroman novels, there are differences between the pattern for male and female bildungsroman. As Mary Ferguson describes the male bildungsroman is spiral and the protagonist will not achieve self realization even after he undergoes spiritual and psychological journey in external world. Unlike male bildungsroman, female bildungsroman is circular as it is centred chiefly inside the female protagonist house and from there the protagonist learns the ways of life as she couldn't explore the world as the male character. The characters which fail to come under these norms were often ends with unhappy and fateful ending. Ferguson argues that, "this natural female development is

viewed as inferior to the males' perceived as part of nature, women in most novels are presented as incapable of autonomy and integrity" (229). However, some women who were confined inside their home left the house and enter in to the outside world. Adah in *Second Class Citizen* is such a woman who gets access to public spheres. It is the cultural setting that allowed the women to explore the world.

Emecheta introduces her female characters whose life begins in their home and expresses their life cycle as a daughter, wife and mother inside the family. In *Second Class Citizen*, Emecheta portrays the transformation of Adah from a young girl in to a working woman which expresses a positive growth of an individual character. Adah believes on herself and achieves her aim and it is a best example of affirmative bildungsroman. In contrast to this in *The Joys of Motherhood* Nnu Ego gets enslaved in an unhappy married life and she never gets deviated from her role as a women confined in her home without getting positive transformation degenerates and faces an unhappy ending. However towards the end of her life she emerges as a feminist breaking the norms that enslaved her. In these novels, Emecheta portrays two female protagonists with differed appeal to their life depending upon the situations in the novels. As a female bildungsroman novel these women are caught between the double bind.

This double bind according to Pratt is "derived from the contrary forces of a girl's desire for authenticity and her society's desire for her femininity"(35). Pratt also considers double bind to be the building structure of all bildungsroman. Both Adah and Nnu Ego face the problems due to this double bind. They both were bonded between the needs of the society and their own desires. Adah desires to get education from her childhood age but it is neglected to her by her own parents and they tried to make Adah to accept her role as a woman inside her house. Her parents represent

what the society expects from a woman. Unlike Adah, Nnu Ego accepts her fate from her childhood and she only desires to fulfil her role as a typical woman of Igbo society. Nnu Ego never expresses her own desires and she only lives according to the expectation of the society. So they both were caught in this double bind as an individual on one side and the socially mandated role of being a daughter, mother and wife on the other side. Unlike male bildungsroman which searches freedom through a happy way of living. Female characters in bildungsroman wishes to liberate themselves from the way of living that subordinate them.

Double bind paves way to conflict between individual and society. As a child Adah expresses her family's early disappointment on her which expected Adah to be a boy. Her parents praised Ibuza their native village for its virtues and that made Adah to realize her responsibility and importance of their heritage. Being born in to a society which has defined social orders Adah realizes about her desire which is against the social order. As in the beginning lines on *Second Class Citizen,*

> It had all began like a dream. You know, the sort of dream which seems to have originated from nowhere, yet one was always aware of its existence. One could feel it, one could be directed by it; unconsciously at first, untill it became a reality, a Presence. Adah did not know for sure what give birth to her dream, when it all started. (7)

However as a bildungsroman heroine, Adah felt the pressure of fitting herself in to the society. She desired to get education as her own people believed education to be a saviour from poverty and disease. Gender discrimination hindered Adah to join her schooling but her brother started his studies at a young age. For women, education

was neglected and knowing to write one's name itself is considered sufficient for the women. Adah realizes her true potential and desire to achieve her true freedom.

Nnu Ego too faces this conflict between individual and society even before her birth as her parents decided to care take the baby based on its gender as Ona says, "My father wants a son and you have many sons. But you do not have a girl yet. Since my father will not accept any bride price from you, if I have a son he will belong to my father, but if a girl, she will be yours"(25). Nnu Ego lives with her father and follows the norms of her society and her father. Agbadi expects Nnu Ego to be a virtuous Igbo woman who would bring honour to him. As Agbadi says, "There is nothing that makes a man prouder than to hear that his daughter is virtuous" (31). Nnu Ego didn't contradict from the society as she didn't have any personal desire and tries to satisfy the needs of others. Nnu Ego desires to lead a normal happy life along with her children like how the society expects a woman to be. Adah rebels against the society while Nnu Ego adjusts with it.

Both the protagonist in the novels tried to achieve their desire with strong determination, Adah whose aim is to get education followed her brother 'Boy' to his school one day because of her curiosity and there she meets Mr. Cole. When she was questioned by him Adah states, "I came to school – my parents would not send me!"(11). Adah's early education started with such troubles and her parents allowed her to receive education after the ruckus Adah created in the school. After hearing about United Kingdom from her father, she aspired to visit there at least once in her life. Adah even cheated her cousin by stealing the money which is given to her to buy steak. She lied to him and saved the money to join the exam for scholarship. Adah saw the scholarship as her only chance that would help her to manage her needs in higher education. She won the scholarship thereby continued her studies without

getting subordinated by her neighbours. Even though in her house Adah was confined and treated as a slave by her uncle whom she calls 'Master'. As Adah believes,

> One might think on this evidence that Africans treated their children badly. But to Adah's people and to Adah herself, this was not so at all; it was custom. Children, especially girls, were taught to be very useful very early in life, and this had its advantages. (18)

Adah understands how the society acts against the woman and she tries her best to reach her aim against it. As for Nnu Ego she marries Amatokwu, as decided by her father. Both the characters as daughters of the family have different appeal towards life from their childhood.

The circumstances for marriage differ in male and female bildungsroman novel. The male protagonist gets married in a young age and as a matured person they designate their role in their society and seek a better career. Unlike this when the woman gets married she struggles to accept her role and suffers to find her identity as an individual. As Fraiman says that "for the male protagonist marriage is not a goal so much as a reward for having reached his goal; it symbolizes his gratification"(129). Marriage is not a hindrance for male who seeks self development. As for the female is the only matter that is seriously concerned. Unlike male, marriage is a hindrance to the development of female characters. Society appeals different to male and female. The wisdom that man gains from the world is about the art of living. Even the male characters Francis and Nnaife which appear in the novel *Second Class Citizen* and *The Joys of Motherhood* were lethargic and detached from their family. However, the female characters Adah and Nnu Ego gains nothing from the world as it was neglected to them because of their gender. They were made submissive, weak and

child bearer. In bildungsroman the characters irrespective of their gender undergoes spiritual as well as moral growth. But the woman lack economic support and they depend on the men. They try to overcome this economic dependence by earning some values in the society.

Like Adah, Nnu Ego faces problems in achieving her aim as a virtuous woman through her marriage. Nnu Ego marries Amatokwu and leaves her father's compound to live with him. Her initial marital life is happy and she is praised by her neighbours. Children were always considered to be the priceless assets of the family. Without a child Nnu Ego considered herself as a failure and she even feared about humiliating her father. Nnu Ego blamed herself for her barrenness as Emecheta writes, "Nnu Ego could not voice her doubts and worries to her husband anymore. It had become her problem and hers alone"(31). Nnu Ego soon lost her values as she turned to be a woman misfit in the society. Her failure to be a mother disturbed her mental state and she tried to calm her mind. She desired for a child to improve her status in the society.

Similar to Adah who lied to get money for her exam, Nnu Ego too betrays her husband and nurses the baby from Amatokwu's second marriage. The act of Nnu Ego shows her desire to have a child. She fondly takes care of the child and wishes to run away with her dream like child. Nnu Ego tells about her misery to the child,

> She would sing and coo to him and say, "Why did you not come to me? I cried in the night and longed for a child like you – why did you not come to me?" The notion of just taking the child, who had by now become very attached to her, occurred to Nnu Ego.(34)

For Adah being educated was her dream and she tried her best to achieve her dream and for Nnu Ego bearing a child was her dream and she felt happiness even by

nursing other's baby. Soon Nnu Ego leaves Amatokwu's compound after being beaten by Amatokwu which ends her marriage life.

Even before marriage Adah and Nnu Ego have their own desires. For Adah it was education and to Nnu Ego it was to satisfy her people. Adah married Francis to continue her studies and to her marriage is an excuse or a relief which would help her to escape from the society. As it is in the novel *Second Class Citizen*, "To Adah the greatest advantage was that she could go on studying at her own pace. She got great satisfaction, too, from the fact that Francis was too poor to pay the five hundred pounds bride- price"(23). Adah is tactful in getting her needs when it comes to her dreams. She longed to have a peaceful life without getting attached to anything. Adah even overcomes the economic dependence which was one of the greatest hindrances for woman. Her education helped her and she became a librarian at the American Consulate Library and supported Francis in his studies.

Adah provided money for Francis and her in laws. Though Francis is ashamed of this, his needs overpowered his self respect. Francis says, "Do you think our marriage will last if I allow Adah to go and work for the Americans? Her pay will be three times my own. My colleagues at work will laugh at me"(24). Francis father advices him by saying,

> You are a fool of a man, you are. Where will she take the money to? Her people? Her people, who did not even come to congratulate her on the arrival of baby Titi? Her relatives, who did not care whether she lived or died? The money is for you, can't you see? Let her go and work for a million Americans and bring their money here, into this house. It is your luck. You made a good choice in marriage, son.(24)

Adah gets bonded to Francis through marriage, though she won in her career by earning a job. In the name of marriage, she became a money plant for her husband. Francis made Adah work and enjoyed his life as her oppressor.

Nnu Ego after her marriage which turned to be a disaster stayed with her father. Agbadi searched new groom for Nnu Ego and she agreed to get married again forgetting her bitter past as an obedient daughter. Nnu Ego only wished for a baby therefore she moves to Lagos to meet her future husband Nnaife. Like Francis, Nnaife is portrayed as a tool for Nnu Ego to get children. She decided to marry Nnaife because of her humiliating past where she is determined as barren by the society. Nnu Ego hated Nnaife because of his appearance, their first encounter showed Nnu Ego's resentment.

Nnu Ego even compares Nnaife with a barrel and cow. Yet she accepted Nnaife just for the baby which she longed to be blessed with. As Nnu Ego thinks, "Father I just do not like the man you have chosen for me. Another thought ran through her mind. Suppose this man made her pregnant, would that not be an untold joy to her people?" (44). Nnu Ego embraced her fate and lived with Nnaife in a loveless marriage. Both Nnu Ego and Adah married for a purpose, they didn't like their husbands yet lived with them for the sake of society and their dreams.

Francis moves to United Kingdom and Adah soon decides to follow him to fulfil her long desired wish of entering into the land of her dreams. But this idea is not entertained by Francis and he opposed Adah's opinion on moving with him by saying,

> Father does not approve of women going to the UK. But you see, you will pay for me, and look after yourself, and within three years, I'll be back. Father said you're earning more than most people who have been

> to England. Why lose your good job just to go and see London? They say it is just like Lagos. (28)

Francis takes the decision concerning Adah's future and advices her to stay in Lagos to financially support his needs.

Adah never gives up and uses her wits to get her dreams. She executes her idea by brainwashing her in laws and tempts them by mentioning the luxury they earn through her job in England. As Adah says to her mother-in-law, "In England I'll work and still send you money. All you have to do is to ask, and then you'll get whatever you want"(33). As Francis family partially dependent upon Adah's income they didn't allow her to leave with Francis for England. To earn their trust Adah gives away all her jewels to them and relieves their mind from the fear concerning their future without the presence of Adah. Both Adah and Nnu Ego undertakes journey which is the main feature of a bildungsroman novel and their movement helps them in the path of attaining maturity. Due to this departure they both earned new lessons from the world. It also helps them to shape their spiritual and psychological growth.

The efforts taken for self development is higher for female in the novels of Emecheta. The female protagonist undergoes painful experiences before attaining maturity. Another important feature of female bildungsroman as Labovitz says is "loss of self, efforts to gain control over their minds, to win their freedom without hindrance, and to further their self- development"(248). Bildungsroman novels must help the reader to gain advices for their own personal enrichment by knowing the protagonist journeys from youth to psychological and emotional maturity. The characters Nnu Ego and Adah undergo a journey to other places which is an intelligent and a sensitive one in search of life through which they learn what life is.

Nnu Ego adjusts to her new life but she is offended by Nnaife's job as a washer man. She even accepts the crude appearance of Nnaife just for her future child as she says, "O my dear mother, please make this dream come to true, then I will respect this man, I will be his faithful wife put up with his crude ways and ugly appearance"(45). Like the female characters in bildungsroman novel Nnu Ego cope up with the family. Adah reaches England along with her children and her husband. Adah sets a new goal that to be achieved in the foreign country,

> The tiny hands clutching her blouse were the hands of a big man in the making. Her duty was to them now. From now on her children came first. All she could do for Boy was to make him aware that he had a sister he had ever reason to be proud of. She might not come back a millionaire, but she would come back with pride.(34)

Before entering England, Adah plans for the welfare of her children. Like Nnu Ego who is not satisfied with Nnaife, Adah is disgusted on seeing Francis accommodation which looked worse than ghetto. Her pride soon backfired and she yells at Francis, "You could have got better accommodation if you had really tried. But you didn't try hard enough"(39).

In female bildungsroman novel, the female characters will not care about themselves and lives for their husband and children. Adah and Nnu Ego as mothers find solace in satisfying the needs of their children. Nnu Ego bought things for her child by the money she earned rather than using it for her comforts. She only cared for her children more than Nnaife. As Nnu Ego thinks, "Nnu Ego realized that part of the pride of motherhood was to look a little unfashionable and be able to drawl with joy"(80). As an independent woman Adah and Nnu Ego overcome economic

dependence through earning money through working. Nnu Ego with the help of her neighbours learned to sell cigarettes and matches and by earning some meagre money satisfied her family needs without depending upon her husband. Nnu Ego bought new dresses and household accessories through the money she earned from trading.

> In Lagos a wife would not have time. She had to work. She provided the food from her husband's meagre housekeeping money, but finding the money for clothes, for any kinds of comforts, in some cases for the children's school fees was on her shoulders. (53)

Nnu Ego using her trade saves money for her children and she understands the importance of money in the world.

Adah in England soon understands the need of money and she started to apply for various jobs to sustain her family. Though it is difficult using her past experience as a librarian she started working as senior library assistant in the England library. Both Adah's and Nnu Ego's marital life started to drift away with their love for their children. Nnu Ego didn't like the life of Nnaife who served as a slave for his white servants. She often compares the nature of her past husband Amatokwu with Nnaife. For Adah she didn't care about a man who lived on her salary, so for her, marriage is not a bed of roses but of thorns, fire and hot nails. Both Adah and Nnu Ego were happy to earn money for their family.

As mothers the female characters must also fulfil the needs of children. They must help the children to grow in the path of goodness along with their own self development. As in *Second Class Citizen* Adah says, "In Nigeria, when the children were good, they were the father's, they took after him, but when they were bad, they were the mother's taking after her and her old mother"(45). As mothers Adah and

Nnu Ego cared for their children in different ways. Adah arranged a baby sitter for her children as Francis never cared for them. Nnu Ego takes care of her kids along with her trading business. But both Adah and Nnu Ego did their duty as a mother and loved their children.

Second Class Citizen and *The Joys of Motherhood* also possess the other features of bildungsroman novels. The protagonist of the bildungsroman novel as a child suffers from the loss of their parents. They were often orphaned and lack the guidance from both parents. Similarly both Adah and Nnu Ego have a rough start. As daughters of the family they hold strong relation with their fathers. Emecheta didn't give much importance to the mothers of her protagonist. But it is evident that both characters have learned many things from their fathers. They play a great role in shaping their daughters in their initial stage.

Nnu Ego's father Agbadi admires her very much after the death of Ona. Nnu Ego respected her father as an honourable man and always wished her father to look upon her with pride. Even during his death Nnu Ego stays with her father to comfort him. Nnu Ego is not orphaned but she only gets the love of her father and not the mother. Nnu Ego being raised without mother gives her best for her children and she gave her children what she could not receive. Nnu Ego considers motherhood as a noble entity even though she had not enjoyed of being loved by her mother.

Similarly Adah was the prized daughter of 'Pa' for whom Emecheta had not given any name. As a child, it was through her father Adah learns about United Kingdom. But her father's death came as a catastrophe to Adah as she had to give up her education. Adah is nearly orphaned as her mother and her younger brother leaves her due to custom. As a child she grows up in her uncle's home and often gets

mistreated by them. Without getting love from her parents, Adah invested her time much for her dream and concentrated only on her education. Adah gives better surroundings for her children which is an expression of her love. The care which was lacked to her is expressed through these qualities.

The chief element of bildungsroman is about understanding the importance of money through outer world. This aspect plays an important role in determining the status of the characters in the society. Both Nnu Ego and Adah know the importance of money. Adah survives with her husband only through her hard earned money which she spends for her children. In the birth of her third child Bubu, Adah is embarrassed in front of the people at the hospital without getting proper needs and gifts from Francis. "The only table that was bare in the whole ward was hers. She had no flowers, she had no cards. They had no friends, and Francis did not think flowers were necessary"(116).

During the birth of her next child Dada, Adah skilfully prepares congratulatory cards and flowers for herself using her money. She learns her value as she earns money. When Francis tries to control her, she raises her voice against Francis and neglects to share her money for him. "Francis gave up his job because he guessed that Adah was now earning a great deal more than she had ever done in the past. But Adah remained adamant to her resolution. Her money was for herself and her children"(170).

Nnu Ego on the other hand established a stall in the market. She learns about the value of money after moving to Lagos. Even though, Nnaife earns money for the house, to manage the expenses Nnu Ego finds ways to earn money along with this she manages her new born baby. She also questions about her need for earning, "Nnu

Ego, the daughter of Agbadi, don't be greedy. Manage with Nnaife's income and look after your child. That is your duty. Be satisfied with his earnings. Let him do his duty"(81). However during the troubled times and after the departure of Nnaife, Nnu Ego managed her family with the little money. After the arrival of Nnaife she enlarged her trading business and saved money for the future rather than spending it like Nnaife on drinking. She learned sewing to earn more money for her children. Nnu Ego finds happiness in giving her children their needs. Both Adah and Nnu Ego faced problems and money helped them to overcome it.

Another important aspect of bildungsroman is loss due to death, the characters faces death of their loved ones. It increases the emotional maturity in the characters and some incidents trigger their mind in the path of attaining maturity. Both Adah and Nnu Ego face death during their psychic growth. Nnu Ego's mother dies soon after the birth of her second child, as a child Nnu Ego loses both her mother and baby brother. Agbadi's death too affects Nnu Ego. But she suffers greatly during the loss of her first born baby Ngozi. Nnu Ego felt pride as a mother having a child. She bought clothes for him and took great care of him. Ngozi dies mysteriously at one morning, "She saw him, her baby Ngozi, lying there where she had laid him only a short while before, dead. Stone dead"(55). After the death of her child she suffered from greater mental stress.

Similarly in *Second Class Citizen*, Adah loses her father at a young age when she was eight years old as she says,

> Just a few months after she started school, Pa went to the hospital for the something, she could not remember what. Then someone – she was

> not quite sure who it was – told her that Pa was staying there for a few days. A week or two later Pa was brought home; a corpse. (17)

After her father's death, Adah's life changed without anyone to support her dreams, she worked harder for it. It was her father who ignited ideas about United Kingdom and about the whites and inspired her through his words. For Adah and her father it is the land of their dreams. Though Adah did not lose her child she nearly got feared of losing her child Vicky when he suffered from Meningitis.

The main focus of bildungsroman is attainment of maturity and personal growth of characters from initial stages. Both Adah and Nnu Ego turn as a feminist towards the end. Nnu Ego learns about the world and realizes her mistake on living for others. Towards the end loneliness becomes her only companion and she dies as a pathetic mother who knows only to be a mother. As for Adah towards the end she knows about her values as a working woman leaves Francis to rejoice her own life. As Adah thinks, "What mattered was that she should not be bothered with unhappiness, because she wanted to radiate happiness to all those around her. And she was happy, she noticed that her children were happy too"(165).

Generally towards the end of the bildungsroman novel the characters reach a point where they exhibit their unique talents. In *Second Class Citizen,* Adah exhibits her talent and emerge as a writer. This novel has some Kunstlerroman aspects in it. *Second Class Citizen* is about Adah who began to write novels from her own life. Kunstlerroman is a subgenre of bildungsroman where the protagonist's growth as an artist is discussed. Adah's growth from a librarian to a writer portrays her as a matured character and matches with this Kunstlerroman feature. Some characters after

their fruitless journey end their life with the death. In *The Joys of Motherhood* Nnu Ego dies at the end which is one of the aspects of bildungsroman novel.

The female bildungsroman novels possess five components, at first the novel projects the psychological growth of the protagonist and the story is centred on that particular character. Emecheta's novel *Second Class Citizen* centres on Adah and *The Joys of Motherhood* revolves around Nnu Ego. The novel is structured by following their life from their childhood and the novels focuses on the growth of the particular character. Secondly the author gives importance to the thoughts and opinions of the protagonist depending upon the situation or the persons they meet. The story is from the point of view of woman characters and they assume the other persons nature through their behaviours.

Thirdly, some bildungsroman novel possesses biographical elements in it. Emecheta's works has the rudiments of her own life. The novel *Second Class Citizen* is an autobiographical novel, Adah is the representation of Emecheta. Emecheta uses the words like 'Pa', 'Ma' and 'Boy' for her relations. The incidents that take place in the novel that were related to Adah are from Emecheta's own life. The novel *The Joys of Motherhood* is about the expressions of Emecheta about her own society. The only character which appears in both the novel was the lawyer Nweze who appears at the beginning of the novel *Second Class Citizen* where Adah's mother and other women were welcoming the only lawyer of Igbo. The women honoured him as 'Messiah'.

As Adah states, "These women were so proud of this new lawyer, because to them it meant the arrival of their very own Messiah"(8). In *The Joys of Motherhood* Nnu Ego appeals to this lawyer to save Nnaife from the crime, where he nearly tries to kill someone using cutlass. As Nnu Ego says, "I know the Ibuza people say nasty

things behind my back, but look, son, they are sending our only lawyer, Nweze to plead for your father"(213). Emecheta narrates her life through Adah and Nweze who appears in both of the novels from Emecheta's own life.

The fourth component of bildungsroman novel is the psyche growth of the character. Adah differs from her personality from the beginning, as a girl child of eight she is left with nothing yet she manages to improve herself and as a writer she exposes what she feels wrong even though it is against her culture. Adah grows as a woman of pride and her perspective of life changes. Nnu Ego begins her journey as a timid woman who believes being blessed with children is the greatest asset of woman. Psychologically her definition of being a wife and mother changes towards the end and she realizes that women must have some life for themselves which would earn them some happiness. Also the psychic growth of a woman from a daughter, wife and mother is clearly seen in both the novels of Emecheta.

The fifth component of the bildungsroman novel is that these novels have some understanding of human life. Adah is the representation of all women who fight against the oppressing society with their determination. Her life inspires others to be a success against the dominating world. Nnu Ego is the representation of all women whose life is tied up with her husband and children. Her death acts like a warning to other women to have some personal dreams and wishes for themselves rather than fulfilling the needs of their family.

Emecheta's both the novel possess the various component of bildungsroman novels. Emecheta has written about the life of two Igbo woman through various stages of life attains maturity towards life. It also has some conflict regarding the growth of female characters in terms of family relations, education, career and independence.

Emecheta contrast the individuality of her characters against the dominating society. The novels *The Joys of Motherhood* and *Second Class Citizen* are structured in female bildungsroman as it also posses its components.

Nnu Ego and Adah were greatly influenced by the political and cultural changes in their society during colonial and postcolonial era. The leading chapter focus on the cultural beliefs of Igbo tribe and the changes happened in Nigeria after the intrusion of whites. The difference between two diverse cultures Igbo and British and the sufferings of Nigerian people is analysed.

Chapter Three

Culture and Colonialism

Colonialism brought new culture which altered the traditional African culture. The whites forced the native people to adapt with the European systems. It greatly influenced the values of people in society including their family. Women were affected by these changes as they were forced to follow the new culture along with their native culture which dominated them. The World Wars have its impact on Nigerians. Though the Africans were not the cause of war they were forced by British to join in armies against other European lands. As all Nigerians were blacks they didn't face problems in their place. However through immigration when they moved to other European countries like America and England the Africans faced racism.

Racism is a socially constructed evil which affected the immigrants, the westerners misinterpreted the Africans based upon their skin colour and they created dogmas regarding them. These misconceptions created some wrong perception on the people and it affected their relations with others. Racism is the representation and distortion of reality done on textual works of westerners which were believed by the world. In Emecheta's novel the characters faces struggle through colonial dominance in their native land and troubles of racism in the immigrated land. In *Second Class Citizen* and *The Joys of Motherhood*, the author gives importance to the cultural beliefs and also the colonial beliefs. Nnu Ego and Adah belong to the Igbo tribe. Nnu Ego faces problems in Lagos which was dominated by whites while Adah moves in to the United Kingdom which was the territory of white people who dominated the Nigerians. When Nnu Ego faced the colonial dominance, Adah underwent the struggles of racism.

Nigeria from the pre historic period is a closed society and it has limited contact with the outside people. The Nigerian people indulged in agricultural systems and used iron and earthen wares. The pre colonial Nigeria has a rich artistic culture and skills that sustained in them before getting in contact with whites. The great historic significance that took place in Nigeria is human slave trade. The Europeans engaged in the purchase and use of slaves from Nigeria for their countries. Similarly, many Africans were forced to move from their native land to England as slaves. Many Europeans later colonised Africa depending upon their need on man power and land. Also during this time the Great Britain partitioned Nigeria officially and they were colonised by them. The white missionaries began to establish Christianity and churches were built propagating their beliefs.

The Nigerians began to lose their dominance to British people. The missionaries colonised the minds of people to adapt European culture through mission schools and western education. The closed Nigerian society came into contact with outside world and transformed to get acknowledged by others. Nigeria is a multi ethnic nation with Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa which were dominant among other ethnic groups. The Igbo people dominate other ethnic groups as they possessed western education and they excelled in civil and military service. During Biafra war the Igbo people lost their importance and Yoruba became a dominant one. During the two great World war Nigeria was under the British rule. In the pre colonial era, the European used trade and slavery as a medium to rule them. The British colonised Igbos during 1889 to 1914 and Nigeria became the colony of whites. The people continued to suffer under British till 1960 till they gained political independence. The independent Nigeria faced social, economic and political problems. The western education also polarised people and gave rise to social and economic warfare.

Lagos is the political and economic capital of Nigeria and it belongs to Yoruba. It is the largest seaport in the country and the people indulge in all kinds of trades. Lagos enjoys the commercial and political advantage of United States. Nigerian is bilingual and they know English and their own language. Nigerians were religious people and they had faith not only in Christianity, but also in Islam and other Nigerian ethnic religions. Christianity is popularised and spread to Nigerians by white missionaries. This greatly influenced the people and the whites also built churches and schools through which they tried to change the Nigerian religious beliefs. The people who studied in the schools were converted to Christianity and they became teachers, clerks, civil servants, doctors, architects, professors and politicians in Nigeria. Some of them had also become prominent writers who established their culture to outside people using English as their language.

The traditional ethnic religions of Nigeria have various names Eslin Ibile in Yoruba, Igo Mmuo in Igbo and Bori in Hausa. They were organized around three theological concepts, the greater god 'Olodumare' in Yoruba, 'Chukwu' in Igbo and 'Ubangiji' in Hausa. The Nigerians respect human beings on earth, their dead ancestors on spirit world and even unborn child in womb. They also honoured the earth and treated the environment with same respect and faith. The Igbo people were one of the largest ethnic groups in Nigeria. The word 'Ibo' or 'Igbo' were as Ofomata states,

> One of the lost 'tribes' of Israel or Egypt and that for some inexplicable circumstances, they left the East and wandered across until they finally came to their present abode. The exponents of this theory found similarity of culture between that of the Igbo and some of the Eastern people. Circumcision, system and manner of naming children, sentence

> structure and similarity in some words, religion and ritual symbols, love of adventure and enterprise were used to explain derivation from the East. (40)

Emecheta's novels have Lagos as its central place. In *The Joys of Motherhood* Nnu Ego moves to Lagos whereas in *Second Class Citizen* Adah moves from Lagos to England. In *Second Class Citizen* Adah through her parents came to know about the native Ibuza and for Adah's parents Ibuza is the beautiful place and they explained to Adah how their native people were friendly with ample natural resources like water. However in Lagos the people lost their identity as even their native accents were corrupted by other languages. For Adah's parents Lagos is a misfortunate place as for them, "It was bad because it was a town with laws, a town where Law ruled Supreme"(8). Law holds an important role in their lives and the British formed rules and law to control the people. Some of these laws were even against the Igbo culture yet they lived under the laws of whites. When Adah goes to school without her parents notice, her mother is arrested by charging her against child neglect. These unwritten laws depict how the people dominated the common people. Adah's mother is tortured in the police station by forcing her to drink 'Gari', a tasteless bitter drink. This shows the implementation of the white's law upon them.

The Ibuza people in Lagos were also untainted by the growth of civilisation and they didn't care about race, pollution and population which affected the European countries. These people also treated the person who arrived from those civilized countries with more honour and respect. As Adah says about her childhood age as, "These were the days before Nigerian independence when nearly every boat from England brought hundreds of English graduates and doctors to work in the schools and hospitals of Lagos"(15). Lagos being the colony of British had schools and

hospitals through which they manipulated people minds to adapt their culture. The common people looked upon them with greatness. Likewise in *The Joys of Motherhood* during Nnu Ego's childhood in Ibuza shows the culture of Igbo people. The life of Nnu Ego in the story begins in 1934 when Lagos is under the control of British. Nnu Ego thinks of her past from the life of her parents Agbadi and Ona. In the pre colonial era, Agbadi belongs to Ogboli tribe who were the early descendants of Ibuza village. Though these people were overthrown by other people they considered themselves as sons of the soil. The people of Ibuza village lived happily without getting affected by the changes happened around them.

The concept of Chi is considered important in the traditional Ibuza. When Agbadi was attacked by elephant, many goats were sacrificed to pacify his Chi. "Goats were slaughtered everyday to appease Agbadi's *chi*; others were left alive by river banks and at Ude to appease the other gods"(15). Chi is considered to be the identity of people in the spiritual land. It is also known as the inner person who guides the activities of their life. The Igbo's believe that the spirit is from Chukwu and this Chi stays with them from their birth till death. Chi is also referred as a spiritual providence of God as Mbaegbu comments that, "It is a man's other transcendental self, differing from his life force since it is immortal. As a portion of God's divine nature deputizing for Him, "Chi" goes with man all through his life and reverts to God at a man's death"(170). Also they believed that everything good and bad happens to the person only with the approval of their Chi. In *The Joys of Motherhood* Nnu Ego believes and blames her Chi for everything happened to her.

Chi is not considered as evil because it returns to God after the person's death. The Igbo people also believed that success and failure depends upon their Chi. Also during the death of the individual many sacrifices were made to the wandering spirits

and they are expected to re-enter the womb of pregnant women. They offer sacrifices in forms of sheep as a peace making ritual, these offerings were made to ward off evils and wrath of God. In Agbadi's senior wife Agunwa's death, the servant of Agunwa is buried along with her following the Igbo belief. The funeral ceremony begins with the sacrifice of servants buried with their masters. "A good slave was supposed to jump into the grave willingly, happy to accompany her mistress; but this young and beautiful woman did not wish to die yet"(23). As Emecheta writes the funeral of Agunwa takes place throughout the day. With feasting and dancing she is buried in her coffin along with her things as a custom. The slave of Agunwa revolted against her death and the sons of Agbadi pushed her to the grave. On nearing her death she swore to Agbadi, "I shall come back to your house hold, but as a legitimate daughter. I shall come back..." (23).

Reincarnation is greatly believed by the Igbos and they trusted that there is life even after death. It gave solace to people who lost their loved ones and it comforts the people dying and gives them a chance in their next life. Nnu Ego is born to Ona and Agbadi with a lump on her head and a priest of God commonly known as 'Dibia' is called to see her future. The dibia examined Nnu Ego and said,

> This child is the slave woman who died with your senior wife Agunwa. She promised to come back as a daughter. Now here she is. That is why this child has the fair skin of the water people, and the painful lump on her head is from the beating your men gave her before she fell into the grave. (27)

Nnu Ego's Chi is thought to be the slave woman and Nnu Ego started to pray to her for her life. An effigy representing her chi is given to Nnu Ego and she prayed to the

Chi for children following the advice of Ibuta. In *Second Class Citizen* Adah's father saw her as the reincarnation of his mother as his mother died when he was young. As Adah says, "When Pa's mother was dying, she had promised Pa that she would come again, this time as his daughter. She was sorry she couldn't live to bring him up"(13). Adah is nicknamed as 'Nnenna' which means father's mother.

In *The Joys of Motherhood* during Agbadi's death he promised to return to her daughter along with Ona her mother. After Agbadi's death the funeral went on for days and many goats were sacrificed. The coffin is made along with a stool, "He was dressed in chief's regalia, his cap and his elephant tusks were placed across his knee, and so were his hunting weapons, his shield, his iron spear and his cutlasses"(154). He is buried in his household facing his family inside her courtyard. Following this a secondary burial takes place for the spirit to enter the spiritual world. Soon after his death Nnu Ego gave birth to a boy. The people of Nnu Ego believed that Agbadi had returned fulfilling his promise to Nnu Ego. The boy is named as 'Nnamdio' which meant 'This is my father'.

In Igbo culture the Bride price were given prominent importance. The values of the daughters in the family are represented only through the bride price the parents earn through them. Agbadi too accepted normal bride price for Nnu Ego before she married Amatokwu. Also the bride price was usually returned to the groom in case of separation. Nnu Ego and other Igbo women were turned into a commodity. The daughters were usually sold to the highest bidder who pays best bride price. The bride price was returned to Amatokwu as Nnu Ego couldn't produce children. As Nnaemeka observes

> Husbands dominate their wives and fathers dominate their daughters ensuring a system of perpetual subjugation of women. Here, women are valued only for the money they bring to their fathers through their price.(179)

The culture of exchanging bride price is not appreciated by the westerners. During the trial of Nnaife for attacking Yoruba man, he tells about the difference between the bride price received for Igbos and Yoruba based on their culture. As Nnaife tells, "A good husband is expected to pay well for a good girl. That is the way to prove his manhood. If he cannot afford to pay, then he does not deserve a wife. But the Yorubas, they don't do anything like that. They just give the father a bowl of drink and buy the bride a few lappas ... no, not enough for all the food the child has eaten since she was born"(216). The Igbo custom of giving bride price was generally ridiculed by the westerners. As the lawyer mock Nnaife by questioning about his fight for bride price and palm wine and not for worrying about his daughter's honour.

In *Second Class Citizen*, Adah is approached by many suitors who were willing to pay the bride price. But Adah didn't wish to sell her life for those men and married Francis who was studying to be an accountant. Francis is not ready to pay Adah's five hundred pounds bride price. Adah is considered to be an expensive bride as she is college trained. Though her relatives didn't support her studies they wished to receive her bride price. Therefore Adah's mother and her relations didn't attend the wedding. Unlike Nnu Ego in *The Joys of Motherhood* Adah didn't care about the bride price. Adah's view represents the colonial mindset. In post colonial era the culture was not given much importance and young generation respected their own life rather than living for the others.

Religion always had been the part of the culture. Igbo people gives importance to their different types of god. The people also made sacrifices to the river gods to grant their wishes and to guard them from evildoers. On Francis departure from Lagos to England, his relatives prayed to river Oboshi for his journey. This ritual is made by breaking kola nuts inside a circle on the floor. They chanted prayers to Oboshi,

> She was requested to guide Francis, to keep him from the evil eye of white girls, to make him pass his examination in good time, to bless him with all the money in England, to bless him with everything good in England; she was requested especially to forget him when circulating diseases and anything plaguey. (29)

Adah didn't care about their prayers as she thought about the possibility of Oboshi to hear their prayers who is four hundred miles away to accept their sacrifices. She also validates how Oboshi would save the life of people in foreign country.

In *The Joys of Motherhood* Olisa is given prominent importance. When Agbadi was injured during hunting, many offerings were made to Olisa to cure Agbadi. Even Nnu Ego is advised by Amatokwu to pray for children to Olisa. Unlike Adah, Nnu Ego believes her Igbo gods and trusts them before taking decisions. However, the importance and beliefs on Igbo gods were soon replaced by the intrusion of Christianity. The missionaries used education as a medium and made the native people to accept Christianity and its beliefs. Adah even remarked about the superstition beliefs of Igbos who believed that Igbo men will be affected by Leprosy if they angered Oboshi by marrying a white woman. Adah laughs at the foolishness of people. As she says,

> The funniest thing about all these superstitions and beliefs was that they still had such a doleful grip on the minds of her people. No one dared ignore any of them. Leprosy was a disease with which the goddess of the biggest river in Ibuza cursed anyone who dared to flout one of the town's traditions. (16)

Adah mentions the changes that happened near river Oboshi as white men found oil near the banks of the river. These men started exploiting these places in search of oil, yet they were not affected by leprosy. The former beliefs on getting affected by leprosy on marrying white people changed as many Igbo men and women married the whites. Adah comments on this by saying, "So Oboshi was faster than most of her sons and daughters at catching up with the times"(16). Failing of superstition is also seen in *The Joys of Motherhood* on the incident of Nnaife's guitar music at night. The Igbo believed that playing music at night would attract evil spirits. Therefore Nnaife's habit of playing guitar at night is not encouraged by his wives Nnu Ego and Adaku.

One night when they heard noises from the guitar they feared on evil spirit which made Nnaife to break the guitar. Following the advice of medicine man sacrifices were made to pacify the spirits. However Oshia just like Adah wonders about the psychology of Igbo people. As Oshia knows the truth behind the music as he had hidden his new pet mice on the guitar. His views regarding the Igbo changes as he thinks, "Maybe some medicine men could really see into the future, but the man from Abeokuta, they had then in Yaba was not so truthful"(132). Oshia when moved to America married a white woman breaking the same superstitions made by Igbo. This signifies the breaking of Igbo culture after colonisation.

The superstitions in Igbo religion made Christianity to spread vastly in Nigeria. In *Second Class Citizen* Adah learns about Christianity from her childhood through the Methodist School. Christianity at first entered to Nigeria through education. It also has an important role in marriage as they took place in churches unlike following Igbo tradition. Adah's father believed Christianity and her parents got married in the church. Similarly Adah too got married in Church with Francis. Adah questioned between the beliefs of Christianity and beliefs of Igbo culture. As she feared ,that praying to Oboshi will anger Christ. Adah wondered about the acceptance of Christ by Igbo people. By referring to Francis she says being a Jehovah's Witness who carried Bible every week he participated in the rituals of Oboshi. Adah gets confused by the true beliefs of people and she states, "Didn't Jesus say to the Pharisees that one should give unto Caesar what was Caesar's and to God what was His? Well, that was what they are doing" (30).

Adah's firm belief on Christianity shows her adherence to its values. She gives importance to the Bible and at times she picks up incidents and words from Bible and relates it with her own life. Francis preaches the words of Bible using his own interpretation. However Adah looks upon the Bible as the source of spiritual guidance. She valued the Bible as the greatest book about human psychology. Adah couldn't tolerate the people who change the meaning of Bible according to their own interpretation. As Adah states,

> It is a mysterious book, one of the greatest of all books, if not the greatest. Hasn't it got all the answers? But the one thing Adah could not stand was when a group of people took a portion of the Bible, interpreted it the way that suited them and then asked her to swallow it like that, whole. She became suspicious. (100)

Adah also questions about the unfairness in the story of Adam and Eve as Eve is made out of one of the rib of Adam. She finds it unfair for the woman for struggling in carrying the baby. The fact that woman is made out of the rib drawn out from man's body increased Adah disbelief. As she says,

> Fancy a woman having to work, having to carry babies who kept pushing their mummies about and, on top of it all, having to have cancer as well. Was Eve the only person who ate the apple? Did not the man Adam eat some too? Why was it that women had to bear most of the punishments? It was not at all fair. (102)

Christmas is considered to be the most important occasion for all Christians. Adah says about the celebration of Christmas England, in London Christmas is celebrated with joy, prayers, gifts and supper. However for the immigrants Christmas is not the same. Francis as a father didn't buy anything for the children. However Adah received her presents from the library she works. As Adah says, "God did understand and comforted her a little. Because, all of a sudden, a big parcel arrived as if it were from Santa Claus. It was from the kind woman who was her boss at the North Finchley Library"(131). Adah tells about the difference between the celebration of Christmas in Lagos and England,

> In England it was silent night, holy night. In Nigeria it was noisy night, holy maybe, but fireworks night, the night of loud rejoicing, the night of palm- wine drinking in the streets, the night of bell-ringing. In England it was a hush, hush, morning for was Jesus not lying asleep in the manger? (134)

In *The Joys of Motherhood* Nnu Ego gave importance only to Igbo culture. However after moving to Lagos through her surroundings she learned about Christianity. Marriages in churches are considered vital for the Igbo people and other Nigerians working under white masters. The Igbo tradition of marriage is not encouraged by the whites. As Nnaife says to Nnu Ego, "What will they say in the church? We have not been married there. If I do not marry you in church they will remove our names from the church register and Madam here will not like it. I may even lose my job. So keep it quiet, will you? Ubani the cook had to marry his wife in the Catholic church to save his job"(50). Nnu Ego is introduced to Christianity through Nnaife and she attended some community prayers. Initially Nnu Ego is not interested to attend those meetings but she followed her husband.

However when Dr.Meers departs to England Nnaife forgets Christianity. But Nnu Ego continued to follow some principles of Christianity and adapted it in her life. Whenever she faces problems "Her new Christian religion taught her to bear her cross with fortitude. If hers was to support her family, she would do so, until her husband found a new job"(89). Nnu Ego believed in Jesus Christ and his Kingdom of heaven, even though their beliefs in Christianity weren't strong and also they were not well informed about it. "Nnu Ego was like those not-so-well informed Christians who promised the Kingdom of Heaven, believed that it was literally just round the corner nd that Jesus Christ was coming on the very morrow"(162).

There were also clashes between the principles of Christianity and Igbo ulture, they both had contradicting views regarding polygamy. Polygamy is accepted n Igbo culture but Christians preferred monogamy. In Igbo tradition marriage is seen a relationship between two families therefore polygamy is normal and traditional in

African and Igbo society. After colonial rule polygamy became obsolete as Christianity only accepted monogamy. As Basden remarks,

> Polygamy is favoured and fostered equally by men and women; in some respects, the latter are the chief supporters of the system... the ambition of every Ibo man is to become a polygamist, and he adds to the number of his wives as circumstances permit. (97)

In *Second Class Citizen*, Adah looks upon her mother who after the death of Adah's father 'Pa' following the Igbo custom moved to live with Pa's brother. As Adah says, "Ma was inherited by Pa's brother, and Boy was to live with one of Pa's cousins"(17). After her father's death Adah due to their custom is separated from her mother and brother. Adah being an immigrant of England and as a follower of Christianity she didn't accept the concept of polygamy. She argued with Francis over his relation with Trudy, the care taker of Vicky and Titi. As Francis says, "In their society, men were allowed to sleep around if they wanted"(64). Francis didn't wish to follow the laws of London, "Women at home never protested, and had said that she did not mind, but feeling the intensity of her anger, he sensed that she did mind"(64). Francis who is educated in western knowledge and who called himself as Jehovah's Witness acts like a typical Igbo for his own benefits. But in the post colonial England, woman like Adah were not ready to accept such customs of Igbo society.

In *The Joys of Motherhood* Nnaife after the death of his brother inherits his wives. Nnu Ego hesitated to accept this change in her life and she also worried about her future. Adaku is the only wife who came along to live with Nnaife. Though Nnu Ego was brought up in Ibuza village as she is familiarized with Christianity and westerners she didn't open heartedly accepted polygamy. Nnu Ego didn't ask her

father Agbadi's opinion as she knows that her father would tell her to accept it as it is part of their custom. But Nnu Ego is not ready for it,

> She tried desperately to control her feelings, to put on a pleasant face, to be the sophisticated Ibuza wife and welcome another woman into her home; but she could not. She hated this thing called the European way; the people called Christians taught that a man must marry only one wife. Now here was Nnaife with not just two but planning to have maybe three or four in the not so distant future. (119)

In Ibuza they called the first wife of the man as 'senior wife'. The inheritance obtained by the first wife makes polygamy valid among Igbos. Being the senior wife Nnu Ego obtains the inheritance of Nnaife. Later in the post-colonial period polygamy in Ibuza were not strictly followed due to western education.

Another important aspect of colonialism is the contact between the natives and the whites. The colonial rulers treated colonised people as slaves in their native land. Also the native people who immigrated to the colonisers land suffered from racism. In *The Joys of Motherhood* Nnu Ego after shifting to Lagos meets the whites who were masters. The life of these people gets degenerated as Nnaife works as a laundry man while Nnu Ego rather than working in farms sells cigarettes in the market. Ogunyemi states that, "Nnaife's slavery put Nnu Ego in double jeopardy; for as a victim at work, at home he becomes the victimizer"(255). Nnaife is ridiculed by his white master Dr. Meers as baboon. Nnaife's illiteracy made Dr. Meers to insult him habitually. Nnaife who is not aware of its meaning says, "We work for them and they pay us. His calling me a baboon does not make me one"(42). Nnaife is titled as Nnaife the washer man, but Nnu Ego is ashamed of Nnaife and calls him a slave who works for a white

woman. Even Cordelia, says to Nnu Ego that, "Men here are too busy being white men's servants to be men. We women mind the home. Not our husbands. Their manhood has been taken away from them. The shame of it is that they don't know it. All they see is the money, the shinning white man's money"(51). The Africans lost their identity after being corrupted by colonial mindset on earning money.

During the birth of Ngozi, Nnu Ego feels like a slave while accepting old baby clothes from Mrs. Meers. In Igbo custom they offer old clothes to slave and servants who were lower to them. She feels inferior yet she accepts it forgetting her pride. When Nnaife searches for a job, he encounters a group of whites and asks them job and after getting mocked by those men he receives a job. "He was an Ibo. The Europeans were happy about this because it had long been an accepted thing that Ibo men made good domestic workers"(94). The people in Nigeria were not affected by World Wars.

Yet being under the white masters who provided them job and money, the war did affect them indirectly. It also affected Nnaife and other workers of Dr. Meers, "Now with the war, the masters were at the front fighting. Money was short and so were jobs"(126). The dominance of colonisers is seen when Nnaife and other men were taken by them as soldiers to fight war without their likeness. Though slavery is abolished the colonisers treated the black men as paid slaves, "They were paid -- paid slaves – but the amount was so ridiculously small that many a white Christian with a little conscience would wonder whether it was worthy anybody's while to leave a wife and family and stay almost a year on a voyage"(112). In *The Joys of Motherhood* the colonisers dominated the native people by treating them as slaves and illiterates also they used the people for their benefits. It shows the life of Igbo people in a colonial era.

Similar to Nnu Ego and Nnaife, Adah faced the troubles from colonisers in the form of racism. As Kanneh views that,

> What colonial histories show is that, however much we can deconstruct concepts such as race, nation, and culture, reveal their instabilities and illogical nature, they still operate actively to oppress groups of people and materially, psychologically and violently affect their lives. (142)

Adah moves in to England to have a better education for her children and she is not aware of the stereotyping behaviour of the people who held themselves as masters even after independence. They dominated the immigrants economically and politically. England gave Adah a cold welcome which acts as a premonition that shows her life in England. As Adah says, "But if as people said, there was plenty of money in England, why then did' the natives give their visitors this poor cold welcome, even if it came from the land of her dreams"(36). Soon Francis shattered the dreams of Adah by stating the absolute reality and made her to understand how living in Lagos is different from staying in England. As Francis says,

> You must know, my dear young *lady*, that in Lagos you may be a million publicity officers for the Americans; you may be earning a million pounds a day; you may have hundreds of servants: you may be living like a elite, but the day you land in England, you are a second-class citizen. (39)

They worked under the whites as paid servants. When Francis and his neighbours advised Adah to secure a job in a shirt factory shows how people accepted their state as second class citizen.

The unfairness between blacks and whites is also seen in parenting. As whites were privileged to live with their children, the blacks send their children to foster parents to improve their life and language. "Only first class citizens lived with their children, not the blacks"(47). Adah's persistence failed and she sent her children Titi and Vicky under the care of Trudy. Trudy as a white woman ill treated Adah's children. As a caretaker she didn't give Adah's children Titi and Vicky a safe space and care for them to develop themselves. Even the toys Adah brought for her own kids is taken by Trudy's children and she abandons Titi and Vicky in the backyard. Due to this Vicky gets affected by Virus Meningitis which affects him very badly. As Adah sees, "Vicky was busy pulling rubbish out of the bin and Titi was washing her hands and face with the water leaking from the toilet"(52). Trudy's failure as a caretaker is not seriously punished and she is reprimanded.

The society too didn't give importance to black children. Adah felt racial discrimination in all places. Even the hospitals provided for them showed such discrimination, though hospitals were better than Lagos but the name 'Royal Free' showed how far the blacks are separated from the whites. As Adah says,

> Why was the name of the hospital Royal Free? Was it a hospital for poor people, for second-class people? Why did they put the word "free" in it? Fear started to shroud her then. Were they sending her Vicky to a second-class hospital, a free one, just because they were blacks? (60)

When Adah and Francis searched for better accommodation, she faced yet other evils of society against blacks from the owners of the houses who disliked black tenants. 'Sorry No Coloureds' boards on houses showed the aversion of whites

owners to blacks. The whites didn't wish to see blacks near their neighbourhood. Adah even tried to pay twice the normal rent, yet as blacks they couldn't have the proper house to live. "She was beginning to learn her colour was something she was supposed to be ashamed of. She was never aware of this at home in Nigeria, even when in the midst of whites"(70). In England, blacks were always considered inferior. Near Queen's Crescent Adah had managed to find a house but as it is not for blacks, Adah tactically changed her accents and through telephone conversation managed to get an appointment. Adah planned to plead to the white woman on seeing her and to allow her children. As Adah says,

> It was all so friendly, so humane. But what would happen when the landlady was faced with two black faces? Adah told herself that it would be better to postpone this discovery to the last minute. One could never tell, she consoled herself, the woman might not even mind their being black. (74)

But on seeing two blacks the white lady politely rejected Adah's request by saying that the rooms were already given to other tenants. Once again both Adah and Francis feel dejected, as Adah reciprocates,

> Rejection by this shrunken piece of humanity, with a shaky body and moppy hair, loose, dirty and unkempt, who tried to tell them that they were unsuitable for a half derelict and probably condemned house with creaky stairs. Just because they were blacks? (77-78)

Adah's description about the white woman shows her anger against all white people who humiliated blacks. When Adah saw hatred in the woman's eyes, she faced the greatest humiliation in her life.

Mr. Noble, the owner of Adah's new house is also a victim of racism. He represents one of the many black people who lost their self to earn the favours of whites. The oppression of whites tamed the blacks as mere puppets and robbed them of their talents. Mr. Noble only through humiliation earned money and the name Mr. Noble is given to him by whites who claimed that the man could do anything they asked to do for a cup of beer. Initially though Mr. Noble aimed for a job as a civil servant without any success he ended up as a lift man. However he was made fun by whites in pubs as Adah says, "His mates at work were not bad. They liked him, because they turned him into a jester, a clown. They would invariably ask him to perform some African tricks, just for laughs, and Mr. Noble would comply"(82). He turned as a clown for satisfying many young whites. "On one occasion, he was asked to remove his trousers; his mates wanted to see whether Africans had tails or not because that was the story they were told during the war. Adah remembered her father telling some of his friends something like that, but she had been too young to understand"(82).

From this incident it is evident that the Africans suffered years and years of humiliation. The Africans were also humiliated by whites by provoking them with their country spirit. Mr. Noble is asked to operate the lifts manually by his mates to check whether the Africans were strong. To prove this Mr. Noble tried to operate the elevator using his strength and he got injured. "He was not operated on, but that right shoulder was useless for life. It later affected the whole arm, so much so that on seeing him one would at first get the impression that he was a one-armed man. The shoulder was permanently dislocated"(83).

In *Second Class Citizen* there are also incidents where black people were treated worse than animals. Adah saw Mrs. Noble feeding her dog Kimmy some

culture she compares it with her childhood experience. As she says, "She had confused the biscuits and, had it not been for the fact that people were watching her, she would have tasted one. Were these not the very ones her Pa and her mother used to bring for her and her brother Boy Down the army barracks when the war was over?" (104). In yet another instance, she says that the English people loved their dogs, and Francis says, "Yes, they love their dogs. Francis continued, so much that they would rather the dogs butcher a black man, than let the black man kill the dog" (128).

The Igbo people lost some of the cultural values with the adaptation of western principles. However by adapting to the new culture they faced troubles in forms of racism. Even after the postcolonial era black people and especially woman were not given importance. Adah overcomes this struggle by not confining herself under the category second class. Adah respects herself and she feels pride in being a black. She accepts both her culture and her colonial world.

Nnu Ego faced colonial suppression during her life in Lagos. She enjoys her childhood in Ibuza and feels pride in her native culture. She is not affected by the colonial culture before her marriage with Nnaife. Nnu Ego encounters the whites only after moving to Lagos. She learns about Christianity after following Nnaife to churches on compulsion. Nnu Ego confuses the beliefs of both cultures which contradict with each other. However Nnu Ego is not ready to accept the white's culture and religion like her sons Oshia and Adim. Her departure to Ibuza village along with her third son Nnamdio shows her return to her native Igbo culture. Nnu Ego didn't assimilate with the white's cultural beliefs and followed her Igbo culture even though it didn't give her any happiness.

Adah on the other hand, rejected the Igbo cultural beliefs which restricted her independent life. She escapes to a foreign land for a better life and adapts the western culture. Unlike Nnu Ego who had strong faith in her Igbo religions, Adah is described as an assimilated Christian and she relates her life with the Bible. She suffers in the United Kingdom after being marginalised as black. She accepts this and faces the society that discriminate her. Adah tries to cope up with the world without giving away her native pride. She strives to earn her place in the coloniser's world and her western education guides her to achieve it.

The following chapter explores the identity of both the male and female characters in the novels *Second Class Citizen* and *The Joys of Motherhood*. It analyse the changes in the identity of Igbo people after the colonial era. It studies the character's quest for a better identity and their struggle to overcome the socially determined identity.

Chapter Four

Quest for Identity

Identity is the fundamental and basic need of all humans to survive in the world. It is determined based upon their name, their culture, country, class, gender and their profession. Identity is also created through one's language, dress, food and behaviours. It is through their identity every individual is recognised and respected among the society. Though identity differs from one person to the other at times many people were grouped under the same identity because identity is dependent upon the place they are from. Also it is evident that human beings balance their multiple identities both inside and outside their society and they tend to search for a better identity. The rich people are identified by their wealth and their value is determined by the wealth they possess which gives assurance to their identity. Discrimination occurs when one people dominate the identity of other people. Similarly the European countries from the West dominated the East using their identity of being powerful. Due to this, identity clashes take place and one's identity is lost and reshaped by the dominant people.

Identity also differs based on the individuals gender, the male is generally identified for their superiority, dominance, bravery and strength. Woman is always identified as weak, fragile, inferior and subordinate to men. This difference in this structure of society creates gender discrimination. In Africa, people are identified for their rich heritage, customs, agriculture and cultural practices. While westerners denounced some of the African practices they also had their own identity and culture. Every identity is unique depending upon the place they originated from. Identity crisis happens when some new external forces ruptures the traditionally built identity which

disturbs and reshapes the old identity. Identity crisis affects not only a particular person to a large extent it also affects the system of a country Also identity is formed by the external situations. As Hogan comments,

> The contextual view, in contrast, sees identity as open to considerable alteration throughout one's life. It is not something fixed in childhood and adolescence, but something that can alter freely as one's circumstances alter. In this view, one's self-concept or ego can change fairly radically as society changes around one. (258)

Identity is not constant or accurate and identity is what one earns for them and what is given to them by others. It differs depending upon the circumstances. The Africans identity faced a major shift during the colonial period. The colonialism and the wars that followed affected the identity of individuals. The ordinary people's identity lost its values due to the changes happened in the society. They faced rootless in their own territory and the factors that shaped their identity started to drift away. The immigrants faced alienation and isolation in the new found lands. They tried to establish new identity in their newfound lands. New culture and identity were created by merging of two different cultures into a hybrid culture.

However people were conscious of their own identity along with their new identity. Even the beliefs and laws of people changed as they adapted to other culture. The pre colonial era differed from the colonial era and colonial period differed from the post colonial period. African identity underwent many transitions from being exposed to external factors. It is not only the colonised but also the colonisers who were affected by the changes affect their identity. Therefore the postcolonial writings written by both the coloniser and the colonised depicted the hybrid identity and the

affected minds of people. The immigrants who leave their home land search for new identity and home in the migrated place. There arouse a sense of isolation and alienation for the immigrants.

The Igbo tribe mentioned in the works of Emecheta, had definite identity which separated it from other tribes of Nigeria. Igbo society does not have a ruler or clan leader in their society. They are grouped together and shared a common identity. Men in the family became their identity and the council of elders represented their tribe. As Ndukaihe comments,

> Every town rules itself through the council of elders. The non-unified political status of Igbo notwithstanding, they remain a single people, one race, one ethnic group, sharing a common identity, common social structure, culture and tradition. (168)

Igbo people during pre colonial era had these ideologies and established their identity on the whole.

Emecheta in her novels expressed how Igbo people were identified and addressed by other tribes. In *The Joys of Motherhood* Nnu Ego after the departure of Nnaife from Dr. Meers compound searches for house and the Yoruba land lord didn't trust Nnu Ego at first as she is an Ibo. This shows how the Igbo were belittled by other tribes. The Igbo were considered to be barbaric and fierce. In *Second Class Citizen* the character Adah suffers being an Igbo. During Adah's confrontation with her headmaster she fiercely bites the boy named Latifu to suppress her pain from canning. Because of this Adah gets a new identity as 'The Ibo tigress' and her Yoruba classmates teased Adah by provoking her Igbo identity. "Some of her Yoruba classmates used to ask her what human flesh tasted like, because "You Ibos used to

eat people, didn't you?" Well Adah didn't know about the cannibalistic tendencies of her tribe"(20). Igbo were often regarded as cannibals and this remark continued through ages. It continued even in the post-colonial world when Adah after leaving Francis boarded a house by hiding her Igbo identity. The landlord asked Adah about her identity, "When she signed the cheque she gave the landlord he had noticed the name and had said, 'How come a nice girl like you got married to a YAIMIRN?' *Yaimirin* and *ajeyon*, are the two words the Ibos are known by- it means a race of cannibals"(171). From these incidents it is evident that some identities remain without being changed.

Emecheta through her novels *Second Class Citizen* and *The Joys of Motherhood* states the loss of identity and the characters search for new identity in the post colonial period. Emecheta states the various stages of identity during the pre colonial, colonial and post colonial Africa. In these novels, she discusses the identity of male and female characters. In *The Joys of Motherhood* through Agbadi's character the identity of male among Igbo people is revealed. Agbadi's words and stance showed his powerfulness. As it is described in the novel,

> He was a great wrestler, and was glib and gifted in oratory. His speeches were highly spiced with sharp anecdotes and thoughtful proverbs. He was taller than most and, since he was born in an age when physical prowess determined one's role in life, people naturally accepted him as a leader. (10)

Igbo men were honoured for their strength and bravery and they fought wars against clans and protected their tribes. Emecheta narrates an incident were Agbadi along with other Igbo men went to hunt elephants which shows the strength of Igbo men

and their strength becomes their identity. So one's identity is determined by their physical strength. Agbadi though wounded kills the elephant to show his bravery.

Even the identity of woman differs in the pre colonial society as Agbadi states the Igbo woman had much confidence and sauciness and arrogance in the past. "To regard a woman who is quiet and timid as desirable was something that came after his time, with Christianity and other changes"(10). Changes in identity happened only after invasion of whites. In ancient Africa, women were considered as equal to men and they took part in daily activities of men and supported them. They indulged in farming, commerce and even fought against the Europeans along with their men. Violation against the female identity is created by the whites who separated women and men. The westerners introduced their own ideologies about woman which changed women's identity in Africa. Ona is described as a woman of pride and she is admired by Agbadi and other people for her nature. Her posture of walking with pointed chin showed her prideful identity. Therefore, in pre colonial era men and women in Igbo tribe had different identity.

In the colonial era, the Igbo men identity is reduced to slavery by dominance as they worked for white masters. The life of Nnaife and Ubani in Dr. Meer's compound shows how the Igbo men lost their identity. Nnaife is portrayed as a laugh stock and his identity is reduced to a washing man who washes woman's clothing. Nnaife is victimised and his state reveals that how Europeans altered the identity of men and turned them as mere puppets. Nnaife is portrayed as a man who worked as a slave to whites and only shows his dominance on his wife and children. Nnaife's identity as a man is questioned by Nnu Ego as she says, "I want to live with a man, not a woman-made man?"(50). Even Cordelia claims referring to Ubani and Nnaife's identity that, "They stopped being men long ago. Now they are machines"(53).

Colonial influences swapped the identity of people and Nnaife acts more like a woman while Nnu Ego manages her family as a man.

Nnaife adapted himself to the colonised world unlike the men in Igbo village who worked vigorously in their ranch and invested their time in farming. He undertook meagre works which is easier for him and which allowed him to use lesser strength. He possessed dual identity as he followed Igbo belief inside his family while in outside he behaves like a colonised man. He imitates the whites and became more European than African. As Bhabha comments in his foreword to Francis Fanon,

> It is not the Colonialist Self or the Colonized Other, but the disturbing distance in-between that constitutes the figure of colonial otherness – the White man's artifice inscribed on the black man's body. It is in relation to this impossible object that emerges the liminal problem of colonial identity and its vicissitudes. (xvi)

Nnaife outwardly gave up his Igbo identity to merge himself with new coloniser's identity. Instead of working in farm he took jobs in Lagos under the whites. His identity clearly contrasted with the traditional Igbo identity which gave importance to culture and physical strength. Nnaife forgets his own natural identity and Nnu Ego mocks him for his feminine appearance. "His skin was pale, the skin of someone who had for a long time worked in the shade and not in the open air"(42). Further Nnu Ego claims that living with Nnaife will be like living with a middle aged woman.

Nnaife's native masculinity is lost as he gave importance to wealth over strength. Europeans gave importance to wealth which acted as their identity. Therefore the identity for the Africans differed from the identity for the Europeans. The colonised Igbo men like Nnaife didn't look for their family and Nnaife being a

servant could not keep up his identity in the family. Nnaife uses violence as his method to control his family as he failed to prove his identity before them. Nnu Ego compares Nnaife with Amatokwu, while Nnaife has lost his Igbo male identity. Amatokwu is respected by Nnu Ego as he keeps up his native identity. As she says,

> Amatokwu measured up to the standard her culture had led her to expect of a man. How would he react if he were forced by circumstances to wash for a woman, a skinny shrivelled-up one with unhealthy skin? He would surely refuse. That was the sort of man to respect. (72)

Nnaife failed this as he never earns anything for his family. He loses his identity as the head of the family during the colonial age.

Similarly, Nnu Ego too had lost her identity and searches for a new identity. In *The Joys of Motherhood* Nnu Ego chiefly possess the identity as a mother and motherhood alone stands as her identity. Women's identity is determined only with their relation with her surroundings and her family. Nnu Ego's identity began as the daughter of Agbadi and she is initially addressed only using that identity. However Nnu Ego didn't give up her identity as Nnaife. Nnu Ego's identity lies in her respect for Igbo culture and her children. Nnu Ego lacks an individual identity and her identity is embedded with Agbadi, Nnaife and her sons, mainly Oshia and Adim. While living with Agbadi, Nnu Ego remains as a dutiful daughter following her father. When she didn't get pregnant after marrying Amatokwu, she imagines herself as a failure as she couldn't complete her identity as a woman. In Igbo culture, similar to how a man's identity is determined by his strength, a woman's identity is determined through her motherhood.

The female characters in the novel have the general identity and they accept the superiority of men. Therefore they project their identity as a good daughter, wife and mother. Adankwo and Nnu Ego fall under this category as they follow Igbo traditions. Women were not given designated identity by themselves but with their children and husband. When she loses them her identity too gets lost. Nnu Ego by attempting suicide at the beginning after the death of her child Ngozi feels dejected. Her identity as a mother is lost along with the dead child. She at first even respected Nnaife who gave her this identity of being a mother. Nnu Ego mourns to the bystanders who question her decision for committing suicide. She says, "But I am not a woman any more! I am not a mother any more. The child is there, dead on the mat"(62).

After the birth of Oshia, Nnu Ego once again regains her identity and she takes care of her child by trading cigarettes and matches and saves money for her children. She emerges as a meagre working woman and her trading turned to be her new identity. Due to colonisation the gender roles of people changed which in turn affected their old identity as many women emerged as a working woman which increased their economic independence. Nnu Ego takes the role as the head of the family and meets the demands of the family in the absence of Nnaife. However she suffers under Nnaife as she could not question about his job and as a mother she also took care of her children. With the rise of colonisation women were marginalised not only in their culture but also under the European culture. But for Nnu Ego her sons became her pride and joy.

Unlike Ona her free spirited mother, Nnu Ego gives up her pride which stayed as her identity. Soon the identity of Nnu Ego changes when Nnaife marries Adaku. Nnu Ego is referred as senior wife of Nnaife which brings further humiliation and

responsibility to her. Nnu Ego feels jealous and afraid of Adaku who came along with her daughter Dumbi. It is also revealed that being the mother of sons is valued much in Igbo. As Nnu Ego is praised by her neighbours for her sons she feels pride. Nnu Ego didn't give any importance to her daughters as well they were only looked upon as a commodity which helps her to earn some bride price which would help her sons' studies. Being living for others turns her identity in to a prisoner inside her family.

> It occurred to Nnu Ego that she was a prisoner, imprisoned by her love for her children, imprisoned in her role as the senior wife. She was not even expected to demand more money for her family; that was considered below the standard expected of a woman in her position. It was not fair, she felt, the way men clearly used a woman's sense of responsibility to actually enslave her. (137)

Adaku on the other hand projects her identity as an individual and independent woman in the post colonial Nigeria. Unlike Nnu Ego who follows her husband Adaku questions Nnaife when he fails to act like the head of the family. Adaku didn't have sons to take pride on them even though she longed to attain that identity of being a mother for male child. Adaku is also humiliated by Nwakusor, the friend of Nnaife for failing to have a son. All Igbo men respect the women only for the sons they have and they consider daughters to be a burden. As Nnu Ego says, "Though Ibuza men admired a hard working and rich woman, her life was nothing if she left no male children behind when she gone to inherit the wealth, children who were her own flesh and blood"(166). But Adaku overcomes this perception of Igbo men and created new identity for her. She leaves the house of Nnaife and sets her own standards. She releases herself from the designated identity made by the people in the society. As she says, "Yet the more I think about it the more I realise that we women set impossible

standards for ourselves. That we make life intolerable for one another. I cannot live up to your standards, senior wife. So I have to set my own"(169).

Adaku breaks away from the old belief about how a women's identity lies only in her sons. She leaves with her daughters and independently open stalls and earns wealth which earned her happiness and identity. She also allowed her daughters to get education which shows her positive growth against male dominated culture and she creates a better identity for herself than Nnu Ego. Unlike Adaku, Nnu Ego lives for the men surrounded her and fails to create some identity for her, "Even in death, Nwokocha Agbadi ruled his daughter. She belonged to both men, her father, and her husband, and lastly to her sons" (185). Even though she is not respected and recognised by Nnaife and her sons. Nnu Ego dies lonely without any identity and people for her own. As she claims, "God, when will you create a woman who will be fulfilled in herself, a full human being, not anybody's appendage?"(186). She feels entangled with her relations and it deface her identity.

Nnaife and his sons blamed Nnu Ego for their misfortunes. Oshia accused Nnu Ego by stating that he couldn't get a peaceful childhood because of Nnu Ego, who is busy in her trades of selling paraffin and firewood. Nnaife also blamed Nnu Ego for allowing her sons to talk against their own father.

> It was all so hopeless that Nnu Ego simply broke down and gave in to self-pity. Oshia, her son, blaming her as well. Of course to him his father was a hero. He was a soldier. He was a fighter. He brought money into the family. All the poor boy had ever seen of her was a nagging and worrying woman. (185)

Oshia as a man recognised the identity of his father in the society but the effort of Nnu Ego who did everything for him is neglected by him. On the outside other people from her village praised Nnu Ego for her sons. Oshia and Adim moved to western countries like United States and Canada. But they left their mother alone who gave her entire life for them. During the end Nnu Ego realises her state and what she had earned as an identity didn't give her the joy she expected. "She died quietly there, with no child to hold her hand and no friend to talk to her. She had never really made many friends, so busy had she been building up her joys as a mother" (224).

The identity of Nnu Ego's sons Oshia and Adim differs from their father and grandfather. Oshia being the eldest son takes pride in his identity as a man. "Oshia had heard enough to make him realise that he and his brother Adim were rare commodities, and that he being the oldest was rarer still"(128). Oshia and Adim being born in the wake of post colonial era didn't get affected by the traditional customs and they both felt pride in being male. Oshia neglected her work as a child and refused to fetch water which he considered to be the work of a woman. Oshia also gave importance to his education rather than his Igbo culture and he also failed in his duty of taking care of his aging parents. His decision shows the change of identity in men after the arrival of colonialism and its influences. Oshia and Adim gave importance to their own ambition forgetting their parents and other siblings to earn some new identity for themselves in the society.

Nnu Ego too possessed her identity as a caring mother but she never attained any honour from it. She faced various troubles and sufferings to safeguard the various identities given to her. As a woman in a male dominated society she is suppressed by the males using their identity. Nnu Ego felt pride at her identity as a mother above

everything but it turned meaningless and she couldn't hold on to that identity which never brought any joys upon her. Though after her death when Oshia and Adim returned to the village to gave her a lavish funeral and made others to see their love for their mother. She is not recognised by her sons during her life time. Her identity as a woman and a mother ended in misery.

> When her children heard of her sudden death they all, even Oshia, came home. They were all sorry she had died before they were in a position to give their mother a good life. She had the noisiest and most costly second burial in Ibuza had ever seen, and a shrine was made in her name, so that her grandchildren could appeal to her should they be barren. (224)

Nnaife's identity as a father and head of the family changed when he was arrested for attacking a Yoruba man with a cutlass. He got arrested and investigated in the court under the law made by the colonisers. Nnaife's identity is shattered at court when the prosecutor questions about his life. Nnaife is also mocked by the people in the court for his careless life. Nnu Ego's respected Nnaife for his identity as the head of the family as it is apparent with Igbo culture. But their native identity is not honoured after the emergence of new colonial setting. As Adaku states, "I am afraid even that has changed. Nnaife does not own any body, not in Nigeria today. But, senior wife, don't worry. You believe in the tradition"(218). Adaku states the fact how identity has changed from the pre colonial era to post colonial era and how woman were not a property to be owned by men.

In *Second Class Citizen* Adah a black woman born in Lagos moves to a foreign land where along with other minority group she faces problems in forms of

racism. She struggles to keep up her identity and along with that she searched for new identity. Her identity gets differentiated in two places, in her birth place Lagos she earned a identity while being with her people and in moving to England her native identity is suppressed and humiliated and Adah searches and upgrades her identity along with the other immigrants. She faces new customs, languages, class which separates Adah from her native identity. As seen in *The Joys of Motherhood* the Nigeria didn't give importance to the identity of woman. Also the women were subjugated by men who made them to lose their identity and the women were also expected to live only for her husband and children. Though Nnu Ego accepts this as her fate, Adah is different and she is not oppressed by these traditional strings of rules made by the patriarchal society to dominate women.

As it is seen in the novel Adah as a girl didn't get much attention from her family and her parents didn't wish to spend money on her education as she is a girl. Gender discrimination based on identity is privileged in Lagos, as Adah's mother states, "A year or two would do, as long as she can write her name and count. Then she will learn how to sew"(9). But Adah goes against this traditional rules, she didn't end her life within her family. She dreams to expand her knowledge and enhance her identity by living in United Kingdom. Like Nnu Ego, many women tried to overcome the gender oppression inside their family and in their community. However the immigrant women face yet another marginalisation in forms of racism.

Adah uses education as a medium to exhibit her self confidence and identity. Women were not given proper respect even in their marriage as their parents choose grooms for them depending upon the bride price they get from the suitors. Adah breaks the myth by choosing Francis as her husband against her family members. Unlike Nnu Ego Adah dominantly expresses her identity. She marries Francis without

even receiving any bride price. Adah expresses her identity as an independent woman rather than a commodity bought and sold. The duty and identity of husband and wife in a family differs between the man and woman and working outside in public spheres is seen as the work of male and taking care of the family is determined as the work of female. The person's identity is also determined by the work they does and it brings honour and humiliation to them. Nnaife's work as a washer man didn't earn him any identity.

Adah gets a job soon unlike Francis who is studying to be an accountant. Her job as a librarian gives her new identity as she is not under the submission of Francis and she is independent without depending upon a male. Adah emerged successfully by entering in to the society through working and holding a standard job unlike Francis who ends as a failure. Adah upgrades her identity in the post colonial world. Adah takes up her position as the unrecognised head of the family as she takes up Francis role in supporting the family. In post colonial world, importance was not given to the physical strength of the people. Intelligence and money determines the identity of humans. So Adah claims a respectable identity in the society using her education.

Later Adah enters into an alienated world where she is marked with the identity as black woman. Being deemed as a second class citizen Adah struggles to tolerate the evils in the whites' world. Like other immigrants who emerge from different places, moves to England believing that it would increase their wealth and grant them identity. Adah too believed it, "Adah was so full of happiness that she started to dance an African calypso. So they were going at last! She was soon going to be called "been-to", which was a Lagos phrase for those who had "been to" England"(27). After encountering the racial practices in England, Adah realises her

inferiority on the alienated land. Adah gets a job as a librarian and earns money equivalent to that of first class citizen. But Francis undermines her capacity and sees her as a weak woman and expects her to be obedient. Francis rules Adah and uses her money for his benefits without taking care of his own children.

Adah realises that her marriage did not get her any happiness and it also humiliates her even though she possesses economic independence. Due to this she loses her identity and faces struggles in England because of her rootlessness. Adah didn't expect love and concern from Francis. She expects Francis to give her some identity and mutual respect and also importance in his life. Adah spends her money for Francis even though it is Francis's duty to take care of her. Francis uses marriage as a medium to dominate and mistreat woman. Her views regarding women differs as he says, "My father knocked my mother about until I was old enough to throw stones on him. My mother never left my father"(183). Adah is against the views of Francis regarding woman. Adah makes Francis realise how the woman must not be subjugated just because of their gender.

Adah even told Francis how he lacked as a father, forgetting his duty and role as a father and as a husband. Therefore she wished to free herself from the marriage which caged her from her dreams. As she says, "Can you, Francis, show me some vests or anything these children can lay their hands upon which you can claim to have bought for them? No, Francis, you broke the laws of our people first, not me. And remember, Francis, I am different from her"(172). Francis never respected his mother and she didn't even support his mother in his old age. Francis is similar to Oshia and Adim who gave up their family due to their selfishness. When Francis violated Adah he is charged in court for breaking in to Adah's house.

Due to her black identity Adah struggles to get accommodation on a decent place even though she possesses money. This leads Adah to question her place in the society. Adah feels inferior to her co workers and some of them were whites. She hates her black identity which denied many things in her life. Her troubles in taking care of her children and her confrontation with care taker Trudy who as white escapes from her mistakes make Adah realise her inferiority among others. Adah did not accept her state and searches for betterment in her life. Along with this she faces troubles from Francis and her dream of expressing herself turned vain because of the abuse and oppression. Adah could not even control her own body as Francis beats Adah for taking pills to control pregnancy.

Adah faces humiliation in the hospital during the birth of Bubu as Adah says, "She watched the nurse showing Bubu around, she was sure the nurse was taking a long time in doing that just because Bubu's shawl was old. She was sure that the woman were all laughing at her and saying 'poor nigger!'"(125). Francis didn't care for Adah and the child, yet he demanded more money from Adah. Adah at last realises her situation and leaves Francis for the sake of her children. As she says to Francis,

> My sons will learn to treat their wives as people, individuals, not like goats that have been taught to talk. My daughters .... God help me, nobody is going to pay any bleeding price for them. They will marry because they love and respect their men, not because they are looking for the highest bidder or because they are looking for a home.... (122)

Adah make Francis realise that woman must be given rights and power to decide her own life. Adah married Francis only for her freedom from her people. But

later she realises that being with Francis didn't give her any betterment. He manipulated Adah and didn't allow her to take decision regarding the children and pregnancy. Francis extends from his limit by beating Adah who tried to prevent her pregnancy. He further called his neighbours for accusing Adah and to humiliate her in front of them. Adah neared her breaking point and leaves Francis and went out of his house along with her children. As Adah states, "Her marriage with Francis? It was finished as soon as Francis called in the Nobles and the other tenants. She told herself that she could not live with such a man"(147). Francis argued with Adah that their marriage cannot be nullified easily as divorce is not accepted in their Igbo culture. Francis uses his African cultural identity only to enslave Adah for his own benefits. But Adah breaks away from the cultural beliefs that ruled her. It is through their culture practice Adah lost her mother and brother which separated them from her.

Adah at last realises her identity as a strong working independent woman who breaks away from the cultural and patriarchal dominance. She learns her position and value as she can live without the support of Francis in the post colonial world. Her education, work and her children earned her a complete identity. As she says, "This is England, not Nigeria. I don't need your signature to secure a job for me"(162). Adah also engages in writing and emerges as a writer. She learns about black writers who write their opinions openly to white readers. Though these writers suffered from racism, they expressed their view being a second class people in Western countries through their writings. Adah learns about these writers from her co worker Bill and she reads about many writers and their works, "She came to believe, through reading Baldwin, that black was beautiful. She asked Bill about it and he said, did she not know that black was beautiful"(152).

Bill turned to be an eye opener for Adah who introduced her to African literature which made Adah to recognise her black identity. She related her own life with literature and found solace in it. She started to accept her identity as black and expresses it through her writings. Adah started to enjoy her life as a writer and did many things she aspired to do. She read many women's magazines and enjoyed her life freely just like the ordinary white woman. At first when she began to write she struggled with her choice of words and her first novel is "The Bride Price". She wrote for her own happiness and expressed her state and her identity.

> Adah had put everything that was lacking in her marriage into it. During the time she was writing it, she was oblivious of everything except her children. Writing to her, was like listening to good sentimental music. It mattered little to her whether it was published or not, all that mattered was that she had written a book. (164)

Adah considered her work to be her child and adored it and even her co workers encouraged her to write novels. But it was not appreciated by Francis who says, "You keep forgetting that you are a woman and that you are black"(167). He even burns her work out of his hatred. It provoked Adah to hate her husband as she saw her book as her brain child. She leaves the court after getting divorced from Francis and keeps up her identity as an individual black mother against the society and takes up her children and lives for them. As she says, "Don't worry, sir. The children are mine, and that is enough. I shall never let them down as long as I am alive"(174).

Identity changes in the pre colonial, colonial and post colonial world. The male characters Agbadi, Nnaife, Oshia, Adim and Francis expressed different identity

following the cultural changes in their tribal society. For them their identity changed from having physical strength in pre colonial era to earning money in colonial era and lifestyle like whites in postcolonial world. Identity differs and many lose their identity in search of new identity and they try to earn values and respect in the society. Unlike men, women face different troubles in earning their identity. As Christ tells that females,

> (Female) must break long standing habits of seeking approval, of trying to please parents, lovers, husbands, friends, children, but never herself. In probing her experience and asking basic questions, a woman may begin to wonder whether she has ever chosen anything she has done. (9)

Both Nnu Ego and Adah as a woman faced many humiliation and they also get affected by the gender, class and race identity. Nnu Ego didn't express her identity as an individual, she related her identity with her family and by being faithful to her customs she reflected her identity. Though she experiences some colonial freedom, her adherence to her culture made her to lose her own self identity. She gets immersed only with her children and only during her death she realises the value of identity but she never gets to experience it. Adah on the other hand, tries her best to express and improve her identity from her childhood. Unlike Nnu Ego Adah gave up the things anchored her freedom. She gave importance to her own life .Her expression as a writer shows her growth of self identity and she gives up her husband who subjugated her using her gender. She at last overcomes class identity using her education and employment. Lastly as a writer, she expressed herself and entered to battle against the racial differences to safeguard her identity. She earns self identity and respect in the post colonial world.

The preceding chapter acts as a conclusion for the previous chapters and it conclude the analysis on the victimisation of African women under cultural and colonial setting. It shows how the Igbo women Adah and Nnu Ego get identified by the society and their growth in establishing themselves against their suppressors.

Chapter Five

Summation

Buchi Emecheta is one of the prominent African female writers who discover the role of African women in the society. Unlike the other Nigerian writers in pre-independent Nigeria who gave importance to male characters in their novels. The black female writers like Flora Nwapa, Mariama Ba, Tsitsi Dangarembga and Buchi Emecheta focused upon the female characters and it is through them they points out the hurdles for women in the society and they highlighted the views of woman in their novels. The African writers through their writings notified the world about the changes happened in Africa. These writers also gave significance to the culture and the colonial background that shapes the country. They gave importance to the issues regarding corruption, violence and dominance in colonial setting and also the follies in their own cultural beliefs. As Stratton says,

> The female tradition in writing that emerges through the writing of Ogot, Nwapa, Emecheta and Ba is in part defined by its antagonistic relationship with colonial and African men's literature. As these authors belong to different generations and come from two different regions and three different countries in Africa their works can be taken as paradigmatic. The interrogation of the racial and the sexual codes of colonial discourse and the subversion of African male literary discourse are the characteristic features of African women's fiction. (175)

The African literature had both written and oral literatures in their own languages, out of which many works were written chiefly in Yoruba and Igbo languages. Other than

this the Hausa language too is chiefly acknowledged by the European readers. Translations were made for the native writers to reveal their ideas and beliefs to the western world. Many Nigerian writers also used colonizers language in their writings to get significance among white readers.

Buchi Emecheta is such writer who is born on Lagos which is colonized by Britain. In her childhood after the death of her father she suffered from financial support to pursue her education and after getting married to Sylvester she moved to England which is the greatest change that happened in her life. Her job as a librarian gave her some independence and she left her husband and lived with her children. Though suffered earlier, Emecheta had a creative appeal to her life and she indulged in writing. Education and literature shaped her life and it created a new identify to her life. She emerged as a writer which earned her success in life. In her works using female characters she discusses about the evils against woman and also about men who tries to subordinate them. She takes inspiration from both the westerners and her own Igbo culture.

Buchi Emecheta in her works deals with the cultures in Nigeria and especially the Igbo culture and colonial cultural impact on Africa. Through her works she reveals how women were victimized under the cultural and colonial influences. The writers used European setting and its features for writing their novels. By using European languages for their writing the native writer's works were acknowledged by the white readers. Buchi Emecheta in her novels particularly gave importance to the Igbo tribe. The African literature had both written and oral literature in their multilingual languages and most of the works were written in Yoruba and Igbo languages. Many African writers belong to Yoruba and Igbo tribe. Other than this the Hausa language too was chiefly acknowledged by other European readers.

In her works Buchi Emecheta tried to overcome the docile portrayal of female in the writings of male writers. She also gave importance to education and her characters were free minded. She also questions some orthodoxy in her own culture which is against women. Her themes generally focus upon the education, marriage, motherhood and identity. Through her works she explains the psychological trauma that affects the female characters because of their ruthless surroundings. Emecheta raises her voice against the social injustice imposed upon woman in forms of religion and polygamy. She also exposed all evils against woman in forms of race, colour, which they face in European country. Her characters often encounter struggles between their quest for wealth and their adherence to traditional beliefs.

Some of the novels of Emecheta are written based upon her own experiences as an immigrant in England. While some of the novels were written using the stories she heard from her mother about the pre-colonial era and villages of Ibuza. *The Joys of Motherhood* is written using such background and the story lies on the village Ibuza. In this story Emecheta states the themes like slavery and motherhood. As Robolin states, "The explicit association of women's status and enslavement runs throughout Emecheta's substantial oeuvre. This linkage stresses the oppressive domestic and social conditions that force African women into lives of self-abnegating servitude"(2). The novel *Second Class Citizen* is a semi-autobiographical novel written by Emecheta using the name Adah for her protagonist. Through Adah Emecheta reveals her early struggles in the European country England. Adah as a black woman is victimized and humiliated in the alienated land where blacks were treated with contempt and hatred. Adah encounters the evils of racism and the mistreatment between whites and blacks. Set in Lagos Emecheta reveals the differences between both places simultaneously.

Emecheta's novel also possesses the characteristic features of bildungsroman novel. Many African writers use bildungsroman novel to narrate the lives of their protagonist early life from their childhood till they attain maturity. In *The Joys of Motherhood* and *Second Class Citizen* Emecheta uses Adah and Nnu Ego to narrate the lives of a woman from the pre-colonial to post-colonial era. The various stages of woman as a daughter, wife and mother are structured in the novels of Emecheta. As the daughters in the family both Nnu Ego and Adah endures struggles in their family. They were asked to satisfy the needs of their family and expected to live according to the codes designed for them. Both Nnu Ego and Adah were asked to give up their own desires to balance the happiness in their family. Nnu Ego lives for her father and accepts her life destined by the society, Adah breaks away from it and desired to get education and attained it against her own family members.

One of the salient features of bildungsroman novel is that the protagonist in the novel has conflicts in coping with the ways of society. As an individual they face problems in their lives in learning the ways of society. Emecheta's novels too possess these features of bildungsroman. This double bind drives the characters towards a dilemma as they couldn't fulfill the needs of both the society and their own desires. The characters face disappointment as they tried to cope up with the lives balancing the society and their own mind. Further as seen in the bildungsroman novel the female protagonist in *The Joys of Motherhood* and *Second Class Citizen* novels Adah and Nnu Ego were expected to fit in to the society. Gender discrimination also takes place as women were not given much importance in their homes.

The differences between the early life of Adah and her brother show the discrimination between genders in the Nigerian society. Marriage in a bildungsroman novel has different effect for male and female characters. While in general in male

bildungsroman novel the male characters learns their life experiences during their expenditure with the outside world. But female characters faced obstacles inside their house while being oppressed by the men and customs inside their society. Francis in Adah's life and Nnaife in Nnu Ego's life became oppressors for their lives. Francis in used Adah only to support him financially and he never cared for Adah and his children. Nnu Ego is treated worse than slave by her husband and sons. They both were not respected and recognized by their husbands and she was only seen as a money provider, child bearer and servant.

As a mother too Nnu Ego and Adah struggles against the colonial world. They became the sole protectors of their family and their children depended on them. The children became the responsibility of their mother as their fathers Nnaife and Francis never cared for them. The education and food were provided by the mothers using their hard-earned work. Nnu Ego indulges in trading business and Adah worked in the library and took care of her children using care taker Trudy. Both the female characters in the novel were satisfied in their role of being a mother. The novels too possess the elements of female bildungsroman novel and some of its characteristics. At first the novel possess some autobiographical component and the character Adah is the author's own self in the novel *Second Class Citizen*. The novels deals with the psychic growth of the individual character as Adah and Nnu Ego were the only characters given more importance by Emecheta. The character's personality changes from their early childhood till the end and their understanding of their own self and the society changes during the changes in their surroundings. Therefore it is evident that Emecheta had used the features of bildungsroman effectively in these novels.

The differentiation between the colonial beliefs and the significance of Igbo culture is seen in the novel. Emecheta gives importance to the effects of colonial and

cultural factors in the life of her protagonist. In Igbo culture the significance of chi for a woman is seen through the character of Nnu Ego as her chi became her inner soul and she talks with her chi regarding her life. The alteration of culture is also seen as the chi lost its importance in Nnu Ego's life soon with arrival of Christianity. It replaced the beliefs of Igbo people and Nnu Ego struggled to face contractions between the cultural beliefs. Polygamy and Bride Price which were the customs of Igbo were ridiculed and questioned by the colonizers. The changes in the beliefs of Igbo people with the arrival of western thoughts states the impact of the colonizers upon the colonized people.

Nnu Ego fall victim to this changing ideology while men used these changes for their own benefits. Francis and Adah encounter a new culture where they managed to adapt with the western life. Unlike the events in *The Joys of Motherhood* Adah didn't pay any bride price and the importance of chi were never mentioned. Drastically the colonial influences made the natives to forget their cultural practices by pointing out the negativity in it. The faults in their culture made them to question their beliefs and it gets changed eventually. Christianity replaced their religion and they began to practice and preach Christianity openly. Bible was given prominent importance and the people adapted the verses of Bible in their life. Adah believed in Christian principles and she accepts it forgetting her traditional religious beliefs and it shows the changes in the African people's life as they learnt to adapt themselves in the foreign country.

Emecheta in *The Joys of Motherhood* lists out the African and Igbo heritage using the character of Nnu Ego who beliefs in their Igbo culture and offers sacrifices to pacify the gods. Also they believed in reincarnation and chi and after their encounter with western culture their beliefs began to get ruptured and woman were

highly affected by this changes and men used it according to their own way to dominate woman. It is also seen that many of the superstitious beliefs were against woman fell apart with the arrival of new culture. Bride price and the notion of treating women as a commodity changed and polygamy is rejected as a sin against God. It also carried some misfortunes as some of the traditional beliefs were lost and it also created a wedge between the westerners and the black Africans. Racism emerged in European countries and the blacks were treated badly by the whites in native Africa and also in America.

Nnaife and other workers in Dr.Meers compound in *The Joys of Motherhood* were treated badly by their white masters and in *Second Class Citizen* Adah and Francis faced several humiliations for being blacks in a white's country. The people were denied from giving equal rights, jobs, accommodation and basic facilities. Emecheta states such differentiation between whites and blacks and rich and poor. This cultural change also affected the identity of the people as it comes from one's society. The protagonist of Emecheta suffer from various identity discrimination as a woman they face gender discrimination. Men's identity differed from the woman both in their native Igbo culture and in the colonizer culture.

Being an Igbo brings humiliation to the people under the British people. The native people after the intrusion of colonial influences change their course of life and tried to adapt the life of westerners. During oppression the native people were forced to give up their traditional identity. Swapping of identity also took place as woman began to earn money equal to that of men. But woman who are attributed with weakness and men who were associated with strength faced changes in their identity during the colonial world. After the dominance of whites the Africans lost their cultural identity as they struggled between establishing their native identity and the

newly acquired identity. Nnu Ego wished to establish her identity as a mother and worked for her children. Adah sees education as her identity and after moving into England, she works in a library and establishes her identity as an independent black woman against her homeland and the colonizer world. These African women accept their identity based upon their gender and racial differences. They tried to earn a new identity which earned them recognition in the society which once subordinated them.

Like woman the African men too tried to establish their identity which was affected by whites. They tried to get equal value and respect among the whites who once been their masters. Even though their Igbo identity was ridiculed by others the African immigrants adapted the western identity and they were identified by a new hybrid identity. Adah earns her place as an individual black woman after leaving Francis and through her career as a writer gets recognized among the people. Nnu Ego could not get acknowledged for her identity as she is tied with her marital life.

Emecheta through her works brings out the struggles of black females who were traumatized by the cultural and changing colonial world. Both Adah and Nnu Ego were subjugated by this but they earned a new identity which gave them happiness. As Robolin states about Emecheta, "Her books challenge readers to see issues of gender, sex, and race as fundamentally ethical and political matters, whether they arise in the marketplace or the individual home"(6). Her characters earn identit even across the continent and she brings out the struggles of women and their ways overcoming it.

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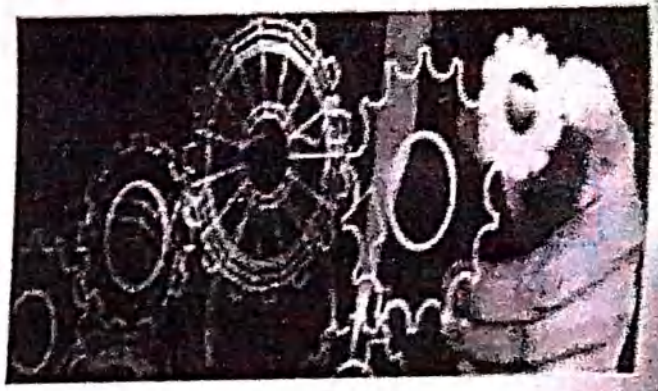

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Cultural Harmony: A Depiction of Monogamous Parsi community in Rohinton Mistry's *Family Matters*

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Abstract:

Culture is rooted from our ancestors and is braided among humans for their continuous existence. It is weaved in the minds of people and they express them in various manners. Indian constitution gave consent to immigrants and refugees, to be an element in their construction and it demonstrates a mixture of culture and religion. The immigrants from other regions came out with their own language, culture and customs. Parsi, is one such immigrant community, they emigrated from Iran and settled in India. Rohinton Mistry, a Parsi by birth, through his works brings out the afflictions of his own culture under the political supremacy. Though subjugated by the ideologies in India, Parsi community set a strong foot on preserving their ethics and ethnicity. In Mistry's *Family Matters*, using his narratives, he features the realistic picture of a Parsi family.

This paper shows how they grapple with their crisis and their efforts to preserve their humanity and identity on the outer and inner circle of culture and how they maintain cultural harmony.

Keywords: Cultural harmony, Identity, Marriage, Monogamy, Parsi.

Culture represents the way people live in a civilized manner. It is formed through many elements like language, values, norms, beliefs, symbols and actions. Every human being is made aware of their own cultural practices as it marks their identity. Culture also acts as a mirror which displays the inner psyche of all humans. Culture is expressed outwardly through the way people think, act and speak. All literary works have culture as their base upon which the content is built. However, culture differs from people to people and in the modern world there is a mixture of culture within a small territory where many cultures were fused together. India as a multicultural country is composed of various ideologies emerged from different religions and regions people. Though citizens of India have many diverging cultures among them, on the whole they possess harmony and mutual admiration which allows all culture to participate in the growth of the nation. The unity among people is maintained by a peaceful coexistence and understanding. All people in spite of their culture differences supported and worked for the welfare of nation. Among other communities, Parsi community which is an old minor community in India had their own cultural beliefs. Though they struggled to set foot on India they developed themselves and emerged as a community and they were widely known for their values. As Luhrmann says, "Modern Parsis are a tiny community settled in Bombay. They are an old people who emigrated from Persia a thousand years ago, probably to preserve Zoroastrianism from Islam" (Luhrmann 1). They practiced Zoroastrianism as their religion.

Currently, the Parsi community lost their cultural identity and many people left India for preserving their culture. Many writers have written about the Parsi community one among them is Rohinton Mistry. He is an Indo-Canadian Parsi writer and his works mainly focuses on the Parsis and their struggles in India. As Dodiya says, "Mistry has an amazing way of setting up ordinary lives scarred by tragedy, then illuminating them with moments of merciful beauty. He creates a visceral feel for their loves, humiliations and little victories" (Dodiya 89). In *Family Matters* he presents a Parsi family and their combat in a changing political world. The characters in the novel at one hand tried to preserve their culture and on the other hand they expressed their contempt against corrupted politicians. They balanced both the circles of culture and society. The cultural harmony is balanced by the people under two circles. On the social level they united themselves along with other cultures and had a mutual respect among themselves. On the inner level, particularly in family circle they expressed their love for their own culture. The main focus of the novel *Family Matters* is a Parsi family which struggles after the demolition of Babri Masjid. Nariman's family consists of his daughter Roxana and stepchildren Jal and Coomy. Roxana marries Yezad and their sons were Jehangir and Murad. Through other minor characters from other religions Mistry presents the commitment of Parsi people within their family and outside their family. Inside their own family circle, the characters were rigid and they passionately followed their beliefs and on the outside they showed concern for the future of all people under the dominating world. However the Parsi family exhibits cultural harmony but it is has its own boundaries. Yezad and Jehangir were the most important characters as they come across and faced the social values and family values of Parsi culture. Their views regarding cultural harmony emerges from their encounter with the other harmonized people who belong to other religions.

Yezad as a Parsi set a good example for people whose culture ideas deviates within their family and outside their family. He is greatly influenced by Mr.Kapur his employer. Kapur made Yezad believe that all people strive for cultural harmony and the people were only misguided by the partition made by politicians. Kapur's love for Bombay made Yezad to look upon the city with a different light. Yezad notices how Kapur finds harmony in his life by being part of every other culture. It is evident when Yezad praises the efforts of Kapur in celebrating all religious festivals. "Yezad noticed that Christmas deçoration had appeared in many shop windows. Till last week their Divali displays were up"(273). Yezad who neglects his own culture began to embrace Zoroastrianism and he practices its cultural rituals. But unlike Kapur, Yezad put forth Parsi culture before other cultures. Monogamy is seen in the character of Yezad as he respects his culture more than other cultures. He appreciates the values of Kapur and Vilas Rane on cultural harmony as a key to unite people. Yet Yezad shows his obligation to Parsi culture as he believes that commitment to their own culture gives space for an individual to accept other cultural values.

Similarly Jehangir son of Yezad, a young Parsi child is influenced by values on cultural harmony through his school. The characters like Father D'Silva and Helen Alvarez moulds the mind of Jehangir. He respects his Parsi culture and admires its dogmas and he also believes the traditional stories about the forefathers of Parsi religion. He is taught by Nariman and Roxana the common beliefs of Parsis like their superstition in not having cat as a pet which is practiced by them. "Parsi families never keep cats. They consider them bad luck"(162). Such teachings made Jehangir to have knowledge about his Parsi religion. But he tried to have a mutual affinity among other cultural people. He extends his understanding of harmony and merges the circle of culture and society. Jehangir is highly influenced by his school and he also favors his Parsi culture.

Lucy shows the rigid norms of Parsis regarding marriage. The elder Parsis like Nariman's father considered inter-communal marriage to be a disgrace in spoiling their culture. Parsis considered such marriages as a threat that would ruin their cultural cleanliness. Hence even though they supported cultural harmony on the outside, they tried to follow their customs when it affected their inner world. Yezad too disapproves of his son Murad's relation with a Maharashtrian non-parsi girl Anjali. Yezad says, "You can have any friends you like, any race or religion, but for a serious relationship, for marriage, the rules are different" (482). This shows how such old beliefs regarding marriage diminishes the future hope of cultural harmony.

Yezad role as an ardent supporter of Parsi is immense and he is a complex character he accepts the ideas of mutual friendship among other religion. But he did not wished to have any serious relations like marriage with other cultural people. It is here he marks the limit of his own cultural harmony. Murad and Jehangir the younger Parsi generation tries to enlarge the circle of culture and it shows the future hopes of Parsis to get mingled with other cultures. Cultural harmony as portrayed by the characters of the novel is working with other people in social level as they considered intimate relationship as a pollution that corrupts their culture. Hence the cultural harmony in the society is marked by a limit. Parsis understand the values of other culture but they were monogamous only in terms of marriage as their limit ends before it. In the end it is seen that cultural harmony is not a complete acceptance of other culture and nor it is a devotion to their own culture. It is maintained between people who respect their culture along with other cultures and it has limits. It is by thus mutual understanding and limit peace prevails in human beings. India as a nation is crowned with many cultures which like gems adorn its unique place. Each of those precious stone is magnificent and no

ticular jewel is ranked higher or lower to other. Likewise culture adds beauty to the
on and humans, every culture is a valuable treasure.

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Cultural Friction: A Study of Kikuyu tribe in Ngugi Wa Thiongo's The River Between

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Abstract:

Cultural clash turns to be a most prominent theme of African novels after colonial rule. New culture, new faith and new education imposed upon Africans greatly affected their life and tradition. Due to cultural change people lost their unique identity and suffered under the intrusion of western culture. The contrasting ideas created controversy and it lead people to question their identity amid old and new conventions. Being caught in the mid of this colonial imperialism the rich heritage of Africa were lost. Some native people compromised themselves and embraced the new culture along with their own culture. Many African writers portray this chaos in their work and showed how people strived to mingle themselves with the new accustomed British culture. Ngugi Wu Thiongo in The River Between *states how Kikuyu people of pre-colonial era, after the implementation of Christianity suffered between two paradoxical beliefs. This paper presents how people divided by the ideologies of their native and new religion indulged in a cultural war. It also displays how they tried to adapt themselves with such cultural changes and their methods to entwine and reconcile with both cultural beliefs. It reveals at times how the cultural faith was treated as a weapon of political supremacy.*

Keywords: Kikuyu, Circumcision, Education, Rivalry, Politics, Christianity, Mission

Cultural studies deals with cultural practices and their relation with human society. Through culture one can also know the political and social growth of the world. Culture charts down the structures and formations of the human race. It creates and transforms one's life and it gives identity for their existence. Every country has

culture which plays an intimate role in their social, political and economic construction. Africa, the world's second largest continent is assumed to be the origin of human ancestry. In Africa there is a range of tribes, languages and cultures. The Africans embraced their culture and felt honor in upholding their traditions. Their culture is often conveyed through their myths, dogmas, attires, cuisine, music and languages. Among various other tribes in Kenya, Kikuyu is considered to be the most popular ethnic tribe. It is also known as Gikuyu or Agikuyu. Kikuyu, like other tribes of Africa, had their own customs and traditions. They worshipped Ngai and offered sacrifices under Mugumo tree. Their connection with outer world was initiated through Christian missionaries and British settlers. They had undergone an immense change after the domination of colonial conqueror.

Ngugi Wu Thiongo, an East African writer focused on the cultural aspects of African tribes and the advent of imperialism which flawed and ruined it. His novels generally deal with the pre-colonial era of Kenya and the invasion of Christian missionaries. His novel *The River Between* which is set in Kenya presents two Kikuyu villages, Kameno and Makuyu estranged by the river Honio. It is a story of divisions within Kikuyu society caused by the growth of Christianity. Politically, people were manipulated by their favoritism towards their culture. Using cultural attachment, people are turned as puppets and they madly follow the principles forced to them by greedy superiors. In Thiongo's novel the inhabitants of Makuyu converted themselves to Christianity believing the preaching of missionaries and hoped to attain salvation. They were made to renounce their traditional culture and British dominated them using culture as a medium.

The people of Kameno remained loyal to their traditional religion and practiced their customs and they believed in the prophecy of freedom through a redeemer. Chege, who is most honored as the descendent of Mugo, a seer was the leader of Kameno. Joshua, a revolutionary village priest spearheaded the principles of Christianity and acted as a head of Makuyu and he was supported by Kabonyi. The people of Kameno believing the prophecy of Mugo wished to revolt against the missionaries. While the Makuyu people preached Christianity. The novel revolves around the son of Chege, Waiyaki who respects his culture and imitates the ways of missionaries. Other characters like Nyambura and Muthoni were also mentally swayed and these three characters tried to withstand their identity in both culture.

Waiyaki, Nyambura and Muthoni being the younger generation wished to follow the morality in both culture. Particularly it was the practice of Circumcision fueled the antagonism between the two villages. As Young states, "For the missionaries, the practice was barbaric and mentally dangerous and required suppression. For the Kikuyu, female circumcision was an important affirmation of identity, linking the present with past"(Young 127).

Circumcision ceremony which is firmly followed by Kikuyu's tribe indicates the child's passage in to adulthood. "Circumcision was the central rite in the Gikuyu way of life" (37). Broadly, it revealed a sense of realization of individual's part with society and culture. It marks one's identity with the tribe. "This would mark his final initiation to manhood. Then he would prove his courage his manly spirit"(11). However, the Christian missionary's contempt against this body mutilation and they considered it as a heathen and Anti-Christian custom. As Njoh in his preface says, "For the average westerner, every aspect of traditional African customs and believes is a bizarre. Ironically, Western customs and beliefs are just as weird to the traditional African"(Njoh x).

Waiyaki is looked upon by other people as a seer and in his eyes the people saw the future of their tribe. As a child he was taught all the secrets of his tribe and he viewed circumcision as a ritual that gives him identity as a man. He grows with the creeds and traditions of Kikuyu and he learns about his self from his father Chege. He is honored to be a resident of Kameno and discovers the altar of Mugumo tree where he sees that it unites the estranged villages. As he claims, "Kameno and Makuyu were no longer antagonistic. They had merged into one area of beautiful land"(16). Waiyaki under the condition of prophecy made to learn the culture of whites which Chege found as a way to defeat the uprising Christian religion. As Chege says, "You go there, I tell you again, learn all the wisdom of white man"(21).

After learning the culture of whites, Waiyaki had incongruent ideas regarding his own culture. On his return to the village, he hesitates at first to participate in the drumming festival of Kameno and even during circumcision ceremony he thinks about the views of the British man Livingstone who considered this ritual to be a mere heathen belief. During the eve of initiation Waiyaki mind wavers. "Something inside him prevented him from losing himself in this frenzy"(42). But soon he was

manifested and ... his tribal instinct. The daughter of Joshua, Muthoni being raised under Christian faith craved to be a part of Kikuyu tradition and wished to be circumcised. As she says, "I want to be a woman. I want to be a real girl, a real woman, knowing all the ways of the hills and ridges"(26). Muthoni had an idealistic view and she desired to have the values of both cultures. Even though she dies because of genital mutilation she tells her sister that, "I see Jesus. And I am a woman, beautiful in the tribe"(54). Muthoni felt fulfillment of being a part of the both cultures. Unlike her Nyambura had a strong faith in Christianity as she says, "You and I are now wise in the ways of the white people"(25). The daughters of Joshua represent the conflicting ideas regarding the female circumcision which prevailed in their period. Their quarrel shows how the cultural customs were actually twisted by the intervention of new beliefs.

The death of Muthoni created chaos among both ridges and it fueled the conflict. Kameno people charged whites and they believed that the new cultural belief angered the gods of hills. Joshua and other followers viewed it as a sin of disowning Christ and it enlarged their disgust for the dark cultural practice. Even the death of Muthoni was complicated and both rivalry groups confronted the other. As Joshua says, "It was Christ who would be fighting the Prince of Darkness through him"(56). The tussle between the two villages continued and each battled against the principles of other religion more rigorously. Waiyaki being educated with the ways of whites tried to unite both perceptions and he wished to bring harmony between the alternative cultures. He found education of whites to be a key and solution to unite the two villages.

Fearing of being annihilated by other religion, both Mukuyu and Kameno followed new rules for safeguarding their culture. Kameno introduced Kiama a new group which was established to maintain the purity of the tribe. "It was concerned with the purity of the tribe and the ridges"(87). It forced people to give up all Christian beliefs and teachings. Kiama was strongly initiated by Kabonyi. While on the other hand, Makuyu in Siriana missionary under the guidance of Livingstone stopped to educate the Kikuyu tribe who continued to follow the hideous rituals. As it is said, "The children of those who defied the laws of the church and continued with their tribal customs would have to leave Siriana"(60). This made many people to give up Christianity and they returned to their old ways. Waiyaki saw greater splits

between two cultures which got on bad terms. Waiyaki proposed to merge the two cultures and he considered it to be his mission. "He also wanted reconciliation between Joshua's followers and the others. The gulf between them was widening and Waiyaki wanted to be the instrument of their coming together"(91).

Waiyaki found Marioshoni, a school for tribal children and taught them the values of whites. Through this he aimed to change the minds of young people and believed it be a way of bringing unity among them. "Marioshoni had established itself as the centre of new spirit sweeping through the ridges"(78). The school launched by him is an attempt to bring unity and the education is seen as an important factor which bonded the culture and it lessens the frictions caused by the predicaments of other cultures. As Williams says, "For Waiyaki, the importance rests on the changes which it brings about inside a person, and he also agrees that change must come about gradually, especially via education, than legislation"(William 33). The Kameno people looked Waiyaki as a savior, "He was a man who, impregnated with the magic of the white man, would infuse the tribe with wisdom and strength, giving it new life" (91). Waiyaki vigorously built many schools and he failed to reveal the idea of merging two cultures. The conflict continued and Kameno people burnt the houses of Christian peoples and the riot lead to blood shots. As Williams says, "Kabonyi's nativist or traditional model predicated on strict adherence to tribal custom and the maintenance of cultural purity" (William 30). On the other side Waiyaki tried to combine them and it created bitterness between Waiyaki and Kabonyi.

Though changes was brought by Waiyaki, the political superiority made people to split as both religious people did not wished to mingle with others. Waiyaki was falsely accused as a traitor and the people failed to understand the need of harmony among culture. In Thiongo's novel, the reasons for cultural clashes and the political dominance were portrayed in an explicit way. The pre-colonial era brought together a mixture of cultures to get mingled and thereby it gave birth to some new cultures. However, at the beginning people didn't readily accepted such changes. The failure of Waiyaki mission was inflicted by the animosity the elders had with others. However as a teacher he made the new generations to know the concepts of new culture. Though every culture is unique in its principles, the colonial world created a need to form a new culture as it brought countries together. The growth of mankind depends upon the growth of culture and it is not permanent.

Every culture must adapt the changes for the betterment of human life. As culture is rooted in human minds as time passes the culture must expand to accommodate some new concepts. The people of Kameno neglected to accept cultural changes and strictly followed tradition. While the people of Makuyu totally gave up their culture and adapted new conventions. Widely every culture has some blemishes as well as beauty in them. Rather than criticizing the culture for its inappropriate practices which seem vigorous and which may mismatch with the conventions of other culture. It is wise to seek only the goodness in them. Culture gives identity for an individual and it must not be forced by certain political dogmas. During colonial period many people lose their identity but it made people to enlarge their cultural circle and changes were accepted.

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Aditanar College of Arts and Science

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Certificate

This is to certify that M. RUFINA MARY, M.Phil SCHOLAR, St. MARY'S COLLEGE participated / presented paper entitled CULTURAL FRICTION : A STUDY OF KIKUYU TRIBE IN NGUGU WA THIONGO'S "THE RIVER BETWEEN" at the One Day State Level Seminar on " *LITERARY THEORIES: BEFORE AND AFTER*" organised by the Post Graduate and Research Department of English, Aditanar College of Arts and Science, Tiruchendur held on 27th September 2019.

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Explorations in Human Identity: A Study of Samuel R. Delany's *Nova* and *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand*

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By

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **Explorations in Human Identity: A Study of Samuel R. Delany's *Nova* and *Stars In My Pocket Like Grains of Sand*** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is a work done by Selva Kuzhanthai Meenakshi.C during the year 2019-2020, and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

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PREFACE

This thesis entitled **Explorations in Human Identity: A Study of Samuel R. Delany's *Nova* and *Stars In My Pocket Like Grains of Sand*** analyses the major themes of Samuel R. Delany's two novels, *Nova* and *Stars In My Pocket Like Grains of Sand*. It explores the study of science fiction.

The thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter **Introduction** throws light on the perception of science-fiction in general, with a short biography of Samuel R. Delany, discussing the general characteristics of his works and his predominant place in the field of Science-Fiction as a Black Writer.

Chapter two, **Racial Expressions** analyses the Delany's racial attitude and its essential to the success of his early career in the science fiction field. It shows how racial heritage and ethnicity are both obvious and essential to the layering of the plot. And it also deals about slavery and its result in the distant future.

In the third chapter, **Mythological Identities** deals with the use of myth. It shows how Delany used Greek mythology to explore the choices that his characters have in the working out of the quests. He creates myths through cyborg politics.

The fourth chapter, **Existential Explorations** highlights the fact about existence death. It shows how technology portrays both constructive and destructive directions. It also explores how technology makes life worse for man in specific ways.

The final chapter sums up all the important aspects dealt in the preceding chapters and validates the title **Explorations in Human Identity: A Study of Samuel R. Delany's *Nova* and *Stars In My Pocket Like Grains of Sand.*** The

Chapter One

Introduction

In modern age, science fiction is the [illegible] literary genres in the world. Its enthusiasts range from [illegible] serious scholars who investigate and to view change which will be either [illegible] inevitable. And since the change is fast becoming one of the few [illegible] society. And also, the attractiveness of this genre is understandable as well as encouraging. The fiction of the science has a pure amusement. It becomes clear why this literature is attracting vast numbers of readers of all the ages and from all the stations of life. Since ancient time's science fiction is literature with a heritage for a pre scientific world residing by peoples whose myths, legends and superstations become a way of thinking about and explaining the wonders of the world. the seeds of the science fiction had been planted thousands of years, when the human species dreaming of the great unknown.

The beginning of science fiction in the early second century with a Greek named Lucian who satirized his own society by the device of moon voyage which was imaginary. The starting of the Industrial Revolution in the eighteenth century, with its vision of a futurewas altered by technology that science fiction could exist as a viable literary form. With the Industrial Revolution that burst upon the Victorian world, people started to write fantastic stories which based on the possibilities of the scientific discovery and also evident facts that the world was changing. By the nineteenth century the entire world had come to relieve limitless miracles of science. Hence the seeds were sown for science fiction development.

Science fiction is frequently set in future and has often been called futuristic fiction. This rests on the effects on science and technology on man in future. Science

fiction induced scientific, social or political changes related to the present time into future. Ben Bova views that science fiction open as many features as possible for man and states "Science fiction writers are not in the business of redaction future. They try to show the many possible futures that lie open to us." (4) The common denominator of these views is the orientation of the future, the foreseeing capacity of science fiction for the possible effects of science and technology upon man.

In present time,scientific progress and technological advancements have changed the fact of the earth. Human beings need new myths to explain in inexplicable, to give shape to their unconscious racism and personal obsessions and to recreate their new archetypal images. Sciences have taken the place of old Gods in the minds of many people. The different distinctive features such as changing face of literature, depends on fact in science. Science fiction has levels of quality like all types of literature, as far as adult fiction and discussion are concerned. Derleth states that "Fundamentally seven out of every ten science fiction stories are only orthodox adventure tales with the trappings of interplanetary travel." (119) According to him this particular type of science fiction relates to the genre as the confession story in romantic fiction.

Adventure stories have been constituted by Space Opera. So, its characters are flat, there is a creation of scientific gadgetry which fit the plot of the story in spite to adept given Engineering principles. These seems little personal interest to the reader in relation to the future, which has been set too remote articulate scientific data and also there is little literary merit of it.

The nineteenth century attracted with the ideas and science progress. There was optimum behind it and inclination was towards that attraction. In the same time

machine had been inaugurated. Its effects on science fiction were considered [illegible]. There was public interest, which was published by many magazines such as *Century*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Harpers*, *Atlantic Monthly* and *Saturday Evening*. They were also popular people with the stories featuring new mechanical devices as well as scientific. Many writers produced the group of tales, which constitute very important American contribution for the real growth of the science fiction. Such writers as Nathaniel Hawthorne, Edgar Allan Poe, Fitz James O'Brien, Edward Bellamy, Ambrose Bierce and Mark Twain. These writers laid the ground work. So far as every major writer in America and many from Europe are concerned, they experimented with writing stories related with the new science and also possibilities for the future. For that task Jules Verne was the first to devote rather than part time efforts.

The noteworthy work ofJules Verne's was *Five Weeks in a Balloon* in 1863. Secondly *From the Earth to the Moon* in 1865, *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* in 1870 and *Around the World in Eighty Days* in 1973. Nineteenth century's expression was romantic interest, in the science and technology. Jules Verne's worlds seems limited, when compared with the work of another nineteenth century writer, Herbert George Wells. He wrote his first book of scientific romance *The Time Machine* in 1895. This novel is a vehicle for an extraordinary journey through time, more importantly the work contained social commentary. Wells criticized about exploitation of the working class. He attacked English class system and accordingly separation of worker from the class which is called leisured rich.

Science fiction's great rise in popularity during the first half of the twentieth century was closely tied to the popular respect paid to science at that time, as well as the rapid pace of technological innovation and new inventions. Science fiction has often predicted scientific and technological progress. Some works predict that new

inventions and progress will tend to improve life and society, for instance the stories of Arthur C. Clarke and Star Trek. Others such as H. G. Wells's*The Time Machine* and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World,* warn about possible negative consequences.

The study of science fiction is the critical assessment, interpretation and discussion of science fiction literature, film, Tv shows, new media, fandom and fan fiction. Science fiction scholars study science fiction to better understand it and its relationship to science, technology, politics, other genres and culture at large. Science fiction studies began around the turn of the twentieth century, but it was not until later that science fiction studies solidified as a discipline with the publication of the academic journals *Extrapolation* in 1959, *Foundation: The International Review of Science Fiction* in 1972 and *Science Fiction Studies* 1973.

There is unquestionably a link between science fact and ideas that emerge in science fiction and fantasy. Science fiction authors are inspired by actual scientific and technological discoveries, but allow themselves the freedom to project the possible future course of these discoveries and their potential impact on society.

Samuel R. Delany is one of todays most innovative and imaginative writers of science fiction. He integrates psychological and sociological insights and extensive character portrayals with lyrical descriptions, poetry, social commentary and metafictional comments. In describing science fiction Delany distinguishes between three classes of writing: "naturalistic fiction concerns events which would could have happened; fantastic fiction concerns events which could not have happened, and science fiction concerns events which have not happened." (41) Delany states that the real triumph of science fiction is "the redefinition of women and men of the universe, or how women and men look at the complexities of existence." (84)

The conventional areas of science used in science fiction are circumvented by Delany. He is less concerned with hardware science and prefers to approach scientific theories of time and space, linguistics and particularly anthropology. An excellent discussion of Delany's use of science aside from linguistics and anthropology is Frank O. Sadler's *Science and Fiction in the Science Fiction Novel*. Basically, Delany uses an anthropological approach in his works in two ways: to discuss evolution rather than cause and effect and to present a comparative description of cultures through the multiplex view of the double consciousness of a minority. Art is not confined to literature in Delany's works. He includes music, theatre, and painting as well as poetry and prose. By using these art forms, Delany is able to discuss both the process of art and the qualities and purposes of artists in a culture. The role which Delany defines for the artist is to observe, record, transmit and question paradigms in a society. Delany indicates that it is not the artist's duty to provide resolutions to problems, only to provide order so that others may observe their situation and take their own actions.

Since the early 1940s, a movement has been growing among science fiction writers to make social criticism their primary theme and to use science merely to place the plot in the future. There is excellent reason for maintaining the futuristic element of science fiction. The futuristic element allows the reader the freedom to observe from a distance, without consciously accepting them, the realistic aspects of the character's thoughts and actions, as well as the social parallels between the science fiction world and present-day reality. These associations become evident as the novels develop, although the reader may not be immediately aware of them.

Delany uses the distancing technique to approach his white audience with the realities of the black culture. Delany is a science fiction writer, but he is also a

member of the black literary movement. Those critics who evaluate his writings without attention to his cultural imperatives are only seeing the surface. It is understandable that they have not delved deeper, for indeed the complexity of that surface is staggering. Yet, the confusion of those multiplicities immensely clarified when one views his works as the product of his double consciousness as a black man. Delany presents a unique view of black and white cultures because he understands the two from both an insider's and an outsider's point of view. This duality of consciousness enables him to present the cultures in a radically different light than most black or white authors have so far accomplished.

Delany was fortunate enough to be a member of the middle-class black community, to be accepted as a person of worth both at home and at school, and to experience intellectual stimulation and expectation although he is still a black man in a dominant white culture. His works are detailed descriptions of the central factors of the black and white cultures. Delany's keen observation of cultures, his knowledge of their myths, philosophies and sciences provides him with material that cuts through racial barriers while at the same time depicting them.

In 1967, Delany moved into the Heavenly Breakfast Commune and began writing music for the group's rock band. Resuming his former prolificacy, he also wrote and directed two short films, 'Tiresias' and 'The Orchard'. He also composed essays on other writers of science fiction and started drafting a new novel. The result is 1968's *Nova*. It was considered as the summation of his career up to that time. According to Barbour, "*Nova* is one of the grandest space operas ever written." (57)

Delany's works present a description of various worlds always from the viewpoint of a member of a minority culture in each world. Delany presents his

minority characters with a clarity not often found in the works of other black writers or white writers. There is a connection between the characters' minority status and every individual's essential isolation. This relationship allows the reader the opportunity to empathize with a character whose isolation is visible and therefore easily identifiable. Delany explores the effect of double consciousness in his works. Double consciousness is defined as that psychological dichotomy which results when an individual lives in a culture.

Various aspects of religion occur in Delany's works from Green-eye, the Christ figure, in *The Einstein Intersection* to the mumblers in *Triton*. However, Delany most frequently approaches religion through myths. He uses myths to demonstrate not what has happened in the past but what is happening in the present. He does not propound cause and effect relationships; rather, against the backdrop of myths, he presents cultural change and how people of different cultures deal with those changes. The characters in Delany's works do not rely on myths for instruction in surviving in or reviving their socio-religious-political environment. Instead, Delany's characters determine their position according to their own perceptions of what they, as individuals, value as important for the survival of their society.

Delany plays with the elements of art, religion and science, testing the results of different balances, different interrelationships from novel to novel. It is not surprising that as Delany matures as a writer, science becomes less prominent, religion becomes more superficial, and art becomes more prominent in his works. Considering these elements and other interrelationships, Delany points to the narrow strictures ofculture. It is the ethnocentricities of the individuals who comprise a society and who hold a society to its paradigms that are established on the foundations of its past.

Delany's novels and stories have taken place in outer space and the future and other alien worlds. His plots are speculative: the race to harvest an energy source from the sun, the struggles of a libertarian society on one of Neptune's moons, the plight of slaves in a pre-industrial world of slaves and barbarism. Some of his works have become essential to the history of science fiction. His 1968 novel *Nova* describes people being plugged directly into computers, a staple of what would become cyberpunk.

Science fiction provides an excellent media for the black writer to present an alternate point of view: a black's view of his own and white society as opposed to a white's view of his own and black society. Whole new societies can be created values by inverting or changing their cultural context. Delany comments on his opportunity to observe and be affected by both the black and white cultures through his educational and social experiences as a black man:

> It determines where you live, . . . who your childhood friends are, the particular landscape-or city-scape you see around you...I was subjected to a virtually ballistic trip through a socio-psychological barrier of astonishingly restrained violence. It wouldn't be too far afield to say. I suspect, that within the metaphorical freedom science-fiction provides, I have written about nothing but the trip through such socio-psychological barriers ever since. (41)

Born April 1, 1942, Delany grew up in a comfortable home in New York City's Harlem. The schools he attended were Dalton Elementary, a primarily white private school; Bronx High School of Science, and City College were remarkable in their acceptance of creativity, of intellectual and personal interchange between

students and teachers, and of exposure to various cultures and medias of communication. Delany is dyslexic, which made reading a slow process and prompted his valuing each word and his disregard for the unnecessary. Delany applied himself, at home and school, to the study of myth, mathematics, physics and music. While at City College, he was also the poetry editor of *Prometheus*, a literary magazine.

In his travels throughout the United States, England, Italy, France, Greece and Turkey. Delany worked for short periods of time at various jobs: clerk in a pornographic bookstore, shrimp boat worker, folk singer, and once as a turkey plucker to secure funds to celebrate New Year's Eve. In academic circles Delany has taught at the Clarion Workshop, was visiting Butler Chair Professor of English at State University of New York at buffalo, has served as a Fellow of the Center for twentieth century studies at the University of Wisconsin, and lectures from time to time at various universities.

Delany was a novelist and critic who taught literature and creative writing at the University of Massachusetts and Temple University. He had won four Nebula Awards and a Hugo Award when he was twenty-seven. He was inducted into the Science Fiction Hall of Fame in 2002, by which time he would also been chosen by the Lambda Literary Report as one of the fifty people who had done the most to change our view of gayness in the last half century. In 2013, he was named the 31st Damon Knight Memorial Foundation Grand Master by the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America.

Delany came of age at a time when the genre was indeed characterized by gee whiz futurism, machismo adventuring, and white, heterosexual heroes. From the beginning, Delany in his fiction, pushed across those boundaries, embraced the other

and received ideas about sex and intimacy. Delany's rapturous sexuality and his explorations of race within the trappings of science fiction have the power to startle. His works have become essential to the history of science fiction.

Samuel R. Delany's science fiction and fantasy tales are available in *Aye and Gomorrah and Other Stories*. His collection *Atlantis: Three Tales* and*Phallos* are experimental fiction. His novels include science fiction such as the Nebula Award Winning *Babel-17* and *The Einstein Intersection*, as well as *Nova* and *Dhalgren*. His four-volume series *Return to Neveryon* is sword and sorcery. He has also written the Science Fiction novel *Through the Valley of the Nest of Spiders*. His 2007 novel *Dark Reflections* won the Stonewall Book Award. Other novels include *Equinox, Hogg* and *The Mad Man*. Delany was the subject of a 2007 documentary, *The Polymath*, by Fred Barney Taylor, and he has written a popular creative writing textbook, *About Writing*. He is the author of the widely taught *Times Square Red or Times Square Blue*, and his book length autobiographical essay, *The Motion of Light in Water*, won a Hugo Award in 1989. Delany is also the author of several collections of critical essays.

Delany interview in the Paris Reviews *Art of Fiction* series appeared in Spring 2012. In 2015 he was the recipient of the Nicolas Guillen Award for philosophical fiction. His novella *The Atheist in the Attic* appeared in February 2018. Professor Delany retired from teaching at the end of 2015. He lives in Philadelphia with his partner, Dennis Rickett.

Delany wrote his first novel, *The Jewels of Aptor*, when he was nineteen in 1961. *The Jewels of Aptor*is a 1962 science fantasy novel. It first appeared in shortened form as an Ace Double F-173 together with Second Ending by James White. *The Jewels of Aptor*begins with a post – atomicfuture, when civilization has

regressed to something near the Middle Ages or even before, a young student and poet, Alter, takes a job as a sailor on a boat. He travels with a strange passenger, a priestess of the goddess Argo, who is heading toward a mysterious land of mutants and high radiation, called Aptor. The journey is presumably made to recapture a young priestess of Argo: her daughter, who has been kidnapped by the forces of the dark God Hama.

Delany's second novel is *Captives of the Flame.* It is a 1963 science fantasy novel and is the first novel in the*Fall of the Towers*trilogy. The novel was originally published as Ace Double F-199 together with The Psionic Menace by Keith Woodcott. It was later rewritten as *Out of the Dead City* and published by Signet Books in 1968. In *Captives of the Flame,* Jon Koshar is the son of a rich merchant in the city of Toron, capital of the Island nation Toromon. He escaped after five years in the mines as a prisoner. At one time a fire destroyed much of Earth. A city near Toron lies in ruins and in the woods, there live giants who were victims of radiation. Some can even read minds. The priest marks them with three facial scars cut with a sword. An unseen and unknown enemy live behind a radiation barrier. The King of Toron is twenty-one years old and does whatever he told and eventually declares war on whoever is behind the barrier. The war starts. It looks like aliensbuild the barrier and are controlled by the Lord of the Flames. Jon, Alter and the Duchess of Petra, end up as different life forms on various planets as the battle rages on.

Delany's third novel *The Towers of Toron*is a 1964 science fantasy novel and is the second novel in the *Fall of the Towers* trilogy. His fourth novel *City of a Thousand Suns* is a 1965 science fantasy novel and it is the final novel in the *Fall of the Towers.* As in the other two books, the setting is the post-apocalyptic empire of Toromon, confined by a surrounding Barrier of highly radioactive land, and inhabited

by mutant forest people and developed Neanderthals, as well as normal humans. The events of the boo focus on a claimed war. Soldiers are told repeatedly "we have an enemy behind the barrier" (181) and placed in coffin like modules to be teleported into enemy territory to do battle. The soldiers are wired into a computer prior to their teleportation experience but remain in their coffins. The pre-determined fatalities are killed by an enemy energy weapon within the communal reality, as the survivors remember it, but in reality, are electrocuted and burned within their coffins. However, Toromon does have a real enemy of stars, on another place of existence, and at the end of the book there is a comic conflict which leads to this entity being prevented from conducting further malicious experiments on Toromon.

Delany's fifth novel *The Ballad of Beta-2* is a 1965 science fiction novel. The story is about the history of an ill-fated multi-generational interstellar expedition of discovery. Some of the ships were broken and all passengers were killed by some unknown force, only their broken shellsarriving at the destination. In others the passengers survived, but by the time the spaceships arrived at the destination star system, it has been settled through the developed FTL ships. The descendants were incapable of and uninterested in settling on the system's planets, showed themselves extremely hostile to any outsiders entering their ships, and were left alone. To continue living in the spaceships as an obscure backwater culture isolated from broader human history.

The degenerate Star Folk and their culture arouse little interest among the flourishing interstellar human culture. Only one researcher had bothered to record their songs, these being dismissed as derivative due to their repeated reference to cities, desert and other Earth-bound concepts. However, an Anthropology professor charges a promising student with looking deeper, pointing out that these were the only

humans to ever actually cross the depths of space between the stars, since later FTL ships are able to simply bypass these depths. The Professor's intuition proves amply right.

Delany's sixthnovel *Empire Star* is a 1966 science fiction novella. It was published together with *The Ballad of Beta-2*. The story revolves around the protagonist, Comet Jo, and a narrator named Jewel. Nominally a tale of Comet Jo's education into galactic society, his efforts to deliver an important message to Empire Star, and an attempt to bring an end to slavery. The story has several layered loops of events.

Delany achieved his first national recognition with his seventh novel *Babel-17*. It is a 1966 science fiction novel which won the Nebula Award for best novel in 1966 and was also nominated for the Hugo Award for Best Novel in 1967. The story opens during an interstellar war, one side develops a language, Bable-17, that can be used as a weapon. By learning Bable-17, it turns one into an unwilling traitor as it alters perception and thought. This change made more dangerous by the language's seductive enhancement of other abilities. This is discovered by the beautiful star-ship captain, linguist, poet and telepath Rydra Wong. She is recruited by her government to discover how the enemy are infiltrating and sabotaging strategic sites. Initially Bable-17 is thought to be a code used by enemy agents. Rydra Wong realized that it is a language in and of itself, and furthermore during her journey she has a traitor on the ship. Rydra later finds that she herself is becoming the traitor as she learns more about Bable-17. She is rescued by her dedicated crew, figures out the danger and neutralizes its effects. This novel deals with several issues related to the peculiarities of language, how conditions of life shape the formation of words and meaning, and how words themselves can shape the actions of people.

Delany, while writing *The Einstein Intersection*,he travelled throughout Europe, using his experience in Greece for the novel's background material. The surface story tells of the problems. A member of an alien race, Lo Lobey, has assimilating the mythology of earth, where his kind have settled among the leftover artifacts of humanity. The deeper taleconcerns, however, the way those who are different must deal with the dominant cultural ideology. The tale follows Lobey's mythic quest for his lost love, Friza. In luminous and hallucinated language, it explores what new myths might emerge from the detritus of the human world as those who are different try to seize history and the day.

Equinox is a 1973 novel. It was his nineth novel. It tells of a series of erotic and violent encounters in a small American seaport following the arrival of an African-American sea captain. It is a non-science fiction work. Peter Nicholas in *The Encyclopaedia of Science Fiction* described the work as serious in intent. In its evocation of the extremes of sadomasochism in imagery which is sometimes poetic and often disgusting and so intended perhaps as a Baudelairean ritual of passage.

Equinox was written contemporaneously with *Dhalgren. Equinox* is Delany's preferred title, but the book was originally published under the title *The Tides of Lust. Equinox* concerns the sexual and violent encounters that follows the search for erogenous gratification of a diverse collection of people, when an unnamed Black sea captain, sailing his 72-foot diesel boat with his dog named Scorpion and two teenagers Gunner and Kirsten docks at a small American seaport and meets its inhabitants including Robby, a native drifter; Catherine, a Countess; Proctor, an artist; Bull, the town sheriff and his equally thuggish operative Nazi and various low life characters including the black and white twins Nig and Dove. The novel contains many long and very explicit sexual descriptions. These are Polymorphous, bisexual

often involving multiple and underage partners and incorporating Urophilic and Sadomasochism elements.

Dhalgren is Delany's tenth novel. It is a science fiction novel. It features an extended trip to and through Bellona, a fictional city in the American Midwest cut off from the rest of the world by some unknown catastrophe. The city of Bellona is severely damaged. People enter and leave by crossing a bridge on foot. Inexplicable events punctuate the novel: One night the perpetual cloud cover parts to reveal two moons in the sky. One day a red sun swollen to hundreds of times its normal size rises to terrify the populace, then retreats across the sky to set on the same horizon. Street signs and landmarks shift constantly, while time appears to contract and dilate. Buildings burn for days, but are never consumed, while others burn later show no signs of damage. Gangs roam among the nightmare streets, their members hidden within holographic projections of gigantic insects or mythological creatures. The few people left in Bellona struggle with survival, boredom and each other.

Trouble on Triton: An Ambiguous Heterotopia is a 1976 science fiction novel. It was also nominated for the 1976 Nebula Award for Best Novel and was shortlisted for a retrospective James Tiptree, Jr. Award in 1995. It was originally published under the shorter title *Triton.* Delany has said that *Trouble on Triton* was written partly in dialogue with Ursula K. Le Guin's anarchist science fiction novel *The Dispossessed*, whose subtitle was *An Ambiguous Utopia*. As the subtitle implies, the novel offers several conflicting perspectives on the concept of Utopia. Utopia literally means good place or no place. Delany takes the term heterotopia from the writings of philosopher Michel Foucault. Literally, heterotopia means other place or a place of difference. Foucault uses the term to designate spaces outside everyday fixed institutional and social spaces. In the novel's future solar system, Neptune's moon Triton supports one

of several human societies independent from Earth, which has developed along radically libertarian lines in some ways. Through a representative government exists, it has virtually no power to regulate private behaviour. Citizens may choose to live in an area where there are no laws. Technology provides for a high degree of self-modification, so that one can change one's physical appearance, gender, sexual orientation and even specific patterns of likes and dislikes.

Delany's twelfth novel *Empire* is a 1978 graphic novel. Thousands of years in the future, a powerful device has been hidden in separate pieces. Qrelon, whose planet was destroyed by the Empire. It leads a small group of rebels that risks everything to collect the pieces of the device. It will be the powerful weapon to destroy the planet-sized computer that runs the Empire. Wryn, an archaeology student was chosen by the Empire to assassinate the rebel leader. *Empire* is categorized as speculative fiction and science fiction. The graphic novel is a fantastical foray into space and planetary travel.

They Fly at Ciron is an expanded version of short story which Delany wrote in 1962, just after completing his first novel, *The Jewels of Aptor*. This novel is a collaboration between the young Delany and Delany at midlife. It takes place in a fantasy realm where the basic inventions of civilization are just dawning. Ciron is a peaceful, pastoral realm where the people spend their time like growing food, playing games and singing songs. They do not even know what a weapon is. However, there is also some tension in this Utopia. The Cironians distrust the winged ones and flying humans who inhabit the nearby mountains of Hi-Vator. The Cironian peace comes to a shocking end when soldiers from the empire of Myetra, led by Prince Nactor, slam into Ciron, ending its innocence by introducing brutality, weaponry and slavery.

Under the pressures of the invasion, the Cironians join with the Winged Ones in resistance to the Myetra invasion.

The turning point comes with Kire, a Myetra officer who has become disturbed by Prince Nactor's cruelty. When Nactor sentenced Kire to death for refusing to rape and kill a Cironian girl. So Kire abandons the Myetra Empire and joins Rahm and Vortcir in defending Ciron and Hi-Vator. Ultimately the Cironians and the Winged Ones are victorious, but they lose their innocence forever. Like William S. Burroughs's concept of the virus of language infecting humankind, the virus of civilization has infected the Cironians and the Winged Ones.

Delany's fourteenth novel *The Mad Man* is a sexually drenched literary novel. It was first published in 1994 by Richard Kasak. *The Mad Man* received a Lambda Literary Award and also nominated for Best Gay Mystery. Delany describes it as a pornotopic fantasy. In New York City in the early 1980's, a black gay philosophy graduate student, John Marr, is researching a dissertation on Timothy Hasler, a Korean-American philosopher. And academic stabbed to death under unexplained circumstances outside a gay bar in 1973. As details arise Marr finds his lifestyle converging with that of Hasler. And he becomes increasingly involved in intense sexual encounters with homeless men, despite his growing awareness of the risks of HIV. In the course of unravelling the mystery of Hasler's death, Marr joins with a homeless man from West Virginia, who goes by the street named Leaky. As a poststructuralist, Delany was interested in exploring the multiplicity of the self, the ruse of identity, the betrayals of language and the impossibility of any account of a person claiming to represent the truth of that person.

Hogg is a pornographic novel. It was written in San Francisco in 1969. As the novel was completed no one was willing to publish it due to its graphic and copious descriptions of murder, homosexuality, child molestation, incest, coprophilia, coprophagia, urolagnia anal oral contact, necrophilia and rape. The novel is told from the perspective of an eleven-year-old boy, who is unnamed, but frequently referred to as cocksucker. It is not clear where the action of the story takes place. The narrator mentions various areas like Crawhole, Frontwater and Ellenville. All these are fictional locations in a nameless city which is portrayed as a industrial wasteland. The events take place at docks, garbage barges, truck stops, bars as well as within Hogg's truck.

Hogg takes the narrator to his truck where he explains that while he is a trucker by trade, he prefers getting paid to rape women. Hogg also reveals a bit about himself and his personal history. He reveals about the painting a picture of his overall persona, which is one of extreme filth, violence and sexual sociopathy. In an interview with TK Enright, Delany states "Hogg's action takes place in Pornotopia, that is the land where any situation can become rampantly sexual under the least increase in the pressure of attention. Like its sister lands, Comedia and Tragedia, it can only be but so realistic." In the same interview Delany also staes, "Hogg is another of my stories that takes place in the city of Enoch"

*Phallos*is a novella by Delany. It was published in 2004. *Phallos*takes the form of a modern online essay recounting the history. As Delany's *Neveryon*series,*Phallos*uses a frame story. Throughout the novel, the plot of *Phallos*is more compelling than the rhetorical turns and twists. The story picks up when Neoptolomus goes to Hermopolis to visit the temple of a nameless God that holds land his master wants. Before reaching the temple, Neoptolomus beds a well-hung,

handsome, complex, and then encounters the love child lover who explains the complexities of their relationship. To Neoptolemus's surprise, the older man and his protege have an agreement where the young boy enacts sexual fantasies Neoptolemus asks of the gentleman is jealous, when he sees his young lover with three great Nubian sailors. But the older, wiser man corrects his simple question, his exhibitionistic adventurousness and my voyeuristic inquisitiveness are as complementary as much of the uncritical world finds to be male and female. The old man is a man of importance in disguise, beautifully expounds on topics from the value of sex that contributes little to procreation. Eventually *Phallos*does become more pedantic than exciting.

Dark Reflections wasDelany's eighteenth novel. It was published in 2007. In 2008 it received a Stonewall Book Award and nominated for a Lambda Literary Award for Gay Men's Fiction. *Dark Reflections* presents the story of a moderate successful black, gay poet, Arnold Hawley, during numerous periods of his life from 1958 to 2004. Arnold Hawley was a gay African-American poet who lives most of his life in New York City. The novel is divided into three sections, each illustrating a period in Arnold's life. Most novels would start in youth and move towards old age, but *Dark Reflections* begins between the ages of fifty-two and Sixty-eight of Arnold, then it moves backwards to his middle thirty's and finally recounts his early college days.

In the first section *The Prize,* Hawley confronts the fact that his latest volume of poems has not been a success. The narrative moves back and forth through his life, introducing his formidable Aunt Bea, an opera loving polymath whose death precipitated her nephew's breakdown. The second section, *Vashi in the Dark,* recounts Hawley's impulsive, egregiously brief marriage to a disturbed and disturbing young woman he had just met on a park bench. Finally, the third section, *The Book of*

was a student at Boston University. He encounters various characters on the periphery of society, most notably a mentally retarded but sexually aware giant rescued from Alabama poverty by a pioneering photographer in homoerotic images. *Dark Reflections* layered into a complex, refracted narrative.

The novel *Through the Valley of the Nest of Spiders was* published on 2012. The novel begins in Atlanta, Georgia on July 6, 2007, where the author introduces Eric Jeffers some six days before his seventeenth birthday. Eric is living with his adoptive father, Mike. The story follows Eric as he goes to live with his mother, Barbara in the fictive Runcible County on the Georgia coast. Living in the town of Diamond Harbor, Eric learns that a black, gay philanthropist has established a utopian community for black gay men in a neighbourhood called the Dump. Eric takes a job with the local garbage man, Dynamite and his nineteen-year-old helper, Morgan. The two boys become life partners and the novel follows them through job changes, changes of friends, and changes of address into the twilight of their years. Though it moves many decades into the future and mentions fictional future events and technologies. The novel does not exactly fit within the realm of science fiction.

Nova is a science fiction novel which was published in 1968. Nominally space opera, it explores the politics and culture of a future where cyborg technology is universal and major decisions can involve using tarot cards. It has strong mythological overtones, relating to both Grail Quest and Jason's Argonautica for the golden fleece. *Nova* was nominated for the Hugo Award for best novel in 1969. David Pringle lists it, as one of the hundred best science fiction novels written since Second World War. Delany completed the novel *Nova* at the age of twenty-five. In this novel the story takes place in the 32nd century. By the year 3172, political power in the

galaxy is split between two factions: the older Earth based Draco and the historically younger Pleiades Federation. Both have interests in the even newer outer Colonies, where mines produce trace amounts of the prized power source Illyrion, the super heavy material essential to starship travel and terraforming planets.

Caught in a feud between aristocratic and economically powerful families, a scarred and obsessed captain from the Pleiades, Lorq Von Ray, recruits a disparate crew of misfits to aid him in the race with his arch enemy. His enemy was Prince Red from Draco's Red Shift Limited to gain economic leadership by securing a vastly greater amount of Illyrion directly from the heart of a stellar nova. While doing this, Von Ray will shift the balance of power of the existing galactic order, which will bring about the downfall of the Red family as well as end Earth's dominance over interstellar politics.

The future civilization is fuelled by the fictional element Illyrion, a power source like none ever seen before. There is not much of this element available, but even the smallest amounts can generate huge amounts of energy. The discovery of modest amounts of Illyrion could completely upset the balance of power among human worlds. No trace of these elements has ever been found in nature, but they remain an intriguing possibility. *Nova* have long captured the imagination of those who watch the sky. The idea of a star becoming unstable and exploding into cosmic fury: one that could destroy every world that it is both frightening and fascinating. Scientists separate the phenomena into two types of events such as classical nova, which are caused by two binary stars interacting, and supernova, which involves a massive star exploding toward the end of its lifespan.

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interstellar travel in Delany's universe, which involves passing at speeds faster than light, is made possible by manipulating the flow of forces which was unknown in a process similar to sailing. These forces of the space time are accessed by energy vanes, each of which is controlled by a computer operated by the cyborg studs who make up the crew of a starship. Most humans have been outfitted with cybernetic control sockets in their wrists and at base of their spines. This allows them to control a range of devices and power tools, from vacuum cleaners to mining machines and right up to starships. It also allows people to be much more flexible in moving from career to career.

Delany writes the history of the future without Marxist narratives of inevitability or Star Trek style attempts to fit the galaxy into the mould of Western European history. As writer D.J. Johnson points out, the word nova has the same etymological roots as the word novel. The two sides of Delany's own artistic personality are shown in the contrasting characters of Katin and Crawford, a cerebral would be novelist, and PontichosProvecchi, who was also called as Mouse, a street urchin who makes money by playing the sensory syrinx. Sensory Syrynx is a device that lets him conjure up sounds. Smells and 3-D images.

Like Crawford, Delany is a very deliberate writer who filled up countless ages of his journal planning out of his ideas. But Delany in the early 1960's was also a street musician like the Mouse. In *Nova*, we see that Delany's revitalization of space opera took place on a sentence by sentence level. Delany's synesthetic prose achieves the same effect as the Mouse's sensory syrinx.

Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand is a science fiction novel which was published in 1984. It was part of a planned duology whose second half, *The Splendor*

and Misery of Bodies, of Cities which remains unfinished. The novel takes place in a distant future in which diverse human societies have developed on some six thousand planets. Many of these worlds are shared with intelligent nonhumans, although only one alien species also possesses faster than light travel. In an attempt to find a stable defense against the phenomenon known as Cultural Fugue. Cultural Fugue is a process where socio-economic pressures reach a point of technological recomplication and perturbation where the population completely destroys all life across the planetary surface. Many human worlds have aligned themselves with one of two broad factions: the Sygn, which promotes and celebrates social diversity and the Family, which promotes adherence to an idealized norm of human relations modelled on the nuclear family.

Like much of his work, sex, politics, freedom of action, gender and multiculturalism are themes that Delany explores heavily throughout this novel. Gender is constructed very differently in the novel *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand.* She is the standard pronoun for any sentient being, and woman is the standard term for a person. He is the pronoun for someone one desires. Man is an obsolete poetic word. Mother is a role anyone can choose if they are parenting. Delany makes his aliens feel alien by making their gender fluid and also by changing the default sense.

*Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand*begins with a prologue, in third person which was set on the planet Rhyonon and deals with Rat Korga. In Rhyonon, where Rat Korga comes from, sex between males is permitted for people over twenty-seven, but sex between tall people and short people of any gender is entirely and completely forbidden. The first-person narrator of the book is MarqDyeth, who is an Industrial Diplomat whose job is delivering weird goods from planet to planet. Marq comes

from Velm, from the South of Velm, from a little city called Morgre, and there, consensual sex between any species and any gender is freely available and a matter of preference. Marq and Rat are each other's perfect erotic object. When Rat's world is entirely destroyed and he is the only survivor, the Web which is a space-based organization, sends a Rat to visit Marq for what turns out to be only a few days.

Humans have found alien intelligences on a lot of different worlds, but only one other star faring civilization. Human and alien relationships are varied and complex. On Velm, in the south the humans and evelmi live close together and also, they can be even lovers or family members. In the north they are fighting each other. There are two main paths of civilization, which stand opposed to each other. The family which is generally reactionary and rigid, and the sygn, which believes in multiculturalism and relativism. Human and evelmi cultures are both founded on a love of illusion. One of the chief illusions is peace between their respective races, despite the fact of a longstanding family bonding between humans and evelmi among the Dyeths.

In his novels, Delany has consistently attempted to create fully developed female characters and has been considerably more effective in doing so than most writers. Delany's analysis of the problems of creating fully participating female characters emphasizes our enculturation concerning appropriate women's roles that conflict with the changes taking place in our society. While it is true that in our society the view of women has still not changed to any great extent from the traditional one of being subservient to men, this does not mean that the psychological characteristics of women or how women perceive themselves have not changed.

Chapter Two

Racial Expressions

In his 1993 essay *Racism and Science Fiction* Samuel R. Delany writes with discomfiture with the oft-given title of "The first African-American science fiction writer" (383). In order to give a more accurate portrayal of the early contributions of African-Americans to science fiction, Delany briefly highlights the proto-science fiction writers M. P. Shiel and Martin Delany and the early alternate histories of Sutton E. Griggs and Edward Johnson. Delany also includes a lengthier review of George S. Schuyler's twentieth-century texts. This short literary history reveals Delany's desire to reform the science fiction community and its relationship to race; it is a first small step towards increasing the inclusiveness of the science fiction field.

Recurring themes in Delany's work include mythology, memory, language, sexuality, and perception. Class, position in society, and the ability to move from one social stratum to another are motifs that were touched on in his earlier work and became more significant in his later fiction and non-fiction. Delany also makes use of repeated imagery: several characters like Hogg, the Kid and the sensory syrinx player, the Mouse in *Nova* are known for wearing only one shoe and nail biting along with rough, calloused hands are the characteristics given to individuals in a number of his fictions. In his works he uses social sciences, such as linguistics, anthropology, and psychology. In each case scientific extrapolation is used to establish a setting in which Delany can develop his themes of social criticism, rather than the scientific extrapolation itself being the theme.

Delany's works are excellent examples of modern science-fiction as it has developed from the earlier and more limited science-fiction tradition, especially

because of his manipulation of cultural themes, his detailed futuristic or alternate settings, and his stylistic innovations. These literary aspects and his well-developed characters distinguish his works as not only superb science fiction but as significant contributions to the general tradition of literature.

Delany uses the traditional motifs of science fiction in new, highly sophisticated ways. His novel *Nova*embody the theme of heroic epic; thereafter, the quest turns inward until the appearance of the *Neveryon* stories, when the heroic asserts itself again, though now solidly within the context of the psychological. Lorq Von Ray's quest for the nova and Katin's quest for his novel are each transformative, although the former is a quest for power, the latter for understanding. However, power destroys, and understanding is necessarily incomplete, which is why *Nova*breaks off in mid-sentence. In his novels *Nova*and *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand,* Delany consider race as the major theme.

First, Delany entered the science fiction field and worked for nine years as the sole publishing African-American writer of science fiction. From 1962 to 1971, he published nine full length fictional texts, several of which won Nebula Awards. During the 1970's, Delany expanded the field of his writing to include non-fiction. In addition, no less than five full length critical texts have been written about Delany and his oeuvre. In *Samuel R Delany,* which was published in 1984, Seth McEvoy summarizes Delany's career as follows: "Delany went from being a middle-class black youth in Harlem to become one of the top ten selling science fiction writers by the age of forty" (11).

Finally, Delany, has been a teacher, writer in residence, speaker, and guest of honour and at too many campuses, conferences, and conventions to name. Delany is a

prominent member of the science fiction community, the steady divide between the African-American literary genre and the science fiction field has prevented his reciprocal acknowledgement in the mainstream forums of Black Studies. Delany's literary career provides an excellent heuristic tool for investigating the relationship between science fiction and race. However, rather than rejecting race altogether as a meaningful term, Delany uses the freedom of individuality to work in a genre which has not been associated with African-Americans. Delany's career must be placed with his divisive context, with its racial expectations, in order to understand how unusual was his initial entrance and lengthy participation in the science fiction.

Once race is added to the mixture, a pull towards the general realism and race consciousness of African-American literature makes Delany's ultimate choice of genre even more unusual. Within the racial context, Delany's prominent career in the science fiction genre resonates with additional meaning. First, his entrance into the science fiction community in the 1960's highlights the long-time stability of the white racial triangle of author, protagonist and audience in the science fiction genre. On the other hand, Delany's use of science, science fictional forms and conventions, and poststructuralist theories offers a challenge to more traditional theories of African-American literature and culture. Delany's ground breaking and influential work in the science fiction genre has opened up the field, allowing for more diverse writers and texts. He has brought science fiction several steps closer to realizing its full potential as the literature of possibility.

A racial triangle was maintained, simply changing racial affiliation. After Schuyler, the trio of Edgar Rice Burroughs, John Carter, and Anglo male teenagers remained the overwhelming norm in the science fiction genre. It was not until Delany's emergence in the early 1960s that the authorial element of the racial triangle

changed significantly within the science fiction literary community and more diverse protagonists, and other characters, became increasingly commonplace. In *Racism and Science Fiction*, for example, Delany writes of his experience at the 1968 Nebula Awards Banquet. While Delany won two Nebula Awards, he faced opposition to his experimental or more complex writing style. Within this tense environment, Isaac Asimov toldDelany in an aside, "You know, Chip, we only voted you those awards because you're Negro. . .!" (390) Delany first acknowledges the good intentions underlying Asimov's comment, but then goes on to verbalize the other meaning inherent in such a statement:

> No one here will ever look at you, read a word you write, or consider you in any situation, no matter whether the roof is falling in or the money is pouring in, without saying to him or herself (whether in an attempt to count it or to discount it), "Negro..." The racial situation, permeable as it might sometimes seem and it is, yes, highly permeable, is nevertheless your total surround. Don't you ever forget it...! And I never have. (390-391)

Delany's take on race consciousness is negative here. Rather than a voluntary or personal identification and a source of pride and enrichment, race consciousness is portrayed as an involuntary, pervasive, and external evaluative tool. It is used by others to judge Delany, regardless of the contextual warrant. Not surprisingly, then, Delany's praise for the generally liberal and permeable environment of the science fiction community in comparison to the mainstream literary community emphasizes its sensitivity to overt racial labelling. In his 1979 article, Michael W. Peplow wrote, "after finding so few references to colour in the anthologies of science fiction, I had assumed that Delany's colour must be closely guarded secret". (119)

[illegible] science fiction publishing industry is largely Jewish, liberal, and rooted in the tradition sometimes referred to as "old left." The editors have known their share of prejudice and they're not anxious to be caught perpetuating it" (119). Delany's comments here underscore his desire to be viewed as a science fiction writer first and foremost, rather than a black writer. Such an attitude highlights his published texts and not his racial status.

Delany's inclusive racial attitude was essential to the success of his early career in the science fiction field. Not only did Delany face discrimination as a black writer, but also, he had to struggle against the racist norms of the generic conventions. Robert Elliot Fox's comparison between Delany and Amiri Baraka and Ishmael Reed is instructive here. Fox contrasts Delany with the other two writers within the African-American literary tradition because while race is a factor in the worlds of Delany's fiction, it is not a foregrounded concern. Likewise, Emerson Littlefield asserts that "Delany is assuredly not a one-dimensional black writer, that is to say, a writer concerned only with racial identity, revenge motives, and expressing the frustrations of the oppressed. His fiction is too humane and too rich for so simpleminded an interpretation" (238). In a complex process of give and take, then, Delany subtly and slowly revised elements of the traditional white, male, heroic protagonist of science fiction.

In traditional Western culture, black has for centuries been the color associated with mystery and evil: night, the underworld, the dark forest all have foreboding qualities associated with them. Some black writers of the Harlem Renaissance, but more especially through the elaboration and exploitation of the new myths, which have provided their proponents with a way of explaining and communicating their

experiences of blackness in America. So, it is very clear that Delany is more than tangentially interested in racial themes.

Several factors make the science fiction writers subtle and dismissive racial attitude possible. First, as previously mentioned, "because of their orientation toward the future science fiction writers frequently assumed that America's major problem in this area – black or white relations – would improve or even wither away". (188) Also, the presence of inhuman races seems appropriately trivial. The speculative element of science fiction, then, tends to highlight the collective human race rather than a multitude of human races, human commonality rather than difference. Campbell's rejection of *Nova* clearly illustrates the necessity of utilizing such inclusive strategies in the science fiction community. Campbell's position is clarified by an exchange between Octavia Butler and an unnamed editor at a convention. In an interview, Butler relates that:

> She was sitting next to the editor of a magazine that no longer exists and he was also doing some science fiction stories. He said that he didn't think that blacks should be included in science fiction stories because they changed the character of the stories; that if you put in a black, all of a sudden, the focus is on this person. He stated that if you were going to write about some sort of racial problem, that would be absolutely the only reason he could see for including a black. (18)

In *Nova*, a black man moves from the role of strong support to that of hero proper; but again, most of the critical response to the novel concentrates on Delany's wedding of form to theme: space opera to the quests for power, for art, for meaning, for free will. *Nova*follows the adventures of Captain Lorq Von Ray and his

[illegible] Von Ray) through the galaxy to an exploding star, a nova, to bring back the rare element Illyrion. Lorq's mission, writes Sandra Missel, unites the Prometheus story with that of the Holy Grail, but Delany's paramount myth is the harmony of opposites. In *Nova*, two characters suffer derangement of their senses in the quest to obtain Illyrion.

> The Illyrion mines in the Outer Colonies. Mining Illyrion naturally is much cheaper than manufacturing it. "Even if it takes plugging in a population of millions upon millions. Even if three dozen competing companies from both Draco and the Pleiades have opened mines all over the Outer Colonies and subsidized vast migrations of labor from all over the galaxy. What strikes you as different about the setup of the Outer Colonies as opposed to Draco and the Pleiades?" It has comparatively, all the Illyrion it wants right there. Though the Outer Colonies have been prompted by those with money both in the Pleiades and Draco, the population of the colonies comes from the lowest economic strata of the galaxy. The combination of cultural difference and I don't care what your social studies teachers at Causby say and the difference in the cost of transportation is what assures the eventual sovereignty of the Outer Colonies. And suddenly Red shift is striking out at anyone who has their hands on Illyrion again. (92-93)

Attached to the physical adventures of Captain Lorq Von Ray are the ctual and emotional adventures of two artists Katin and Mouse, whose attempts erstand one another make a kind of allegory of the growth of the literary artist. [illegible] learning how to master his craft. Mouse is a musician with a sensory [illegible] entertain, maim, or

kill. Certainly, each is an important figure in the story, and, together with Lorq, they form one of Delany's recurring triads. They complement Lorq, but they do not take precedence over him. The son of a Senegalese mother and a Norwegian father, Lorq Von Ray is a black man and a hero clearly at the center of this novel.

> His name was Lorq Von Ray and he live. . . Those were the childish things, the things that persisted, the first learned. Ark was the greatest city in the Pleiades Federation. Mother and Father were important people and were often away. When they were home they talked of Draco, its capital world Earth; they talked of the realignment, the prospect of sovereignty for the Outer Colonies. (41)

Samuel R Delany's vision of future and possible worlds is a vision in which race, however subtly manifested, is as emblematically significant as any of the other concerns his work treats. If in *Nova's* Lorq, Delany has rendered one of his most commanding signs denoting the significance of black folk in his speculative future, in his other works black people are viable too. His black characters may be heroic, or they may merely assist the protagonist.

Delany is assuredly not a one-dimensional black writer, that is to say, a writer concerned only with racial identity, revenge motives, and expressing the frustrations of the oppressed. Delany's heroes tend to represent a careful blending of racial strains: Lorq Von Ray is a red-haired mulatto. It is the villains more than the heroes who represent a racial stereotyping. But there is white character in Delany's *Nova*that is positive. For example, Katin, the writer, who can be seen as the voice or alter ego of Delany himself.

Katin, long and brilliant, dribbled toward Hell, eyes on the ground, minds on moons aloft. The unshaven derelict leaned on the fence, clutching the rail with scaly hands. "Where you from?" The derelict's eyes were fogged. Luna, Katin said. And his mind went back to moons. Karin, born on the Moon, loved moons" (16-17).

In *Nova*, racial heritage and ethnicity are both obvious and essential to the layering of the plot. The sexual power struggle is tied to a racial motif of black man and white woman. The son of an African woman who serves the traditional dishes of Senegal at plush parties and a Norwegian entrepreneur involved in a family business with origins in piracy, Lorq Von Ray is a black man in love with Ruby Red, sister of Prince and part-heir to the fortunes of the rival Red-Shift Company of Draco Federation. When black Lorq touches white Ruby, Prince is infuriated.

> "You're Ruby Red." He took her shoulders and pulled her forward. For a moment her blue eyes beat. "And you take all this nonsense that little people seriously?" "I'm Lorq Von Ray! And you're Ruby, Ruby, Ruby Red!" The lift had already taken them past the first balcony. Will you go over the rim of Draco, with me, Ruby? There's a house there that you'd remember if you saw it, there at the galaxy's edge. "Prince!" She pulled away from Lorq, and started down over the lift's edge. "GET AWAY FROM HER!" His silver glove snatched another of the shelves from the inductance field that caused it to float around the room, and sailed it at them. "Damn you, you..." Prince's voice rasped to silence on his anger, then broke: "Get away!". (83)

First, he sees a Von Ray pirate threatening the stability of his business empire. Secondly, he sees a black man touching his sister. If the Reds win the fight to control the flow of Illyrion and thereby destroy the Von Rays, stagnation and oppression will result throughout the galaxy. If Lorq prevails, vibrant economic growth will continue, and an uncontrolled flow of men, goods, and materials will help continue the settlement of the outer worlds. The development of the galaxy depends on the ability of a black man to bring back the fire of the sun.

> How many millions of years back, those three-foot lizards' ancestors had been huge, hundred- meter beasts, and the intelligent rave which had inhabited New Brazillia had worshiped them, carving life sized stone heads about the foundations of their temples. But the race- that race was gone. And the offspring of that race's gods, dwarfed by evolution, were mocked in the pits by drunken miners, as they clawed and screeched and bit. And he was Lorq Von Ray. And somehow Illyrion had to have its price lowered by half. You could flood the market with the stuff. (95)

In *Nova,* valiant as Lorq is, the sexual lore attached to black man and white woman is sufficient to show us that being black in the distant future still matters to some in a way not so different from our present. However, that Lorq is able to pit his strength and will successfully against the Reds, rather than be lynched by them, says something different about the cycle of violence and oppression blacks of the future may endure. Delany has described his future worlds as places in his *Samuel R Delany: A Primary and Secondary Bibliography,*

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has changed and changed for the bette
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Delany's *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains o*
its result in the distant future on the fictional plane
at odds with generating new knowledge about
However, scholars of Afrofuturism, a critical appr
that science fiction is an important site for explora
and racism are important sites for the de
*Ethnoscapes*Isiah Lavender III says,

> The blunt thesis underlying Af
> production in the New Wor
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> slave labor capable of produci
> substance of science fiction b
> from translating the black sl
> machine necessary for the cul
> access to new and developing

According to Lavender, Afrofuturis

Americas as actual cyborgs whose bodies w

fiction began hundreds of years ago. So, the setting of *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand*may seem distinct and distant from the reality of United States antebellum slavery as well as contemporary United States culture its themes of slavery and bodily alienation resemble the realities of United States history. So, Lavender regards *Stars in My Pocket like Grains of Sand*as a meta slavery narrative. *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand*have speculative fiction writers making direct reference to United States antebellum slavery and its attendant tradition of black authored slave narrative.

*Stars in My Pocket Likė Grains of Sand*was set in a place with no apparent connection to United States history. The novel conveys an understanding that its characters may not be affected by the legacies if slavery and race in the United States, but its readers certainly are. Timothy Spaulding explains that such a conceit actually defines neo-slave narratives in general: "Rather than drawing on elements of the sentimental novel and nineteenth century spiritual autobiographies as the original slave narratives did, postmodern slave narratives draw from non-realistic genres in order to reform our view of the past (4)". As both a neo-slave narrative and a meta slavery narrative, *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand*suggests the uncritical notions of reality, as well as the generic forms associated with it.

Delany announces his concern with slavery in the first sentence of the novel: ""Of course," they told him in all honesty, "you will be a slave" (11)". Delany explores a kind of tension in the statement that begins in the novel. The people at the RAT institute consider Korga's status as an enslaved individual plainly. Delany's careful exposition of this apparently inevitable situation reveals Korga's identity to be contingent on a number of social norms willfully articulated by the socially powerful. The RAT institute members explain to Korga why he will be a slave.

> ... brain damage, small as it is, we still can't correct. You've been in trouble of one sort or another for as long as there are records on you: orphanages, foster homes, youth rehabilitation camps, adult detention units – and you haven't gotten along in any of them. Sexually...? Lozenge tinkled against lozenge: the man's head shook. "In this part of the world your preferences in that area can't have done you any good. You're a burden to yourself, to your city, to your geosector." Lozenges lowered, just a bit: the man moved forward in his seat. But we can change all that. (11)

The RAT spokespeople see Korga as a prime candidate for lobotomization, because of his appearance. On Rhyonon, the very shortest are considered the most beautiful. The RAT spokespeople explain Korga's supposed ugliness with a plain descriptive tone similar to that used by Immanuel Kant in *Of National Characteristics, They Depend upon the Distinct Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, the essay in which he described Africans as incapable of creating beauty due to what he saw as African physical ugliness. Indeed, the aesthetic and intellectual incapability, Kant projected onto Africans are in similar association for Korga, whose supposed ugliness is considered part of his prenatal brain damage.

As a result of his supposed ugliness and intellectual deficiency, Korga has been subject to various institutions such as orphanages and jails from since birth. The rhetoric used by the RAT spokespeople resembles colonialist rhetoric of Africans as the white man's burden. Significantly, the RAT spokespeople also consider Korga as ... with preferences that are at best suspicious. Delany reveals that the ... depends upon an

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who has been in trouble with the la

ɔ Radical Anxiety Termination, a sp

ıappy. But instead, he becomes a

pester at different research stations under dreadfully inhuman conditions, until one day his planet is destroyed in a mysterious holocaust. The society of Rhyonon is sexist, hierarchical and riddled with restrictions. The whole society is riddled with oppression and power struggles. People seem not to be valued as individuals. In Rhyonon, the person's name was not mentioned, instead, people are referred as the man, the woman, or the rat, which implies that the most important factors differentiating people are their gender and their status in a hierarchical society.

> The temperature rose twenty degrees in ten seconds. In the dark something fell over on him, pinning one leg, something bigger and heavier than 184. And in a conflagration that lasted some seventeen hours, all life on the surface of his world - a world whose name in all his forty-one years he'd had less than a dozen opportunities to speak, a world he'd known only from the most impoverished perspective, a world whose coordinates in the Web's encyclopedia of habitable worlds he had never even heard – was destroyed. (84)

According to Orlando Patterson, emancipation is seen a gift of personhood that the master bestows upon his former slave: "The master gives, and in giving he creates" (211). However, no explanation is given for the conflagration in *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand.* Therefore, no particular master grants the formerly enslaved his freedom. Delany writes about this significant event using the passive voice. Rhyonon was destroyed and what momentarily results is a sense that no lingering effects of enslavement and its attendant discourses of sexual and intellectual inferiority remain.

After the conflagration, Korga is retrieved by a group of researchers from Velm, another planet with no prior knowledge of Rhyonon, Korga or his people. When the researchers reverse the RAT that lobotomized and muted Korga. After the process, Korga asked the researchers, "What have you given me? . . . What have you taken away?" (221). These questions are Korga's first newly speaking subject. Korga's questions admit that the Velm researchers have given him freedom and socially recognized personhood. But his questions also point to something they have potentially taken , away. Emancipation attempts to reverse the slave's natural alienation and cultural death. Korga's keen understanding of this situation demonstrates his own agency in the process of racialization, as he demands accountability and answers regarding his new identity.

> "This . . . this is not my world. On what . . . world are we?" Biting, Rat spoke and must have heard that the speech was unintelligible with the gnawing; so stopped biting and spoke again: "I had a world. But it is true to say I never had a world. You have given me . . ." He paused to gnaw again while agate or garnet obscured a word: ". . .possibility of a world. What world will you given me?" The fingers, bent above opals, went back to the teeth – big, straight, more ivory than white. The hand dropped. Rat paused, tongue struggling with the syllables, missing as many as it caught: ". . .radical anxiety termination. It only compensates. (221-221)

Korga recognizes that his status as an individual and as a person at the mercy of the researchers who are the scientists, like the RAT spokespeople on Rhyonon, they are the privileged members of their society. Korga's question of what world will be granted to him to recall the Medieval and Renaissance notions of the America as

the New world and Europe, Africa, and Asia as the Old World. He wonders how he will be positioned among the unfamiliar researchers. As such, he considers what his life will mean post emancipation. Korga's words suggest that emancipation, like the Middle Passage, sustained the displacement and alienation of the formerly enslaved. While liberated from slavery, freed people were not liberated from New World discourses of blackness and its attendant stereotypes of physical appearance, mental capacity and sexual orientation. Furthermore, they were not liberated from the idea that recognize humanity is sewed to recognizable sexual orientation and gender identity.

In transporting chattel slavery from a colonial to a neoliberal context, *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of sand* sets aside many formal and thematic conventions of slave narrative, particularly those deriving from an enlightenment understanding of the self as philosophical subject and bearer of rights. Unlike many eighteenths and nineteenth century African American, Rat does not see his will or his desire as the wellspring of his humanity. He is not interested in his own mind.

> He said: 'Will it -?' 'Destroy your will? Oh, we don't do anything so simple or unsubtle. If you can make fine, fast, and fertile decisions now, you'll be able to make them afterwards. You simply won't be inclined to make new kinds of decisions, at least without instructions.' He said: 'Will it hurt…? ' 'Say "yes." There's no pain, I assure you – either physical or emotional. After all, what did you come here for?' He said: 'Well, yeah. Sure. That's why I – Say "yes." We need a voiceprint of the actual word; this is being recorded. Otherwise it isn't legal.' Which confused him. 'Yes . . .? Yeah, but that's what I –' and felt something terrible in him pull away or something gigantic in him

> vanquished, and its departure or defeat was a relief or a release, which because he had never felt anything before to such an extent, seemed more something that hadn't, rather than something that had, happened not an overwhelming occurance to him so much as a total surrounded revealed – or removed. (14-15)

However, Rat's disregard for will and selfhood also lead him to an alternative, instinctive political analysis of the RAT operation and the enslavement it requires. To Rat, the narrator explains, the event was not an overwhelming occurrence to him so much as a total surround revealed. He lost not his immortal soul, but the world. Delany replaces the slave narrative's conventional and public self-assertion with Rat's incommunicable experience of isolation and social death. But he also reveals Rat's future in present. Those contractual terms such as a piece of his body in exchange for a mere simulacrum of human rights, because no one will ever offer better. And there is no futuristic possibility in limited but expanding circumstances, they are real now, in the legal arrangement neoliberalism forces on poor people, particularly non-whites, in the United States and around the world today.

> 'You're as happy now as you can be, aren't you?' The silence welling in him obliterated any need to deny; and, anyway, he had never been much for denying what was told him with sufficient authority. On the arched door were the three hieroglyphs: *Radical Anxiety Termination.* In his search for the Institute, he had finally come to recognize them, though he still could not really read them, if only because as a number of people had explained, patiently or impatiently, while he'd been searching – he could pronounce none of the three correctly, even after they'd been repeated to him many, many times. (15-16)

Just like the RAT Institute, in other words, industry today spoils the very bodies of poor, criminalized and racialized people, through the government empowered, ostensibly neutral formalism of private contracts, and in isolated or hard to observe contexts like prisons and grey or black markets. Delany's reformulation of slave narrative analyses the present, by refocusing attention away from the dramas of subjectivity supposedly enacted by chattel slavery, and towards what actually happens to the racialized body. And then turning onto the past, this same analytic turn, away from the metropole, and toward the colony also opens disregarded and under-thought archives of the African Diaspora to new understandings.

Rat Korga leave slavery behind and even has the mutilation of his brain partially corrected. But Delany does not cast these events as episodes in a political struggle or signs of historical change. Indeed, in *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand* Afrofuturism chattel slavery seems monolithic. The scarred and starved rats cannot rebel or even communicate with one another, and the regime that creates and enslaves them is located on a backwater planet, Rhyonon, culturally conservative and isolated from the galactic mainstream. After the destruction of Rhyonon, Rat is a living document to rescurers, caretakers and onlookers: glamorous, at times almost an object of worship.

> 'The survivor was, by now, being monitored and observed by twelve hundred other rescue workers still searching and quartering Rhyonon's steaming, storm-scoured surface, looking for others with one added grain of hope lent by our success.' Yes I was thinking: You could bring in twelve hundred workers to look for survivors in one undersea magma mine disaster. A world…? (195)

Men and women were told to renovate their very selves, and to monitor their own behaviour continually, in order to fully experience freedom. If anything, the letters portrayed Rat are more confusing and more thoroughly destroying of sentimentality's ethical pretension. The galactic government does indeed decide to give Rat a world, and in doing so they subject him once more to extraordinarily intimate constraints. Specifically, a unit of functionaries decide to give him Marq Dyeth's world. So they hunt up for Marq and explains that by their best computer models Marq is Rat's perfect sensual object.

Rat himself is indeed a futuristic desire: he first asked for a world and he first warn of his own potential for tyranny. His words are mediated. He wants to be

absences from slave narrative tradition. Delany's novel offers a fuller glimpse of special reliance. Even today, there is narrow African American literary conventions for making a sense of black history. *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand*'s complex interweave of past and present also has pure speculative political aspect. As Delany has written in the *Foreword*: "...if we believe that a relatively peaceful revolution is preferable to an armed one always to come, then we are-always-within the center, as we are always at the beginning, of the revolution now" (XII).As Delany himself writes in an essay*Racism and Science Fiction*,

> Racism is a system. As such, it is fueled as much by chance as by hostile intentions and equally by the best intentions as well. It is whatever systematically acclimates people, of all colors, to become comfortable with the isolation and segregation of the races, on a visual, social, or economic level which in turn supports and is supported by socioeconomic discrimination. (9)

Today, the origins of racial anxiety are essentially lost. Slavery was of course the staging ground for racial inequality in the United States; but today, new racial opposition obtain that have as little to do with the institution of slavery as they do with the supposed differences between blacks and whites.

The following chapter deals with Delany's use of myth in literary sense. It discusses the mythological expressions in Delany's novels *Nova* and *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand.* It also focuses on how myths set up patterns which can be very useful at a time when a person's world seems very chaotic, without order. It also highlights how myth is constructed through the cyborg politics.

Chapter Three

Mythological Identities

There have been a number of critical studies on the mythic and archetypal patterns in Samuel R Delany's fiction. Peter Alterman, H. Jane Goldner, Sandra Miesel, Stephen Scobie, and others have provided insightful studies dealing with Delany's use of Christian, Greek, Oriental, and American folkloristic materials. Their analyses reveal a richly allusive art the equal of most good mainstream work and as significant as any in science fiction. While the major mythological themes seem to have been fairly well covered, however, two important ones have been either overlooked or not examined as fully as possible.

Here Samuel R Delany used myth in its general literary sense, to mean a cultural tradition of understanding transmitted by means of legends, stories, common knowledge, and diffuse ideas. Used to explain the origins and meanings tend to perpetuate strains of thinking which are culture-wide and strongly influenced by underlying, deeply rooted biases. Because they explain a culture's vision of the world, myths and their archetypal symbols become readily identifiable by the population at large.

Man uses myth to learn and to teach. One way to use myth to teach is through literature as Samuel R Delany does in his science fiction novels *Nova* and *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand.* In his novel *Nova,* Samuel R Delany uses Greek mythology to explore the choices that his characters have in the working out of the quests each lives out in the course of the novel. By using mythology in this way, Delany creates new myths in the context of science fiction. Just as there are many reasons to read literature, there are many reasons to read the literature of mythology.

possession of information indispensable to every one who would read with intelligence the elegant literature of his own day." (8)Another noted authority, Edith Hamilton, also claims that the study of Greek mythology will lead to a better understanding of the history of Greece and, in addition, a better understanding of its cultural offspring:

> They (the tales of Greek mythology) do throw an abundance of light upon what early Greeks were like a matter, it would seem, of more importance to us, who are their descendants intellectually, artistically, and politically, too. Nothing we learn about them is alien to ourselves. (14)

Michael Grant, writing a hundred years after Bulfinch and twenty years after Hamilton, agrees with both about the importance of Greek mythology in connection with understanding history and literature, but more importantly, in connection with the potent, almost violent, flashes of inextinguishable, universal truths that myths generate. Not only do myths present truths, but this particular brand of enlightenment is difficult or impossible to grasp by more logical and rational means, and would elude non-mythical presentation. Thus, these truths can be perceived in myth and perhaps by no other means but myth.

Science fiction has undergone the same development of reader appreciation that myth has. At first, science fiction in America was read primarily for the amusing

Recent science fiction literature has continued to mature; Delany, the critic, can make the futuristic statement: "Put in opposition to style, there is no such thing as content" (1). Science fiction, like mythology, can be read for pure enjoyment. Both can be read to learn the manners and modes of thinking of an age, the past age of myth, and the present age projected into the future for science fiction. Myths generate flashes of truth from the past that are relevant today. Delany uses Greek myths to create new myths in his science fiction novel *Nova*. Thus, one individual creates myth. Myths of the past were created by a community over a period of time. Delany consciously makes his myths; older myths were probably not formed by such an individual effort. The development of past mythologies is a controversial subject for theorizing.

Myths are important in assisting us to understand history, literature, and universal truths. Their importance cannot be denied. Controversy exists not so much about their benefit but about their genesis. The explanations for the origins of myths are many. G. S. Kirk in his book, *The Nature of Greek Myths*, discusses five theories for the development of myths in the context of the outside world. He also talks about four psychological theories of myth. He cautions the reader not to be content with

[illegible] using one theory, myths are complex tales which may have different [illegible] of meaning. To try to stuff all myths into one mould would seriously [illegible] characteristics of some of them.

Freud compared myths to dreams. The subconscious manipulation of emotions and experiences in dreaming could be the process of myth-making. Kirk agrees with Freud about the connection between myths and dreams. But he does not believe that myths are the dream-relics of society in its infancy, because the growth of a society and the growth of an individual are quite different. Carl Jung also recognized that dream and myths could reveal some of the unconscious mind. But he saw them as revelations of what he called the collective unconsciousness, an inherited and continuing involvement of mankind with certain key symbols called archetypes. Kirk agrees with Jung that men depend on the traditional forms of expression, like ritual and myth, just as much now as they used to. But he disagrees with Jung's idea of archetypes because, according to him, these symbols have not been shown to occur repeatedly in many sets of myths.

A knowledge of mythology will help readers of Samuel R Delany's novels *Nova* and *Stars in My Pocket Like grains of Sand* to see what he is trying to tell them about their own lives. Many critics have recognized Delany's use of mythology. Two who talk about myth in general in Delany's writing are George Slusser and JaneWeedman. Slusser discusses man's option when faced with the pattern of the myth. He contends in his book *The Delany Intersection: Samuel R Delany Considered as a Writer of Semi-Precious Words* that: "In no way, then, is a man fated to relive any given mythic paradigm, or to follow any archetypal literary pattern. And yet somehow, if that man is to remain human, and recognizable as a hero, he is obliged to relive them." (10)

Delany's own thoughts as expressed by his characters in his novels reflect the same idea that man as an individual makes his own choices. Jane Branham Weedman in his book *Samuel R Delany* discusses myth in connection with the main characters in the novels and their differences from mythical heroes:

> Through his double consciousness, Delany has acquired a different perspective and motivation for his use of myths. He emphasizes the individual instead of the archetype and demonstrates cultural change rather than progress. His heroes and heroines are not traditional archetypes despite their mythical references. They are more: they are the new archetypes of modern man and society, and this mythopoesis is what distinguishes Delany's works. (16)

Myths set up patterns which can be very useful at a time when a person's world seems very chaotic, without order. This chaos can be outwardly caused as in a war time situation, or inward, as in a shaken self-concept. Man's first reaction to chaos is to try to impose order. Order can be imposed by following a mythic pattern. Delany illustrates the fact that order can be imposed by using myths, but not necessarily following them exactly. In his novel *Nova,* he combined two myths to create a pattern for the hero. Lorq Von Ray is a combination of the characteristics of Prometheus and Achilles. Delany combines these two myths in Lorq who follows their mythical patterns to prove that the myths are still valid with regard to predicting

society behaviour today. Delany also shows that this combination is really a new

culture, creating a hero for today's society.

In his novel Samuel R Delany demonstrates that there at least three ways characters may use myth. The main character in *Nova* follows the same mythical patterns as two Greek heroes, Prometheus and Achilles. Some of their heroic characteristics seem to be opposites of each other. Prometheus is the supreme moral trickster, while Achilles, a demi-god, is the most nearly perfect embodiment of the Homeric code of honor as a warrior. Prometheus is known for his mental ability whereas Achilles is known for his physical powers. Prometheus is honoured for what he has given mankind; whereas Achilles is honoured for the qualities of manhood which he embodies. In addition to these opposing characteristics, these heroes embody similar characteristics. They both symbolize rebellion: Prometheus rebels against authority and Achilles against being a nonentity. They both know they have to suffer the painful consequences resulting from their rebellion.

By combing the characteristics of these two heroes into one person, the main character of *Nova,* Delany has created a new hero: one who is god-like and mortal, nonmoral and moral, a player and a fighter. The character combines intelligence with physical action. He rebels against authority and laughs in the face of death. These characteristics of Jungian archetypal heroes are united in a new hero for a new age. But this new hero follows the paths of the Greek heroes. This new hero in the novel *Nova* is Lorq Von Ray. Lorq is god-like in that he attempts a superhuman action. His quest is to figure out a way to reduce the cost of obtaining Illyrion, an important element used as fuel, and thus bring about the downfall of an economic empire.

"Dana," his father said. "Lorq, can you think of any way to lower the price of Illyrion by half?" Lorq frowned. "Why?" "I've figured that at the present rate of expansion, in fifteen years the Outer Colonies will be able to lower the cost of Illyrion by almost a quarter. During that time, Red-shift is going to try to kill us." He paused. "Knock everything out from under the Von Rays, and ultimately, the whole Pleiades Federation. We have a long way to fall. (94)

Lorq discovers the element in abundance in the center of an imploding star, a nova, which seems unreachable until an old friend mentions a past experience. Lorq must contend not only the impossibility of his task but also competition in the form of Prince Red, the one-armed heir to the Red-shift Limited empire. In order for Prince Red and his empire to survive, he must fight for stability. Whereas, in order for Lorq and his empire to survive, he must fight for change. After the initial confrontation where Lorq receives an injury to his face, he inquiries into his family history in order to understand why Prince Red wishes to destroy him. Armed with that knowledge he begins his quest for Illyrion. Along the way he defines himself and his reasons for the quest. His self - knowledge allows him to reach his goal. He obtains the Illyrion and defeats his enemy both economically by flooding the market with Illyrion and physically by causing the death of Prince Red. But Lorq's own health is hopeless. Delany writes:

"Red-shift was one of the mega companies that made the most concerned effort to move into the Pleiades. They tried to claim the thorium mines that are now run by your school friend's father, Dr. Setsumi. They attempted to begin harvesting the plastic lichens on Circe IV. Each time, Granddad blew them up. Red- shift is

transportation, and when the cost of transportation goes down compared to the number of ships made Red-shift feels its throat throttled. (91-92)

One of the Greek heroes that Lorq resembles is Prometheus. Prometheus is an immortal Titan, a name which comes from the Greek word Titainein, which means to stretch or strive to do the deed. Prometheus stretches and grows as a character when he attempts an almost impossible task. He tries to outwit Zeus, King of the Gods. He does this at the least meal that the gods and man eat together, where the question of what to sacrifice to the gods has arisen. Prometheus separates the sacrificial animal into two piles. The one pile has the choicest selection of meat and innards but is disguised in the ox's paunch as the worst part. The other pile contains the bones wrapped in the fat and is made to look like the flesh and, thus, the better part of the animal. Then Prometheus tells Zeus to choose which part of the sacrifice the gods shall receive from then on. Zeus chooses the fat and bones, although Hesiod in his *Theogony*, one of the earliest books narrating the Greek myths, relates that Zeus does through the trick before he makes his choice.

By his deception Prometheus reaches beyond his place in the divine hierarchy. Lorq Von Ray also reaches beyond his station in his society. He defies his ruler: a company called Red-shift Limited, represented by prince Red. He tricks Prince Red by concealing where the important fuel called Illyrion can be obtained. And by his actions the great federation of Earth does not gain control of the Illyrion, just as the gods do not receive the best part of the sacrifice.

Prince and Ruby Red were coming from Earth. He knew that his mother's parents were on Earth, in a country called Senegal. His

father's great grandparents were also from Earth, from Norway. Von Rays, blond and blustering, had been speculating in the Pleiades now for generations. He wasn't sure what they speculated, but it must have been successful. His family owned the Illyrion mine that operated just beyond the northen tip of the Sao Orini mansion's peninsula. (43)

Lorq Von Ray is also a Titan in his times. Webster's *New Standard Dictionary* defines Titan as a "person of magnificent physique or of brilliant intellectual capacity." (25) Prometheus and Lorq share these qualities. In their first meeting as adults, Lorq is called handsome four times by Ruby Red, who is sister to prince Red. Prince Red is Lorq's bitter enemy. Lorq shows intelligence in planning how to obtain Illyrion and keep Prince Red in the dark about his scheme. Prometheus is intelligent, as shown in his name which means forethought. Prometheus and Lorq both are tricksters in that they both challenge a high authority. Prometheus deceives and steals from Zeus, and Lorq steals from Prince Red and his economic empire. Lorq also comprehends the ethics of his situation. He tells his crew that where they will be going, all law has broken down man's and the natural laws. Lorq believes that no law can bind his actions. In one confrontation with Prince Red, Lorq states his reason for his deadly race for Illyrion which will cause economic chaos if Lorq succeeds.

> "Prince, what are you trying to do?" "keep things as they are." "Stasis is death." "But less destructive than your insane movements." "I am a pirate, remember?" "You're fast on your way to becoming the greatest criminal of the millennium." Lorq narrowed his eyes. "I know you want Illyrion," Prince continued. "The only reason you want it is to upset the balance of power; otherwise, it wouldn't be worth it to you." (202-203)

As Prometheus matches wits with Zeus, Lorq battles with Prince Red because there is a chance that he may win. Lorq also fights for change. Michael Grant, in tracing the historical development of the Promethean myth in *Myths of the Greeks and Romans*, claims "Prometheus stood for the urge to revolt against state tyranny." (26) Delany believes that change is a part of life and that stasis is death, as Lorq argues. The change that the seven tons of Illyrion would bring in Lorq's world would strike down one-third of the cosmos. Both Lorq and Prometheus effected great changes in their worlds.

In *Nova*, the hero seeks to obtain for mankind is Illyrion, a rare but extremely important element, which is used as fuel. Illyrion is the basis of the civilization in *Nova*. It is so important that the word is capitalized throughout the novel. It powers everything from the spaceships that unite galaxies by shrinking the physical distances between them to the musical instrument called a syrinx that unites the people of these galaxies by bringing them together physically and emotionally. Illyrion is employed in furnaces beneath the surface capable of sustain human life. But just as Illyrion unites, it can also separate.

> At three hundred we're back to a half-lives back in the millions of years. These elements have immense nuclei, and are very rare. But as far back as 1950, hyperons had been discovered, elementary particles that carry the binding energies holding together these super nuclei, as ordinary mesons hold together the nucleus in more familiar elements. This group of super-heavy, super-stable elements go under the general heading of Illyrion. And to quote again the eminent Plovnievsky, 'Basically, Illyrion is something else.' As webster informs us, it is both

[illegible] saving Illyrion is many things [illegible]

[illegible] Lorq Von Ray's crew members are brothers who [illegible] working in the Illyrion mines. All three brothers were inseparable until they were forced to work in these mines for a time as punishment for a crime. One brother decided to continue working there after his sentence was completed, the other two did not remain. Thus, their fraternity is broken up by Illyrion. At the end of the novel, the super abundance of Illyrion brought back by Lorq makes mining for it obsolete, and thus unites the brothers once again. The possession of Illyrion also separates galaxies economically.

Earth is a member of the Draco Federation, where Illyrion first was manufactured at great expense. One of the largest companies of Draco is Red-shift Limited, owned by Aaron Red, Prince Red's father. Lorq's father is the head of the Von Ray company, the largest force behind the Pleiades Federation. The Outer Colonies, which can mine Illyrion naturally and less expensively than manufacturing it, could become an independent federation; at the time of the novel different companies own mines on these worlds. Red shift Limited feels threatened by this lowering of the cost of Illyrion so it strikes out at anyone with Illyrion.

> Before there was any settling in the Pleiades at all, expansion throughout Draco was carried on by national governments on Earth, or by corporations, one's comparable to Red-shift – corporations and governments that could afford the initial cost of transportation. The new colonies were subsidized, operated, and owned by Earth. They became part of Earth, and Earth became the center of Draco. Your

> great grandfather, when exploration was just beginning in the Pleiades, was very much aware of what I've just told you: the cost of transportation is the most important factor in our society. And within the Pleiades itself, the cost of transportation is substantially less than in Draco. (90)

According to *Myths of the Greeks and Romans*, "Achilles himself knows that he will not live long after Hector's death." (36) Yet, Achilles chooses death and with this choice, he accepts mortality over immortality. His choice will ensure the Greeks victory and bring about the downfall of the Trojan empire, even though Achilles himself will not live to witness the end of the war. Greece will utterly destroy the city of troy much as Achilles annihilated Hector. But Achilles will survive in his fame as the greatest Greek warrior and will serve as an example not only of an heroic figure but also of the maturation required for the development of a hero.

In *Nova,* Lorq Von Ray follows Achilles pattern. Lorq is a mortal man and knows the punishment he must bear if he continues on his quest. If he continues his quest, he will be trapped in a body in which all sensory nerve endings are jammed into constant stimulation because he will have to look at the nova at close range. Lorq's friend Dan looked and is experiencing this living torment.

> Most people go blind in blackness. I have a fire in my eyes. I have that whole collapsing sun in my head, my visual tectum shorted wide open, jumping, leaping, sparking. It's as though the light lashed the rods and cones of my retina to constant stimulation, balled up a rainbow and stuffed each socket full. That's what I'm seeing now. There's a choir

crouched in my ears, shouting down into my skull twenty six hours a day. (4)

Like Achilles, Lorq chooses to fight and live his short life gloriously rather than live safely, long, and ingloriously. Like Achilles, he will lose his friend Dan and destroy his enemy, Prince Red. Anger is the basis for all the actions in the novel Nova. Lorq tells his aunt that on this trip to nova, "the only thing that propels us is my outrage." (144) This outrage is a result of Prince Red's actions and attitude. Even from the beginning, Prince Red tries to control Lorq. In their first meeting as children, Prince Red established dominance over Lorq. He pestered Lorq into sneaking out at night and caused Lorq physical pain when he mentioned Prince Red's prosthetic arm. As adults, Prince Red again dares Lorq into a risky adventure. Later he attacks Lorq when he sees his sister together with him. Then he rips through his face from chin to forehead with his prosthetic arm and fingers. But Lorq's outrage is caused by more than a physical scar he bears on his face, just as Achilles anger is caused by more than the loss of a girl as his share of the plunder after a battle.

> "You..." Lorq began. Words floundered under panting. "You and Ruby, are you crazy-?" Prince rocked back to his knees. Fury and pain hooked his face up in outrage. You clown, you pig, you come to Earth and dare to put your hands, your hands on my-" Lorq cried as it cut his arm and crashed into the French doors behind him. Lorq turned, jumped the wrought iron and crashed against the crowd. They screamed as he barreled through. Hands struck his face, pushed his chest, grabbed his shoulders. (84-85)

Lorq gains control over Prince Red by defeating him twice: once by using the syrinx to push him over the edge of a cliff into the fires of a molten river and again by flying him toward the center of a nova where Prince loses hope of surviving and causes his own death. Finally, the tons of Illyrion that Lorq brings back from the nova will ensure the supremacy of the Von Ray empire over Red-shift Limited, the prosperity of the Pleiades Federation, and a new way of living for the people on all the worlds. Lorq has exerted his power to control and change the lives of people around him, just as Prometheus and Achilles changed their worlds. Prometheus ensured the survival of man with the gift of fire. Achilles presence at Troy forecast victory for the Greeks; his individual powers, especially in killing the bravest and best of the Trojans, brought victory closer. Prometheus and Achilles both chose their destiny. Lorq, on a similar quest has made the same choices.

Delany blended the myths of Prometheus and Achilles creating a new hero for modern man. Prometheus means forethought. Intelligence is a necessary ingredient for success. Achilles earned his fame through his courage in stressful times. The modern hero, exemplified by Lorq, needs both his mind and heart to succeed. Wisdom and passion united form a powerful weapon, allowing the individual to exert control over events around him.

In *Nova* the protagonist embarks on a quest similar to those two mythical heroes: Prometheus and Achilles. The protagonist is similar to Prometheus in his struggle against authority and his search for the fiery element which is necessary for civilization. He is also similar to Achilles in the fire of his emotions and the importance of fame for his self-identity. Delany has shown that one of the choices available to modern man is to succeed by following the path or paths that past heroes

have established. This combing and following of mythical patterns is still a valid method of controlling one's destiny.

In *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand,* Delany uses the term Cyborg as a myth. The word cyborg means an illusory or hypothetical person whose physical abilities are extended beyond normal human limitations by mechanical elements built into the body. Donna Haraway traces the construction of identity and epistemology in her landmark work, *Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, technology, and Socialist Feminism.* Haraway is especially crucial for her restoration of the fragmented and inhuman body of the cyborg as an icon for our time and ourselves. However, in her arguments to prove that the hybrid made thing is antithetical to the bourgeois and patriarchal older, entrenched, and value laden models of the self. Delany himself engages Haraway's optimism and argues that the cyborg body is no more a solution to patriarchy than it is an embodiment of it. Delany argues that the cyborg is both beautiful in its intractability and dangerous in its ambiguity.

From Delany's engagement with Haraway, it is possible to proceed into a consideration of the bodies of Delany's own cyborg entities in his novel *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand.* Cultural experience is organized by certain dramatic motifs that are embedded as narratives in Western culture and which code for a particular universal male subject. One may call this entity a mythological subject, because it seems to be largely constructed according to humanist scripts implicit in those cultural stories.

The universal subject is represented by the protagonist ofarchetypal narratives, figured variously by Prometheus, Adam, Christ and Oedipus. Significantly, this mythologized subject is implicitly presented throughout the cultural media as both

absolute and prior to any other conception of self. Thus these stories may circulate through cultural experience initially and collectively as the founding legend of the prodigal child, the heroic protagonist, the tragic hero in classical myth, but ultimately they describe a collective figure that tacitly underpins identity itself, and that is coded to exclude alternative identities from articulation and validation through articulation.

In this way the narrative figures that code the mythologized subject represent the influences of a dominant ideology that shapes the construction of subjectivity along the axes of history, and desire while identities and categories of experience that exceed the narrative margins of the mythologized subject and the ideology that it remains unarticulated because they are excluded by the codes that constitute these narratives. Writing as an iconoclast, Delany recuperates the unspeakable and unknowable through the subversion of the same embedded narratives that exclude them.

By deconstructing his subject, Delany dismantles the codes that exclude the abject and damages their power to prohibit. The seminal figure of the mythologized subject surfaces in Delany only to be violated and re-enacted and ultimately traded in for newer and more transgressive models, more dangerous bodies that validate the unspeakable selves at the margins of experience. Avoiding the discrete and inviolate figures of Adam and Christ as representative of a marginal identity, Delany prefers the ambiguous and provocative orphan, the cyborg, as a fit icon for the mythological subject.

In Delany's *Stars in My Pocket Like grains of Sand*,myth is constructed through the cyborg politics. The cyborg is the science fiction avatar of a post-modernist impulse to dismantle and remodel human identity. Echoing Darko Suvin's

insistence that the science fiction text is dominated by a reality based logical premise. Whereas Hurley states that the signifying capacity of Science Fiction is therefore bounded by the perceived reality dominating its historical moment and falls short when called upon to represent experience outside of what is commonly recognized or understood at that time. Extrapolating from Darko Suvin's discussion of the novum, she suggests that

> Though the science fiction text depicts fantastic events...these do not violate the precepts of reality, however defined within its host-culture. Rather, the science fiction text represents extraordinary possibilities that are consistent with, and may be logically derived from, the knowledge systems of the culture in which it was written. (16)

The theme of myth that feature prominently in *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand* prepared the way for Delany's edgier critique of the illusion of Western masculinity. In *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand,* the figure is effective in rendering comprehensible the subjectivity of Rat Korga. When the mutilated and clinically dead Rat is rescued and resurrected from the charred remains of his sterilized planet, he can be interpreted variously as a Christ arisen from his tomb, or Eurydice climbing out of Hell. Ultimately, however, these archetypal figures fail to account for the subjectivity of the mutilated intellect and cybernetically re-constructed body.As Rat emerges with his prosthetic eyes and technologically augmented. His rescuers use to heal him, the interpretation of these motifs creates a new paradigm: identity as made and sacred at once, or the made identity as mystic and sacred. In other words, the creature.

> His big-pored forehead wrinkled, his heavy lips opened (the flesh around his green, green eyes stayed exactly the same), the ideogram of incomprehension among whose radicals you could read ignorance's determinant past, information's present impossibility, speculation's denied future. (11)

The member of this cyborg bodies that the protagonists of Delany's *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand* initially make themselves recognizable. Rat Korga, non-hero of the novel, is a not quite survivor of an apocalyptic holocaust. With much of his body destroyed, Rat is resuscitated and refitted with prosthetic eyes. Again, personalizing a particularly twentieth-century trouble, Rat has previously addressed his own social dysfunctionality by having his brain re-wired that is to say, effectively lobotomized. As part of his rebirth, he is outfitted with a prosthetic intelligence, in the form of as a selection of cybernetic rings that can be mixed and matched at will.

> I had never seen such a waking, but GI had given me the recalls to call on of seventeen experts who'd each watched this process many times – watched the coughing, the shaking head, the neural twitches as the nerves came on again, the unsteady motor orientation of an old nervous system taking over a radically reprocessed body, the ten-to-twenty minutes limping to accommodate the inevitable discrepancies in neural firing times of the nerves in the new leg, the two-to-five hours of increased blinking to acclimate to the just-connected optic nerve. (199)

Notwithstanding the force of implications of the machine hybrid, what is equally critically fruitful in these figures extends beyond the basic definition of what a cyborg is to what it really means to be a cyborg. Rat Korga inhabits a body

reconstituted as invention, it is not the nature but the fact of his embodiedness that makes his experience as a cyborg relevant. In short, what is at issue here is not so much the cyborg but the implications of a cyborg identity. The cyborg represents, among other relationships, the union of machine and mind, perceived in the humanist. In other words, it represents the colonization of subject by the domains of the other, the negation of which is so necessary to maintaining a stable subjecthood. This provokes what may be almost distinctively a Western protest. Even while insisting on the physically of the cyborg, Haraway qualifies the apparently not so intractable terms of her own definition,

> Linguistically and materially a hybrid of cybernetic device and organism, a cyborg is a science fiction chimera. But a cyborg is also a powerful social and scientific reality in the same historical period. Like any important technology, a cyborg is simultaneously a myth and a tool, a representation and an instrument, a frozen moment and a motor of social and imaginative reality. (1)

Radical Anxiety Termination is also called as RAT process manifests what Mary Kay Bray calls an "extreme capacity for dehumanization" (20). It was like forcing the subject to lose social and bodily integrity, identity's borders, by making the social hopeless. The rat becomes inhuman in the sense proffered by Kelly Hurley, and castrated through a penetration described by Fuchs. Because the individual has been biomedically altered from what was once a presumably normative subjectively and as a result of that cyborg invention, he falls short of the autonomy that defines the normative subject, man, the rat and not quite human.

Appropriately the rat is re-marked as inhuman by a new epithet that acknowledges the conflation of the depersonalized human and the alien as both an object of contempt and as an instrument of industry. In the history of Gothic representation, the inhuman through its very attenuated relation to the subject, is the alien. Delany balances a description of Korga's ravaged hands against the prime reminder that the technology of that world includes lasers with its lathes in a strategy that shows the organic rat to be intrinsically inferior to, and of lesser value than, the machine.

> He pushed back in the sling that was uncomfortable and costly. A blank and intricate absence on his face, he raised one big-knuckled hand to point with a finger thick as a broom-handle – for the technology of that world still made lathes, lasers, bombs, and brooms: the nail was gnawed almost off it, as were the nails on his other fingers seemed not only too rough and too heavy for any gentle gesture, but also – though, if you counted, there were only ten – too many. The finger jabbed brutally, futilely. As brutally, the fingers came back against the horse-boned jaw. (11-12)

Interestingly, Delany puts an ironic spin on Korga's treatment. His transformation is negligible. The degeneration of the rat's lifestyle is immediate. Despite having lived in filthy conditions as a beggar and incompetent thief, his existence is significantly worse. The rats state as refuse is accentuated by the comparative descriptions of Korga's extremity and of his man-made environment: shoeless, Korga leaves bare foot prints in the frost coating the decks of the installation where he works, although the pouch he is sometimes enlisted to carry is obviously an object of value. Here the slick machinery and apparatus of industry and commerce

warrant careful maintenance while the devalued outcast of society is permitted to deterioration.

Delany's alignment of Korga with the other is carefully understand. The experience of women in Rhyonon's society is never explicitly commented on. Korga hears, without reflection, that women consign themselves more frequently to the oblivion of the RAT process. Women are mostly objects of resentment and contempt, that women who endure the hierarchised ranks of industry deconstruct their own success by failing to perform convincingly as the mythological male subject.

> Those over the eyes (purple left and green right) were transparent enough to see through to blinking lids. You're as happy now as you can be, aren't you?' The silence welling in him obliterated any need to deny; and anyway, he had never been much for denying what was told him with sufficient authority. 'But I don't have to say that to you. You know it. If you'll just go through there...?' At the orders of the men and women who worked there, he dollied medium-sized machines up and down from the station's underground refrigeration crypts, where his bare feet left wet prints on the frosted metal walks, where the thrum of some machine down one of the storage corridors made a purple tube light near the double doors. (16-17)

Ultimately, ambiguity in *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand*, underscores the contingency of conditions of the subject. The RAT process that Korga experiences is described as a total surround revealed or removed, as a mechanism for flitering or discrimination is eliminated. The extinction of this barrier marks the collapse in

Loss of the boundaries that support the integrity of the subject in the midst of the self.

Finally, the cyborg forces to reconsider the claims of human subjects to discrete identities, because the cyborg is itself an indiscretion in both the descriptive and suggestively social conative sense of what it means to be indiscrete Haraway theorizes the cyborg as interstitial, liminal, impure, excessive, without telos, a figure for boundaries that are transgressive, liminal, dangerously hybrid. Hence, acting to cross borders and nullify prohibition, cyborg are about kinship, the intimate, the immediate, and the rough, messy and imprudent mixing of bodies and of selves.

The following chapter deals with technology. It shows how Delany portrays death and destruction through technology. It also highlights the fact that technology makes life both better and worse for man in specific ways.

Chapter Four

Existential Explorations

There is an ancient tradition that says that philosophy is essentially concerned with death – whether with understanding it, reconciling oneself to it or preparing oneself for its inevitable arrival. But if that is so then it seems much contemporary philosophising has failed to fulfil one of its essential functions, since death is a topic that is seldom addressed in contemporary philosophical discussion. One of the reasons that a philosopher such as Martin Heidegger figures so prominently in this collection is that Heidegger is one of the few philosophers who has indeed had a great deal to say about death. For the most part, death appears as a subject for contemporary philosophical discussion.

In this respect, the idea that philosophy is somehow essentially concerned with death need not reflect some peculiar mobility on the part of the philosopher who advances such a view nor in relation to philosophy in general. Instead, it can be taken to express a view of philosophy as a form of inquiry centrally concerned with the question of what it is to be human and with the nature and meaningfulness of human existence, of loss and sadness, of fear and foreboding, sometimes of release and thankfulness seem to be at the heart of what it is to live a human life and of what it means to be human. Thus, whether or not we accept the claim, not only in Heidegger, but captured also in the ancient characterisation of human beings as mortals. Human is indeed to be destined to live a life of only limited span, still we can appreciate that, as a matter of empirical fact, human lives are indeed lives in which death plays a central role.

Karl Christian Friedrich Krause, a German philosopher and Julian Padraic Young, an American philosopher both examine the role played by death in relation to a number of other central concepts in Heidegger's thought. Kraus is primarily concerned with the relation between death, nothingness and being, and with the idea that the very possibility of metaphysics might itself be intimately tied to the possibility of death. Young focuses more directly on the relation between death and the Heideggerian notion of authenticity. Heidegger have also addressed the subject of death but also immortality, life after death and the nature of death during one's existence. In the mind of Heidegger, man through death becomes aware of his finitude. This means that man unlike any other living creature is terminally affected by destruction and death.

During the 1960s and 1970s Samuel R Delany, who is deeply concerned about what it means to be human, wrote *Nova*. His novel *Nova* illustrates his tone and his investigation of difference and change, his responses to the social and political events of those years and which show his understanding of the relation between science, humanism and death. And here Delany portrays death and destruction through technology. The scientific context in which technology presently occurs fails, Delany says, "In a world where specialization is a highly productive and valued commodity, to integrate its specialized products in an ecologically reasonable way." (83) This failure of integration, he believes, is painfully understandable in a world that is terrified of any social synthesis, between black and white, male and female, rich and poor, verbal and non-verbal.

If such syntheses occur, they will, he demonstrates in his fiction, "virtually destroy the categories and leave all the elements that now fill them radically revalued in ways it is impossible to more than imagine until such destruction is well

underway." (83-84) Delany is tentative in his judgement of technology. Judging from the context of technology's failure in his fiction and the attack against it that is made by his characters, it appears that Delany believes there are things that technology can and cannot do to make men and women more human. Delany believes that technology has always run in both constructive and destructive directions. Change is crucial in Delany's fiction. Although he does not believe that history is cyclical, he does believe that humankind may move from chaos to order and from order to chaos; either of these states may contain the seed of and lead to the other.

The ecologically integrated technology contributes to improved human existence, when there is the necessary social synthesis, is shown in *Nova.* At the same time, it also shows the destruction and death of Prince Red and his sister. The technology in *Nova*necessary to accomplish Captain LorqVon Ray's ends is ecologically integrated, and the crew of his spaceship offers a good example of the advantages of a good adjustment to difference and change. The Captain and his crew are a community that includes a great variety of difference. He is a member of one of the wealthiest and most powerful families of the universe. His mother is black, and his father is white.

> His name was Lorq Von Ray and he lived at 12 Extol Park in the big, big house up the hill: New Ark, Ark. That was what you told somebody on the street if you should get lost, and that person would help you find home. The streets of Ark were set with transparent wind shields, and the evenings from the months of April to lumbar were blasted with colored fumes that snagged, ripped free, and writhed above the city on the crags of tong. His name was Lorq Von Ray and he lived . . . (41)

Lorq's crew members, the cyborg studs, display great variety. Mouse, a super-salesman, has had no formal education. Mouse's fellow artist and friend Katin was educated on Earth at Harvard. A brother and sister and African twins complete the group. They are artists and criminals, in a sense, who come from different ethnic backgrounds, have different beliefs and values, and customs, and they use their technical skills in harmony and accept and learn from each other. Through the cooperative effort of this community and its use of an adequate technology, Lorq Von Ray is able to fly his spaceship into the heart of a nova and to bring out of its center seven tons of Illyrion, an energy source sufficient to create beneficial change in the universe.

Delany painstakingly explores the reason why fuel's potential to unite the land is not realized by telling the story of Lorq Von Ray, the protagonist quester of *Nova*. The grandson of a space pirate who settled on the Pileades and began destroying the economic empire of Draco. Lorq is locked in combat with Draco's most powerful family, the Reds. The elder Von Ray, blew up any emissary from some Draco monopoly trying to extend itself into new territory on the pileades. He smashed the ships of the Red family. The hostility which grew up between the pirate Von Ray and the capitalistic Reds during that generation is aggravated by the desperate struggle for Illyrion in the year 3162.

> Any ship that came bearing a multimillion-dollar name out of Draco, any emissary from some Draco monopoly trying to extend itself into new territory-Grandfather blew them up. During the formative years of its existence, he did not let the Pleiades become an extension of Draco. He saw in Pleiades independence a chance to become the most powerful man in a political entity that might someday rival Draco. (91)

Lorq's father foresees that the Outer Colonies, where the richest Illyrion mines exist, eventually will dominate not only Draco and the Reds but also the Pileades and his own family unless some way can be found to lower the price of Illyrion by half. In order to do this, Lorq must find a new source of Illyrion. He accepts the challenge. Ultimately, he gets a spaceship, collects a crew, and drives the ship into a nova-a burned – out sun filled with Illyrion. He collects seven tons of the scarce element, dumps it on the world market, destroys Draco's economy, and insures the economic superiority of the Pileades.

> I've figured that at the present rate of expansion, in fifteen years the Outer Colonies will be able to lower the cost of Illyrion by almost a quarter. During that time, Red-shift is going to try to kill us. He paused. Knock everything out from under the Von Rays, and ultimately, the whole Pleiades Federation. We have a long way to fall. The only way we can do that is to figure out a way to get Illyrion down to half price before it goes down to three quarters – and how to make those ships. (94)

Lorq Von Ray's quests for fuel to save his group, the Pileadesis like the questers in medieval romances. His action places the good for the group above his own individual well-being. Defined by his place in the Von Ray family, he feels that he is personally responsible for the fate of the people who depend upon that family. Herealizes the focus of millions of people. They look to him for economic security. On the Pileades, one out of five people was being paid a salary either directly or indirectly by Von Ray. Lorq quests so that the whole system of reciprocity begun by his grandfather will survive.

Lorq perpetuates social disunity and proves his guilt by questing. In a system where the grail is an economic commodity, the quester must inevitably be marked as the one who widens the breach between groups rather than uniting them. This mark is visible. It is a scar on Lorq's face, caused logically by his chief competitor, Prince Red, the son of the ruling family on Draco. To Lorq the mark symbolizes hatred for Reds; it reminds him to pour all his energy into his quest for Illyrion, through which he can destroy them and Draco. Katin muses that the scar turns Lorq both ugly and dominant; in the same way, Lorq's quest sets him both heroic and guilty.

> His name was Lorq Von Ray and he lived at 12 Extol Park in Ark, the capital city of the Pleiades Federation. He walked beside the moving road. Through the wind shields, the winter gardens of the city bloomed. People looked at him. That was because of the scar. He was thinking about Illyrion. People looked, then looked away when they saw him look back. (94)

In *Nova* technology makes life both better and worse for man in specific ways. Perhaps the most significant of these is the symbiotic linkage of man and the computer that not only takes the drudgery out of work but reduces man's alienation from it. The crew and the Captain are fitted with arm and back plugs, neural devices that permit the individual to be plugged into computer outlets and do work that requires physical effort and intelligence with great freedom without drudgery. The source and the benefits of this symbiosis are explained to Mouse by Katin:

> Work as a mankind knew it up until Clark and Souquet was a very different thing from today (the thirty-second century), Mouse. A man might go to an office and run a computer that would correlate great

> masses of figures that came from sales reports on how well, let's say, buttons-or something equally archaic-were selling over certain areas of the country. This man's job was vital to the button industry: they had to have this information to decide how many buttons to make next year. But though this man held an essential job in the button industry, was hired, paid, or fired by the button industry, week in and week out he might not see a button. He was given a certain amount of money for running his computer. With that money his partner bought food and clothes for him and his family. But there was no direct connection between where they worked and how they ate and lived the rest of the time. (218)

Humanizing work, as it is done in *Nova,* may contribute generally to the desirable social change that is described in the novel. Women and men are equal in *Nova,* and because of the neural plugs, they do the same work with equal ease. The possibility of enjoying life and reducing pain is a product of technology. A man who has had a serious accident, suffers a broken leg and bleeds internally, is made well by a medical team and is back at work in two hours. The technology that controls infectious diseases is not described, but they do not exist in *Nova;* aging is slowed, and the economic conditions of the universe are secure. People can live and die with dignity in this world.

Although technology makes it possible for man to live productively and comfortably in space and on planets and moons that were once uninhabitable in *Nova,* its advantages stop short of being able to change human nature. In *Nova* greed and contests for power destroy Prince and Ruby Red. Technology remedies the physical

lack of the arm Prince Red was born without, but it is unable to ease the psychological injury that the deformity creates in him.

Actually, the technological power that economic monopoly industry makes him selfish and indulgent of his passions. His perversity and greed are shown in his incestuous relationship with his sister and in the goals of his monopoly capitalism. The problem of evil itself in this technologically advanced society. Although, when contrasted with Prince Red, Lorq Von Ray is a good man, he too recognizes and shows the influence of the tension between good and evil in his behaviour. When he has destroyed Prince and Ruby, secured the Illyrion that was the object of his search, and lost his sight from the brilliance of the light within the dying star, he becomes introspective and judgemental. He knows that his effort will save the Pleiades, but he also knows that this good result does not diminish his crime.

> Sprung from pirates, reeling blind in fire, I am called pirate, murderer, thief. I bear it. I will gather my prizes in a moment and become the man who pushed Draco over the edge of tomorrow. That it was to save the Pleiades does not diminish such a crime. Those with the greatest power must ultimately commit the greatest felonies. Neither for meaningful deaths. There is a dead whose only meaning is that it was died to defend chaos. And they are dead. Such lives and deaths preclude significance, keep guilt from the murderer, elation from the socially beneficent hero. (233-234)

The most damaging indictment against the ruler in *Nova*, and the one which ultimately justifies Lorq's quest to destroy Prince Red. Delany surrounds the Lorq and Ruby's relationship with the most grotesque images. Because Lorq tries to begin a

sexual involvement with her. But Ruby is persuaded by Prince to bite Lorq with a tooth filled with strichnine. In Prince's last scene, Delany portrays him in a state of perpetual death. Burned by the powerful heat Lorq has kindled with Mouse's instrument, the Syrynx, Prince floats in a bath of nutrient fluid which keeps him sentient, though as a corpse. He finally dies when his mechanical hand strikes and smashes the sides of the glass tank, spilling the fluid. Ruby, who also is burned, almost beyond recognition, dies after kissing the unconscious Prince. In this mutual death Delany articulates the effect of Prince's refusal to participate in an exchange system:

> Her [illegible] hand yanked [illegible] Lorq's. The arm swung across the room. The fingers seized Ruby's hand. 'No, Ruby! Stop him! Don't let him kill us!' Lorq's [illegible] lapsed. 'Prince, we can't! We're there after [illegible] the glass where [illegible] already helped you, I'll be able to [illegible]. No, you'll [illegible]. He'll be able to watch you a few moments before [illegible] begin to heal, the rubber [illegible], the plastic melts.' He [illegible] protein in Prince's nutrient fluid had entered her system, causing a massive histamine reaction. She had succumbed in seconds to anaphylactic shock. (211)

The technology that is exhibited in *Nova* is excellent, but there are essential human assurances that it cannot provide which both affect the emotions and condition the will. Captain Von Ray is unwilling, psychologically or spiritually unable, to begin his quest to secure a new source of energy until he has received the support of two readings of the Tarot. In this respect he is like Mouse, the gypsy crew member who is always afraid and who always spits in a river three times before he crosses it. There are also limits to what the human can endure. When those are reached in *Nova*

Captain Von Ray goes in search of bliss, a drug somewhat like marijuana, in order to find temporary escape. Technology, with the help of politics and economics, has produced, but cannot satisfy, the greatest human need described in *Nova*, the need for a spiritual center in a universe in which cultural traditions were shattered by the movement of peoples from world to world.

In *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of sand*, Samuel R Delany achieves a thematization of the complex ways the spectacle of gay male identity is established through a set of essentially ritualistic practices wherein the gay man is figured as clean, or more precisely cleansing. Like the figure of the slave, he represents the remains of disaster, a subject whose immature orgiastic prehistory that violence and destruction the blinding light of dawn belies has no weight in the discourse of respectability.

Delany's novel *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand* treats in its three sections the ill-fated love affair of Rat Korga and MarqDyeth. In the first section we are introduced to Korga, an impressively tall and somewhat mentally challenged citizen of the planet Rhyonon. Rhyonon is an insignificant world among the more than six thousand inhabited by intelligent species and loosely bound together by the Web, a network of architects of knowledge and power who help maintain system of change and exchange through the use of a phenomenon known as General Information which is also abbreviated as GI.

> Our survivor, Japril said ruefully, presented a host of medical problems, once we lifted that bruised and ruptured half-corpse off the steaming silt and sand and slag that was, now, much too much of Rhyonon. Something General Info has returned to us: one or two

> people can see a whole project through from start to finish, even if various stages in it demand three or four or fifty fields of extensive specialized knowledge. That the Web is the most constant utilizer of the newest facets of GI should be no surprise. They invented it. (197)

The main tendencies within this confederation are the Sygn and the Family, the one roughly corresponding to those who emphasize ambiguity, complexity, and experimentation, the other those who seek comfort in the knowledge of the ancient traditions of a perhaps-never-extant and certainly spectacularized old Earth. Korga, existing at the margins of his marginal society, delivers himself early in the novel to a Radical Anxiety Treatment Center where those anxious aspects aspects of his intellect are excised so that he might finally achieve that ever elusive entity, happiness. And as with all subjects, the newly liberated Rat Korga is immediately sold to one of the corporations that dominate his planet.

> Perhaps because, with the Family trying to establish the dream of a classic past as pictured on a world that may never even have existed in order to achieve cultural stability, and with the Sygn committed to the living interaction and difference between each woman and each world from which the right stability and play may flower, in a universe where both information and misinformation are constantly suspect, reviewed and drifting as they must be by and between the two, a moment when either information or misinformation turns out to be harmless must bloom, when surrounded by the workings of desire and terror. (112-113)

The planet Rhyonon is destroyed through means that are never fully understood only completes this circuit, returning us again to the necessity of the cleansing and tracing that fuels Delany's project and operates as perhaps the most significant feature of contemporary politics and criticism. Indeed, Delany is relentless in his evocation of epistemology as a sort of dialectics of soiling and cleansing. When Korga, who as a Rat is kept in filthy cages and put to the basest of labours, finds himself in the hands of a woman who has bought him from the manager of a corporation by which he is owned, he flees with her across the deserts of Rhyonon. After they stop for rest and play, she spits on Korga and places on his hand a glove that acts as an epistemological and perhaps even ontological prosthetic. It allows him to bypass the damage done to his brain both before his physical birth and before his rebirth in the RAT center.

> After the ride there was another station, another shower. The man who ushered the hundreds of rats who'd been collected here into the hangar, under water nozzles along the ceilings and walls, stopped him long enough to say 'Jeeze! You look like you ain't been washed since you got to the Institute! The rat cage in back of the polar station, though it had been disinfected and deodorized once a month, had not had any water for washing rats. After the shower they were issued more clothes. The ones he'd been given back at the Institute had, down at the polar station, come apart, bit by bit, first at the places they'd been too tight, then all over, now a sleeve falling off, now a pants leg torn away: for the last year he and the other porters had done their work naked. He was fed from another tough. (24-25)

Korga rehearses the iteration of his own stupidity as he is both schooled and cleansed forces the issue of how and why the rather simple procedure of knowing knowledge is so viciously repressed within our own society. Once one enters into a state of radical relativism in which neither the social nor the scientific can be taken for granted. For example, the natural dominance of man is superseded by the obviousness of woman's ascendancy, and once even our most basic Earth and human centeredconceits are scrubbed from our language, the common and essential structures that allow for the presumably natural dominance of some men over most women, at least at the all-important level of the discursive to unravel.

It is both strange and somehow inevitable, then, that after Korga is rescued from one form of slavery and delivered to another. Then he puts on the glove that bridges the yawning synaptic chasms that might allow him to run or fight, shuffle, lie, or engage in any one of the myriad activities by which the slave actualizes his knowledge of knowledge. His understanding of the prevarication and violence that tie together top and bottom in their falsely natural hierarchies. He becomes the only known survivor of the destroyed Rhyonon. As the Web agents descend into one of the great woman-produced tunnels of the burned planet. One wonders at the incredible amount of energy and expertise they expend in saving Korga, blinded and trapped below a fallen girder, his leg nearly severed, his mind accepting this latest tragedy with no more pathos than an infant removed from the nourishing breast.

> Our survivor was also blind. But we got our survivor bubbled, seated, aerated, and suspensored. In the midst of sealing up the plastic shield over the stretcher, there was some ghastly, basso grunt that threatened to topple towers and shatter eardrums – a human groan, but to us, thanks to the drugs, five octaves lower than uttered. Then we were

> pushing the stretcher along and up between broken ledges. The survivor was, by now, being monitored and observed by twelve hundred other rescue workers still searching and quartering Rhyonon's steaming, stormsourced surface, looked for others with one added grain of hope lent by our success. (194-195)

As they rescue Korga from disaster, part of what the spiders presumably hope to accomplish is a restabilization of the upward flow of value described by several scholars as one of the primary tasks of style setters within neoliberal society. Moreover, the fact that they work so hard to reconstruct Korga to repair his leg, to fit him with artificial eyes, and most importantly to place on his great, ugly hands the rings that will allow him to re-enter the self-consciousness that we most often refer to as civilization, rings originally crafted for the vicious, imperious, world shattering tyrant, VondramachOkk. They also work to control him, to de-sestablish the wilderness and self referentiality.

> We set the survivor's waking for an hour after our own the next day. Rest is still the best cure for that kind of bodily trauma: new leg, new eyes. We came into the rotunda of the rescue station here, wondering if the pale blue walls and the wall window, beyond which sprawled only lunar schist and craters, were really conductive to the best revival. We'd done enough to determine that we had no minor prenatal brain damage that may have been due to potassium starvation in the bearing parent. But neural paths had been established by normal growth to compensate. We had neither a genius nor an idiot on our hands. That we knew. How did we go about telling someone in the huge range we

> humans have generally set out for ourselves as normal that their world is ...gone? (198-199)

Although many scholars of Delany's generation have been rightly impressed by the historical and sociological interventions of Orlando Patterson. Particularly his naming of the phenomenon of social death, that awkward reality in which the slave becomes indispensable to the functioning of society to the extent that the liberal recognition of innate rights and responsibilities is suspended. It is not that the slave is the only subject who experiences social death, or knowledge repressed within itself.

Thus, the half-life hawked by the nation's increasingly desperate pundits is imagined rather explicitly as a return from the dead, a cleanly effected resurrection. As Korga is raised up from below the scorched surface of Rhyonon, his unearthing creates him as a sort of thinking woman's zombie, the figure who like the neoliberal's respectable homosexual has had all that messy prehistory finally ripped away. So that she might properly enter into one of the manically, mechanically repetitive discursive fields that we encumber with the clumsy labels and masks of civilization. Korga cannot become either a desiring or desired subject within society until he has been cleansed of woman's funky stink, until his body has been smashed. His brain fried, and his eyes plucked out so that his knowing and seeing become extensions of his forced and enforced capitulation to the violences of those more civilized beings. Those architects of power and knowledge who have presumably returned him to a civilized, manufactured life.

> We may be dealing with neurological or psychological upset, any combination of the two, and at any level of resolution. After several hand signals, indicating hope and despair in her own religion. Ynn

> depressed a small pedal: and the survivor's eyes closed. The knees bent. The metal floor tipped back to topple the figure into the tub, while the drains reversed to become gargling tributaries. As the body bobbed about, we went through a dozen access catalogues, had a dozen GI programs erased from our minds, and took on some thirty more between us. And we remapped the survivor. (203)

It is within this strange and wasteful scheme of organizing cultures and societies that Delany structures his beautiful lamentations and that the officials of the Web, the spiders, perform their presumably selfless acts of social recovery. They find Korga so abjectly nullified that he defies logic, the basic process of desirous rivalry, and they immediately begin their desperate attempts at rehabilitation. Korga can only be seen in the worlds the Web control as the marker of a sort of previously unknown border. One must be traversed if only because its unknown, unknowing awkwardness testifies to troughs of unrealized value that is the very duty of the modern subject to uncover and despoil.

> The survivor raised both hands and, with two thick and awkward forefingers, rubbed away the juices from each lid in a single downward motion. The tub began to tip, and Ynn automatically stepped forward to give a hand, that clearly, as our healed creature stepped forward among the railings and handholds now, was not needed. Ynn said sharply: Who are you? Tell us your name. We want to help you, in the most common of Rhyonon's six languages. We knew that twenty-four percent of Rhyonon's population was bilingual, with the most common language either the first or second tongue of that three quarters. (200)

The Web spiders contact MarqDyeth, the exceptionally cultured subject whose voice structures the second and largest part of *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand*. When they hail Marq, who is in his position as an Industrial Diplomat is travelling abroad a spaceship. And is therefore, quite literally, high-ranking spider Japril's explanations for the spider's expensive communications are shockingly scientific. That is to say, General Information, a complex process of information storage and retrieval that wired individuals on participating planets can access through thought alone. Marqand Korga are each other's perfect erotic objects. They match out to seven and nine decimal points respectively. And here is the fact that Delany anticipates the coming of our own preoccupations with the presumably limitless information available through the Internet is so often mentioned within the scant criticism on the novel.

> Now what could Rat Korga mean, give me a world? Marta asked, from where she leaned against the freeform aluminium decorations set out from the wall. Hearing our bootheels click the plastiplex, Rat dropped hand from mouth, glanced back at us. "What world will you give me?" then turned back to squat, examining an inset floorheater beneath its plastic grill. "We spent the next days, Marq, trying to find one in which Rat could, with help, fit – one that could fit Rat. We decided Marq...finally, on yours.' The relation's very simple. Listening to someone speaking towards someplace you're both facing has always been hard for me. But people have stranger customs than that with which to decorate what they consider important statements. Besides being the single survivor of Rhyonon, Korga happens to be your perfect erotic object out to about seven decimal places. (224-225)

Clearly the spiders hope or believe that the promise and danger indicated by Korga's survival might be properly directed by pairing him with an extremely competent student and practitioner of the narratological. Indeed, the work of MarqDyeth, Korga's perfect erotic object. As an Industrial Diplomat, Marq must translate and transcribe the discursive codes of the many alien societies that meet within the delicate equilibrium of the Web. His job is to establish inoffensive modes of communication by making the other knowable, substituting inert formalism where once there was a messy subjectivity. As his name suggests, he literally marks death. Moreover, this process is so wondrous or irritating to Delany that he gives readers clues as to his meaning throughout Stars in *My Pocket Like Grains of Sand*.

> I look his hand. Hello. My name is MarqDyeth. I'm Seven Forty-six of us still around, saved during a population drive on my home world. A to Z: AA is MM, and Qaw is Eighteen. Would you believe, not one of us works in Science and maybe 1 in 20 is an electrical mechanic. This isn't a mixed bag, kids, though we all try to pretend it is. She touched an electrode to some metal plate, so that it sparked and snapped — and we'd all be gone, except the dozen or so of us who could get to the nearest ship. She pulled a strap of her coveralls over one hard and dirty shoulder. Ten thousand people gone like that with only a few hundred getting out. (100–101)

The reader encounter Marq on the planet Nepsy with an alien client. A gelatinous figure who constantly forms and deforms herself into and out of a semiautonomous whole. Later, at a high-level Web conference on a space station seven light-years from the planet Krush, a bored Marq proposes to one of the other participants, one heavily muscled and tattooed Clym. Moreimportant still,Marq is a member of the

famous Dyeth family line, a mixed species stream that makes its home on the planet Velm. In Velm, Marq's home was in a largely underground city named, logically enough, Morgre.

> Within seventy-two hours, my friend, if we still know each other, I am going to take you by force, chain you in a special chamber I have already equipped for the purpose, and do some very painful things to your body that will probably – the chances are four out of five – result in your death, and certainly in your permanent disfigurement, mental and physical. We live in a medically sophisticated age. You have to work very hard to permanently disfigure any body. (126)

As a character Marq is no less a figure than Delany himself with his own family's history as motivation. Marq's impressive civilization is based on an awareness of the central role violence and death play in all discursive processes. The point is driven home by the fact that Marq's family stream and the ancient structure that represents and encompasses them, Dyethshorne were established by Mother GyldaDyeth, herself a long-dead and presumably favoured associate of VondramachOkk, that vicious, omnipotent mother whose rings trigger Korga's own obsessive reanimation. One should not consume the products of one's interlocutor's body. One should avoid dangerous sexual play. The properly socialized individual is he who consistently articulates a preordained, prescribed desire, one cleansed of all its kinky dangers, literally scrubbed to death.

> My seven-times great grandmother, GyldaDyeth, came to Velm when she was nineteen standard years old on a colony ship of eight thousand from a world called Klaven that I have never seen, but that a goodly

> number of the inhabitants at the time thought was on the verge of Cultural Fugue. VondramachOkk and her entourage were en route from one star to another, when she stopped at Arwin's relay station. In spite of her security, she and Gylda met. The middle-aged tyrant was much impressed with the young woman colonist and hired her right there. Gylda worked for Vondramach over the next half – dozen years, travelling with her and without her about the galaxy, with a freedom that, from all reports, was rather like yours with your government's gift of unlimited space-fare. At the end of her services – Vondramach gave her Dyethshome! (159-160)

Here, Delany introduces his readers the notion of driving the past and sketches his long-dead characters, Vondramach and GyldaDyeth. Those omnipotent, law-giving mothers whose presence suffuses every aspect of his later novel. Among the two characters, the one a powerful, aging ruler of many worlds, the other not so young apprentice on the eve of taking her leave from her frightening self-aware employer. They meet outside Vondeamach's stronghold of Omegahelm to formalize. They speak to each other, as directly as one imagines is possible, about the viciousness, indeed the death-dealing, that underwrites the relationship of mentor to apprentice, mother to child.

The radical figure here is not, as so many suggest, he who is obsessed with death, but instead that figure incapable of obscuring some extreme, obsessive, improperly desirous will to live. Thus, the spiders must find someone to contain him, to bring about the death of that unknown and inexplicable desire that is so threatening yet so seemingly necessary to the functioning of the well-structured society. It is not surprising that the spiders introduce Korga to Marq by placing him among the dozen

as so students, human and evelmi, who arrive at Dyethshome to study the ancient structures and rituals contained by the great castle-like edifice.

In fact, the web spiders remove Korga from Velm and Marq after that last disastrous dinner at Dyethshome in their efficient, ceremonies manner because they understand that they have failed in their civilizing mission. Korga, the newly freed slave, seems both alive and surprisingly funky. His actions neither continue nor encourage the go back and get it ideological and epistemological obsessions of either the Web or of our own far too death obsessed society. "'Marq,' she said, 'I'm sorry. But our experiment didn't work. Marta, Ynn, and I conferred, and we all agreed: it was just too dangerous. That's why we took Rat away. She had to go, Marq." (453)

Here, Delany clearly portraits how technology leads man to death and rebirth. It is a pessimistic view to argue that death renders life meaningless. Today, humans experience a number of escapisms and eloping from death that seem to ascertain to this pessimism. Such occurrences are a symptom of an existential vacuum that modern man is gradually losing. This existential vacuum is the loss of death to life reference. According to Delany, Life and death are the facts of the same reality; Life. Life and death should be looked at with hope and optimism. With birth life is brought forth, but with death life is not ended but is led a new plenitude. Though it is at the heart of every acting man to live a meaningful life, death cannot be penumbral in this mission.

Chapter Five

Summation

Starboard Wine's first essay, *The Necessity of Tomorrows*, begins with the autobiographical note, "an attempt to sketch out one lane along one of the many possible highways into the Science Fiction World." (12) Within such a conception, science fiction becomes a different way of reading and a different way of thinking. Delany stretches well beyond the borders of science fiction. Science fiction is made different from other texts by the play of its references, the techniques of conceiving and writing texts that utilize this play, and the habits of reading required for such texts to yield the most meaning. These differences do not determine quality. They are present in the best science fiction. In general, science fictional ideas generate when a combination of chance and the ordinary suggests some distortion of the current and ordinary that can conceivably be rationalized as a future projection. Samuel R. Delany insists that science fiction is not about the future; it uses the future as a narrative convention to present significant distortions of the present.

Delany came of age at a time when the genre was indeed characterized by gee whiz futurism, machismo adventuring, and white, heterosexual heroes. Delany's novels and stories have taken place in outer space and the future and the other alien worlds. His plots are speculative: the race to harvest an energy source from the sun, the struggles of a libertarian society on one of Neptune's moons, the plight of slaves in a pre-industrial world of magic and barbarism.

Delany is a rare combination of imaginative writer and articulate critic. As both of these operations are informed by the same imagination, they are reflexive, mutually illuminating. In fact, probably the best way to understand the complex

functioning of his novels is to examine the same process at work in his critical utterances. Delany's works are important in their own right as well, for they expand the traditional vistas of science fiction considerably. If extrapolation is to become what Delany calls speculation, there must be awareness of the dual role of language in this world building process. To Delany writing a science fiction novel is a verbal activity that is simultaneously visionary and analytical. In this sense, his claims are far reaching and revolutionary. Indeed, he turns the tables on the defenders of the mainstream. He sees his chosen genre as the one, among all modern forms, most supremely suited to this structuralist task.

For Delany, literary creation is essentially linguistic activity. At the base of Delany's comments on the nature and role of fiction is the seminal perception of Saussurian linguistics, that the relationship between word and object is arbitrary, neither determined nor fixed. This idea has had a great impact, both on the study of myth, and on that of literature. The process of mythmaking is turned around here. The virtuality of myth shifts the emphasis from cause to effect. It is not an object but its various projections in time and space. Delany's work is full of myth, race, love and relationships.

Delany has made interesting conjectures not only on the nature of Science Fiction but on its origins as well. One of the most intriguing is the possibility of a relationship between American Science Fiction and French symbolism. There are, of course, real affinities between symbolism and Delany's structuralist idea of science fiction. More than this, there is perhaps a direct symbolist influence on Delany himself. There are many different symbolist activities; but the strain that leads from Rimbaud to the surrealists seems most fascinating to Delany.

At a glance, Delany's fictional universe is similar and yet different. First, there is neither history nor cycle here. Each world creation is unique and self-contained. The relation between them, such as it exists, is more a lateral one of association and displacement than a vertical one of analogy. Further, the interior of each world is substantially different, marked by instability, and permanent change rather than change in permanence. Delany's work may seem, highly stylized or lushly ornate. This rigidity is merely a facade. All the various verbal screens, the disquisitions on symbolic logic, blend into a basic weave of imagery that is far more dynamic than static.

Delany's early novels may rely heavily on incantation. The later works, however, show that, if Delany twice felt the temptation of preciosity. His best novels are rather semi-precious works. First, in a series of adventures in time and space culminating in *Nova,* he embraces the heroic epic. Then, after a period of experimentation which may in the long run prove to be transitional, he turns this basic pattern of the quest in the opposite direction, inward rather than out. If the conventional patterns upon which *Nova* is built are those of initiation and adventure.

The novels in this *Nova* cycle are especially preoccupied with myth. Delany's approach to myth also has a tendency to run in both constructive and destructive directions at once. This ambiguity and tensions is built into the modern view of myth itself. Writers like Joseph Campbell and Northrop Frye, on one hand, believe the basic to all human endeavor and all literary genres alike is the myth of the quest, the endless search for meaning in human existence. On the other side, they state that no specific cultural variation of this monomyth is binding. These patterns describe, but do not prescribe, human behavior. In no way, then, is a man fated to relive any given mythic paradigm. If that man is to remain human, and recognizable as a hero, he is obliged to

relive them. Contrary to what it may seem, Delany's universe remains a human one. Delany has a fascination with cyborgs, catmen, and other para-human forms. Once again, this relationship between human and non-human, man and system, functions as a dynamic series of displacements and balances.

Equally evident in Delany's fiction is a desire to depict a culturally and racially heterogeneous future that distinguished his fiction in a genre where the norms of the white American middle class was often presented as a kind of default even when representing allegedly alien cultures. Some writers made a diligent effort to present a multiracial future, notably Robert Heinlein, who impressed the teenage Delany for the casual way that the main character was a person of color. Delany never depicts a monoculture: his characters are always situated by language, history, and class. Lorq Von Ray, the crazed space captain who serves as the anti-hero of *Nova*. The crew that Lorq commands is also racially mixed, with characters who, in inadequate shorthand form, can be described as African, Asian, or Romani.

Samuel Delany's vision of future and possible worlds is a vision in which race, however subtly manifested, is as emblematically significant as any of the other concerns his work treats. In *Nova's* Lorq, Delany has rendered one of his most commanding signs denoting the significance of black folk in his speculative future. His black characters may be heroic, or they may merely assist the protagonist.

Delany believes that technology has always run in both constructive and destructive directions. From the context of technology's failure, Delany believes there are things that technology can and cannot do to make men and women more human. The technology that is exhibited in *Nova* is excellent, but there are essential human assurances that it cannot provide which both affect the emotions and condition the

will. Although technology makes it possible for man to live productively and comfortably, in *Nova* greed and contests for power destroy Prince and Ruby Red. Although, the technological power that economic monopoly industry gives him makes him selfish and indulgent of his passions.

Delany's novel *Nova* is considered as one of the major forerunners of the cyberpunk movement. The novel has always been popular with readers. In this novel, Delany steps aside from his space opera to describe unconventional technologies. He also presents a future history of work and social relations. He speculates on the cultural differences between societies on planets.

Samuel R. Delany's *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand,* as a novel it performs delightful and confounding acts of destabilization, challenging normative understandings of race, myth, language and death. There are still many who persist in thinking of science fiction only in terms of its most simplistic instances. The fact that such a reductive notion of science fiction is based on ignorance, especially ignorance of work done during the past four decades. It is necessary to say that, science fiction is capable of nothing less than the general range of conceptual, structural, and stylistic experimentation. Many works could be cited to support this contention, but none done so more emphatically, than *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand.*

Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand is the most truly galactic novel ever written. Science fiction had known nominally galactic settings before: Isaac Asimov's Galactic Empire, for instance, and the Federation of the Star Trek saga and Delany has clearly taken the pressure of both. But no author before Delany has made such a serious, brilliant, and thorough going effort to imagine the strictly unimaginable degree of difference and diversity that a galactic civilization must logically entail. The

galaxy in *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand* contains over six thousand worlds inhabited by intelligent beings. It is impossible to display, directly, more than a tiny fraction of the life in this immensity. But, Delany, through a use of detail rarely paralleled in modern fiction, succeeds in conveying an intuitive sense of what it might feel like to live amid such literally awesome variety and complexity.

The novel solicits one's active participation in making sense of the universe it has created. The protagonist, MarqDyeth's profession is to interpret the cultures of the galaxy for one another. *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand* attains an epistemological sublime. But the sublimity of the novel is political too. If the setting is almost unthinkably alien, this same setting nonetheless exists in the manner of all the best science fiction. It is not only about diversity, but also about relations of class and power. Especially such relations are inflected by differences of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, myth and death.

The bond between Marq and his perfect erotic object, Rat Korga, who comes from a background that is in many ways about as different from Marq's own as the galaxy affords, is mightily estranging, right down to the unfamiliar diction that the text employs to describe their lovemaking. At the same time, though, the story of Marq and Rat beautifully illustrates the novel's own maxim that the alien is always constructed out of the familiar. Like the greatest love stories, this one lacks a happy ending.

The encounter between the slave Rat Korga from a destroyed planet and the Industrial Diplomat, MarqDyeth, interstellar traveler and cultural sophisticate tells a story of desire technology and political manipulation. Rat attracts attention precisely as the survivor of the loss of a world, a status that renders him an object of interest, of

desire, for both the populace at large and for the Web. It drawn to his very world lessness as an unforeseen obstacle to convenient, controllable classification. Rat Korgacan be seen as an example of what Giorgio Agamben refers to as the homo sacer. He is literally so in his former status as an unwitting slave. He has to be literally remade technologically and re-worlded culturally in order to banish this unacceptable indeterminacy.

The novel traces, through the self-reflexive, other embracing but still endlessly surprised eyes of MarqDyeth, how that process enables him to tentatively discover his own agential role in acquiring a viable identity through the socio-cultural modes and means at hand. Delany pits the conscious cultural and racial chauvinism of the Thants against the uncomprehending Dyeths, in a formal dinner scene that itself becomes an example of non-natural cultural singularities. It all revolves around Rat Korga, the former slave runs up against the intellectual enslavement inherent to certain forms of culture.

The protagonist Rat Korga, seems never to have a home. Once he undergoes Radical Anxiety Termination, he is sent as a slave to various unpleasant stations, without choice or even the ability to be concerned about his situation. At one point he gains access to a library and to the ability to read. This should be a liberating experience; one would expect it to make a difference to him. He is recaptured. He is re-enslaved, and his life goes on as before. But Korga demonstrates the real meaning of homelessness when his entire world destroys itself, apparently the result of cultural fugue.

MarqDyeth is a sophisticated interstellar traveller, frequently away from home. Every planet he visits seems obsessed by the danger of Cultural Fugue, that

ultimate threat to security. On the Velm, even the physical fabric of the residence he occupies appears unreal. As an Industrial diplomat, he is schooled in people and their ways. Marq;s job is Dyethshome docent.

Delany constructs myth through the cyborg politics. The cyborg is the science fiction avatar of a post-modernist impulse to dismantle and remodel human identity. When the mutilated and clinically dead Rat is rescued and resurrected from the charred remains of his destroyed planet Rhyonon. He can be interpreted variously as a Christ árisen from his tomb, or Eurydice climbing out of Hell. The individual has been biomedically altered from what was once a presumably normative subjectively. And as a result of that cyborg invention, he falls short of the autonomy that defines the normative subject, man, the rat and not quite human. That Rhyonon is destroyed through means that are never fully understood only completes this circuit. Indeed, Delany is relentless in his evocation of epistemology as a sort of dialectics of soiling and cleansing.

Delany's both the novels *Nova* and *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand,* explores human identity in various ways. He uses myth to explore the choices his characters have as they venture on their quest. The characters learn about themselves and change. Through this change, they gain better control over their lives and the power to affect others. Delany uses myths to prove that they are still valid with regard to predicting human behavior, as in *Nova*. Next it is to prove that while the essence of the myth is still valid, the context can change to fit the times. In *Nova* the protagonist lives out two myths: Prometheus and Achilles. The decision of the protagonist to search for the elusive element called Illyrion gives him self-knowledge. This knowledge enables him to manipulate the situation to his advantage so that by the end

of the novel he has annihilated his opponents and ensured the survival of his own empire--but at the cost of great pain for himself.

Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand, a science fiction masterpiece is about the inexplicability of sexual attractiveness, and a story that foresaw the World Wide Web. Its central issues - technology, globalization, gender, sexuality, and multiculturalism - have only become more pressing with the passage of time. The novel's raises the question as to what it will do to the individuals involved, to the city they inhabit, to their geosector, and to their entire world society, especially when one is an illiterate worker, the sole survivor of a world destroyed by "cultural fatigue," and the other is - you!" Thenovel, amongst other defining pairings of the present, deals with the familiar and the alien, the singular and the multiple, identity and diversity, information and knowledge, the world and the global. The nature of science fiction as a vehicle to explore the here and now in the guise of the distant in time and space is amply rewarded in the novel. The worlds Delany creates allow him to observe and comment on human diversity and the difficulty of cross-cultural communication. In addition to an analysis of power politics and the control of information, the novel presents a futuristic critique of slavery and its economic and sexual implications.

Delany proves that the characters in his novels have control of their destiny. If in fact Delany is describing a universal human condition, it offers the reader that he or she can also choose the path of his life. He can choose to follow, change, or reject the pattern before him. The analysis thus explores the crisis of human identity through culture, race and myth and validates the title "Exploration in Human Identity: A Study of Samuel R. Delany's *Nova* and *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand*.

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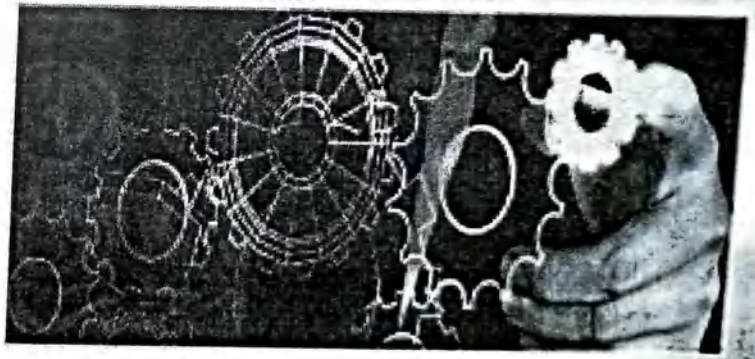

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Reconstruction of Female Uniqueness in Anita Nair's *The Lilac House*

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This paper examines to explore the elements of feminism in Anita Nair's *The Lilac House*. It with a number of problems that are faced by the women in the society such as female foeticide, discrimination and dependence on family members. It also explains how they overcome such to move on in their lives. Feminism lies not on worries and depression but on happiness and ations. Fighting against male dominated society has become old as women have paved their make things better in their own way without any hesitation. Using it as a tool, the protagonist ther female characters overcome the hurdles after the betrayal of their husbands. This paper plores the freedom of the women to fulfill herself as a human being.

rds: **Betrayal, female foeticide, marriage, patriarchy, self-discovery.**

Among the various Indian writers in English, Anita Nair is easily accepted as a proficient specialist genre of fiction. Anita Nair herself does not associate her writing with the term feminism. She refrains alling herself feminist but her writings essentially deals with women from different strata of life and llective struggle to establish themselves in a male dominated society. While Anita Nair does not nself feminist she also does not like her female protagonist to depend on male for support. Akhila in *Coupe*, Radha in *Mistress* and Meera in *The Lilac House* struggle to find their place in a patriarchal

In her works, Anita Nair mainly focuses on the real human condition on the earth. At the same time, rtful in interlocking her stories in the Indian scenario, unique in presenting her conceptions and ve in sharing the experiences of language. All the novels of Anita Nair are surrounded in Indian and the characters and settings are fundamentally Indian. Her stories may be said to be philosophical as practical, based on the structure of Indian middle class families. In this context, she displays a

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mind and observation skill with which she details stories depicting the problem of Indian women, in manner.

The feminist perspective in the novel is marked by male-controlled hegemony in the structure of family. In the patriarchal society, women are colonized, which results into the relationship of ality leading to injustice. Now in the modern world though education and political rights appear to be oped, patriarchy has still got its hold in the domestic life of women. They have to struggle to assert selves through self-discovery and self-reliance. Simon de Beauvoir in her work *The Second Sex* says,

> Women is superior to man, namely: *Materially:* because Adam was made of clay, Eve from one of Adam's ribs. *In terms of place:* because Adam was created outside of paradise, Eve in paradise. *In terms of conception:* because woman conceived God, something man couldn't do. *In terms of appearance:* because Christ after his death appeared to a woman, namely Magdalene. *In terms of glorification:* because a woman was glorified above the choir of angels, namely blessed Mary. (366)

Anita Nair's novel *The Lilac House* was published in 2010. The novel was set in India and traces the section of lives of two individuals undergoing devasting personal tragedies. Meera is the protagonist of novel. Jack is another person who plays important role in the novel. The story is narrated in Meera's and is point of view. Both the characters are flushed out by their memories of a time not so long ago. It also ays how family background is responsible for the women subordination and suppression in the society.

The Lilac House provides perfect example of victimized women in patriarchal society. In an analysis man woman relationship, the male characteristics were coupled with mental thoughts and positive activity. the other hand, a woman is regarded as dutiful person. In the olden days women is completed traditional, educated, and superstitious and confined. So woman has become narrow and controlled. They are known of the outside world. A woman is cut off from the dynamic world.

The novel has a strong feminine flavor where the author portrays female protagonist as a strong oman. Marriage is an integral part in women's life. Educated women in India try to assert their dividuality though they are constrained in their family life by the traditional patriarchal culture. They are o constrained in the quest for freedom when there are children to look after, since they think that children their responsibility. Simon de Beauvoir in her work *The Second Sex* says, "Women is no longer passed m one clan to another through marriage: she is born into and annexed to her husband's; he buys her like ead of cattle or a slave, he imposes his domestic divinities on her: and the children she conceives belong her spouse's family" (270).

Meera, the protagonist is forty-four years old, well-educated housewife, married to a corporate band and has two children, a daughter and a son. She was happily submerged in the role of corporate

wife, who is happy to be dependent on her husband. Evelyn Shyndya in *Empowered Woman in Anita Lessons in Forgetting* aptly defines Indian womanhood as, "Women in India who feel proud that they are protected by their husbands without realizing that they are making themselves helpless" (84).

Meera feels like a queen in her domestic world. She was unaware of her own individuality, her world and her own independent world. She was married to Giri, who hails from a comparatively poor background. Giri married Meera under the impression that the family owned the beautiful Lilac house, but in fact was only on a lease with them. After their marriage Giri stayed in Meera's house. But Meera's mother and grandmother, even Meera expected Giri to move to his own apartment. But Giri refuses to move out of the Lilac house.

Meera is a woman, who feels happy with what she gets. But she is not satisfied with her husband. And one day Giri vanishes from her life, leaving her and his children. She feels the sorrow and pain of being betrayed. When she suspected Giri after having an affair, she tried to console her self-thinking that he was not a compulsive philanderer.

> Besides, Giri is not Zeus. He isn't a compulsive philanderer, merely a middle aged man who has had his head turned. Meera tells herself, don't panic, who else can offer him this cornucopia of elegance? Which other woman can lay his table as I do, or make a home for him as I do? The felicity of our lives maybe shadowed, but will never be trained or violated. Giri will not risk losing any of this. (74-75)

Meera is compelled to look after her family's financial and basic needs. So she emerges as a new woman. She manages to stand on her own feet, finds a job as a research Assistant to a Professor of Cyclones in the University of Florida. Nair portrays the character of Meera as an organized person. She does not have any identity for her own, because she assumes different roles as a daughter, granddaughter, wife and mother. The absence of Meera's identity reveals sad reality of position of women in India.

Jack on the other hand was nurtured with feelings for India but he does not consider the international life his wife Nina was looking for. He unravels the mystery behind his daughter's coma state and finds that her life is indeed highly commendable. The self - actualization of Jack originates from the spirit of the traumatic past. "Vicious as ahead of monsters, it razors ring of violent storms. Sometimes twice as many. It is where the danger awaits. For the eye walls winds have no soul, know no mercy" (241).

Smriti, the daughter of Jak and Nina resides with her father after the legal separation of her parents. Inspired by her father's Indian stories, she comes to India in pursuit of her higher studies. She became an active member of the forum. She was inspired by the slogans of the forum like "The dying daughters of India need you" (153). This slogan creates awareness on dowry, burning the women and female foeticide in India.

...r an awareness campaign she goes to her father's village, Minjikapuram in Tamil Nadu with ... Rishi Soman. When she visits a hospital there for treating glass injury, she was shocked to see ...pregnant women who came for scanning to find the gender of the foetus. If it is a girl child, they do ...either willingly or forcefully. Smriti finds it illegal.

'It's illegal!' Smriti's voice rose. They do it here. Why do you think we came here? The scan doctor is not from this town. They bring him from somewhere else, and he tells us if we ask him, the woman whispered. All these pregnant women, they come from various parts of the district. Do you think there are no hospitals where they live? It's because of the scan doctor. (292)

...Owing to interest in social awareness programs she becomes a victim. She tries to collect proof ...all these illegal actions for making a report. So she meets a woman, Chinnathayi whose daughter ...the nursing home after an abortion. Smriti wants some paper regarding this issue from Chinnathayi. ...Srinivasan who is responsible for the hospital along with his men pass a wrong message to Smriti ...Chinnathayi's name and calls her to meet at sea beach. There three men destroyed her. She becomes ...onless, pathetic and frozen figure. Smriti, a girl brought up in the United States has gone into the ...es when identifying her with the fellow Indian women. She considers it as her duty to remove the ... injustice. Maya Vinay in *Interrogating Caste and Gender Anita Nair's Fiction: Prestige Books ...ational* says, "Smriti in *The Lilac House* is a victim of such a mistaken identity. Men in India are still ...pped to face such a kind of modernity, which is a shoot of progressive Western education and ...nging" (118-119).

The next character is Kala Chithi. She is Jak's aunt, who lives with her husband Ambi. She has a ...hair which attracts her family and also her husband. Her husband was impressed by her long hair and ...es her. And also, he gets promise from her that she should not cut her hair without his permission. But ... disobeys his words and cuts her hair without his knowledge. This incident causes some ...derstanding between Kala and Ambi. So he decides to break their relationship. Ambi is not ready to ...e her and he decides to marry another girl. Kala also decides to go away from him. Before she leaves ... she cuts her hair at the nape of her neck and gives it to Ambi. "Before I went, I cut my hair at the nape ...y neck. A long braid woven with Jasmine and Kanakambaram.' this is all you ever wanted of me. Keep ...nd let me go.' I said, walking out" (206).

If Kala is given the rights to cut her hair at the right time without being afraid of her father, she ...ld have ended up with the person who loves her instead of loving her long hair. Meera and Kala face ...ame fate in their marital life. Kala decides to leave her husband and defies her tyrannical behavior. ...ets an example for modern women by asserting her individuality. After the abandonment by her ...band, Kala becomes an independent, strong woman and is able to think of her own life.

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This paper portrays the condition and status of women and how they suffer in the patriarchal society out having any identity on their own. It also reveals how they overcome their problems. They rebel ost their men in search for freedom and identity. They challenge their victimization and find a new ace of power between their men. They strongly believe in conformity. Women strive hard to get their dentity as a better position by shifting their thought from why to why not.

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CULTURAL STUDIES IN ALICE WALKER'S *EVERYDAY USE*

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ABSTRACT

This paper conveys Alice Walker's passionate feelings about preserving and valuing the African-American culture and heritage. It also expresses the importance of culture and heritage through the story of a mother who was called as Mama and her two daughters Dee and Maggie. It takes place in 1860s, which was a time when some African Americans become a part of groups such as black nationalists. This story was narrated through the eyes of Mama who realizes that one of her daughter Dee becomes a member of the black nationalists and Maggie who feels about their culture and tradition. African American culture was also known as Black American culture. It refers to the contributions of African Americans to the culture of the United States. The identity of African-American culture was rooted in the historical experience of the African-American people.

African-American culture was rooted between the cultures of West and Central Africa and the Anglo-Celtic culture that has influenced and modified its development in the American South. Although slavery restricted the ability of African-Americans to practice their original cultural traditions. So, they modified their culture with European cultures and other cultures such as Native Americans. Finally, African-American identity was established during the slavery period, producing a self-motivated culture to have an impact on American culture.

Many rituals and ceremonies were a significant part of their ancestral culture. Some West African societies believed that spirits dwelled in their surrounding nature. From that nature they treated their environment with heedful care. They also believed that the source of spiritual life existed after death. After liberation, African-American traditions continued to flourish as distinctive tradition or radical innovations in music, art, literature, religion and also in other fields.

The greatest influence of African cultural practices on European culture was found below the Mason Dixon in the American South. But for many years African-American culture was developed separately from European American culture, because of slavery and the persistence of racial discrimination in America as well as African-American slave descendants desire to create and maintain their own traditions. Today, African-American culture has become a significant part of American culture and at the same time it remainsas a distinct cultural body.

Alice Walker was an American novelist, short story writer, poet and social activist. She was the youngest child in her family. Her love of poetry and her writing in universal combined with the passion in her heart to establish equal rights for African-American, especially to African-American women. That makes her writing as a exceptional stamp. Her style takes freedom structurally. Her writing was molded together as a beautiful poetic and allows her creativity to shine over. At the same time she ingeniously weaves in themes that hold a lot of weight and have the quality of raising awareness to the issues that the African-American people struggled to be standard and valued.

Walker was aware of the difficulties that African-American women faced in expressing their creativity through forms of art. Mary Helen Washington, a professor of English at the University of Maryland and the writer of African-American literature, expressed her views in her essay, "An essay on Alice Walker". This essay was included in the book named *Alice Walker: Critical Perspective Past and Present*, Washington says that, "Walker was aware of, from observation and direct experience, the prejudices against black women, and pain, violence, poverty and oppression, being the result of this prejudice"(Washington 40).

Because of this complication for black women to be the artists, it was essential for Walker to express their creativity for them as a channel through which black women can show the world their creativity. Barbara Christian who was the professor of African-American studies at the University of California, supports this in her essay *Novels for Everyday Use* as

> "The exploration, then, of the process of personal and social growth out of horror and waste is a motif that characterizes Walker's works. It is her [the creativity of the black women is essential to this process" (367)

Alice Walker was blinded in her right eye by a BB gun pellet while playing with her brother, during summer of 1952. This accident reflects in her work *Everyday Use* clearly. The character of Maggie represents Alice Walker's life indirectly. In *Everyday Use* Maggie was burnt in a house fire. Here Alice makes a relation between her life and this character in this short story. Alice Walker spends her childhood in a racist environment. Her mother supports to complete her studies in schools and college. The she wrote critically acclaimed novel *The Colour Purple*in 1982. She has won the National book Award and the Pulitzer prize for fiction. Her short story *Everyday Use* can be found in many popular anthologies of American fiction and poetry. She continues to be a prominent social and political activist. She was still alive and lives in America.

The title designates to the quilts, metaphorically refers to the basic conflict in the story. The phrase *Everyday Use* refers how the character Mama wants the quilts to be used. To her the quilts are useful objects, rather than as tradition to be hung up and looked at. So, the title shows the conflict in the short story *Everyday Use*. It refers to the conflict between the old fashioned everyday different types of people like the mother and people like Wangero who has all these new ideas. Using quilting is a metaphor for the creative legacy that African Americans inherited from their maternal ancestors.

Putting an African American women's voices at the centre of the narrative was the first time. So *Everyday Use* anticipated the focus of an entire generation of black women writers. Dee declaims her past and forms a new identity for herself. On the other hand, Maggie accepts her past. She does not try to change her circumstances. Alice walker ties the story into many aspects of her life. Maggies's character was a good example. Maggie was burnt in a house fire as a child and she was left with scars on her arms and legs. Likewise, Alice was also blinded in one eye after an accident with a BB gun. Both of them feels strange with the people around them after their accidents. Maggie's mother was a farmer. Alice's parents were sharecroppers. Maggie appreciates her heritage and what it meant. Whereas Alice Walker was a civil rights activist sticking up for her heritage every day.

In *Everyday use*, the author uses the items of Mama;s house which represents the culture and tradition. When Dee arrives at her mother's house, she views the house as a symbol of her childhood. Then she noticed the benches. It represents the characters past because it has been in home for many years. Then she describes the dash which was made with beautiful light-yellow wood from the tree which has grown in the yard. So the

information about dash represents the history and the fact was by remembering the history, the author values culture and heritage. In other words, these items represent African American traditions and culture.

> "A yard like this is more comfortable than most people know. It is not just a yard. It is like an extended living room. When the hard clay is swept clean as a floor and the fine sand around the edges lined with tiny, irregular grooves, anyone can come and sit and look up into the elm tree and wait for the breezes that never come inside the house." (1)

In this short story, the quilts and the scenes with the quilts are the most important part. Because the author uses these quilts to portray the culture and traditions of African American heritage. This quilt represents the entire past of the family including the days of Civil War. The family's quilts were sewn by Maggie and Dee's grandmother. So, it become the subject for the family's struggle over its tradition. Dee wants to take the quilts away with her, insisting that they should be hung on the wall and preserved rather than being used.

But Mama wants to give them to Maggie, who learned to sew from her grandmother and she used it regularly. So she gave it to Maggie. Maggie ensures that the family's heritage will stay alive in the way she prefers. By using the quilts and making her own when they wear out, Maggie will add to the family's heritage rather than distancing herself from it. However the two sisters who want to have the quilt, represents different ideas to appreciate the family's heritage and their origin. Maggie sees the quilt as an everyday object and she also wants to maintain the family's traditions. But Dee wants to keep it as a piece of art to depict it as an artefact of a past life which was no longer reality for her and the African American people.

> "In both of the quilts were scraps of dresses Grandma Dee had worn fifty and more years ago. Bits and pieces of Grandpa Jarrell's Paisley shirts. And one teeny faded blue piece, about the size of a penny matchbox, that was from Great Grandpa Ezra's uniform that he wore in the Civil War. They had been pieced by Grandma Dee and then Big Dee and me had hung them on the quilt frames on the front porch and quilted them". (55)

The author also suggests that Dee's search for her heritage was artificial. Despite her education, Dee has no appreciation of her true culture. Throughout her life, she was a pretty and intelligent girl. Her attitude towards her sister and mother was negative. To Dee, her

home and her family were an embarrassment. When her house burned, she stood and watched instead of showing concern to her sister Maggie who was severely injured. Because of her selfishness she has shown herself as lacking in respect and consideration for her mother or sister. Her actions and gestures indicate that her only reason for coming home was to take things along with her. She also changed her name from Dee to Wangero LeewanikaKemanjo. By changing her name, she has attempted to break away from her family.

> "She used to read to us without pity; forcing words, lies, other folks' habits, whole lives upon us two, sitting trapped and ignorant underneath her voice. She washed us in a river of make-believe, burned us with a lot of knowledge we didn't necessarily need to know." (92)

Dee's departure shows how little she understands her family. Even though time changes as Dee explains and exemplifies, Mama and Maggie are not interested in participating in those changes. When Dee encourages Maggie to make something of herself, she was confirming her belief that her family was beneath her. But Dee fails to understand that Mama and Maggie are content as they are. If a new period began for Dee with her education, it would also begin for Mama and Maggie because their bond was closer than ever. Unlike Dee, Maggie values her heritage. She does not have the looks or the brain like Dee, but she carries with her something more valuable, which was the respect she has for her culture and heritage.

It is possible to say that the author wants to convey that culture and heritage are neither name changes nor different hair. They are related to each other. They are not something to be adopted from for the sake of a trend but it should be taught from one generation to the next generation. This concept of culture and tradition was portrayed through the quilts, which was the common symbol for heritage. Because balck women can survive only by recovering the rich heritage of their ancestors. So, both the mother and her daughter Maggie know how to quilt and they were also aware of that quilts, so that it could be kept alive. It must be put to everyday use.

WORKCITED

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Aditanar College of Arts and Science
Virapandianpatnam, Tiruchendur
(Re-accredited with "A" Grade in the third cycle by NAAC)

Certificate

This is to certify that C. SELVA KUZHANTHAT MEENAKSHI, M.Phil SCHOLAR, St. MARY'S COLLEGE participated / presented paper entitled CULTURAL STUDIES IN ALICE WALKER'S "EVERYDAY USE" at the One Day State Level Seminar on " LITERARY THEORIES: BEFORE AND AFTER" organised by the Post Graduate and Research Department of English, Aditanar College of Arts and Science, Tiruchendur held on 27th September 2019.

ADITANAR COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE ★ TIRUCHENDUR

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Redness, Tyranny and Cognizance of Xhosa nation: A Historical Reading in Zakes Mda's *The Heart of Redness*

A Dissertation submitted to

St. Mary's College (Autonomous)

Thoothukudi

Affiliated to

MANONMANIAM SUNDARANAR UNIVERSITY

in partial fulfilment of the requirements

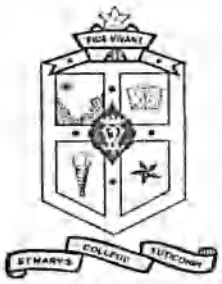
for the award of the Degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN ENGLISH

By

SHUNMUGA NARAYANI K.

(REG. NO. 19MLEN10)



RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled **Redness, Tyranny and Cognizance of Xhosa nation: A Historical Reading in Zakes Mda's *The Heart of Redness*** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is my original work and that, it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

K. Shunmuga Narayani.

SEPTEMBER 2020 **SHUNMUGA NARAYANI K**

THOOTHUKUDI

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **Redness, Tyranny and Cognizance of Xhosa nation: A Historical Reading in Zakes Mda's *The Heart of Redness*** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements of for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is a work done by Shunmuga Narayani. K during the year 2019-2020, and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

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PREFACE

Zakes Mda, one of the prominent South African writers as well as educationists and author of the award-winning novel *Ways of Dying*, is an important member of the post apartheid generation of writers. *The Heart of Redness* is a seamless weave of history, myth, and realist fiction. It is arguably, the first great novel of the new South Africa, a triumph of imaginative and historical writing. The novel shows how a writer's imagination recreates the historical record by dramatizing facts and occurrences.

Mda's tale entwines South African history with present day South African politics. Focusing on different generations of the same Xhosa family, Mda uses their parallel storylines to demonstrate the relevance of cultural history. Writing from the heart of the new South Africa, Mda tells his country's stories through beautifully realized characters whose search for love and connection takes one close to the black experience, past and present. The protagonist Camagu (like the author) had left South Africa during the apartheid years, but now he's back. Camagu has trouble finding his place in the new system until he lands in a coastal village in the Eastern Cape, where a "black empowerment" company wants to develop a tourist haven with casinos and theme parks. The villagers are split between those who welcome "progress" and those who fear it. With the present conflict, Mda weaves in the infamous history of this place, where the savage white conquerors came with "civilization" and a Xhosa prophetess told the people to resist by destroying their cattle and crops. Then, as now, the community was split, and the questions remain.

The thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter **Introduction** throws light on the biographical details of Zakes Mda with reference to the general aspects of his works and his predominant place among South African writers.

The Second Chapter **The Legacy of Ruptures** highlights how the redness is linked with a lush and hedonic place of great beauty, a kind of counter civilization that is safe, for a time, from the havocs of modernity.

Chapter three, **Historicizing of the legacy** deals with the nineteenth century cattle-killing movement as central to his larger narratives, which lasted for fifteen months during 1856-57.

Chapter four **Eco-Consciousness** depicts the preservation of regional cultural identities as a necessity if local cultures are to protect themselves from larger globalizing cultural forces and suggests that a clear sense of local cultural allegiance should override the kind of unstructured hybridity that is represented by expanding and economically dominating forces of Western culture.

Chapter five **Summation** sums up all the important aspects dealt in the preceding chapters.

The researcher has consistently referred to and resorted to the guidelines prescribed by MLA Handbook 7th Edition for the preparation of the thesis.

Chapter One

Introduction

Mda a prolific author of works in a variety of genres is considered one of the foremost writers in post-apartheid South Africa. Born into the apartheid system-which, from 1948 to 1990, legally mandated racial segregation and the subservience of blacks to whites in all aspects of social and political intercourse, Mda witnessed its malevolence firsthand. In his writings he explores both the causes and the effects of a society organized in terms of racial dominance and exploitation, as well as the spirit of revolt that eventually led to its dismantling.

Zakes Mda, legally Zanemvula Kizito Gatyeni Mda is a South African novelist, poet and playwright and is the son of a politician A. P. Mda. Mda was born in 1948 in the Herschel District of the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. His paternal grandfather, Charles Mda, was a petty chief whose job was to enforce apartheid laws. His father, A. P. Mda, has been a founding member of the African National Congress Youth League, where he worked with Nelson Mandela, before leaving that group to join the more radical liberationist Pan Africanist Congress. His mother, Nompumelelo Rose Mda, was a nurse. Because of his father's political involvement, the young Mda came into regular contact with some of South Africa's leading activists, and for a brief period he lived in Mandela's home, Orlando.

In 1963 Mda's father was forced into exile in the Basotho land Protectorate-later the independent Kingdom of Lesotho-and a year later, Mda crossed the border to join him; two years later, the rest of the family followed. The move forced the family to learn

a new language and Mda's feelings of inadequacy in both his native tongue and that of his new country led him to begin writing his creative works in English when he was in high school. Mda went to schools in Lesotho and Switzerland before moving to the United States to pursue a master's degree in theater at Ohio University, after his first published volume of plays, *We Shall Sing for the Fatherland and Other Plays* met with great acclaim. Mda next received a master's degree in mass communication, also from Ohio University.

In 1985 he returned to Lesotho to work for the country's National Broadcasting Corporation Television Project while continuing to write and produce plays. Shortly thereafter, Mda took a position at the University of Lesotho as a professor of English; in 1991 he became head of the university's English department, after receiving his doctoral degree from the University of Cape Town in South Africa in 1990. Upon his return to Lesotho, Mda co-founded the Marotholi Traveling Theatre-with which he went, with his students, to rural mountain villages to help the residents express themselves through drama-and was director of the Theatre for Development program at the university. In 1992 Mda received a fellowship from Yale University's South African Research Program; he remained in the United States, teaching at various universities, until 1994, when he returned to South Africa to serve as a visiting professor at Witwatersrand University's School of Dramatic Art.

In 1996 Mda took over the directorship of Thapama Productions, a motion picture and television production company, in Johannesburg. In 1998 he took part in a cultural exchange program in Reykjavik, Iceland, called Shuttle 99, conducting workshops in children's literature for South African and Scandinavian writers. In the early 2000s Mda

began dividing his time between the United States, where he teaches creative writing at Ohio University, and South Africa, where he directs the Southern African Multimedia AIDS Trust, produces plays at the Market Theatre in Johannesburg, and works as a beekeeper in the Eastern Cape region.

In his plays and novels Mda investigates apartheid and all its attendant social ills: forced relocation, migrant labour, poverty, violence, and unjust land distribution. He also examines problems with the post-apartheid system and postcolonial governments in Africa. In his first published play, *We Shall Sing for the Fatherland,* Mda confronts the disillusionment of soldiers who have fought in the liberation of a fictional African country. After fighting in their country's war for independence, two soldiers return to civilian life, but have neither homes nor jobs. They commit minor burglaries and live in a city park, maintaining the militaristic demeanor they learned in the war to deflect their alienation from the new society they have helped to create.

In *And the Girls in Their Sunday Dresses* (1993), Mda again addresses what happens to a country's people after liberation. Two women-identified in the play as The Lady and The Woman-wait to buy rice at a government aid food depot. Although the interaction between the women seems simple, through their conversation the audience learns of the inefficient, corrupt bureaucracy that has sprung up in their newly independent country, which in many ways is even worse than the exploitative colonial rulers.

In another early play, *The Hill* (1990), two migrant workers, disenfranchised by the collapse of South Africa's agricultural economy, await word on whether they will be

hired as laborers in the country's gold mines. Trapped in a kind of limbo, the men develop what Mda reveals to be a diseased and degrading relationship of chronic one-upmanship, even comparing the relative size of their stools. Meanwhile, the work in the mines, which the men believe will bring them great wealth, turns out to be just as dehumanizing as their joblessness-in fact; Mda portrays migrant labor as little more than modern slavery.

In *Ways of Dying* (1995) Mda again focuses on South African social problems, this time portraying the country's violence in the lead-up to the antiapartheid revolution as largely self-inflicted among poor blacks the self-imposed *ways of dying* of the book's title. *The Heart of Redness* (2000) examines how black South Africans responded to their new freedoms just after the end of apartheid. In this novel, residents of a village in the Eastern Cape must decide whether to accept the proposal of a black empowerment firm that wants to capitalize on post-apartheid possibilities by turning the village into a tourist destination. Mda addresses the many meanings of "progress" and contrasts the native experience of Africa with Joseph Conrad's white European view of it in his novella *The Heart of Darkness.*

In *The Madonna of Excelsior* (2002), Mda takes up the subject of miscegenation. The book is based on an actual 1971 court case in South Africa in which nineteen blacks in the town of Excelsior were charged with violating the country's Immorality Act, which outlawed sexual encounters between blacks and whites.

In *The Whale Caller* (2005), Mda explores the range of human love relationships in a story of a man who is torn between his love for a woman and his obsession and

fascination with a whale. Mda's most recent novel, *Cion* (2007), continues the story of the protagonist of *Ways of Dying* after he has moved to the United States and attempts to negotiate the seemingly strange habits of his new culture.

Mda has received numerous accolades and honors both as a playwright and as a novelist. He is considered one of the leading voices in South African letters, particularly for his acknowledgment of the ambivalent nature of liberation in African countries. Of this quality, Mda's creativity and foresight have never been in doubt. At a time when playwrights were concerned with the evils of apartheid he had the foresight and courage to deal with issues beyond the demise of apartheid.

In 2003 Mda's *The Heart of Redness*, accusing him of clinging to a culturally backward-looking ideology and of ignoring the African AIDS pandemic in his novels. Mda, for his part, responded with outrage over the expectation that he should include a comprehensive analysis of AIDS in all of his books, noting that Rush did not take white South African writers to task for not discussing AIDS. Mda has also sometimes been censured for the violence, hopelessness, and predictable characterizations especially of whites in his works, but he continues to be esteemed for his passionate and imaginative portrayals of life in contemporary Africa.

Mda has won major South African and British literary awards for his novels and plays. He is currently the Patron of the Etisalat Prize for Literature. Although he spent his early childhood in Soweto, he has finished his education in Lesotho where his father went into exile since 1963. This change of setting also meant a change of language for Mda, from isiXhosa to Sesotho. Consequently Mda preferred to write his first plays in

English. His first play, *We Shall Sing for the Fatherland*, won the first Amstel Playwright of the Year Award in 1978. He worked as a bank clerk, a teacher and in marketing before the publication of *We Shall Sing for the Fatherland and Other Plays* in 1980 allowed him to be admitted to the Ohio University for a three-year Master's degree in theatre. He completed a Masters Degree in Theatre at Ohio University, after which he obtained a Master of Arts Degree in Mass Communication. By 1984 his plays were performed in the USSR, the USA, and Scotland as well as in various parts of southern Africa.

Mda then returned to Lesotho, first working with the Lesotho National Broadcasting Corporation Television Project and then as a lecturer in the Department of English at the University of Lesotho. Between 1985 and 1992 he was the director of the Theatre-For-Development Project at the university and founded the Marotholi Travelling Theatre. Together with his students he travelled to villages in remote mountain regions working with local people in creating theatre around their everyday concerns. He got his doctoral degree in the University of Cape Town in 1989.

In the early nineties Mda spent much of his time overseas, as writer-in-residence at the University of Durham (1991), research fellow at Yale University. He returned for one year to South Africa as Visiting Professor at the School of Dramatic Art at the University of the Witwatersrand. He is presently Professor of Creative Writing at Ohio University.

Mda's *The Heart of Redness* has been shortlisted for the prestigious Commonwealth Writers Prize. He sets a story of South African village life against a notorious episode from the country's past. The result is a novel of great scope and deep

human feeling, of passion and reconciliation. *The Heart of Redness* is a flawless weave of history, myth, and realist fiction. It is, arguably, the first great novel of the new South Africa a triumph of imaginative and historical writing.

As a prominent South African writer, novelists as well as a playwright his entire works are on social conditions, community riots, depressions of black, indigenous situation in South Africa. His literary creations embrace either historical events or social reality of the contemporary times. Mda's literary contributions come under the social documentary novels. From childhood he has too much curiosity on historical events. This keenness makes him a great prolific writer as well as a real historic writer.

Mda was inspired by the history of Nongqawuse, the Xhosa prophet. Her prophecies had misled the Xhosa society. Nongqawuse was the main reason for cattle-killing action as well as famine in 1856. As a result of her prophecies the society was split into two types such as Believers and Unbelievers. His deepest zest made her collect all details behind the movement and he clearly exaggerates them in *The Heart of Redness*. Each of his novel deals with the hidden historic matters. The cattle-killing is a symptom of the British invasion. Initially the settlers appeared in South Africa and unhurriedly they had occupied all of Africa.

By the European invasion, South Africa became famous. Before the advent of European colonization, people believed there has no history about South Africa. From the beginning onwards South Africa has been famous for diamond and gold. At present this country is famous for its Table Mountain, Cape Town and Kruger National Park. South Africa was notorious to murders, assaults, rapes and other violent crimes than other

countries. South Africa, officially called Republic South Africa (RSA) is the southernmost country in Africa. Southern Africa landscapes along the south Atlantic and Indian Oceans to the north by the neighboring countries of Zimbabwe, Namibia and Botswana and to the east and northeast by Mozambique and Eswatini. Lesotho is one of the largest cities in South Africa.

Nelson Mandela has been one of the prominent persons in the liberation movement, to the result of revolt he went to jail for few years. Many pupils were sold by slave traders of the white people. In Eric Van Grasdorff's *African Renaissance and Discourse Ownership in the Information Age*, Nelson Mandela described the state of liberation in South Africa as:

> The titanic effort that has brought liberation to South Africa, and ensured the total liberation of Africa, constitutes an act of redemption for the black people of the world. It is a gift of emancipation also to those who, because they were white, imposed on themselves the heavy burden of assuming the mantle of rules of all humanity. (69)

South African society has a single community with in common destiny, requiring general ideals, moral values and national aspirations. South African literature has had a prominent place in each and every human beings heart. Their history was filled with South African struggles, stoicism, protocol and skullduggery. Slowly their history was spoken orally, later it resurrected in stories, dramas, poems and novels in the written format. South Africa has a multiethnic society; there eleven languages had been used in officially, the culture of South Africa is one of the most diverse in the world. Each language was spoken by different ethnic groups. A majority of South Africans were still living in the rural areas, with

cultural traditions. The urbanization and adoption of new technology has wiped out the traditional cultures. Native language was slowly converted into English and other foreign languages. South African culture is not a similar, but it is constructed with multi culture. Each culture followed by their ethnic people. Few cultures got fame in South Africa, such as Khoisan, Xhosa, Zulu, Ndebele and Sotho.

Notable twentieth century's writers are Nadine Gordimer, J.M. Coetzee, Nelson Mandela, Andre Brink, Bessie Head, Fatima Meer, Miriam Tlali and Zakes Mda. Their themes on reconciliation, radical rights, discrimination, assert toward liberation from white people and equality. The Congress of South African writers is a South Africa grassroots writer's organization was launched in 1987. Initially this organization objective such as encourage of literature and rectify the imbalance of apartheid education.

Nadine Gordimer was one of the South Africans most famous political activists and a member of the anti-Apartheid movement. She had started her writing career from *Lying days* (1953). She had received a Booker prize in 1974 and also a Nobel Prize for literature in 1991.Her writings deal with moral values, racial issues, encroachment of whites interlinked with apartheid. Gordimer's works depict innate meaning on society, their turbulence, and how they were ostracized from the society. Her literary works create elite imagery of South Africa's historical development.

Gordimer wrote many novels, short stories and through her revolutionary writing she had tempted Apartheid protest. Her books were banned by the apartheid regime. Her works are spicy and describe the actual condition in society. During 1960s and 1970s she wrote many novels set against apartheid, Gordimer received many awards and honours. Her novels

are *The Burger's Daughter* (1979), *July's People* (1981), *My Son's Story* (1990) and *Pickup* (2002) these are very popular works of Gordimer. She has written many essays, plays and short stories are particularly concerning race in South Africa.

Mandela raised his voice against colour discrimination and equality, liberation and self identity. He was the pillar of Liberation movement so he went to jail for many years. He wrote many books, revolutionary quotes and autobiography. His autobiography is *Long Walk to Freedom* written in 1994. Mandela received more than 250 honours and including Nobel Prize. His autobiography works are *No Easy Walk to Freedom* (1965), *The Struggle in My Life* (1978), *Long Walk to Freedom* (1994), *Conversation with Myself* (2010), etc. Nelson Mandela's achievements are Bharat Ratna (1990), Nobel Peace Prize (1993), Gandhi Peace prize (2001), Queen Elizabeth II diamond jubilee medal (2012), etc. Every July 18 as his birthday has being celebrated by whole South Africa because he considered as the father of the nation.

J.M. Coetzee is a prominent South African writer, novelist, linguist, and translator. He is a living author in Cape Town at African continent. He is a noble prize winner for literature in 2003 and he got booker prize for two times. His work mostly portrayed current situation in society, discontentment on colonialism, and he explored about apartheid regime in the 1970s and 1980. He wrote many novels and essays based on the contemporary landscape of South Africa. His works are *Waiting for Barbarian* (1980), *Foe* (1986), *Age of Iron* (1990), *Disgrace* (1999), *The Childhood of Jesus* (2013), etc. Coetzee novels are engage with the English literary norm, some in crystal-clear others in indirect ways.

Bessie Head also a south African writer, her works based in South Africa during some of the harshest years of apartheid. She was been a teacher in primary schools in South Africa 1956-59.Bessie Head was explored the effects of racial and social oppression. She was received literary awards from 2007-2013.

Mda is South Africa's historical writer. Even as a little boy he was in love with books fortunately grow up in an environment where there books all over place. When he was born, at the while his father was a teacher and working in High School. After few years later he became a lawyer besides he has been a great reader. From the gene he took interest on reading books. Mda once tells in "Zakes Mda: On being an author" interviews by *Oxford University Press*,

> I was introduced to the classics quite early in life and I loved to read and also fell in love with storytelling…for instance we would visit my grandmother in the village in the Eastern Cape… the stories that we told especially in the evenings when we sat around the place so I was influenced by both such as oral tradition and literary tradition, mostly the classics especially English classics.

Mda's journey started as a writer when he was at seven years old. As per openly acknowledge as one of South Africa's leading novelists, Zakes Mda.

Zakes Mda is particularly impressed with the post-colonial themes that are addressed in the novel. After 1994 in South Africa, vastly different in a literary landscapes to that previous available to South Africa writers. A society that has undergone such radical transformation since the transition to nonracial democracy presents entirely new sets of

social issues that need discussion and challenging. In *The Heart of Redness* Zakes Mda has deployed a conscious authorial strategy to achieve larger post-colonial purposes. Post-colonialism is a complex series of culture and cultural preconceptions in the nation that has undergone a post-colonial transformation.

The Heart of Redness is contemporary with the collapse of apartheid and South Africa's peaceful transformation into a non-racial democratic state. This novel contains historical context and its themes which see the author taking a stance against former colonial power relationships and scrutinizing issues such as contemporary attitudes to tradition and the shifting uneasy identity of men and women in South African society help to establish in *The Heart of Redness* as a post-colonial work of art to the cultural studies, historical records, and also it clearly expressed by the post-colonial theory, it is to understand the issues that Mda is raising. It stages are an elaborate and multilayered debate about tradition and contemporary globalization.

Primarily this novel expressed both a newly liberated urban Johannesburg's cultural political of identity and rural South Africa's struggles related to modernization in the village. Here Camagu belongs to a newly liberated person, who has returned to South Africa after thirty years in the west. Camagu's journey from the U.S to Johannesburg and then it is a historically important village near the sea. Sets the stage for his exploration of how tensions around environment development and cultural preservation in the late twentieth century are associated historically to colonialism. Mda's focus on the relationship between the political and the romantic, between Eros and ecology join the personal and the political. Particularly to the question of how modernization and development can threaten cultural traditions deeply connected to personal social and national identity.

Forces of modernization and globalization have stimulated a basic phenomenon that actually has a long history. The specific nature of this history along with debates about the particular relationship between tradition and change under the modernizations are examined in elaborated way in Zakes Mda's *The Heart of Redness*, explores the cultural politics of identity and economic development in post-apartheid South Africa, and novel moves changeable between the eras of nineteenth century colonial domination and late twentieth century economic development in order to stress continuities between colonialism and globalization. It deepens and makes move concrete and then understanding of the troubled relationship between environment development and cultural preservation.

The Heart of Redness shifts back and forth between two stories; one set in the mid nineteenth century and the other in the late twentieth century. The central protagonist is a well educated, cosmopolitan man named Camagu, who fled South Africa during the apartheid years and he has returned in his homeland in 1994 after thirty years. Mda cleverly portrays the challenges posed to past and present South African society through a complex alignment between two distinct narrative strands: one which is set in contemporary post-apartheid South Africa and one that explores the 1856–57 "Cattle Killing Movement" and discloses the early encounters between the Xhosa people and the British colonizers. The manner in which past and present, history and fiction become intertwined in Mda's novel to present a portrayal of the challenges faced by post-apartheid South Africa is underlined by Mike Kissack and Michael Titlestad in "Invidious interpreters: The Postcolonial Intellectual in The Heart of Redness" in *Ways of Writing: Critical Essays on Zakes Mda* by David Bell and J.U. Jacobs,

> Mda establishes an engaging dialectic between retrospective evaluation and prospective visions as he reconstructs the momentous event of the Xhosa cattle killing of 1856–57, tracing the legacy of this event for the Xhosa inhabitants of Qolorha-by-Sea and portraying the constraints and limitations that this historical memory, with its attendant values and expectations, imposes upon the present. In Mda's imaginative synthesis of historical reality and fictional construction, he presents us with a scenario of post-apartheid transformation, which is deeply cognizant of the constraining presence of the past on people's anticipations of a better future. (152–53)

No moment in South Africa's recent history has been more expecting with these anticipations than the country's first democratic elections in 1994, and it is for this event that Camagu, the protagonist of the contemporary narrative in *The Heart of Redness*, decides to return to South Africa and find a position that will allow him to contribute to the development of the country, after almost thirty years spent in exile in the United States, where he is obtained the highest academic and professional qualifications. The various parallels that can be drawn between the character's and the writer's backgrounds the Xhosa origin, the decades spent in exile in the United States, the qualifications in the area of development communication, and the return after the demise of apartheid in order to participate in the country's development are not coincidental but intentional, as Meg Samuelson said in "Nongqawuse, National Time and (Female) Authorship in The Heart of Redness" in *Ways of Writing: Critical Essays on Zakes Mda* by David Bell and J.U. Jacobs:

> Like Mda, Camagu returns to South Africa after the democratic elections following an extended period of exile. Camagu is quickly disabused of any idealized notions of the South African 'miracle' and becomes the spokesman for Mda's strongly worded critique of the 'new' South Africa.(237)

Four years after arriving in Johannesburg full of expectations, and yet still unable to find a job consistent with his qualifications, Camagu thus joins the group of disenchanted intellectual who have become increasingly disappointed with the directions the New South Africa appears to be following, which do not include them:

> He was at Giggles, a toneless nightclub on the ground floor, when he decided to take a walk. He is a regular at Giggles because he lives on the fourth floor of this building. He does not need to walk the deadly streets of Hill brow for a tipple. Most of Giggles' patrons are disaffected exiles and sundry learned rejects of this new society. He is one of them too, and constantly marvels at the irony of being called an exile in his own country.(26)

To analyze the role of Camagu is initial reaction of disillusionment towards the social and political situation of post-apartheid South Africa displayed by Mda's protagonist seems to fit the figure of the disenchanted radical intellectual, which has become a common trope in African literature. This character, who can be found in the works of such influential African writers as Chinua Achebe's *A Man of the People*, Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Petals of Blood*, and Wole Soyinka's *The Interpreters*, arises in the

context of a certain historical perspective that regards the political, social, and economics of African states from colonial occupation to national independence and beyond as one of decline.

Like the majority of these pessimistic intellectuals, Camagu fails to realize that the first democratic elections in South Africa in 1994 mark only the beginning of a complex process of transformation in the country, regarding them instead as a realized achievement of that process. As will be seen later, when Camagu gets involved in the debate over the tourist project designed for a small Eastern Cape seaside village, and as he become aware through his conversations with the villagers of the various perspectives regarding the issue of development, he recognizes that discussing the most suitable type of political and economic development to follow at a local level might prove more useful and much more satisfying than his initial project of joining a governmental department or a private company, where the discussion of local interests would probably not take place.

Importantly too, Camagu realizes that by conceiving alternative development list approaches it is possible to empower local populations, and through this overcome or circumvent the threat of political and economic decline. Analyzing Camagu's role in the novel as a post-colonial intellectual, Kissack and Titlestad argue: "He is unsettled and he unsettles others . . . he is one who rigorously and courageously evaluates and modifies the inherited categories of understanding and who translates his understanding into actions that affect and transform his environment" (166). Attempting to mediate between the traditional and the modern, Camagu not only establishes his own points of view regarding those subjects but also proposes a course of action that may benefit the population of Qolorha.

Mda has dramatized the elaborate historical episode by creating and exploring the lives of several fictional characters confronting them in the process with authentic events and historical figures. In a complicated time for the Xhosa, beyond the mere question of believing the prophecies or not, as it is presented in Mda's novel, the gap among the Xhosa people can be seen by the British colonial power. But the Xhosa were divided. The Believers' confidence in traditional structures of knowledge and belief to help them keep away the British settlers who were invading their lands and destroying their culture can be seen as an attempt to define and preserve their historical and cultural identities, usually implicit but rendered active by the need to reject the categories of the outsiders. On the other side of the conflict, the Unbelievers struggled to survive by seeking alternative forms of resistance to the British occupation, but their desperate situation eventually forced them to establish alliances with the British and their supporters. In more extreme cases, some Unbelievers even abandoned Xhosa traditions to adopt British culture and education, which they regarded as superior.

In the contemporary narrative, the disagreements over the issue of development between the followers of the Believers and the Unbelievers similarly result from their assessment of aspects related to their culture when challenged by an external factor that will almost certainly bring substantial changes to their lives. The two oppositional interpretations of Nongqawuse's prophecies are restored in the twentieth century by the leaders of the two conflicting factions, who adopt opposite viewpoints regarding issues of economic and social development raised by the proposal of a luxury tourist resort for the village of Qolorha. It might be argued that the division of the Xhosa into Believers and Unbelievers over historical and cultural phenomena parallels the distinction between

cultural revivalists and cultural which is based upon their contrasting awareness of and attitudes towards their cultural past.

The acceptance or refusal of the tourist project by the inhabitants of Qolorha in the contemporary narrative has to do with the kind of political and economic development they envisage as the best for their village. The Unbelievers, led by Bhonco, look at the project as a classic introducer of modernization in the village, which has the potential to generate great economic possibilities:

> The Unbelievers stand for progress, asserts Bhonco, to the assenting murmurs of his followers . . . . We want to get rid of this bush which is a sign of our uncivilized state. We want developers to come and build the gambling city that will bring money to this community. That will bring modernity to our lives, and will rid us of our redness. (92)

The expression "redness" used by Bhonco to refer to backwardness and lack of civilization relates to the red ochre used by Xhosa women on their bodies and also to stain the traditional isiXhosa garments, a distinctive element of Xhosa culture.

On the other side of the quarrel, the Believers, led by Zim, are suspicious of the promises of richness, fearing that the luxury resort will drive them into further poverty by excluding the majority of the local population from actually benefiting from the project while overexploiting their natural resources. Stubbornly holding on to the differences between their ancestors, Bhonco and Zim adopt extreme views on the subject of development. While Bhonco considers progress as wholly beneficial to Qolorha, Zim regards any change that may be brought by modernization as negative.

Even though as the descendant of Twin-Twin, founder of the cult of the Unbelievers in the nineteenth century, Bhonco has always stood for progress and civilization, in the discussion of the tourist project he is influenced in his positions by his educated daughter, Xoliswa Ximiya, to the point that he even rejects certain Xhosa customs and traditions as being uncivilized, or "red":

> The Unbelievers stand for civilization. To prove this point Bhonco has now turned away from beads and has decided to take out the suits that his daughter bought him many years ago from his trunk under the bed. From now on he will be seen only in suits. (71)

Zim, on the other hand, wishes to preserve Xhosa customs and traditions at all costs and fears everything modern and foreign to the Xhosa culture as a potential threat.

Most contemporary postcolonial literary works, however, avoid presenting tradition and modernity as simplistic polar opposites. Instead, they frequently focus on the depiction and analysis of both positive and negative aspects associated with both notions. In the two narratives of *The Heart of Redness*, Mda reveals how the Xhosa people have had to juggle the wish to perpetuate ancient traditions and the challenges to those traditions brought by present circumstances, whether in the shape of early British colonialism in the past or globalization in the present. Throughout the novel, Mda contrasts and relatives the arguments that divide the rational Unbelievers from the traditionalist Believers in both narratives by avoiding essentialist or oppositional perspectives, stressing instead the trans cultural characteristics of Xhosa culture.

Even though at first sight the reasons that divide Believers and Unbelievers in the contemporary narrative are apparently of a different order from those that have split the Xhosa nation in the nineteenth century, they relate in both narratives to the question of preserving or abandoning tradition. In the historical narrative as well as in the contemporary narrative, the extreme positions result in an inner division that weakens the resistance of the Xhosa people to the foreign forces.

As is evidenced in both narratives, neither outright preservation nor the utter abandonment of tradition provides the best path for the Xhosa. The conflict between the leaders of the Believers and the Unbelievers, rekindled by the construction of the tourist resort, thus diverts the attention of the villagers from the real issues that need to be discussed and constitutes a threat to the village's ability to resist further marginalization. Newly arrived in Qolorha, Camagu initially avoids becoming directly involved in the conflict that opposes Believers and Unbelievers.

During his stay in Qolorha, Camagu learns about the complex history of the village, especially through the conversations he has with some of Qolorha's inhabitants. Through his dialogues with Bhonco and Zim he becomes aware of the two principal versions of the history of Nongqawuse, but the most significant contributions to Camagu's position on the issue of development arise in his discussions with Bhonco's daughter, Xoliswa, on the general issues of civilization and primitiveness, and through the exchanges with Qukezwa, Zim's daughter, on tradition and nature.

The frequent arguments he has with John Dalton, a descendant of British colonizers, over the best developmental alternatives for Qolorha are also fundamental in

the shaping of his own proposal for a sustainable development project. These different viewpoints, which Mda cleverly presents through characters who are more than mere mouthpieces of ideological positions, have an important function in the narrative itself, but they are also directed at the readers, who are implicitly interpolated in the assessment of the questions the novel explores.

Initially, Camagu appears closer to the modernization ideals supported by the Unbelievers, especially thanks to the close relationship he establishes with Bhonco's daughter, Xoliswa Ximiya. In remote Qolorha, the intelligent, educated, and beautiful Xoliswa unsurprisingly becomes agreeable company for Camagu. During Camagu and Xoliswa's frequent conversations, however, most of which are on the questions of tradition and civilization, Camagu becomes increasingly aware that their positions are irreconcilable. Whereas Xoliswa, whose upbringing in a family of Unbelievers and formal education has inculcated her with the values of the colonizing power, regards all tradition as detrimental and everything Western as potentially beneficial and superior, Camagu is not indifferent to Xhosa traditions, some of which he even observes, in spite of having spent most of his life outside of South Africa.

Camagu becomes emotionally involved with another female character that appears to be the very antithesis of Xoliswa. Qukezwa lacks the charm, beauty, and high level of formal education Xoliswa possesses, but her knowledge and appreciation of the Xhosa and Khoikhoi cultures captivate Camagu. Beyond her disconcerting attitude, he is able to recognize in Qukezwa his counterpart in the struggle for the preservation of the history, culture, and landscape of Qolorha against the greedy and unscrupulous development project. His exchanges with Qukezwa, in which she instructs him on Xhosa

and Khoikhoi culture and beliefs as well as on indigenous plants and animals, increase his appreciation of traditional values and the local natural environment and become an important motivation towards devising an alternative cooperative development project. It is also in great part thanks to Qukezwa that Camagu changes his view on the Nongqawuse episode.

If during the years of apartheid the production of narratives about the past was regarded as a powerful means to resist oppression, in the post-apartheid period the recovery of past histories relates mostly to the responsibilities brought by the new political situation of the country. In Mda's novel, Nongqawuse and the dramatic events of the nineteenth-century Cattle-Killing episode are interwoven with the picture of a contemporary South Africa experiencing the difficulties of becoming a fully democratic nation, thus emphasizing the environment of enormous uncertainty that marked and marks the two historical periods.

Mda assumes the need to examine contemporary South African identities by resorting to the reclamation of their historical memories. Through this fiction, Mda combines history's concern with concrete facts and memory's attachment to disclosure, opening important spaces to debate some of the most complex questions posed to South African postcolonial identities. And deftly portrays the challenges posed to the past and the present South African society through a complex alignment between the two distinct narrative strands, and above all, by moving away from accusations and guilt, focusing instead on the need for development and understanding.

Chapter Two

The Legacy of Ruptures

Writing from the heart of the new South Africa, Mda tells his country's stories through beautifully realized characters whose search for love and connection takes one close to the black experience, past and present. He recounts the divisions that developed among the Xhosa by unraveling the controversies with British colonizers in the nineteenth century around the time of the Great War of Mlanjeni, and brings forward to contemporary times the legacy of the ruptures. Initially, these divisions were caused by the beheading of Xikixa, the "Headless Ancestor", by British soldiers including John Dalton, the nineteenth-century character who would become a magistrate. The novel shows how a writer's imagination recreates the historical record by dramatizes facts and occurrences.

The redness in *The Heart of Redness* indicates the multigenerational saga of traditional South Africa. Its title echoes Joseph Conrad's *The Heart of Darkness*, often challenged by African writers for its characterizations and imagery. Mda's novel delineates numerous interwoven familial relationships that are too complex to remember, so that the author includes in the beginning a genealogical chart of the "Descendants of the Headless Ancestor", Xikixa, with so the many characters whose names are symbolic and metaphorical, such as "NoPetticoat" and "NoEngland". There are references to the known historical figures, such as Nongqawuse, the prophetess whose visions contributed to the infamous "cattle-killing" event of 1856-1857, which has a historical significance with a resurrection of their ancestors who would contribute new warriors to the fight

against the British. The novel shifts back and forth between two stories one set in the mid nineteenth century and another in the late twentieth century. And through Camagu, the protagonist Mda unravels the complex, colourful social life of the modern village, while the flashbacks to the era of Nongqawuse offer a background that illuminates current events and connects the present to the past.

In 1850's Xhosa people faced an unprecedented economic, social and cultural depression. Confused, in search for answers and solutions, they turned to religion, but the spiritual world of the amaXhosa of the time, as that of their neighbours, the Khoikhoi, under the pressure of forced acculturation, had become a hotchpotch of Christian and traditional beliefs that eventually turned into an explosive mixture. As often happens during a crisis, the prophets' voices rose above the general hubbub, and the loudest of them all being the voice of the teenage prophetess Nongqawuse. In "From Neglected History to Tourist Attraction: Reordering the past in Zakes Mda's *The Heart of Redness*" article by Ana Luisa Oliveria Goncalves Pires said, "Nongqawuse's prophecies are restored in the twentieth century by the leaders of the two conflicting factions, who adopt opposite viewpoints regarding issues of economic and social development raised by the proposal of a luxury tourist resort"(131).

Nongqawuse's prophecy divided the amaXhosa into two conflicting groups are *amathamba* "the Believers" and *amagogotya* "the Unbelievers". It is against this background, inspired by J.B. Peires' historical account of the mid nineteenth century Xhosa hecatomb, that Zakes Mda projected the imaginary myth-like story of the inimical brothers Twin and Twin-Twin heads of the Believers' and of the Unbelievers' party respectively, their family strife, standing in fact, for a symbolic image of the suicidal civil

war devastating the 1850's Xhosa communities. In its turn, the post-colonial narrative line focuses on the endless debate upon the opportunity of modernizing Qolorha-by-Sea into a sea resort. The two elders and remote cousins Zim and Bhonco are the descendants of the inimical brothers Twin and Twin-Twin respectively. Zim and Bhonco are the current chiefs of the Believers and Unbelievers factions and they continue the old family strife, by taking side. Bhonco is in favour of the emancipation and development of the region, where as Zim is against the modernization process and the preservation instead of an unaltered, natural landscape as well as of the old Xhosa and Khoikhoi cultural tradition and identity.

The two camps blame each other for the decline of their nation and have radically different views of their culture, heritage, different belief systems and visions for the future. It might be argued that the division of the Xhosa into Believers and Unbelievers over historical and cultural phenomena parallels the distinction between cultural revivalists and cultural anti revivalists that Kwame Gyekye's *Tradition and Modernity-Philosophical Reflections on the African Experience*, which is based upon their contrasting awareness of and attitudes towards their cultural past:

> Now, the consciousness of a people of their cultural past, that is, of the cultural values, practices, institutions, and achievements of their forebears, evokes diverse, even opposing, sentiments among them. For, while some of those, with nostalgic sentiments, would, as we have seen, argue for and urge the revival of the indigenous cultural past, others may evince totally negative attitudes almost disdainful and condemnatory of most, if not all, of the inherited ancestral cultural values and practices. (233)

Particularly interesting are the debates on development strategies and conservation of tradition and nature in the village, the views of life in the village versus emigration to the city or America, and the criticism of the black empowerment movement:

> Apparently a big company that owns hotels throughout southern Africa wants to build a casino on the Gxarha River mouth. They want to introduce water sports in the great lagoon. Tourists will come from all over the world to gamble and to play with their boats and surfboards. At last Qolorha-by-sea will see progress. But it seems some people in the village are against these developments. (66)

Modernization against this development is based both on a belief that their sacred land will be desecrated and that the casino will disrupt the economy of the village resistance to that casino is being spearheaded by Zim, "a believer to the core of his soul" (67). He has been joined by a white trader named John Dalton, wants to defend the cultural integrity of the source and develop an eco tourism business featuring the cultural history of the Xhosa. The unbelievers supporting development of the casino believe they are moving forward with the time. The unbelievers insist they stand for Civilization. The believers want to stay behind in wilderness to remain red all of their lives. "Dalton is only white outside. Inside he is a raw amaXhosa who still lives in darkness"(67).

Camagu is introduced as a well educated cosmopolitan who has left for America during apartheid and returns to Johannesburg after thirty years of self-imposed exile, with the hope of new life in South Africa, in 1994. "He was in mid-forties and was a stranger in his own country" (29). He becomes disillusioned with the new democracy and moves

to the Eastern Cape where the Xhosa people live. He follows a woman he heard sing at a funeral. He does not find her but finds a sect of people split between Believers and Unbelievers; two strands of the same family ancestors. To complicate matters even more Camagu falls in love with the daughters of both factions and is forced to make a decision. He walks into this and becomes embroiled in the battle between the Believers and the Unbelievers.

The story begins at Qolorha-by-Sea, where the battle between old rivals Zim and Bhonco takes a new turn with the promotion of Bhonco's only daughter, Xoliswa Ximiya, to the post of principal of the local secondary school. At about the same time, in Hill brow in Johannesburg, Camagu encounters the lovely and mysterious NomaRussia on the eve of his planned return to America, and he is so fascinated by her that he decides to follow her to her home in Qolorha- by-Sea. Mda has elaborated through this novel the crucial role women played during the villager's contemporary struggle for development and modernization.

Camagu comes to Qolorha in search of Nongqawuse, partly because he is haunted by her beauty. She has become associated with him in his mind "filled with a searing longing for an imagined blissfulness of his youth. He has vague memories ….he remembers the fruit trees and the graves of long-departed relatives…. the mist of decades all the lush plants that grew in his grandfather's garden" (59).

Camagu shortly after arriving in Johannesburg saw the beautiful woman named NomaRussia. She talks about Qolorha, after he finds his way to Qolorha- by- sea. When Camagu was scared of the atmosphere in Johannesburg, NomaRussia treated him, "more

like a spirit that can comfort him and heal his pain. A mothering spirit"(28). In a brief conversation, she tells him that she is from Qolorha.

NomaRussia, the beautiful woman makes the object of Camagu's quest throughout the novel. Like a mythical African mermaid luring the traveler off his course, NomaRussia the untouchable woman, become hard to find and impossible to get catches brought Camagu, under the spell of her mourning song, yearning for her, turning gradually into an obsessive dream, makes him leave the crowded streets of Johannesburg and direct his steps towards the remote Qolorha, far back into *The Heart of Redness*:

> In his dream he was the river, and NomaRussia was its water crystal clear. Flowing on him. Sliding smoothly on his body. Until she flowed into the oceans. He ran after, shouting that she should flow back. Flow back up in the river. Upstream ... when he failed to catch her, he tried to catch the dream itself, to arrest it, so that it could be with him forever. (60)

The arrival of Camagu, former political exile in Qolorha-by-Sea and his decision to remain there and get involved into the social and economic life of the village, led to the escalation of the old disputes between Believers and Unbelievers, with Zim and Bhonco as their game leaders. Three episodes, Bhonco's scars, NomaRussia's illness and the beheading of the ancestor, Xikixa are particularly eloquent from the viewpoint of the role played by pain and body marks in the making of personal and group identities that make the focal points of the novel.

As Camagu learns the way of the Xhosa people Mda piles on a lot of memorable scenes and explores both the comic and the tragic consequences of this contention to

marvelous effect, in a fascinating dual narrative that contrasts the story of believer Zim's son, Twin's ill-fated love for Bhonco's Western-educated, progressive daughter Xoliswa, with his various pursuits of an elusive amaXhosa woman NomaRussia, educating his traditional homeland, and rediscovering his own "redness". In his ethnic identity - compromised and lost during his years in America.

Camagu has planned to stay in South Africa. As he proposes to register his vote he gets swept up by the euphoria of the time and decides ". . . to stay and contribute to the development of his country" (29). When he begins to look for work he encounters resentment from those who stayed in South Africa to fight against apartheid and becomes frustrated with their thought and bewildered at how they have become firmly entrenched with the new ruling class. Consequently Camagu spends the next four years teaching part time at a trade school in Johannesburg, discovering the resentment among South Africans. Camagu wants "to serve his country on merit" (32). Comes to believe that:

> He did not qualify for any important position because he was not a member of aristocratic of the revolution, an exclusive club that is composed of the ruling elites, their families and close friends. Some of them were indeed leaders of the freedom struggles, while others had used their status and wealth to snake their way into very heart of the organization. (33)

Camagu has trouble finding his place in the new system until he lands in a coastal village in the Eastern Cape, where a "black empowerment" company wants to develop a tourist haven with casinos and theme parks. The villagers were split between those who welcome "progress" and those who fear it. With the present conflict, Mda weaves in the

legendary history of the place, where the savage White conquerors came in the name of "civilization" and a Xhosa prophetess' instruction of the people to resist the conquerors by destroying their cattle and crops. Nongqawuse's message from the ancestors to the amaXhosa people to slaughter their cattle and destroy their crops, so that the ancestors would return from the dead, bringing with them new cattle and crops, and drive the white colonists into the sea did not come true, and the power of the amaXhosa people was shattered, resulting in a famine and the division of a nation into Believers and Unbelievers.

The household divisions are drawn around the descendants of those who compromised and those who resisted and exterminated their cattle. On one side is Zim, a member of Believers and on the other, Bhonco, an Unbeliever. His marriage to NoPetticoat resulted in the birth of Xoliswa Ximiya; she is the principal of Qolorha-by-Sea Secondary School. She is a kind of celebrity in Qolorha and mostly she is called by her surname Xoliswa. She is the only one learned lot in her town. She has "a B.A in Education from the university of the Hare, and a certificate in teaching English as a second language from some college in America"(5). Both Xoliswa and Bhonco emerge as central characters among the novel's multiple representations and shifting focal points. Simultaneously Zim's marriage with NoEngland resulted in begetting a girl child by name Qukezwa. "She is only nineteen" (39) years old girl, and also as the same age as Nongqawuse when she delivered her prophecy.

While the old distinction between Believers and Unbelievers rested on their attitude to the prophetesses, particularly the girls Nonkosi and Nongqawuse, the contemporary differences are a lot more complicated. Bhonco, the leader of the Unbelievers, refuses to

believe in anything that cannot be seen and proven, but reacts to joyful tidings with tears. The sufferings of the middle generations are so entrenched in the minds of the Unbelievers that they refuse to celebrate good fortune or allow themselves the luxury of hope or faith.

Through their customary trances, the Unbelievers are able to transport themselves to the sad world of the aftermath of the cattle killing and re-live the suffering of that time. Bhonco's long-lasting tears , "Tears are very close to my eyes"(3) is more remarkable as, apart from other Unbelievers who called as somber people "spend most of their time moaning about past injustices and bleeding for the world that would have been had the folly of belief not seized the nation a century and a half ago"(3). When they return to the real world from one of these trances, the narrator observes that their bodies are drenched with the sadness of the past. They look to the past with grief, and lament their present state of backwardness. They tend to support modern ideas of progress, especially if these appear rational and practical.

According to Bhonco, the believers instigated the demise of the Xhosa "that believer started it. Doesn't he know? It is because his ancestor forces the amaXhosa people to kill their cattle. That is why we are suffering like this" (45). Zim, descendants of the believer, responds, "Tell the unbeliever that it is because his ancestors refused to slaughter the cattle even when prophetesses like Nongqawuse, Nonkosi and Nombanda instructed them to do so. That is why life is so difficult" (45-6).

Camagu struggles to find a realistic median ground between unbelievers and believers. On the one hand as Bhonco insist to Camagu, "the unbelievers stand for

progress" (92) and "we want to get rid of this bush which is a sign of our uncivilized state. We want developers to come and build the gambling City that will bring money to this community. That will bring modernity to our life and will ride us of our redness"(92). Likewise Zim insisted that search for progress will destroy the land of their ancestors and obliterate their culture. "Yes those people!" mocking Zim "those so called tourist! They come here to steal our lizards and our birds...our aloes and our cycads and our usundu palms and our *ikhamangu* wild banana trees"(93).

Camagu searches for a pragmatic solution that will transcend the ideological differences between believers and unbelievers. Of course this search becomes inextricably connected to his own personal search for identity and belonging in the new post Apartheid South Africa. Mda says, ". . . all his learning cannot make up his mind.... (91). Camagu "has tried to observe the patterns of believing and can be living at this village to try to make sense of them" (92).

In spite of Camagu's dissatisfaction with Johannesburg and his frustrating struggles with its modern, insular, elitist economic and political system and the traditional belief for their ethnicity, he gets caught up in romantic relationships with two women belonging to each family, Qukezwa, of the Believers and Xoliswa Ximiya of the Unbelievers. Mda uses the romantic infatuation with these two women to underscore the power they exert in an otherwise patriarchal world.

Xoliswa is Bhonco's daughter, the principal of Qolorha-by-sea Secondary School. She is a kind of celebrity in Qolorha and mostly is called by her surname Xoliswa. She is introduced as a daredevil and kind of cosmopolitan worldliness. This quality becomes

anathema to the village's believers. She is more fascinated to the United States of America and informs Camagu that it is a wonderful country; even she has lived there and studied the skill of teaching English as a second language. She expressed her views on America as if: "it is a fairy-tale country, with beautiful people...it is a vast country that is highly technological" (64). Even Camagu who has come from Johannesburg feels as equal, "She also remembers when she travelled in a subway in New York" (65). She was too much inspired by the modern ideologies. Throughout the novel she endorses modernization and development and scorns tradition.

Once it so happened when Camagu talks about Majola, a totem snake of the village, Xoliswa argues whether he is, "reinforcing the barbarism in this village?" Camagu quickly retorts, "Then I am a barbarian, because I believe in Majola, in the same way that my parents before me believed in him" (150). She didn't expect this type of answer from him and she taunts at him saying, "You are an educated man, Camagu all the way from America. How do you expect simple peasants to give up their superstitions and join the modern world when they see educated people like you clinging to them?" (150). In Qolorha most people never ever bothered about these quarrels, but she wants to see development happening. "They want clean water. They want health delivery service. They see Bhonco and Zim and their small hands of followers as clowns who are holding desperately to the quarrels of the past. But the whole thinking frustrates development" (116).

At the same time, he falls under the spell of the equally attractive and mysterious Qukezwa, who is just as articulate as that of the believer's commitment to Nongqawuse. Qukezwa is the daughter of Zim, leader of the Believers. "She is only nineteen" (39)

years, and also as the same age as Nongqawuse when he delivered her prophecy. As Qukezwa guides Camagu through the valley, she reveals her intricate knowledge of the ecology of the valley. It is meant to counterbalance the modern education Xoliswa has. Camagu observes, "You know a lot about birds and plants"(105). And she quickly says that, "I live with them" (105) and also Camagu observes banana plants growing in the valley, she corrects him, "It's not really a banana tree. It is called *ikhamanga*. White people call it wild banana. But it hears only the banana flower, never the fruit. Birds enjoy its nectar and its seeds"(105).

Qukezwa's deepest knowledge of the ecological world of the valley is connected to her reverence for its mythic and cultural history. In fact, the two are fused in her mind. She explains to Camagu about the Nongqawuse's time, Qukezwa voice full of nostalgia:

> Visions appeared in the water. Nongqawuse herself stood here. Across the river the valley was full of ikhamanga, there were reeds too. …Aloes used to cover the whole area. Mist often covers this whole ridge right up to the lagoon where we come from. It was like that too in the days of Nongqawuse. We stood here and saw the wonders. The whole ridge was covered with people who came to see the wonders. Many things have changed. The reeds are gone. What remains now is that bush over there where Nongqawuse and Nombanda first met the strangers. The bush. Ityholo-lika-Nongqawuse. (105)

Environmental degradation has registered the destructive nature of colonization and development to which tradition and believes are linked to the integrity of the land.

Qukezwa is a vision of life in Qolorha, calculated in every way to be diametrically opposed to Xoliswa's and the indecisive Camagu was torn between the arguments of the Believers and Unbelievers. His desire either to favour for Xoliswa or Qukezwa is seized by a bout of madness. He fights hard against the urge to hold Qukezwa tightly, and kiss her all over. It is different from the urge he once had to hold and protect Xoliswa Ximiya. This woman does not need protecting. But he did. He is breathing heavily as if he has just climbed a mountain, and his palms are sweating, every part of his body has become a stranger to him. He convinces himself that this is temporary insanity, and he is merely mesmerized by the romance of the place and the girl's passion for the prophets.

Camagu finds her arguments against the Casino, she rejects the idea that villagers will have the qualifications to work in the casino, and Camagu is "taken aback both by her fervor and reasoning"(103). She seems right that "the gambling city may not be that boon the unbelievers think it will be", and if development comes "at the expense of the freedom to enjoy the sea and its bountiful harvests and the woods ant, the birds and the monkeys ... then those few jobs are not really worth it"(103).

Camagu becomes increasingly enchanted by her arguments which are presented in a way calculated to contrast with Xoliswa's educated discourse about modernity. Once Qukezwa says Camagu grudgingly "developing some admiration for the scatter brained girl with a standard Eight education who works a cleaner at Vulindela Trading store"(103). His attraction of Qukezwa soon gets linked to the prophetess Nongqawuse and she leads him down into Nongqawuse's valley, a kind of endemic primitive and seductive place meant to contrast with Xoliswa's world of urban modernity.

They walk silently among tall grasses that are used for thatching houses. Then they get to the rocks that are covered with mosses of various colours. Camagu is fascinated by the yellows, the browns, the greens, and the reds that have turned the rocks into works of abstract act. Down below he can see a hut of rough thatch and twigs. "It looks like the nest of a lazy bird. Outside, naked *abakhurtha* initiates are sitting in the sun, nursing their newly circumcised, penises. The white ochre that covers their bodies makes them look like ghosts." (104).

Camagu eventually sides with those who are opposing the development of Casino and holiday Resort. He joins forces with Dalton to develop a Cultural Tourism in the area. Camagu's distance between modernity and the tradition to explore the larger clash between indigenous cultures and development as it is, has unfolded an arch from colonialism through the contemporary era of globalization, all calibrate to present a balanced exploration of both sides.

John Dalton's project in the mid nineteenth century, in seeking to preserve and respect Nongqawuse story, seems committed to preserve the indigenous traditions and practice. However Mda is careful to connect such preservation of native practice to colonial domination. In the movement of cattle-killing Sir George Grey was a Governor of the Cape Colony, Australia and New Zealand and ". . . commissioned an exhaustive research of native laws and Customs in support of my system of material rules in the eastern Cape. When you know their customs you will be much more effective magistrate over the natives. . . "(206). John Dalton's grandfather was allowed during Grey's ruling period. At the time he was shifting to New Zealand, "He built an important collection of the

languages, customs and religion of the natives it is important to record these because they are destined to disappear along with the savages who hold them" (206).

Grey's project laid out to John Dalton's grandfather in the middle of the nineteenth Century had a clear link to the younger Dalton to have the vision of the cultural heritage theme park in late twentieth century:

> He already had two formidable women in NoManage and NoVangeli who were experienced in entertaining tourist by displaying cultural performance and practice of an amaXhosa....Women will wear traditional isiXhosa Costumes as their forebears used to wear. They will grind millet and polish the floors with cow dung. There will be this place of clay pots and other earthenware items. Tourist will flow to watch young Maidens dance and young woman in cage in stick fights. (247)

Dalton's cultural theme park, which he envisions will distort amaXhosa life, believes Camagu and persists, "That's dishonest it is just Museum that that is how real people live. Real people in today South Africa don't lead the life that is seen in cultural villages"(247). Camagu's objection develops into a full clown intellectual argument against the exploitation and commoditization of indigenous peoples:

> It is an attempt to preserve folkways...to reinvent culture. When you excavate a buried colonial identity for these people ... a pre-colonial authenticity that is lost... are you suggesting that they currently have no culture . . . That they live in cultural vacuum?. (248)

But Xoliswa Ximiya insists, though she manages to be Western in her approach, "I am interested in the culture of the amaXhosa as they live in today not yesterday. The amaXhosa people are not a museum piece. Like all cultures, their culture is dynamic"(248). The contemporary practices are appropriated, transformed and incorporated into traditional one, seeking to melt the kind of late twentieth century cosmopolitanism with a commitment to protect local cultural practices.

In the end John Dalton stops the development of the Casino operators by having the government declare Qolorha-by-sea a "national heritage" site (269). The arguments between believers and unbelievers in Qolorha-by-sea, in effect get displaced by the argument between Dalton, descendants of British colonial administrator and Camagu. Dalton's cultural heritage village makes the Villagers subservient to him and replicates a kind of colonial imperialism. Xoliswa Ximiya argues that Dalton has thwarted the civilization in Qolorha:

> You are greedy! My people will not allow you to get away with this. My people love me. Your people love you because you do things for themselves. You are thinking like Businessman you are...you want to a piece of the action. I do not want a piece of any action. This project will be fully owned by the villagers themselves and will be run by committee elected by them in the true manner of cooperative societies. (248)

The Cultural Village that Dalton established a few years back in direct competition to the Holiday Camp is also a cooperative society run by Dalton with the assistance of

NoVangeli and NoManage. Although it is called a Cultural Village, it is not the real village of that sort. The Blue print structure of the cultural village shows:

> There are four mud rondavels, thatched with grass and fenced in by reeds. The outside walls of the rondavels are decorated with colourful geometric patterns. Inside there are clay pots of different sizes... village actors walk around in various isiXhosa costumes. Some are sitting on tree stumps, drinking sorghum beer. When the tourist come, the amagqiyazana, the young girls who have not yet puberty are invited to dance. (274)

The novel ends with Dalton's Cultural Heritage Park and the Co-operative business, both are thriving. However Bhonco, the leader of the unbelievers, is particularly displeased with the way things have turned out, since he associates anything that preserves cultural traditions with the believers. Cultural Heritage Park views according to Bhonco:

> All these things represent defeat. The believers have won. He has nothing more to lose. And it is all John Dalton's fault. He brought that despicable Camagu to this village. They both stood with the believers against the unbelievers. As a result he lost the abaThwa dance, he lost his wife, he lost his daughter, and he lost the respect and prestige that he enjoyed in the village. The village itself lost her lifting gambling Paradise that would have changed life for everyone. Instead it got rustic holiday Camp that lacks the glamour of the gambling City. (273)

Although both Dalton and Camagu believe their two projects have protected the indigenous culture and ecology of the Xhosa, Mda in between has articulated his about the for the most part sociological content. He explored about economic, cultural and ideological issues with Camagu's own personal struggles with his identity.

It is clearly seen that Camagu gives priority to Qukezwa's tradition and at the end, vows to marry Qukezwa. Qukezwa has a piling of knowledge about communication with the birds in Qolorha land. She communicates with the whistling music of the birds. And also she knew the actual history of their ancestor's tale, through this way she followed her descendants of the believers. According to her, she is mostly inspired by Heitsi Eibib who was an earlier prophet of Khoikhoi. She said "he was the son of Tsiqwa. He lived and died for the Khoikhoi, irrespective of clan" (21). Her ancestor Twin said, that, "no one had ever died for the amaXhosa people in the same way that Heitsi Eibib had died for the Khoikhoi" (21). Camagu and Qukezwa got a boy baby, and the baby was named in memory of Heitsi. After long days she sings in many voices, as Heitsi plays on the sand. He is six years old, yet he had no interest in the sea. In Qolorha Believers hands is raised.

Finally as Camagu's cooperative and Dalton's cultural heritage park become operational Xoliswa decides to leave the village and move towards civilized places, "It is high time I went to live in more civilized places" (226). Xoliswa is such a daring girl that she never bothered about gossip and does not even regard as deserving to walk on her land. The sooner she leaves the heart of redness the better. But this would not be the end of Xoliswa's troubles.

Interestingly in the Unbelievers' family the first male child, carried like a kind of cultural genes, the painful historical memory of brotherly hatred and humiliation. Written on the skin, both pain and memory are eternalized and become a responsibility and a burden to the whole split lineage: "At the time he did not know that his progeny was destined to carry the burden of the scars" (17).The Unbelievers thought that the scars had come to an end, as Bhonco did not have a male heir to inherit them. Every one believed that the curse of the scars had finally been broken. They were shocked to hear the scars on their daughter's civilized body. Many talks about, the scar of her: "She is a man in a woman's body. That is why even a doctor like Camagu was afraid to marry her" (262). Scar as much as redness, cannot and may not be wiped away. This becomes pretty clear at the end of the novel; everyone believed that the curse of the scars had finally been broken. They believed sooner she leaves this heart of redness the better. But that is not the end of Xoliswa's troubles. As Mda puts it:

> She wakes up one day and finds that the scars of history have erupted on her body. All of an ancestor's flagellation has become her flagellation. She rebels against these heathen scars. She refuses to believe that they are part of an ancestral vengeance. She curses her father for resuscitating the Cult of the Unbelievers. (261)

Xoliswa leaves Qolorha-by-sea. She has lost the battle for the soul of the village and for the love of Camagu. She has got a new job with the department of Education in Pretoria. She goes off to more civilized places. She would be in a better position to consult specialists in dermatologists and plastic surgeons. This plastic surgery would be to remove the accursed scars. People knew about her scar. When Camagu heard of the fact

he asks sorry to her. But Xoliswa Ximiya left the country without even a good- bye. She embraces the Western culture at the expense of her traditional culture. She sees her people as being outdated by following their culture; her traditional culture is as if it's an obstacle for progress.

Bhonco thinks that, "he has nothing to lose. He had already lost everything"(272). The believers have been victorious at every time. There is no gambling complex at Qolorha. Instead there is a tourist place, which started as a backpackers hostel has now developed into a holiday camp and those villagers who decided to join the cooperative society own it.

To Bhonco all these things represent defeat. The believers have won. He has nothing more to lose. And it is all John Dalton's fault. He brought that despicable Camagu to this village. They both stood with the believers against the unbelievers. As a result he lost the abaThwa dance, he lost his wife, he lost his daughter and he lost the respect and prestige that he enjoyed in his village. Qolorha lost its glittering gambling paradise that would have changed life for everyone. Instead it became a rustic holiday camp that lacks the glamour of the gambling city.

Mda allows his characters to learn and grow, and it gets a sense dynamically, of their growth. The amaXhosa are patriarchal, however they greatly value women, hence the allegiances to the young prophetesses. Mda describes the two Xoliswa and Qukezwa eloquently thus, even both were belongs to Xikixa heritage, and their great grandfather's cause of different opinion was lead into the two groups of family. Xoliswa Ximiya, a

westernized unbeliever she stands against certain Xhosa customs and traditions as being uncivilized or red. She is more beautiful and modern in that atrocity.

Qukezwa, she wants to preserve their land from the modern atrocity. And then there is the white man, merchant John Dalton, who provides a bit of irony, as he supports the preservation of the village perhaps in atonement for the infamous deeds of his legendary ancestor of the same name. Camagu, in conversation with Believer Zim and the skeptical Dalton, has this to say about the power of belief:

> There is nothing foolish about belief... It is the same sincerity of belief that has been seen throughout history and continues to be seen today where those who believe actually see miracles. The same sincerity of belief that causes thousands to commit mass suicide by drinking poison in Jonestown, Guyana, because the world is coming to an end . . . or that leads men, women, and children to die willingly in flames with their prophet, David Koresh, in Waco, Texas. (245)

There seems to prevail throughout this novel, *The Heart of Redness* clashes between tradition and modernity, about the clash between old and new, about the differences between subjective views of the world, without getting into spiteful anger. Thus Mda by focusing on different generations of the same Xhosa family, uses their parallel storylines to demonstrate the relevance of cultural history, the failed prophecy split the Xhosa into Believers and Unbelievers, dividing brother from brother, wife from husband, with devastating consequences.

Chapter Three

Historicizing of the Legacy

Zakes Mda looks back once again to the past that shuttles between the present and the past events and shows how the past influences the present in his *The Heart of Redness*. Nevertheless the current occurrences are intertwined with the past occurrences. Mda has been demonstrated the history of the descendents of the Middle Generation, who suffered under apartheid, damaged by a combination of colonialism and their own faiths in the name of Believers and Unbelievers in Qolorha-by-Sea at the turn of the millennium through Bhonco's soliloquies.

The fictional narrative follows the main contours of the historical one which is very close beginning with the three year long war waged against the Xhosas by their self-styled Great White Chief as the Governor of the Cape Colony, Sir Harry Smith, and continued under his successor, Sir George Cathcart. Not only does the novel quote Smith's instruction to his field commanders to "exterminate the savage beasts!"(19). But the notion of savagery is further related by the inclusion in Mda's narrative of the Xhosa practice of disemboweling slain British soldiers to render their witchcraft powerless as well as the British practice of decapitating slain Xhosas.

Mda uses various elements of the complex history in his fictional exploration. Historians have debated upon the historical significance of Nongqawuse's prophesy of the resurrection of their ancestors that would contribute new warriors to fight against the British. Historians have also argued that the cattle-killing might be influenced by a web of causes, including Christianity, indigenous beliefs in regeneration, and lung sickness, a

bovine disease transported from Europe to the Cape, causing an epidemic in 1854. Portions of the novel set against the Frontier Wars, from 1837 to 1857, including starvation; the social outcomes caused by the cattle-killing are expressed by Mda in flashback episodes: "Throughout kwaXhosa, Believers were killing hundreds of cattle every day. People were not allowed to eat the meat of cattle that had been killed the day before"(87).

Mda represents the British in historical and contemporary frameworks through John Dalton, the storeowner and great-great-grandson of the nineteenth-century Dalton. The contemporary Dalton be raised in the village and knows the language of isiXhosa, having attended initiation school. He is characterized as mocking the "sneering snobbishness of his fellow English-speaking South Africans"(9). Other white characters are principally governors or military figures, such as the Great White Chief, possibly a reference to the actual Sir Harry Smith; Sir George Cathcart, who replaced Smith; and The Man Who Named Ten Rivers, referring to Sir George Grey, Cathcart's successor.

Thematically, the novel is concerned with land rights and the destiny of South Africa. The land question separates the Believers from the Unbelievers. The familial divisions are drawn around the descendants of those who compromised and those who resisted and exterminated their cattle. Still the division continues on one side with Zim, a Believer and on the other, Bhonco, an Unbeliever.

Mda offers perspectives from both sides of the argument without attempting to find a culprit for the dramatic situation the Xhosa find themselves in and without privileging one perspective over the other. However, the novel's emphasis on the dangers

associated with internal opposition seems to set *The Heart of Redness* apart from many postcolonial novels, as Jana Gohrisch in "Cultural Exchange and the Representation of History in postcolonial Literature" in *European Journal of English Studies* explains:

> Mda does not only write back to the white colonial masters and producers of grand narratives to teach them a lesson about pre colonial past and colonial history. Rather, he aims at his black contemporaries, to whom he wants to point out the contradictions and future potential of their own local history and culture. (240)

In the mid-nineteenth century there befell what could perhaps be the most extraordinary event in all the history of the Xhosa nation in South African. After the defeat of the amaXhosa nation by the British forces in the War of Mlanjeni during 1850 - 1853, this is eighth Xhosa war between the British and Xhosa forces. These events were the longest-running military action in the history of African colonialism. Mlanjeni, the Man of the River was only eighteen. He makes himself as a prophet as a result is this war is the longest, hardest and ugliest war ever fought over one hundred years of bloodshed on the Cape Colony eastern frontier, the British Governor, Sir Harry Smith who have styled himself the Great White Chief of the Xhosas has taken more of the land of the amaXhosa people. Meanwhile when the war been raging Sir George Cathcart would stop at nothing to win it. He ordered his soldier to go on a rampage and burn amaXhosa fields and kill amaXhosa cattle.

Ultimately the great fear of salvation could be to overcome the General Maqoma's forces and the amaXhosa have been surrendered to the British. They all were

turned against the Mlanjeni, because his attraction has failed. But other nations continued to believe in him. Messengers from the distant nations of the Basotho, the amaMpondo, the amaMpondomise and the abaThembu visited him, asking for war charms and for the great secret of catching witches. Six months after the war has come to an end, the great prophet Mlanjeni died by tuberculosis. So amaXhosa people turn towards British Empire.

Consequently, the amaXhosa people were displaced, and those who lived in the lands that were now under British rule paid allegiance to the British Empire. British soldiers also murdered Nongqawuse's parents during the War of Mlanjeni. "The War of Mlanjeni was provoked and launched by Sir Harry Smith, the pompous moron who had styled himself the "Great White Chief of the Xhosas." The colonists called the amaXhosa Xhosas, or even Kosas!"(63) And is carried out by the much-hated colonial governor, Sir George Cathcart who finally defeated the amaXhosa nation in the war.

Mlanjeni's war gave the good result further the good ending to Twin. He did not wait until the war gets over. He married Qukezwa, a beautiful yellow colored wife and according to Twin-Twin it would like be shocking result because of the scars he had. Nongqawuse annoyed and frustrated on British soldiers' merciless actions it leads to slaughter many people and also her parents died in the war. Nongqawuse pronounced that "if the people killed all their cattle and set all their granaries alight, the spirits would rise from the dead and drive all the white people into the sea" (77).

Mda fictitiously employs and engages the cattle-killing event as perpetrated by a young girl Nongqawuse, "she is fifteen years old" (53). She said the dead would arise if the Xhosa people destroyed their cattle in order to highlight the plight, of the Xhosa

people in the Cape in the mid nineteenth century during the height of British colonialism, and to highlight the ripple effects of that today. According to Mda, many people became distraught one hundred-and-fifty years ago due to the consequences of Nongqawuse's prophecy while today, in the new political dispensation, the majority of African people are similarly frustrated owing to the ANC-led government's failure to fulfill some of the grandiose promises it made during an election movement.

The cattle-killing saga is the nucleus of the novel as it attempts to link the historical event with contemporary history and current conditions of the country. Nongqawuse has against the colonial system and the British rule, hence her perpetration of the cattle-killing saga in order to drive the whites into the sea from where they came and where they belong. Governor Sir Harry Smith, in the cause of colonialism, civilization and enlightenment has empowered to lay down whatever laws he liked. Smith ensured that all the land between the Fish and Keiskamma rivers and the Xhosa nation was driven to the territory between Keiskamma and the Great Kei rivers where they were ruled directly by the Governor and his appointees under martial law.

The land is eventually divided into villages, towns, cities and counties bearing English names, and Smith declared himself the Great Chief of the Xhosa people and considered the Xhosa as his dogs. Furthermore chiefs were superior alien officials whose decisions the people of Xhosa were unable to question. They were dogs cramped and restricted in strange territories, while their rich land across the Keiskamma was occupied and desecrated by the white impostors. In middle descendants were pushed into the situation under the whites:

> They spend most of their time moaning about past injustices and bleeding for the world that would have been had the folly of belief not seized the nation a century and a half ago and spun it around until it was in a woozy stupor that is felt to this day. They also mourn the sufferings of the Middle Generations. That, however, is only whispered. (3)

Zakes Mda revealed the fantastic post war on how Nongqawuse has featured in history, how she interfered in the Xhosa people and how her prophecies led to a millenarian movement that culminated in the Xhosa cattle-killing occurrences. Mhlakaza is a part of cattle-killing and accompanied on various preaching assignments and expeditions around the Eastern Cape in 1848. This manipulative action is evidenced by his adoption of the English name of Wilhelm Goliath. Nongqawuse declared that she already conversed with the spirits of old heroes of the Xhosa tribe, who intimated that they had witnessed with sorrow the ruin of their race through the oppression of the conquerors from overseas; and as they would no longer be silent spectators of the wrongs and insults, it was their intention to come to the rescue and save their progeny from destruction. "The faces of two strangers appeared in the mist and addressed her"(53). Nongqawuse continuously said:

> The strangers said I must tell the nation that all cattle now living must be slaughtered. They have been reared by contaminated hands because there are people who deal in witchcraft. The fields must not be cultivated, but great new grain pits must be dug, new houses must be built, and great strong cattle kraals must be erected. Cut out new milk sacks .... The strangers say that the whole community of the dead will arise...they will

> arise from the dead, and new cattle will fill the kraals. The people must leave their witchcraft, for soon they will be examined by diviners. (54)

It is absolutely difficult to prove beyond doubt that Nongqawuse saw any strangers or visions, but on the balance of probabilities the strangers seen by Nongqawuse never existed, except in her imagination. It has either her own reflection which she saw in the water as she stared at it, or the strangers were the agents of Sir George Grey or Grey himself in disguise as many Xhosa people believed. In the beginning every one considered it as a joke, but the slow spreading of lung sickness proved the strangeness right. As stated in Nongqawuse's prophecy, "The new people who will arise from the dead will come with new cattle, horses, goats, sheep, dogs, fowl and any other animals that the people may want" (54).

Nongqawuse's aim has to take avenge the death of her parents, restore the land of her ancestors that has annexed by the British Empire, and fiercely fight the British encroachment into the land of the amaXhosa nation. Because the amaXhosa nation wanted to see their land as it was before the notorious white conquerors have been cast by the waves on to their land, they complied. Their compliance can also be attributed to their strong traditional belief system and the sincerity of belief. Some of the amaXhosa people did not obey, causing a split among them. Those who had complied were angered by the ones that did not heed to Nongqawuse's orders. They argued that the dead would not resurrect if they did not kill all the cattle living. They were furious, however, that subsequent to their refusal the white people will not be swept into the sea, but shall continue to rule them and take more land for British settlements.

Mda attempts to highlight the plight of the previously disadvantaged, oppressed people in South Africa as a result of colonialism, imperialism, apartheid, and their plight on the new political dispensation. The idea to use the cattle-killing event is prompted by the plight and suffering of black people he noticed after the First Democratic Elections in 1994. For instance, on a visit to one of his ancestral homes in the Eastern Cape after his return from exile, he discovered an impoverished community. He discovered that many of the men who had been from the mines or neighboring farms, were still living in appalling conditions with no development whatsoever.

Nongqawuse's has intended to save the amaXhosa by forcing them into rebellion against the British Empire in order to free them from the bondage of oppression and to regain their freedom and independence. This dictum does not entirely imply that the Cattle-Killing was entirely anti-white. It is worth noting, however, that the Cattle Killing was born partly out of Xhosa frustration at the colonial domination and partly out of the hope that the Russians had beaten the English. Thus a new mess was made, a conflict between amaThamba and amaGogotya, and between ubuqaba, backwardness or 'redness' for the red ochre with which the women smear their bodies and dye their skirts and ubugqobokha, moving forward with the times. The feud between Believers and Unbelievers in Qolorha-by-Sea sometimes leads, at other times follow, and often overlap with the Nongqawuse narrative.

The main cause of the denial of the resurrection was considered to be the disobedience of the Unbelievers who did not slaughter their cattle and farm. The believers invaded the Unbelievers. At the time Twin-Twin protected their cattle by John Gawler. The Man Who Named Ten River said the unbelievers should hold their military

power. Unfortunately Twin's horse also was affected by the disease, perhaps its first stage of constipation, then diarrhea, then weight loss. The poor horse spent days gasping for air, with its tongue hanging out leading to its fatality.

The impacts of Gxagxa, as Nongqawuse said could be correct thought Twin, so Twin and his supporters initiated to slaughter their cattle. Sarhili was recognized as the king of the clans of the amaXhosa. Even those amaXhosa who lived in the lands that were now under British rule paid allegiance to him as he illustrated great interest in the prophecies, many amaXhosa people followed him. King Sarhili started asking that "my herds are too many. I shall only ask that I be given three months to destroy them all"(79). He began to kill his cattle from that week onwards.

First victim would have been his best bull. All important visitors were introduced to the young prophetesses Nongqawuse and Nombanda the girls are talking to the spirits. As the chiefs approached the river they were overwhelmed by a fear. The whole valley has been covered with mist. The air was filled with the bellowing of cattle, the neighing of horses, and the bleating of sheep and goats. Chiefs and Nongqawuse repeatedly stated that, "the new people will come only when you have killed all your cattle"(80). Meanwhile Twin has been spreading over the news to Twin-Twin; similarly they went to Kwafeni to try to persuade his brother to believe in the prophecies.

Twin-Twin refused to do that nonsense vision. But Twin has killed two of his oxen, after few days Twin went to his stubborn brother. The following day Twin and Qukezwa went home and slaughtered more of their cattle with greater vigor. At the same time they proceeded to enlarge their kraals in anticipation of the new cattle, and to

renovate their houses so that the new people the resurrected relatives could be welcomed in the newly thatched huts. Throughout slaughter movement was begun among the believers. Likewise, "Everyday new cattle were slaughtered and the previous day' meat was thrown away. Soon the stench of rotting meat filled the villages. The stomachs of the Believers were running from eating too much meat. And again the stench filled the villages" (87).

In Cattle-killing movement women became the strongest supporters of the prophets. Many of them left their husbands and went to live with their parents, and "Women were the leaders of the cattle-killing movement"(110). They made open challenges towards the believers. This cattle-killing movement was against the wishes of Sarhili, the king of the amaXhosa. He had issued orders that the prophets started to obey. The ripple effects and consequences of the above events clearly manifest themselves today in the new order. General Maqoma is a full supporter of this. So all were followed him. Twin led his men to destroy the Unbelievers' fields and house.

The dilemma of the Believers is presented from the perspectives of Twin and his wife, Qukezwa. Believers still believed the words of Nongqawuse, Twin and Qukezwa and they sat on the river bank full day in anticipation of the sun to become red. In them can be seen the complex operation of belief on the one hand, and on the other, frustration at colonial domination and the hope that the settlers would also be swept away when the new people arrived. The First Disappointment came when the first date of the resurrection set by the prophets, on the full moon of June 1856, went like any other day. No miracles and Wonders even in amaGealeka and kwaXhosa had happened.

Some believers shifted to the unbeliever side. First excitement could be disappointment, so they expected the next new moon be the moon of wonders and dangers:

> On that great day two suns will rise in the sky, they will be red like the color of blood. In the middle of the sky, over Ntaba kaNdoda, our sacred mountain, they will collide, and the whole world will be in darkness, a great storm will arise, and only those huts that are newly thatched in preparation for the arrival of our ancestors will survive it. Our of the earth, at the mouths of all our great finally come wearing white blankets and shiny brass rings...all those traitors who wear trousers, will be swallowed by the sea, ...whence they came...to be re-created into better people. (130)

The next full moon has been in mid-August. Twin and Qukezwa would not sleep that night. They were joins the revelers at the banks of the Gxarha River, and filled the valleys of Qolorha with song and laughter. The hills echoed the joyous sounds, and can be send shivers down the spines of the colonists. Qukezwa sat on the banks of the Gxarha River and she watch keeping towards the sky that:

> Her eyes were looking fixedly at the horizon; waiting for two red suns to burst out of the pink-and-purple skies....The sun that rose was not red. The Believers watched in breathless anticipation...No other sun came. No great collision happened. No darkness. Instead the day was brighter than usual...The ancestors did not venture out of the mouths of the rivers. (131)

Second attempt was also a disappointment, meagerly believer move into other side. King Sarhili was very excited because he believed that he would meet his dead father. He could also announce to the multitudes that, "I have seen my father! I have seen Hintsa face-to-face"(132). King Sarhili has returned to his Great place he has been send emissaries to other black leaders in the region, to exhort them to kill their cattle. King Moshoeshoe of the Basotho people has sent his own messengers to Qolorha to find out what all their cattle-killing meant. But none of the other kings has paid any attention to the prophecies. At the same time, Mhlakaza was extending a hand of reconciliation to the white settlers. He is been asking them to kill their cattle and destroy their crops as well, for the sake of their own redemption.

The fact is whole thing would have been a conspiracy of Kreli and Moshesh, the king of the Basotho people, he explained, using the colonial names for Sarhili and Moshoeshoe. The latter would be bent on uniting black resistance against white domination in the whole of southern Africa. That is why he could send an emissary to Kreli. The Basotho king was defeated the British at many years back. Governor said "Mhlakaza is merely the instrument in the hands of Kreli and Moshesh, working on the superstition and ignorance of the common people....This whole cattle-killing movement is not just superstitious elusion. It is a plot by the two chiefs"(135). It could be clear to the governor that his admires were not bright enough to understand the intricacies of this political intrigue. As per:

> Kreli and Moshesh want to drive the pacified Xhosas into a war they do not want against the English. Hunger will make them desperate and they will fight. They will steal cattle from the white people ...to provide their

> fighting men with food. Now they are killing their own cattle so that they will have none to guard, and more men will be available to fight. Those are the true reasons for the cattle-killing. (136)

All stayed in the river's mouth while war cry sounds was heard. A ship full of his soldiers has been seen entering mouth of Kei River. All believers sang a war song. So would unbelievers turned to believe, but those believers who had destroyed their cattle of their own were hungry. Twin and Qukezwa spent a whole time in Mhlakaza's house. Believers suffered deeply by famine; even "They refused to cultivate their fields. Like everyone else, they were hungry"(184). Nongqawuse told that, it is a right time to celebrate the coming of the new people. They got ready to welcome their ancestor, by wearing their traditional dress isikhakha skirts and brass jewelry. Hoping that with the rising of the dead they would have their youth restored to them.

King Sarhili in turn appealed to Mhlakaza and his teen age prophetess. He tried to force them to come up with a new date for fulfillment of the prophecies. Then they said that, "the dead will not arise as long as Chief Nxito remains in exile. The chief must return to his chiefdom near the Gxarha. Only then will the new day known"(185). Now believers were too much blissful. Still they were waiting in the mouth of Gxarha River. But Mhlakaza and Nongqawuse had not there; later Twin and Qukezwa did not know that problem. King Sarhili and a group of councilors had ridden down there on the third day of January. Both prophets had vanished and told that, "the new people had angrily returned to the Otherworld because of the despicable behavior of the unbelieving chiefs. The King and his people should wait for the full moon of February instead"(209).

Like the Unbelievers, the Believers are not a homogeneous group, but become divided between the followers of Nongqawuse and the followers of Nonkosi, the eleven-year-old daughter of the traditional doctor, Kulwana, who begins prophesying on the banks of the Mpongo River. The failure of the new people and cattle to materialize is attributed at first to the only partial obedience to the cattle-killing command by the Believers, and then to the disobedience of the Unbelievers and their betrayal of the Xhosa nation.

The further postponement of the promised arrival on the full moon of January 1857 to mid-February makes belief all the more urgent as starvation bites in, the country is filled with the stench of rotting carcasses, and angry resentment against the Unbelievers grows. The long-awaited on 16 February 1857 dawns, but turns out to be the day of the Great Disappointment. "The sun rose. It was not the colour of blood. It looked like any other sun. It did not rise late either. The Believers watched it in disbelief as it moved across the sky. There was no darkness. No thunder. No lightning. The dead did not arise"(210-11).

The believers were about their usual work. But for the believers it was the day of the Great Disappointment. Perhaps on the following day things would be different, sighed the Believers. But nothing happened and the next day until all hope faded away. Twin and Qukezwa slowly made their way to Qolorha. Their hunger belts were fastened even tighter. The Great disappointment was the fault of Nxito and his spies, who has been insulted by new people and it was the fault of unbelievers, who has been refused to slaughter their cattle and continued to cultivate their lands.

King Sarhili would have been finally lost all hope. He took the blame upon himself for issuing the *imiyolelo*, the orders that people should obey the prophets of Gxarha. Sarhili told John Dalton, "I have been deceived. I must explain this whole matter to The Man of the Rivers personally. Please send a message to him that my people and I do not want any war"(211). Mhlakaza says "they will still their appearance. In spite of what the Believers have done to them, they have not deserted us completely"(212). Mhlakaza could be declaiming about the action of unbelievers such as if "Blame the amaGogotya, the unbelievers"(212).

Many of the people escape from there. Twin-Twin's kraals were empty. Twin-Twin has sent his remaining cattle with his sons to hide in the Amathole Mountain. His family members were safe. From that movement Twin-Twin and his followers was led by Nxito's guidance. They were reached Native hospital, and were highly taken care with food and blankets. From that on the unbelievers completely changed and they followed the Thixo, the God of whites, where they started their farm work and prepared the lands to crop.

Even Twin-Twin did not believe on these atrocities, but he expected as if one day the opportunity to avenge his father's head would present itself. Nxito could even persuade his nephew to stop supporting the cattle-killing movement and to acquiesce to the good intentions of the British government, who wanted only to bring civilization and progress to the amaXhosa people. The British government was coming with a new administrative system, devised by the government itself. But the cattle-killing movement became a serious distraction to the new system. It was crucial that it be stopped.

Eventually all the believers were kneeling around Mhlakaza's skeletal corpse. Outside Mjuza's voice heard, and he came the purpose of arrest the prophets. Actually he was the son of Nxele. He died in 1818 and was known for anti-colonist militant. He had burst down a mission station in Butterworth in 1851. It is the beginning of the cattle-killing events. Russian army liberates the amaXhosa people.

Twin-Twin would have been happy to hear this news. Nongqawuse was arrested when she was hiding in Nonkosi and was taken to the custody under Major John Gawler. According to the state of Believers, Twin and Qukezwa were determined to keep Heitsi alive at all costs. They had stolen food from believers and unbelievers. Qukezwa prepared soup from the old bones of cattle due to their hunger. Sometimes hordes of hungry people who would grab the meat and run away with it. Hungry thieves would steal the whole pot, right from the fire and run away, "It was a dog-eat-dog world. And their utter shame they did actually eat dogs. They stole the well-fed dogs of the colonists and cooked them for supper"(254).

Qukezwa lamented over that, "The prophets have failed us, we must move. We must seek refuge, or even go to the colony and seek help from our conquerors"(254). Finally she decided to go back to the God of her people, the Khoikhoi. She had led them to the amaMfengu, who were known traitors in alliance with the British. Eventually land and families came together. But Twin-Twin, his brother and his senior wife were not forgiven.

The story of the Cattle-Killing ends with the starving survivors of the Xhosa having to cast themselves on the arbitrary charity of Sir George Grey, and being forced

from their land to work for white settlers. Twin dies raving mad from starvation in the Kaffir Relief House; Qukezwa wanders from village to village begging for scraps of food. By the end of 1857, approximately 40,000 Xhosa people had starved to death an estimated four per homestead and upwards of 150,000 more were displaced. Estimated 400,000 head of cattle had been slaughtered by January 1857. More than 600,000 acres of land were subsequently lost by the Xhosa.

Xhosa people were baffled by yet another evil marauding disease that had attacked their cattle in their kraals, in the veldt and even in distant mountain cattle-posts. It had happened during the night, seizing its victims when they least expected it. Until they never ever heard of the disease, but those who were affected knew that it was lung sickness. White people knew about lung sickness because it came from their country. They stated that it had killed many cattle across the sea in the land of the whites. It has brought to the land of the amaXhosa nation by Friesland bulls that came from Dutch ship two years earlier in 1853. Even the best of the isiXhosa doctors did not know how to cure lung sickness.

Lung sickness disease would have been traveling the land of the amaXhosa people and of the amaMfengu like a wild fire. Cattle owners drove their herds to mountainous and secluded places. Yet many cattle were lost. At the end the disease came towards the twins' village and later it attacked cattle and plants. Twin-Twin wept as he watched his favorite bull die a horrible death. "First it is constipated. Then it became diarrheic. It gasped for air, its tongue hanging out"(50). Later they planned to flee out of the village to rescue the remaining herds from the horrible disease. They and their families and drove their cattle to move out from amaXhosa. "As if lung sickness was not

enough, the maize in the fields was attacked by a disease that left it whimpering and blighted. It crept through the roots and killed the plant before the corn could ripen. It certainly was not going to be a year of plenty"(51).

This kind of calamity has never been there in kwaXhosa before. They assume it is the work of malevolent spirits and of *ubuthi* or witchcraft. It took years for the Twins' to come out of it; it would have been a slow and painful journey. Qukezwa has led the way, for she knew the language of stars. She rode rainless on Gxagxa, Twin's brown and white horse, which seemed to know exactly where to go without being guided by her. Twin was proud of his wife. She could do things that Twin-Twin's numerous wives could not do. Qukezwa told them, "The stars tell me that we must move until the sea stops us"(51). After many weeks later twins reached Qolorha.

The cattle-killing event is the springboard of the novel. Mda attempts to juxtapose the gruesome suffering endured by African people in the hands of British settlers since the mid-nineteenth century colonialism with the gruesome suffering endured by African people since the mid-twentieth century in the hands of the Afrikaners and the policy of racial segregation Apartheid. The ripple effects and consequences of the above events unequivocally manifest themselves today in the new political dispensation when people were optimistic as well as confident that "a black race across the sea, newly resurrected from the dead, is surely coming to save us from the white man. Even the armies of The Man Who Named Ten Rivers cannot stand against it! You saw what happened in Cathcart "(84).

In "Current Trends in Theatre for Development in South Africa," Mda describes the evolution of South African contemporary theatre from Protest Theatre to Theatre for Resistance in the 1970s, a change that followed those that took place in the liberation struggle, which moved from protest to challenge with the emergence of the Black Consciousness Movement. Mda's main focus, however, is on Theatre for Development, which only began to gain a higher profile after the end of apartheid and is now a popular form of theatre among South Africans. Mda argues that because it encourages the involvement of the spectators in its production, resorting to their own traditional performance modes. Theatre for Development is particularly suited to a recently democratic country like South Africa:

> Theatre for Development has the potential to be the most relevant theatre in a democratic South Africa, since it can be rooted with the people in the marginalized rural areas and urban slums. It utilizes modes of communication and of entertainment that already exist in these areas. It is the theatre of the illiterate since, in its most progressive form, it has no dramatic text that acts as a referent for the performance text. Workers and peasants together form the vast majority of the population of South Africa. Of necessity a truly South African theatre will not be that which is the sole privilege of the dominant classes, but that in which peasants and workers are active participants in its production and enjoyment. (264)

Transformation and development in the country, according to the novel, did not move in accordance with the majority of the African people's expectations, and they lost hope and were engulfed by pessimism, a feeling of helplessness, and loss of confidence

in the government of the day. According to the cattle-killing event, Mda is made to believe that hopelessness and lack of confidence in the ANC-led government has divided the people into Believers and Unbelievers. Believers are those who have completely lost hope, those who are convinced that "the whole country is ruled by greed. Everyone wants to have their snout in the trough"(277). These believers presume that a black race newly resurrected from the suffering. They are convinced that the new generation, not the middle generation, shall emancipate them. And the Unbelievers are those who believe that change often comes with problems and that the government should be given time as transformation is a slow process. The Unbelievers include some of the most influential and farsighted men and women in the country. These Unbelievers are convinced that many African people are being misled and that children of a person should not fight on these matters.

Twin-Twin had still protection from the colonial government though John Gawler and John Dalton until settled on the frontier and in British Kaffraria. He had now magistrate in his own right and he based at Chief Nxito's chiefdom protecting both Twin-Twin and the aging Chief from the marauding believers. The Man Who Named Ten Rivers grabs more and more of their land for white settlement. He had always been his intention to break the independence of the amaXhosa by destroying the powers of the chiefs, and forcing their subjects from their land to work for white settlers on their farms and in their towns. He had achieving this sooner than he had expected.

At the last moment he ended up to expel those amaXhosa who had found refuge among his people. Twin and Qukezwa were among the thousands of people who were driven out of the land of the amaMfengu. Two thousands of these refugees were handed

over to the colonial labor officers. He ended up an inmate of the Keiffi Relief House. Twin and Qukezwa wandered from village to village with Heitsi. Twin-Twin heard how thousands of his people had died as a result of the cattle-killing movement. He heard of the activities of The Man Who Named Ten Rivers. He saw with his own eyes white settlements spreading over the lands of his people. He was filled with bitterness and his scars went wild. He and Chief Nxito shook their heads over the disaster that had befallen their people. "We have been cheated", he told Nxito. "These people through whose ears the sun shines are spreading like a plague in kwaXhosa". "What can we do? We are a defeated people", said the old chief. Twin-Twin has stated that:

> It must be true that The Man Who Named Ten Rivers planned all this cattle- killing business...He is the one who planted those ideas in the mind of Nongqawuse. He wanted the amaXhosa people to defeat themselves. Now he is enjoying the spoils of victory without having lifted a finger. (259)

In the end, The Man Who Named Ten Rivers achieved his plan, but it brought destruction to amaXhosa. Twin-Twin had indeed disillusioned with all religions. He therefore invented his own Cult of the Unbelievers elevating unbelieving to the heights of a religion. Since at present ancestors will not arrive descendants of the Believers were expected but it never happened.

As a result of immense frustration the Xhosa people could hardly accommodate a continued settler presence in their own land. Nongqawuse and the amaXhosa population believed that the English, like all other evil things, would be swept away in the great

storm, which would precede the resurrection of the dead, so that there would be no suffering, domination of the amaXhosa people by colonizers, and so that there would be peace and harmony without foreign interference and foreign invention.

Nongqawuse's catastrophe resulted in large number of people dying of hunger and disease, and the fact that the great cattle-killing movement remains an open sore in the historical consciousness of most South Africans whilst the cattle-killing was a logical and rational response, perhaps even an inevitable response, by a nation driven to desperation by pressures that people today can barely imagine rather naive idea that progress is a good thing, that even the cattle-killing was beneficial since it destroyed tribalism and brought people into a modern age.

The cattle-killing event from the colonial situation which was imposed on the, Xhosa in 1847 by Sir Harry Smith and other colonial authorities, such as, George Grey as a Governor and High Commissioner, Sir George Cathcart, Colonel William Eyre, Sir James Jackson, Sir William Moles worth, Colonel John Maclean as a Chief Commissioner of British Kaffraria, Major John Gawler as s Magistrate and from the fact that the success of the movement also depended on the common belief in the Christian notion of the resurrection.

Nongqawuse and the amaXhosa populace believed that the English, like all other evil things, would be swept away in the great storm, which would precede the resurrection of the dead, so that there would be no suffering, domination of the amaXhosa people by colonizers, and so that there would be peace and harmony without British interference and foreign intervention. Mda illuminates the degree of blacks suffering

brought about by British colonialism, and matches, compares and contrasts it with the degree of blacks suffering today in the new democratic South Africa.

Mda argues that Black South Africans in particular were hoping that when the ANC-led government took over in 1994 things would change for the better but every day the sun rose as it had risen in the days of their forefathers some one-hundred-and-fifty years ago and as of today, they sat like that every day, hoping the sun would turn red, and other suns would emerges from behind the mountains or from the horizon and run amok across the sky and collide and explode and their embers rain on the earth and burn the hardened souls of the Unbelievers. But every day the sun rose as it had risen in the days of their forefathers.

Contemporary history and current conditions of the country however, one should not lose sight of the fact that the final outcome of either British colonial domination of South Africa or its incorporation of Xhosa land into British South Africa or the notorious, iniquitous cattle-killing event would have been very different, even if the individuals named Grey and Nongqawuse have been never existed. Nevertheless, the independent Xhosa land was dead; Nongqawuse and Sir George Grey had irrevocably transformed the Xhosa nation into South African the oppressed South Africans that were turned into, as the phrase goes, useful servants, consumers of their goods, contributors to their revenue, turned into subordinates that had lost their land, their national, cultural and economic integrity, religion, culture, tradition, customs and practices. Nonetheless, the story of Nongqawuse and the cattle-killing is perceived as a story that still lives in the emotions and thoughts of the Xhosa people today.

Like many black South Africans of the past and present Nongqawuse seemed to have understood the wrong intentions and gruesome, misleading efforts of the colonizers. Franz Fanon views about colonialism in "On National Culture" in *The Wretched of the Earth*: "The effort consciously sought by colonialism was to drive into the natives' heads the idea that if the settlers were to leave; they would at once fall back into barbarism, degradation and bestiality" (169). These intentions and efforts, undoubtedly, resulted in the creation of a dependency mentality that distorted black peoples' consciousness making them the dominated subjects of Britain.

The current events, however, remind Mda that the hopes African people envisaged of the new government are dashed, not accomplished and they reminded him that prophets could not be relied upon to make sound judgments, and that the whole story of the new people and new cattle was a deceit.

According to Harry Sewlall, he analyzes both Conrad and Mda's texts in "Deconstructing Empire in Joseph Conrad and Zakes Mda" from a postcolonial perspective:

> Metonymically, the title *Heart of Darkness* functions as a substitute for Africa, the Dark Continent as it was scripted in the European imagination. It represents, or acts as, a substitute for the African wilderness and a place which still awaits the civilizing mission of the West. *The Heart of Redness* also assumes metonymic dimensions as it is the equivalent of backwardness and the absence of enlightenment. (8)

Chapter Four

Eco-consciousness

The Heart of Redness is a successful attempt by Mda to bridge the gap between the two seemingly dissimilar theories of Eco criticism and Post colonialism. The two fields have so far been viewed as completely different from each other. While post colonialism is people centre in its approach, eco criticism is more focused on nature. Post colonialism is primarily concerned with hybridity and cross-cultivation, where as eco criticism is a discourse of purity and it differs in their perception of place.

While post-colonialism is concerned with displacement, eco criticism gives priority to literature of place. The other two points of disparity between the two fields include the favouring of cosmopolitan and transnational by post-colonialists in addition to laying emphasis on reimagining the marginalized past, whereas for the eco critics the focus is primarily on developing literature within a national framework, as well as on subordinating history to a more pronounced emphasis on communion with nature. Thus the two fields appear to be completely apart from each other.

Zakes Mda presents a picture of a society torn between the dual attraction of rising global capitalism and progress on one hand and the desire to protect the local environment and indigenous cultures, against their corrupting influence, on the other. This dualism, which is central to most postcolonial societies today, is addressed by Mda through an exploration of the intimate relation that the amaXhosa share with their land and its ecology. The historical past becomes significant in the present by helping the

amaXhosa from protecting their land against the environmentally destructive development schemes.

While Nongqawuse's prophecies in the past has led to the destruction of the Xhosa land, in the present the same past helps provide the people of Qolorha-by-Sea with an alternative to protect their lands. By doing so Mda has created a counter narrative to the actual history in which Nongqawuse was the cause of destruction of the Xhosa lands. Metaphors of land and landscape help Mda bring out the deep connection between man and his environment and also explore how these can become tools to create a better understanding of ecological consciousness amongst indigenous people.

The Heart of Redness is filled with nostalgia and set in concrete space and time. This nostalgia becomes striking in Mda's use of folkloric language as well as in the significance he places on landscape and myth. Mda creates a multi-faceted picture of culture in the past and in the present and portrays amaXhosa culture, as genuine as other cultures and the past as complex as the present. He achieves furthermore, through different formalizations and multiple time levels. Through the setting of the novel on two different time levels, Mda explores the traditional values, beliefs and practices of the past and their significance in the present.

The indigenous people of Qolorha too share a symbiotic relationship with their environment. The plants, birds and animals are a part of their life. It was a common belief in ancient cultures that all non-human forms of life like birds, animals and trees possessed super human abilities and powers and were considered sacred in the lives of the natives. In *The Heart of Redness* does observe how the villagers revere nature. For the

people of Qolorha- by- Sea, their trees, birds, and the lagoon are a way of communicating with their ancestors. Zim, who finds solace under the giant fig tree in front of his hexagon, believes that all his ancestors visit this tree regularly. So he spends most of the day dozing under it, listening to the song of the birds. It seems to be like:

> The wild fig tree knows all his secrets. It is his confessional. Under it he finds solace, for it is directly linked to the ancestors- all of Twin's progeny who planted it more than a hundred years ago. Now the trunk is as big as his main hut. As soon as it leaves...spreading wide like an umbrella over his whole homestead. Some branches reach as far as the top of the umsintsi trees- the coral tree that used to be called kaffirboom during Middle Generations ...aloes that surround his yard. (38)

This belief in the holiness of land leads to greater environmental awareness among the natives of Qolorha-by-Sea and they exhibit their ecological consciousness in their way of life.

Mda imagines and mythologizes the impacts of the pre-colonial past on the post-colonial present as it exists in the imagination of the people. Camagu's present life directs to his childhood nostalgia. Qolorha's the landscape, plants and traditional houses instigate his longing for the times of his childhood. Camagu is filled with a searing longing for an imagined blissfulness of his youth. He has vague memories of his home village, up in the mountains in the distant island parts of the country, that is:

> He remembers the fruit, trees and the graves of long-departed relatives. He can see dimly through the mist of decades all the lush plants that grew in

> his grandfather's garden, including aloes of different types. There are the beautiful houses too: the four-walled tin-roofed ixande, the rondavels, the cattle kraal, the fowl run, and the toolshed. Then the government came and moved the people down to the flatlands, giving them only small plots and no compensation. (59)

Mda's delineation on place and landscape has a characteristic of its own. Camagu is spontaneously invited to the homestead of Bhonco, the leader of the Unbelievers, and the festivities there along with the rural village bring back childhood memories that he had almost forgotten: "So many things in Qolorha bring back long forgotten images. He is glad to find himself in the middle of these festivities"(60).

At the beginning Camagu is presented as one who still survives on his Western knowledge. He mingles freely with the Unbelievers and wonders "why the Believers are so bent on opposing development that seems to be of benefit to everyone in the village" (71). Slowly but surely he begins to appreciate the local mythical and spiritual sensation. One key event that brought back Camagu's own cultural connectedness and his own traditional roots is his encounter with a brown mole snake. At first in Qolorha, he finds such a snake in his bed and is thrilled because the Majola snake is the totem of his amaMpondomise clan. "He has heard in stories how the snake visits every newborn child; how it sometimes pays a visit to chosen members of the clan to give them good fortune. He is the chosen one today"(98).

Camagu lived in exile for over thirty years, he has to large parts has been socialized and educated according to Western standards. The encounter with his totem,

however, immediately brings back his historical and cultural memory. Followed by this event Camagu celebrates his lucky encounter. In fact, the encounter with the Majola snake is one of the key incidents which encourage Camagu to positively look back at the past, at historical memory. Now slowly give his votes towards to be glad about the cultural practices and traditions which symbolize a coherence of past and present.

Mda further links this psychological and ideological effect of colonialism to the ecology of a place. The deep rooted inferiority complex can be seen in the natives even in the present. The villagers believe that even the trees and plants in the forest of Nogqoloza were civilized as they were from across the seas. They admire the forest of Nogqoloza because the trees there were planted in straight lines several years ago by the white men. Religion also used as a prime too! in achieving this objective. The image of resurrection, in the form of ancestors rising from the sea, has been effectively used by Mda to bring out this fact.

The present psychological colonization of the indigenous mind and use of religion in doing so has been captured most effectively by the Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe in his book *Things Fall Apart*. "The white man is very clever. He came quietly and peaceably with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now he has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knife on the things and we have fallen apart"(129).

A similar idea is presented by Mda through the character of chief Nxito. "And we helped them to conquer us! . . . When these white people first came, the alcoholic king Ngqika believed that they were his subjects. He welcomed them and allowed them to

preach their gospel among his people. When he woke up the next morning they had taken his entire country and he was their subject"(259). Zakes Mda nimbly moves backward and forward between the two time periods, to effectively bring out the continued existence of the colonial legacy on the present ecological concerns of the people. The upcoming proposal of the gambling city is a form of neo-colonialism that threatens to disrupt the ecology of the land and the intimate relationship that the indigenous communities have with it.

Camagu's exploration about economic development and cultural preservation in the late twentieth century is associated with history of colonialism. The forces of modernization and globalization have stimulated a basic phenomenon that actually has a long history which moves between the eras of nineteenth century colonial domination and late twentieth century economic development in order to stress continuities between colonialism and globalization and moves more concrete in the understanding of the troubled relationship between economic development and cultural preservation.

Followed by Mda has stated the relationship between nature and mankind. Those days Xhosa people live with nature, especially some tribes were experts in understanding the language of birds. In *The Heart of Redness,* Camagu has never before heard the song of the young Xhosa girl, Qukezwa. So well versed is she from Khoikhoi clan in communicating with birds:

> She bursts into a song and plays her umrhubhe musical instrument. She whistles and sings all at the same time... Sounds are that have the heaviness of a steamy summer night... Light sounds that float like flakes

> of snow on top of the Anatole Mountains. Hollow sounds like laughing mountains. As if a whole choir lives in her mouth. (175)

Once Camagu is strolling in Nonggawuse's Valley he finds Qukezwa cutting down the beautiful plants with purple flowers. When he objects to this, Qukezwa replies:

> Nice plants, eh? Nice for you, maybe. But not nice for indigenous plants. This is the inkberry. It comes from across the Kei River. It kills other plants. These flowers that you like so much will eventually become berries. Each berry is a prospective plant that …the plants of my forefathers. And this plant is poisonous to animals too, although its berries are not. Birds eat the berries without any harm, and spread these terrible plants with their droppings. (90)

By the way Qukezwa that Camagu learns about the destructive effect of foreign trees on the native plants. Planting foreign trees on the lands of the colonies is seen as a form of subjugation by Qukezwa. Qukezwa says, "The inkberry is poison. It is well known that it destroys everything before it!" "So do the trees that I cut down" "They are foreign trees" They are not the trees of our forefathers!"(215). When Qukezwa is summoned to the court of Chief Xikixa for vandalizing trees, because she has always spoken about preserving the forests. One of her reasons for opposing the planned holiday paradise is that it would lead to the destruction of their forests. At the village council meeting Qukezwa defends herself by pointing out that the trees she had destroyed were the foreign trees.

The lantana and wattle are trees that have been brought in from Central America and Australia. These foreign trees were destroying the indigenous trees by suffocating

them. The wattle trees needed a lot of water to grow, thus drawing all the water of the land and not leaving enough for the other plants. The country is as it is short of water what can see emerging here is, what Alfred Crosby termed as ecological imperialism, instead of the white colonizers' the foreign plants subjugating the native plants. The legacies of colonialism continue to haunt the ecology of the present.

Qukezwa, who makes the village council realize the potentially destructive effect of these invasive plant is the first to notice how the lantana and the wattle have the same poisonous effect as the inkberry tree. She believes that the law of the land needs to change. The village council gradually began to understand the reason behind Qukezwa's action and agree with what she has done. Qukezwa's actions are reminiscent of Wangari Maathai, who was the first African woman to won the Nobel Prize and a renowned Kenyan social, environmental and political activist. She worked along with the grass root workers to protect the local environment based on their knowledge, wisdom and expertise, and also of the 'tree-hugging' or the Chipko Movement of the 1970s when the local people of the Himalayan hills of Uttar Pradesh in India came together to protect their indigenous forests and oppose the government's plan to plant non-indigenous trees such as the eucalyptus which would lead to the destruction of the food system of the region.

Thus once again that it is women who are more conscious about the changes in their environment and take necessary actions to protect it from the environmentally destructive forces. Ecological imperialism, it observe to represents one of the ugly faces of global capitalism. Ecological criticism and post-colonial studies are in fact deeply political activities that involve a critique of Western power structures. Mda's novel is the

fact that the post in post colonialism does not signify an end to colonialism rather it signifies its continuation in the form of ecological colonialism and neoliberal capitalistic colonialism. Mda deals with the potentially devastating effects of a capitalistic driven development of land. Just like the foreign trees were leading to the suffocation of the indigenous plants, the invasion of Western companies would ultimately lead to the obliteration of indigenous cultures and traditions.

The Nigerian poet Tanure Ojaide explores the possible devastating effects of such multinational companies on the biodiversity and environment of the Niger delta region of Nigeria in his poem *Delta Blues* one of the poems in the collection, *Delta Blues &Home Songs*. The following lines from his poem bring out the impact of such an ecological devastation. That is:

> This share of paradise, the delta of my birth,
>
> reels from an immeasurable wound.
>
> Barrels of alchemical draughts flow
>
> From this hurt to the unquestioning world
>
> That lights up its life in a blind trust.
>
> The inheritance I sat on for centuries
>
> Now crushes my body and soul… (p. 21)

Writers like Mda and Tanure use literature as medium to challenge the unjustness of such Ecological and cultural imperialism. It is this ethical integrity of the biosphere

that the Believers of Qolorha-by-Sea want to preserve. Colonialism has had both ecological and cultural impact on the native lands. The postcolonial critic Homi k. Bhabha once said in *The Location of Culture*: "Remembering is never a quiet act of introspection or retrospection. It is a painful re-membering, a putting together of the dismembered part to make sense of the trauma of the present"(90).

Mda's vision seems well ahead of his times, since it is such a community based ecotourism that he proposes through Camagu in *The Heart of Redness*, that is;

> The promotion of the kind of tourism that will benefit the people, that will not destroy indigenous forests, that will not bring hordes of people who will pollute the rivers and drive away the birds . . . There are many people out there who enjoy communing with unspoiled nature. (201)

Once again the idea of preserving the wilderness or as in this case the natural environment of a place is brought out by a writer. Just like Edward Abbey who believed in the importance of the wilderness in shaping a human being's identity, Zakes Mda too incorporates this idea in his text by showing how human beings desire to commune with their natural environment.

Protecting the natural environment thus becomes essential for shaping the spiritual, cultural and psychological identity of any individual. The concept of ecotourism can go a long way in approaching this purpose. While keeping in mind the developmental needs of any nation, it can also promote conservation of natural resources, encourage sustainable development, alleviate poverty and raise environmental awareness. Camagu and Dalton provide the people of Qolorha-by-Sea with an alternative view that not only supports

development, but at the same time, also promotes conservation of natural resources and preservation of cultural values.

Kissack and Titlestad claim that Camagu's eco tourist project also has the potential of helping the inhabitants of Qolorha redefine their identities in the challenging context of post-apartheid:

> For Camagu, and the project of ecological tourism, the past is to be remembered...and reinvented to provide people with the dignity of self-determination, forged within the confines and prospects of their present situation. The vision of ecological tourism can provide this, as it offers the people of Qolorha-by-Sea respectful and conservatory control over their own environment, ... conflict and tragedy, through which the region and its inhabitants have passed, and permits them some independence in the construction of a new identity in a time of social transformation. (163)

According to Ava Oliveria Goncalves Piers, "In *The Heart of Redness* the eco tourist project thus becomes associated with both the global and the local, given that it depends on global forces to allow local positions to defend their interests against the pressures of globalization"(144). The declaration of Qolorha as a national heritage site seemingly relates to the role the village assumes in the novel as a source of multiple natural and cultural meanings. In the context of contemporary South Africa, heritage has become not only a much-debated subject, due to its emphasis on historical and cultural memory, but also a flourishing activity, given its economic potential as part of the heritage tourism industry. Both the cultural and the economic potential associated with heritage are stressed by Sabine Marschall's *Visual Anthology*:

> Heritage not only can lead to the manufacture of a suitable past, it also can become a veritable industry. . . . As official statements and press reports insist, virtually all new monuments and heritage sites are bound to attract hordes of 'cultural tourists', thereby becoming catalysts for infrastructure development, employment creation, and poverty alleviation to the benefit of previously disadvantaged communities. ... design of any new commemorative object is at least as much guided by perceptions of what is visually appealing to tourists as by what is meaningful to the local communities. (255)

The developers of the tourism project create a perfect picture of modernization and development in front of the villagers, promising them with jobs and basic facilities like lights and streets. The lure of becoming like the West is profound in the Unbelievers like Xoliswa Ximiya and Bhonco. They are angry with the Believers for opposing the project and preventing their village from moving out of the darkness of backwardness. Unmindful of what the repercussions of the project could be on their environment, Xoliswa Ximiya, Bhonco's daughter says, "We cannot stop civilization just because some sentimental old fools want to preserve birds and trees and an outmoded way of life"(67). In sharp contrast to Xoliswa Ximiya and Qukezwa, the Believer who wants to preserve the indigenous way of life which Xoliswa is so opposed to.

Qukezwa strives to preserve her traditions and identity in the wake of the development project. At the same time she is conscious of the devastating effect that the development project can have on her land and its people. Qukezwa is sensitive to these imminent dangers and her ecological consciousness underlined by an ethical concern for

nature. It is through her that Camagu gives a glimpse of the obverse impact of such projects on the environment and culture of any community. Camagu, who is initially unable to understand why the Believers are opposed to such a project which would benefit all in the village, soon realizes that tourism could have both ecological as well as socio-cultural impacts on the indigenous lands for a project of this magnitude could not be built without destroying their forests and polluting their rivers, sea and the great lagoon. Such diverse forests would be difficult to restore once the project came up.

Research shows that when large scale tourism projects are brought to native lands with the hope of bringing economic development and better job opportunities for the natives, they seldom serve the purpose. Lack of education and experience make it difficult for the natives to take up highly skilled jobs. Qukezwa too tells Camagu how once the gambling complex comes up, the natives would have to pay to use their own land and water. The sea would be used by the white tourists for their water sports and the local women, who harvest these waters for mussels and oysters, would no longer be able to do so with such independence.

Although there are talks about the villagers getting compensated for the loss of freedom to use their own lands by being given jobs at the casinos, Qukezwa feels that it would be of no use to the natives. The villagers know nothing about casinos, they lack the necessary skills and not all of them would be able to get jobs there. The developers would employ their own set of experienced people, while keeping only few from the village. Again the kind of jobs that would be left for the villagers would be menial ones. Camagu finds himself agreeing to Qukezwa. He realizes that the small number of jobs that would be available to the villagers too would come at a very high price. "But if they are at the

expense of the freedom to enjoy the sea and its bountiful harvests and the woods and the birds and the monkeys . . . then those few jobs are not really worth it" (103). The price that Camagu talks about would be a socio-cultural one, as the freedom of the natives to live without restrictions on their own land, would be taken away from them.

Camagu struggles to find a pragmatic middle ground between unbelievers and believers. On the one hand as Bhonco insist to Camagu, "the unbelievers stand for progress" (92) and "we want to get rid of this bush which is a sign of our uncivilized state. We want developers to come and build the gambling City that will bring money to this community. That will bring modernity to our life and will ride us of our redness"(92). Likewise Zim insisted that search progress will destroy the land of their ancestors and demolish their culture. "Yes those people!" scoffs Zim "those so called tourist! They come here to steal or lizards and our birds...our aloes and our cycads and our usundu palms and our *ikhamangu* wild banana trees"(93).

The people of Qolorha- by- Sea are sensitive to these changes around them. They were participating in discussions about community based issues. While the argument about the project is on, a history teacher from the secondary school comments, "Chiefs cannot just issue orders. That is what democracy is all about. Citizens must first debate these matters. There must be consensus before a decision is taken" (95). Gradually the people of Qolorha-by-Sea begin to realize the adverse impact of such a magnificent project on their land and ecosystem.

The history teacher tells Camagu and Xoliswa Ximiya, "These are difficult issues, Miss Ximiya, Sometimes I find myself tilting more to the position of the Believers. I

think it is important to conserve nature . . . our forests . . . our rivers" (95). This gradual realization amongst the natives, about the power of their voice, is the first step towards achieving environmental justice. Environmental justice often involves the experiences of those people who are expelled from the benefits of development or who carry the burden of its costs and externalities.

Camagu encourages the villagers to participate in the discussions regarding the process of development, making them realize that they are indeed an integral part of it. The cooperative society started by him, along with the two women of the village, serves as a means of economic sustenance for them. Camagu envisions a similar endeavour for the entire village wherein the villagers would own and run their own business. The past traditions and customs of a community could serve as a basis for small- scale development that would benefit the whole community. According to Camagu and Dalton there are a lot of tourists who would like to visit nature in its wild, pristine and unspoiled state; to revel in the beauty of nature.

Although both Dalton and Camagu believe their two projects have protected the indigenous culture and ecology of the Xhosa Mda in between expresses the sociological content behind it. He explored about the economic, cultural and ideological issues with Camagu's own personal struggles with his identity he longs to in the tensions between urban and village life in post apartheid South Africa. Even though this novel elaborated that the crucial role that women play in the villager's contemporary struggle with development and modernization that the protagonist Camagu shortly met in Johannesburg, where he saw the beautiful woman named NomaRussia. She talks about the Qolorha, after he finds his way to Qolorha- by- sea.

Zakes Mda rises through the conflict that exists between the two groups. The past conflict encroaches upon the present giving rise to several ethical and ecological concerns. Mda's narrative makes one realize that perhaps the time has come to envisage an eco critical vision which encompasses the anthropocentric along with the non-anthropocentric ecological concerns. The forests, trees, and water may not belong to any individual but sustain all lives on the biosphere. Whether it is Zim, who is found communicating with his ancestors through the birds, or Qukezwa riding rein less on her horse Gxagxa, the relationship between the human and non-human world seems to be a permeable one, each penetrating into the other.

The increasing demand for economic advancement and modernization threatens to put a strain on this relationship. Protecting this inextricable bond from the onslaught of capitalistic endeavours and mindless tools of modernization becomes the ethical and moral duty of all citizens, irrespective of class, caste or gender. While sustainability is an integral part of ecotourism, environmental justice is integral to the peace and prosperity of a nation.

Mda, through his narrative explores the dynamics behind developmental issues and the impacts it has on the ecology of the land. The local developmental politics revolves around issues related to not just the building of the casino or the holiday resort but also smaller issues like the use of communal taps, which requires payment of taxes, or the local elections and differences with the ruling parties. When local elections were introduced a few years back the people became hopeful that they would be able to manage their affairs by appointing their own people, but the ruling party had different plans. They

brought in their own representatives whom the villagers refused to vote. The villagers soon realized that unless they fight for their rights this would continue at every election.

Camagu tries to identify the root cause of the failure of the water project and realizes that the reason for the failure of the water project was that it lacked the involvement of the people. The project was simply imposed on the villagers without taking their needs into consideration. According to him the success of a project involves the involvement of those who are going to be most affected by its implementation. Once the people are a part of the project at the conception and implementation stage they feel that it is something which belongs to them and then they would ensure that it becomes a success. Under the current system the people have become passive recipients who have been denied the right to shape their own destiny.

Mda's *The Heart of Redness* judiciously deals with these issues and shows how they can contribute towards the growth and development of the people of Qolorha- by- Sea. The quest for a sustainable future requires looking at the present need of the people without compromising on the needs of the future generations. The indigenous, which have always depended on these forests for their sustenance, should not be denied the right to protect their natural resources from those who advocate economic development.

Bhonco's wife, NoPetticoat has one such humiliating experience at the Blue Flamingo Hotel. The white tourists, staying at the hotel, made NoPetticoat do funny things like sing and dance while they were recording all this in their camcorder. Although projects of such magnitude do help in boosting the economy of a nation, it is the indigenous people who suffer by compromising on their cultural integrity, dignity and

self-respect. While Bhonco is in favour of development and progress and welcomes the tourism project, here we see him and his wife getting humiliated and become objects of ridicule at the hands of the white men whom they want to welcome in their village.

The love for native culture, traditions and values can be seen in the characters of Camagu, Qukezwa and NoPetticoat. The three characters are symbolic of environmental activism in its various forms as they all fight back against established authority in their own ways. Qukezwa's stands tall to question the now redundant environmental rules which the village council has been blindly following. NoPetticoat on the other hand, is symbolic of those women, who are doubly marginalized under patriarchy and colonialism. She finally raises her voice against her own husband and daughter, breaking away from the shackles of modernity and colonial impact.

Longing to embrace her own customs and traditions, she finally joins the cooperative society started by Camagu, much to the displeasure of her husband and daughter. Thus how the path of all three Qukezwa, Camagu and NoPetticoat converge, as all three take up a struggle to protect their culture, land and environment. The natives of Qolorha-by-Sea are finally successful in opposing the plan for the gambling city by having their village declared a National Heritage Site by the government. Dalton, the owner of the Vulindela Trading store, also highlights the main concerns of the people of Qolorha- by-Sea. According to him the villagers are no longer concerned about the war between the believers and the non-believers. Majority of them are only interested in getting basic amenities like clean water, health services and street lights. The war of the Believers and Unbelievers only acts as an obstacle in the way of development. Dalton and Camagu both feel that if they are to oppose the development project they would have to

> and practice of an amaXhosa...Tourists like visiting such cultural villages to see how the people live. Women will wear traditional isiXhosa Costumes ...will grind millet and polish the floors with cow dung...Tourist will flow to watch ...dance and young woman in cage in stick fights. (247)

Dalton cultural theme park, pointing out the various ways in which the performance Dalton envisions will distort amaXhosa life. "That's dishonest Camagu insists it is just Museum that that is how real people live. Real people in today South Africa don't lead the life that is seen in cultural villages"(247). Camagu's protests develop into a full clown intellectual argument against the exploitation and commoditization of indigenous peoples: "It is an attempt to preserve folkways...to reinvent culture. When you excavate a buried colonial identity for these people... a pre-colonial authenticity that is lost... are you suggesting that they currently have no culture. . . That they live in cultural vacuum? . . ." (248).

Bhonco's daughter Xoliswa Ximiya talking about civilization which means what she manages to be western civilizations "I am Interested in the culture of Amazon has they live in today not yesterday. The amaXhosa people are not a museum piece. Like all cultures, their culture is dynamic"(248). The contemporary practice are appropriated, transformed, and incorporated into traditional one, Seeking to melt the kind of late twentieth century cosmopolitanism with a commitment to protecting local cultural practice. In the end John Dalton thwarts development by the casino operators by having the government declare Qolorha-by-sea a "national heritage" site (269). The arguments between believers and unbelievers in Qolorha-by-sea, in effect get displaced by the

argument between Dalton, descendants of British colonial administrator and Camagu, a well-educated cosmic politician returns from the west. Dalton's cultural heritage village makes the Villagers. The subservient to him and replicates kind of colonial imperialism. At the while Xoliswa Ximiya argued with Dalton. Because he is thwarts the civilization in Qolorha. Ximiya expressed that:

> You are greedy! My people will not allow you to get away with this. My people love me. Your people love you because you do things for themselves. You are thinking like Businessman.... This project will be fully owned by the villagers themselves and will be run by committee elected by them in the true manner of cooperative societies. (248)

The novel ends with Dalton's cultural heritage park and the Cooperative business creates both thriving. However Bhonco, the leader of the unbelievers, is particularly displeased with the way things have turned out, since he associates anything that preserves cultural traditions with the believers.

> To Bhonco, all these things represent defeat. The believers have won. He has nothing more to lose. And it is all John Dalton's fault. He brought that despicable Camagu to this village. They both stood with the believers against the unbelievers. As a result he lost the abaThwa dance, he lost his wife, he lost his daughter, and he lost the respect and prestige that he enjoyed in the village. The village itself lost her lifting gambling Paradise that would have changed life for everyone. Instead it got rustic holiday Camp that lacks the glamour of the gambling City. (273)

The project for the gambling complex is finally called off and instead is replaced by a backpacker's hostel for the tourists who come to the village. The entire project is managed by the village cooperative society, just like Camagu had envisioned. For Bhonco, the failure of the project represents defeat as the village lacks the glitter and glamour that it would have had if the gambling complex had come up. On his part Dalton also establishes a so-called cultural village in direct competition with Camagu's cooperative society. The people at Qolorha have finally won the battle to save the indigenous plants and birds. But Camagu is haunted by a fear. For how long will this victory last? "The whole country is ruled by greed. Everyone wants to have his or her snout in the trough. Sooner or later the powers that be may decide, in the name of the people, that it is good for the people to have a gambling complex at Qolorha-by-Sea" (277). He feels pessimistic when he thinks about the gambling complex finally coming into existence and says rather sarcastically, "And of course the powers that be or their proxies- in the form of wives, sons, daughters, and cousins- shall be given equity. And so the people shall be empowered" (277).

As far as Camagu's life is concerned, he gets back to the own culture. Thirty years back there was living different life in the Johannesburg, through this modern life gave good education, modern culture as well as luxury life. So many things bring back long-forgotten images, events, etc. Later it seems to be Camagu yearned for his own culture, overall he lost his culture in Johannesburg.

The Heart of Redness helps bring forth a different brand of environmentalism one that lays stress on the importance of indigenous cultures, traditions and past traditions and practices in protecting the environment against the neo-colonial forces of capitalistic

actions. The historical past which once was a reason for obliteration of the land, now becomes a source for reclaiming their lost land and its ecology. By creating a counter narrative, Zakes Mda has given voice to the indigenous communities. Mda thus through the novel sends out the message that empowerment, education and community involvement are essential for achieving environmental justice in a postcolonial nation.

Chapter Five

Summation

Among contemporary South African black novelists, Zakes Mda is one of the most renowned, both inside and outside South Africa, especially for his ability to articulate in an aesthetic sensibility with subtle humour, and sharp critical commentaries. Forced into exile by the apartheid regime, Mda has established his academic career in the United States and on return to his home country and the physical distance in fact has contributed to the exploration of his innovative stylistic approaches and controversial subjects in his novels.

The Heart of Redness not only represents the formal and informal occasions by means of which a culture enacts both its perpetuation of ancient traditions and its engagement with present circumstances, but also of the cultural traditions and performances of the amaXhosa, and the way in which the narrative also observes their cultural protocols. Mda can also be seen to operate valuing tradition while also manipulating it to shape the present, at the heart of oral performance in South Africa.

The Heart of Redness certainly makes one understand some of the things that went on in kwaXhosa during the times of Nongqawuse. Mda attempts to highlight the plight of the previously disadvantaged, oppressed people in South Africa as a result of colonialism, imperialism, and apartheid, and their plight in the new political dispensation. He found that many of the men has been retrenched from the mines or neighbouring farms, and were still living in appalling conditions with no development whatsoever. The idea to use the cattle-killing event is prompted by the plight and suffering of African

black people he noticed after the First Democratic Elections, on a visit to one of his ancestral homes in the Eastern Cape after his return from exile.

The Heart of Redness which signifies The Xhosa tribe's traditional culture the history of Nongqawuse is closely entwined with modern day South Africa so Mda shows us how the past and present reflect each other. There are crumbs of humour but it focuses on how modernization and capitalism can influence a certain type of mentality. Mda piles on a lot of memorable scenes as Camagu learns the way of the Xhosa people and the book ends on a ambiguous note, which could mean that progress is still unresolved. *The Heart of Redness* is offered by Zakes Mda. He is addressing the present history of South Africa in regional terms rather than those of national allegory, and in a narrative that draws on distinctive cultural practice and a particular event from the South African past to structure its concern with contemporary realities.

Mda is special even though there are a lot of writer in South Africa. He is used writing content as well as despite the serious underlying tones, the mood of the story is light, which implies the real strength of Mda as a writer. He knows his people and their culture intimately, and he uses his skill as a writer and storyteller to share with inexperienced people. Much has been recounted in other reviews of the historical and cultural background to *The Heart of Redness*. There is significance backwards and forwards in time on virtually every page, and making those connections is like finding those special shells or unusually shaped rocks while on a stroll along the beach. But the purpose of a beach stroll is seldom to find shells or rocks. It is to savour the sea air, enjoy the soft sand at our feet, hear the cry of the gulls, and feel the eternity of the ocean as it advances and retreats in the same way it has for millions of years, so it is with turn

through the story of *The Heart of Redness*. It is an enchanting, intriguing, bewitching and amusing walk. Mda's tale entwines South African history with present day South African politics.

Among contemporary South African black novelists, Zakes Mda is one of the most renowned, both inside and outside South Africa, especially for his ability to articulate an aesthetic sensibility in which subtlety, humour, and sharp critical commentaries are central. Forced into exile by the apartheid regime, Mda has established his academic career in the United States, returning nevertheless several times a year to his home country. Instead of constituting a difficulty, it seems as if this physical distance has actually contributed to the exploration of innovative stylistic approaches and controversial subjects in his novels.

The Heart of Redness not only graphically represents the formal and informal occasions by means of which a culture enacts both its perpetuation of ancient traditions and its engagement with present circumstances, and also it is depicted the cultural traditions and performances of the amaXhosa, and the way in which the narrative also observes their cultural protocols. Mda can also be seen to operate valuing tradition while also manipulating it to shape the present, at the heart of oral performance in South Africa. In *The Heart of Redness* once again turns to traditional performance to mediate a culture in the process of transition and renewal, but Mda focus is now on Xhosa culture in the context of contemporary South Africa, and his fictional mode is more complex and also more accomplished.

The Heart of Redness certainly understands some of the things what went on in kwaXhosa during the times of Nongqawuse. It is also a fun way to observe the cultural beliefs of the people and how they have evolved since those days. Imagine the sight of all those starving people who will fully killed off and destroyed their own food and implements of survival. The survival instinct on it head. The delude minds of those who refused to let go of the fantasy despite glaring evidence of the fallacy of the things they believed in. British civilization continues to enjoy humiliation as its barbaric nature gets exposed more and more for what it truly was. More barbaric than they could have imagines us to be to justify their even bigger barbarism.

In the mid-nineteenth century, it seems to be in the village of Qolorha on the eastern Cape coast, a girl called Nongqawuse brought a message from the ancestors to the amaXhosa people: to slaughter their cattle and destroy their crops, so that the ancestors would return from the dead, bringing with them new cattle and crops, and drive the white colonists into the sea. People were divided between Believers, who slew their cattle, and Unbelievers, who did not. The prophecies did not come true, and the power of the amaXhosa people was shattered.

A hundred years later their descendants are still at odds. They now argue about a plan to build a casino and tourist resort. Camagu walks into this and becomes embroiled in a love triangle with two women; one from each group. This is a powerful, funny and tragic story, lovingly and tenderly told. There are shades of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* although the concept of Redness is much more complex. It also reminded a strong thread of magic realism. It is a political satire and an examination of South Africa's past and present. Moving between the worlds of contemporary characters and their nineteenth-

century ancestors, Zakes Mda's new novel is a triumph of imaginative and historical writing, showing how the past continues to live in the present.

The terrific cattle-killing movement has happened by the British. The colonial perspective Parallel to this view of the cattle-killing episode as a form of resistance is the view expressed by colonial administrators of the time, including John Maclean and Charles Brownlee, who were mystified and alarmed by the events. They suspected that the whole affair was the brainchild of Kreli, it is colonist used for King Sarhili of the amaXhosa, whose strategy was to fake a grand agreement against the white settlers of all amaXhosa clans with the northern Basotho and amaZulu tribes. This suspicion was strengthened by messages stopped between Sarhili and King Moshoeshoe of the Basotho. There was also the danger that the amaMfengu, who had helped the British in their previous military encounters with the amaXhosa, might abandon them and join the other African tribes as they were in a rebellious state because their lands were being taken by white colonists.

At about this time, news that the Russians had defeated the British in the Crimean War started circulating in Xhosa land, and, as it was assumed that all enemies of the British were black, the Russians were assumed to be black. Because of this, there was great anticipation that Russian troops would land and liberate the amaXhosa from British subjugation. Some even identified the Russians with amaXhosa ancestors. Thus, the ground was well prepared for the illusion of amaXhosa ancestors who would rise from the dead to protect their people, their children. Custom of people from traditional societies to cover or decorate their bodies with ochre, with its complex aesthetic, practical, evocative and often apostrophic function, gives the true colour of African skin.

While blackness or race is only skin-deep and moreover a negative label imposed from the outside, the ochre redness standing for culture belongs to the essence of the African's and is fully assumed.

The Heart of Redness educated young woman who has adopted Western ways, acquires, against all expectation and all wish. Mda has embodying indigenous womanhood itself, NomaRussia's illness is a woman's disease, perceived as such in both Western and African key defined by the former as cervical cancer, by the latter as the curse and due punishment for an unbecoming, lecherous behavior. Related to the general rhetoric of the human body, connoting pain, womanhood, life, death, and a whole range of other anthropological values besides, blood accompanies the metaphors of the heart in *The Heart of Redness*. Actually, blood represents the closest possible association to body pain. Nevertheless, the fullest symbolical potential is touched in Zakes Mda's novel, where blood transcends *The Heart of Redness* metaphor, connecting it seems that separate stories of Twin-Twin and NomaRussia and prefacing Xikixa's history.

The indigenous people of Qolorha too share a symbiotic relationship with their environment. The plants, birds and animals are a part of their life. It was a common belief in ancient cultures that all non-human forms of life like birds, animals and trees possessed super human abilities and powers and were considered sacred in the lives of the natives. In *The Heart of Redness* is too observed how the villagers revere nature. For the people of Qolorha- by- Sea, their trees, birds, and the lagoon are a way of communicating with their ancestors. Zim, who finds solace under the giant fig tree in front of his hexagon, believes that all his ancestors visit this tree regularly. The wild fig tree knows all his secrets.

Turning to Mda's exploration of space, it is worth noting that he focuses mainly, though not exclusively, on black experience in his depiction of current South African conditions and the varies responses of different communities to the changing environment. The contextualization of current realities in terms of historical events, social circumstances or political ideology provides one with a sophisticated, if often ironic, reading of the different responses to specific environments that may be encountered within the broader South African community. This means that the main stories, in the present of the novels, are put into perspective by providing a broader socio-political context. This depends either on a rewriting of remote history of the period before and during colonization in *The Heart of Redness* or on a new perspective of the more recent past the white government in general.

Mda cleverly presents through characters who are more than mere mouthpieces of ideological positions, have an important function in the narrative itself, but they are implicitly interpolated in the assessment of the questions the novel explores. To analyze the novel, Camagu appears closer to the modernization ideals supported by the Unbelievers, especially thanks to the close relationship he establishes with Bhonco's daughter, Xoliswa Ximiya. In remote Qolorha, the intelligent, educated, and beautiful Xoliswa unsurprisingly becomes agreeable company for Camagu.

During Camagu and Xoliswa's frequent conversations, however, most of which are on the questions of tradition and civilization, Camagu becomes increasingly aware that their positions are irreconcilable. Whereas Xoliswa, whose upbringing in a family of Unbelievers and formal education has inculcated her with the values of the colonizing power, regards all tradition as detrimental and everything Western as potentially

beneficial and superior, Camagu is not indifferent to Xhosa traditions, some of which he even observes, in spite of having spent most of his life outside of South Africa. Her passionate defense of civilization, which makes Xoliswa reject anything vaguely related to Xhosa traditions, provides a further context for her strong feeling of shame in relation to the Nongqawuse episode, Xoliswa Ximiya is not happy that her people are made to act like buffoons for these white tourists. She is miffed that the trails glorify primitive practices. Her people are like monkeys in a zoo, observed with amusement by white foreigners with John Dalton's assistance. But, worst of all, she will never forgive Dalton for taking them to Nongqawuse's Pool, where they drop coins for good luck. She hates Nongqawuse. The mere mention of her name makes her cringe in embarrassment. That episode of the story of her people is a shame and a disgrace.

When he came back to South Africa his childhood days are swaying memory, trees, plants and an atmosphere as further as customs were deconstructing his culture by present day practices. Further he is truly realized that he lost his culture. Zakes Mda takes us to the alternative realities, centuries apart, and weaves them together like the beautiful red isiXhosa costumes of its peoples. Many new Xhosa word is defined the Xhosa food, festival, ritual as well as their tradition could be deeply expressed by the Mda's *The Heart of Redness*. And their stories are interesting and overflowing with meaning as the twin paths of tradition and progress that intersect with tragic consequences in cattle-killing of amaXhosa tribe tales. This tragic cattle-killing element seems to be it is a tricky or brilliant plan of British.

To conclude initially Camagu felt might be the losing his culture but finally he gives support to his old culture and tradition.

The Heart of Redness depicts the preservation of regional cultural identities as a necessity if local cultures are to protect themselves from larger globalizing cultural forces and suggests that a clear sense of local cultural allegiance should override the kind of amorphous hybridity that is represented by the expanding and economically monopolizing forces of Western culture. Over all seems to be *The Heart of Redness* makes more concreted the relationship between environment development and cultural preservation, and also is the cattle-killing as a new technique to British for colonialism.

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ANNEXURE

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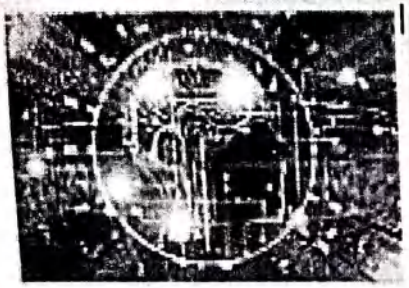

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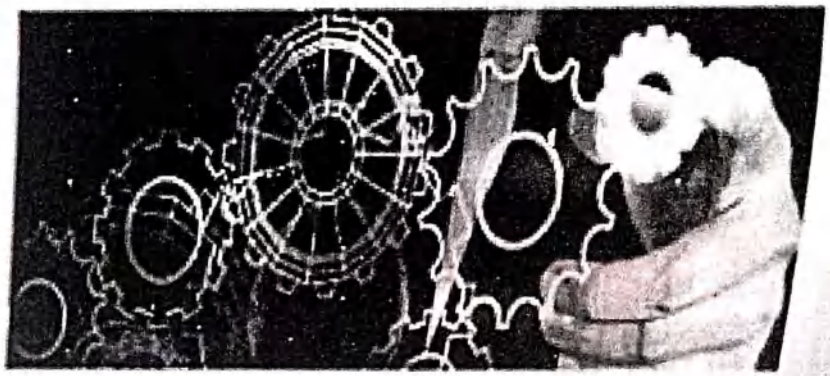

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A Comparative study of Cultural History in *Thing Fall Apart* and *Death and the King's Horse man*

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Abstract

Each tribe is identified by its culture. Culture differs according to the natural setting. According to culture history is perfectly identified through novels. Nowadays culture studies play a vital role in giving significant ideas to future generation, because modern society has destructed culture. Each culture has certain norms and specialities. These elements are explored through the history. Africa has a peculiar culture. This paper analyses the culture of different tribes Igbo and Yoruba with regard to their customs, rituals, marriage, funeral with special reference to Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Wole Soyinka's *Death and the King's Horseman.* Facts of the cultural history is a gate way of process to know more about culture.

Key words: Culture, Customs, Tribe, Rituals, Tradition.

Culture is following the ideas, customs and social behaviour of a particular ethnic group of people in different places, which has a significant value in ceremonial ornaments, costume and artefacts. Constantly culture is rapidly identified by the people. Culture is constructed by society; so society could not function without cultural norms. History is the study of past events as relates to a particular people, country, period, etc. Historical data contains information of how people and societies lived and behaved in the past. Contemporary novels, poems, newspapers, books depict the historical facts on time.

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Chinua Achebe belongs to Nigeria and he explores Igbo culture. He has written many novels based on the Igbo culture. Geographically, Igbo homeland is divided into two unequal sections by the Niger River. One is eastern and the other is western section. The Igbo people are one of the largest ethnic groups in Africa.

Things Fall Apart is based on customs, tradition, celebrations, rituals and hospitality of the Igbo clan. An Igbo person of South-eastern Nigeria follows Igbo culture. Achebe depicts the conversion of the Igbo people into Christianity and the decline of the Igbo culture.

Okonkwo, who is the protagonist of the novel, is a great warrior as well as a follower of culture. He is an important man in the Igbo tribe. The author describes the Igbo people's attitude in two ways such as pre – colonialism and post – colonialism. Before colonialism people followed their own culture, later on after colonialism they changed attitude, modified their surroundings and followed the new western tradition.

Okonkwo, the protagonist followed the Igbo culture until his end. He is a greatest warrior and a wealthy man in Umuofia clan and a respected person. Obierika, Okonkwo's friend was celebrating his daughter's Uri.

> Everybody had been invited men, women and children. But it was really a woman's ceremony and the central figures were bride and her mother. As soon as day broke, breakfast was hastily eaten and women and children began to gather at Obierika's compound to help the bride's mother in her difficult but happy task of cooking for a whole village. (Achebe 156-57).

Through this betrothal ceremony people's unity, helping tendency and hospitality is seen.

Mostly Igbo people followed their traditional work farming. Entire Igbo men are farmers. During the feast of the New Yam, Umuofia is in a festival mood. "It was an occasion for giving thanks to Ani the earth goddess and source of all fertility" (51). The Feast of the New Yam was held every year before the harvest began, to honour the earth goddess and ancestral spirits of the clan. All cooking pots, calabashes and wooden bowls are thoroughly washed especially the wooden mortar in which yam was pounded. "Yam foo-foo and vegetable soup was the chief food in the celebration." (52). The Yam festival is part of their tradition.

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According to Igbo culture, Death in old age is accepted as blessing, after the death the person is clothed in the finest garments. The corpse is placed on a stool in a sitting position. Old friends and relatives visit and pay their last respect. Young men wrap the corpse in grass mats, carry it out to the burial grounds and bury it. Ezeudu is an important man in the society so people celebrated his funeral grandly. Canons and riffles are used in the funeral ceremony. While gun shooting Okonkwo used his gun unexpectedly as a result Ezeudu's son was killed. So Okonkwo was exiled from the village for seven years.

During this time Christianity entered into the Igbo society and the colonizers started to rule the Igbo land. British rule brought about changes in culture. Through colonisation, Christianity was introduced into Umuofia society. Igbo culture moved on to new cultural aspects. Two years later Obierika informed about the white colonisation and the conversion of many to Christianity. Even his son Nwoye became a Christian. Aspects of Igbo culture such as construction of houses, education and religion changed during colonialism. According to Igbo tradition, they built houses of mud with thatched roofs. Due to the impacts of colonialism people constructed house with cements blocks and zinc roofs.

During colonialism people converted to Christianity. Initially missionaries stayed in the Evil forest. People did not to allow them in their village, Mbanta. The village people had a wrong opinion about Evil Forest, they believed that anyone who passes through the evil forest will be dead. The colonizer stayed in the evil forest.

> The next morning the crazy men actually began to clear a part of the forest and build their house. The inhabitations of Mbanta expected them all to be dead with in four days. The first day passed and the second and third and fourth, and none of them died. Everyone was puzzled and then it became known that the white man's fetish had unbelievable power. (206-07)

Nneka is excluded from the family and tribe as her children died. Later on she meets the Mr. Kiaga, the leader of missionary to accept her and convert her to Christianity. Mr.Brown with his kind speeches, lovable character easily binds the people to convert them to Christian. He built many schools, hospitals, etc., through this people believed them and praises the western culture.

Like the Igbo culture, Yoruba culture is followed by a large group of African people. The Yoruba dominate the western part of the country, most Yoruba live in Nigeria. Their language belongs to the Kwa-Kordofanian language family like Tonal language. The Yoruba society has different ethnic communities such as Muslims and Christians, yet Yoruba still follow the traditional religion of their ancestors.

Wole Soyinka's entire works represent Yoruba culture. *Death of the King's Horse Man*, is a play based on the real incident of the Yoruba society.

Death and the King's Horse Man shows the traditional events as well as the colonizer's impact on the society. This play represents the tradition of western African ritual death and civilization. According to the Yoruba culture, the ritual death should be followed by the death of king, when the king dies the king's horseman, king's dog and horse all should accompany the king by the traditional way. The horse man's spirit is essential to helping the chief's spirit ascend to the afterlife. Otherwise, the king's spirit will wander in the Earth and bring harm to the Yoruba people. This event is portrayed in the play by Soyinka.

Yoruba people are ready to celebrate the ritual suicide of Elesin, who is the king's horseman. The whole day singers praise him and enthusiastically celebrate his ritual death. Pilkings, the colonizer is against the events because it is an immature action. According to law it is a crime, but Yoruba people strongly stand for their ritual and tradition.

Elesin's eldest son, who studies medicine in England is against his father's wish in prolonging the ritual death. Informed of the king's death, he comes home to bury his father and asks Pilkings not to interfere. While he seems to hear distant drums to announce his father's death, he leaves to see his dead body. Elesin is brought in alive and in handcuffs. Elesin feels ashamed, falls on his son's feet, but Olunde refuses to recognize him.

The last scene takes place in Elesin's improvised prison. Pilkings gives him a message from Olunde, who regrets his reaction and would like to have his father's blessing before going back to England. Soon afterwards, on Olunde's written demand, Elesin's people are let in with a burden, a courier by which Elesin should send the waiting king a message to tell him that he may set out on the journey alone, without him.

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When Elesin asks to see the courier, the face of Olunde, dead, is disclosed. The whites are shocked and Elesin, by one quick movement, strangles himself. His young wife, who accompanied him to prison, closes his eyes.

Cultural history is found through novels, plays and poems of the contemporary days. The novel *Things Fall Apart* and the play *Death and the King's Horseman* portray the culture and tradition values of the Igbo and Yoruba people.

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A Study of Marxism Impacts in Mohsin Hamid's *Moth Smoke*

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Abstract:

This paper aims how those financial conditions they affect human life. how human life becomes a part of literature and how they communicate things through the level of money. Karl marx, Fredick angel and all great writer who have expressed people were not divided in caste, creed and gender. It's just two parts of the world that dominating one and the dominated one that is rich class and the poor class. Through the paper expressed the role of money, how money governs our language, society. Mohsin Hamid's *Moth Smoke* novel keenly expressed the Marxism manner. Through the novel, which can able to know the mind's of people specially those who are in rich. How the poor leads their life towards inexpensive way. From this aspect of Marxism reader can easily get the outlook of the society of both poor and rich. Darashikoh shezad resemble as a poor society, and Ozi Aurangzeb resemble as a rich society. Through the characters reveals the Marxism habbits, behavior on the society.

Key words:bourgeois, money government, Marxism, injustice, elite class, dialectional materialism.

Marxism coined by the Karl mark and Frederick angels which fight for the self- emancipation of working class, subjecting all forms of domination by the bourgeois. Karl Marx's*Das Kapital* talks about the money or the financial status in the thing that are totally controlled the society. He was supported by Frederick angel in his work *Communistmanifesto* in 1848 and said two different parallel societies the rich society and poor society. Rich society which is actually having privileges benefits compared to poor society go by the common speed of progress. Rich will go bigger richer and the poor will try to be rich. But they will never be able to compete them. Dialectional materialism is people's financial conditions of dressings, iphones, costly watches, AC, etc. these things were expressed the status symbol of elite

failure in live and relationship, and frustration. Hamid defined the description of Daru as a protagonist:

> A hard man with shadowed eyes, manacled, cuffed, dishevelled, proud, erect. A man capable of anything and afraid of nothing. Two guards accompany him, and yes, they are brutes, but they would offer scant reassurance if this man were not chained. He is the terrible almost- hero of a great story: powerful, tragic, and dangerous. He alone meets your eyes. (6)

Daru's childhood friend Ozi Aurangzeb, he belongs to Elite one. His character is absolute matched for the Marxist look. He got married withMumtaz. In the sense of Aurangzeb loved ACs. He insisted that his father install central air-conditioning in the new house. He wants to show himself as a too rich among the poor. He was not bother about the other feelings of material disturbance. He always shows himself as rich. His wife deeply hates ACs functioning in the room. But he refused her opinion and he replied, "I couldn't care less about the country" (130). Through this uses of material such as AC, costly dress are expressed his dialectional materialism manner explored. On the other hand Ozi use the costly car Pajero. Through the line depicts his economic status of Ozi, "I sit in the back of Ozi's Pajero" (27). Limitations made them bound into four walls and life were become narrow at them. On the other side elites have a wider range for availing higher education, travelling from one place to another in their big cars, wearing a branded cloth and other things, eating and drinking in big hotels, visiting in broad countries in vacations, getting qualities of foods, using air conditioner in summer and heaters in winters. All these facilities they are getting easily and without struggling. They thought all these facilities made for them and they are for its.

Economic development of a nation can be defined as quantitative and qualitative change in economy. There are many parameters to examine the economic development of a nation such as standard of living, human capital, critical infrastructure, regional competitiveness, heath, literacy, safety and entrepreneurship of a country. Though, the term economic development is frequently used by common people and media, it is almost misunderstood. Economic diversification helps to expand the local economy and control the domination of a certain race of people to a particular work. Economic development is about building healthy economies in order to have healthy community.

The range of economic development includes the method and policies by which a nation improves the economic, political, and social well-being of its people. Usually, people judge the economic development as the base of generally development of a nation and people. Ozi belongs to rich class, he used influence whenever he committed problems as well as crime.

According to Ozi, he can easily escape from his crime; even his father also received corruption money. Even though he can elope from the laws. Once Ozi drive the car at the while he accident on boy, but he cornered his friend Daru. Through this incident depicts the condition of the society Ozi used Pajero, Daru used suzukki.

Ozi, a figure of the Marxist ideology, because his every action expressed the essence of the Marxism flavor. In the sense of Ozi he rescues himself by the money. That the thing he do not respect the law of society, no humanity. Daru belongs to poor as well as he cornered to the thief and also murder of the same society.He gave money to the enquiry police man and the lawyer of the courts. At the last line " of course, that a Pajero and not a Suzuki killed the boy" (306). From this line expressed the law as rebirth.

Wealthy people break down the laws, and all the legal departments are obedient of that people. They had a complete control on all the legal institution, they get into wrong and illegal deeds and they proudly feel that they had a complete right. Ozi drives his big car on the road without noticing the signal and killed a boy through his Pajero accident and he doesn't feel guilty and ashamed. But unfortunately Daru catches by the mob because of penniless guy.

Mohsin Hamid had paid devoted contribution for highlighting the socio-political issues of Pakistani culture in the term of Marxism by Karl Marx. The relationship between exploitation and capitalism allows the writer to express the panic condition of specific culture. Marx illuminated in his theory that capitalistic have complete tendency to control over the labour. In capitalistic system people encountered all the challenges of surviving and labor had paid highly devotions of service. They faced multi dimensional instigation of unfair and injustice sources of existence. Capitalist have an approach for their personal motives to gain a super power and super economy through perish and exploitation of labors masses.

Moth Smoke novel clearly expressed the social condition of the rich as well as poor through the Ozi character Marxism approach explored by the Hamid's novel. Marxism plays a vital role in society.

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P G and Research Department of English

Aditanar College of Arts and Science

Virapandianpatnam, Tiruchendur

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Certificate

This is to certify that K. SHUNMUGA NARAYANT, M.Phil SCHOLAR, St. MARY'S COLLEGE ~~participated~~ / presented paper entitled A STUDY OF MARXISM IMPACTS IN MOHSIN HAMID'S "MOTH SMOKE" at the One Day State Level Seminar on " LITERARY THEORIES: BEFORE AND AFTER" organised by the Post Graduate and Research Department of English, Aditanar College of Arts and Science, Tiruchendur held on 27th September 2019.

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Diasporic Representations: A Reading of Rohinton Mistry's *Such a Long Journey* and *Family Matters*

A Dissertation submitted to

St. Mary's College (Autonomous)

Thoothukudi

affiliated to

MANONMANIAM SUNDARANAR UNIVERSITY

in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the award of the Degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN ENGLISH

By

SIVAPRIYA V.

(REG. NO. 19MLEN11)

RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

ST.MARY'S COLLEGE (Autonomous)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **Diasporic Representations: A Reading of Rohinton Mistry's *Such a Long Journey* and *Family Matters*** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is a work done by Sivapriya V. during the year 2019-2020, and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

Ms. A. Judith Sheela Damayanthi

Head of the Department

Dr. S. Sudha Rani

Assistant Professor of English

GUIDE

Dr. Sr. A. S. J. Lucia Rose

PRINCIPAL

EXAMINER

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled **Diasporic Representations: A Reading of Rohinton Mistry's *Such a Long Journey* and *Family Matters*** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is my original work and that, it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

SEPTEMBER 2020 **SIVAPRIYA V.**

THOOTHUKUDI

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PREFACE

The study of **Diasporic Representations: A Reading of Rohinton Mistry's *Such a Long Journey* and *Family Matters*** draws understanding about the Parsian people culture, their immigration and also about social, cultural and political in India. Mistry has established himself as an exciting new voice on Canadian English Literature. He is a writer with great honesty of imagination. The political and cultural concerns that have changed the life style of many and are very close to the mind and spirit of the people are his main thematic concern. His portraits of the Parsian community map the tension of modernity and their struggle against marginality. Mistry brings forth the issues that are extremely relevant in day to day life of the common man.

The first chapter **Introduction** makes a brief survey of South Indian diaspora and diasporic writing in general. It also throws a light on some of the recent critic, who explored their view on Mistry's novels. Further, the life and works of Mistry are discussed in detail. His views on Indian history, political and memory of immigration are discussed in next chapters.

The second chapter **Representation of Culture** deals with the complete history of Parsian community and their tradition and culture. It also analyses the different narratives of Mistry's characters who express their concern that affects their community.

The third chapter **Representation of Socio-Political Changes** highlights the historical contexts such as Indo-Pakistan war, the reality of the Nagarwala conspiracy case in 1971, the religious chauvinism of Shiv Sena in Bombay and also sharply

insights about pre and post-independence of India. It also throws light on corruption in India.

The fourth chapter **Representation of Reminiscences** deals with immigration of Parsian Community. It also reveals the differences that exist between the land of the past and the land of the present by the subtle play of the device of memory and by a capturing of past in the present.

The final chapter **Summation** sums up the ideas discussed in the previous chapters and established the finding of following representations.

The researcher has consistently followed the MLA Handbook 7th edition for the preparation of the thesis.

Chapter One

Introduction

The seed of Indian Writing in English was sown during the period of the British rule in Indian. Particularly, Indian writers – poets, novelists, essayist and dramatists have been making momentous and considerable contribution to World Literature since pre-Independence era. If our dives deep into the work of the Indian stalwarts of the English fiction, it is revealed that their work are not an imitation of the English Literary pattern but highly original and intensely Indian in both theme and spirit.

The early history began with the works of Michael Madhusudan Dutt followed by R.K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao who contributed to Indian fiction in the 1930s. Mongia stratifies the phases of the Indian English Writing in three distinct categories. Bankim Chandra Chaterjee's Raj Mohan's Wife is an example of 'Nativity' of the English novel. Then the phase of 'confluxion' occurs in 1930s with writers like Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan and Raja Rao.

In recent years, Indian Writing in English has achieved phenomenal success in the form of Prizes and best selling status. Many texts show an engagement with the history of the subcontinents in terms of strong emotions like joy and horror. The history of Indian English literature indicates certain points of progress, point of departure from a former period towards a new one. However, the most post colonial writers have been able to shed these inhibitions by asserting their identity. The evolution of Indian English fiction from the 1860s to the present day diasporic writing needs further elaboration to properly understand the tradition and new narrative experiment of the Diasporic Writing.

At present age they find a great diversity in the human population in almost all the countries especially in the First World Countries and in the speedily developing countries. This is chiefly because of migration. This migration is said as Diaspora. Diaspora means the scattering of people of a certain community or nation outside its home or homeland. The word 'Diaspora' originated from the Greek 'Diaspirein' meaning 'to disperse', which was especially for scattering of seed on soil. The present concept of Diaspora has been derived from the Jews dispersal from Palestine after their defeat with the Romans in 70 CE.

The late ninetieth century and the twentieth century witnessed a worldwide dispersion of vast population fleeing political oppression or simply looking for more beneficial opportunities in terms of education and earning etc. Diaspora now includes any group of people living outside their homeland. The nature of the term 'Diaspora' defined by Martin and Barumann is as followed:

> The idea of Diaspora has been calculated as expressing notion of hybridity, heterogeneity, identity, fragmentation and reconstruction, double consciousness, fractures of memory, ambivalence, roots and routes, discrepant cosmopolitanism, multi-locality and so forth. (324)

Some of the characteristics of the diaspora people can be identified as follows, (a) these people maintain regular or at least occasional contact with their homeland, (b) they have a hope or at least a desire, to return to their homeland at some point of time, if their homeland still exists, (c) these migrant people not only settle in new territories but also take with them and recreate a form of their homeland with its artifacts in case of culture, language and all other aspects of life, (d) the subsequent generation get the ideas of their homeland through their parents, diasporic society,

reading literary compositions, myths and legends, (e) so, the homeland, for the subsequent generation is a land of emotional attachments and the health of their original cultural, (f) they do not share the same history with the citizens of the host country and so they feel their different ethno-political identity, (g) moreover, these people always possess a feeling of alienation.

The diasporic writing is about the writers going abroad and writing his/her experiences living there. But most of the diasporic writers write about their nostalgia of their homeland, or their sociopolitical experiences in the past. Nostalgia means a sentimental longing or wishful affection for the past, typically for a period or place with happy personal association. When one migrates to the other country then the feeling of homelessness starts hunting. This is what is evident in the works of most of the Indian writers living abroad, or the Indian origin writers living abroad.

The feeling of rootlessness, alienation, confusion, nostalgia, dislocation and sufferings on the basis of race, culture, religion and language concludes into conflicts, flight for identity and on the other hand it lead to birth of feeling of marginality in the minority group. Usually, the first generation diaspora clings to food and clothes as the most obvious markers of Indianness that sets them apart and highlights their difference. The second generation diaspora declines and removes such identity markers to assimilate the dominant culture.

Earlier, people used to travel abroad without the conscious knowledge of boundaries that exist. However, today, the scenario has changed and immigrants become acutely aware of the sense of displacement. They are forced to accept the cultural displacement, but the state of migrants remains problematic as they are just not able to delete the memory of their native land from their mind. The characteristic

of migrant people vary from place to place and from community to community or even from individual to individual.

The concept of multiculturalism is workable only when man tries to understand the new culture and tradition of other country and it is workable when man tries to appreciate the positiveness of other culture ignoring the drawbacks. But in old days it was not possible, but now it has been existed as a real form in many countries in the world. Multiculturalism does not mean to demolish one's own culture but to search for the possibilities to bridge two cultures. It does not mean to blame one's original culture, but to get assimilated with other culture which is not easy process; it takes more time to assimilate. Stuart Hall in his essay "Cultural Identity and Diaspora" also explains the concept of multiculturalism in the diaspora he says:

> The diaspora experience . . . is defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of "identity" which lives with and through, not despite, difference, by hybridity. Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves a new, through transformation and difference. (235)

The main feature of Diaspora is Dislocation. Dislocation is breaking the old identity of the immigrants. They feel alienated by the adapted land and suffer from the acceptance of host society and face the problem of dislocation. It is also one of the major problems faced by the immigrants. Diaspora writing explains the experiences, the term of location, dislocation and re-location. When people migrate to alien land, the foreign ambiance makes them sick. In the case of 'forced exile', the suffering will be severe when compared with the 'self exile'.

The rootlessness is the basic form of alienation. Dictionary of literary term defines Alienation as the state of being alienated or separated from something or somebody; it is condition of the mind. Social alienation is replaced by the metaphysical alienation. The traditional values and customs of their indigenous personality have been repressed by cultural orders. The quest for identity in the immigrant experience is complicated. Immigrants always find him/her in the homeland and try to be change. That change filled with the memories of homeland and conflict with the realities of new world.

All these kind of experiences have been portrayed in the literary works of some of the migrant people. These literary works are popularly known as Diasporic Literature. As the migrant people torn between the two places and two culture and often languages; the expatriate writers navigates a new literary space. Diasporic Writers unfolds these experiences of unsettlement and dislocation, at some or other level. A Diasoric text can be investigated in terms of location, dislocation and relocation.

During the time of these developments in Indian English Writing, a sub-genre of Post-colonial Writing started to emerge by the name Diasporic Writing. The history of Indian Diasporic Writing can be traced back to 1794. Indian Diasporic Literature is a vast field to be studied. The Indian Diaspora has been considered as one of the most outstanding and complex socio-cultural and economic phenomenon in the scenario of the Contemporary World Literature. There is the push of inadequate opportunity in the homeland and pull of better prospects in the west.

The diasporic literature is fascinating, but it is equally complex and unique. Many writers got recognition initially as the proponents of a new genre belonging

exclusively to overseas Indians. But today, many writers have become mainstream contributors to global literature. They have come of age and get counted without their identity as migrants with their feeling of estrangement with both the homeland and the host countries.

Deen Mahomed, an Indian by birth, published *The Travel of Deen Mahomed from Cork*, England after migrating there in 1784. Another writer named Mizra Abu Taleb Khan wrote an account in Persian from Europe. These two writers' perspectives differ due to the different languages they use. Since Deen Mahomed uses English, his addresses are the European, and his role is the represent his responses to the voices of Europe.

Abu Taleb wrote about his exotic European experiences to the Indian people back at home. Diasporic Indian Writing has travelled a long way after that. Indian Literature is largely a terrain occupied mainly by Diasporic Indian writers like V.S. Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh, Anita Desai, Bharati Mukherjee, Rohinton Mistry, M.G. Vasanji, Bapsi Sidhwa, Kiran Desai, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and Jhumpa Lahiri.

V.S. Naipaul is the most outspoken critic of Indian among the diaspora writer. His comments on India and Caribbean and his evaluation of Muslim fundamentalism in Non-Arab countries have been topic of ruthless denigration. His early novels are *The Mystic Masseur* and *The Mimic Men* about longing of migrated people return into their homelands that are dislocated in the form of indenture labors. Naipaul continues at the epicenter of literary development even today. Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* is the path-breaking novel. It started a new trend of free play of language,

style, fantasy, laughter, irony and satire. His work revolves around the Indian subcontinents as a vital theme.

Anita Desai was one of the most successful, prolific and respected novelists of the modern era. Some of her best-loved works are set against India and Abroad. She portrayed the lives of the all classes of women in India. Her works include: *Fasting, Feasting*, *Journey to Ithaca*, *Baumgartner's Bombay*, *In Custody*, *The Village by The Sea*, *Where Shall We Go This Summer?*, *The Peacock Garden*, *Voices in the City*, *Cry, The Peacock* .

Shashi Deshpande, is one of the foremost writers of today's India, who balances new heights. Her novel *That Long Silence* brought her lot of regard. In her writings she unfolds the different experiences of Indian women. Their problems and lifestyles are projected tracing the hard times or difficult situations and the struggle they would undertake to shape life in a better, new, effective way.

Jhumpa Lahiri is an Indian American author. Lahiri's writing is characterized by her 'plain' language and her characters, often Indian immigrants to America who must navigate between the cultural values of their homeland and their adopted home. Lahiri's fiction is autobiographical and regularly draws upon her own experiences as well as those of her parents, friends, connections, and others in the Bengali communities with which she is familiar. Her famous novels includes: *The Namesake*, *Interpreter of Maladies*.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is an award-winning writer, poet and teacher. Her themes take in women, immigration, the South Asian experience, history, myth, magical realism and diversity. Her books have been translated into 29 languages, including Dutch, Hebrew, Russian and Japanese. Two novels, *The Mistress of Spices*

and *Sister of My Heart*, have been made into films. She teaches Creative Writing at the University of Houston.

Bharati Mukherjee is an award-winning Indian-born American writer. The publication of *Darkness* in 1985 earned Mukherjee far greater critical applause than had either of her first immigrants. Her fiction impressively and delicately induces the cultural apprehensions and torn personalities representing South Asian women. Mukherjee published her first two novels from Canada: *The Tiger's Daughter* and *Wife*.

Kiran Desai is an Indian author and a permanent occupier of the United States who turned into literary - celebrity with her novel, *The Inheritance of Loss*. She paints the act of immigration as an act of cowardice: Immigration, so often presented as a heroic act, could just as easily be the opposite; that it was cowardice that led many to America; fear marked the journey, not bravery; a desire to spoil to where you never saw poverty, not really, never heard the demands of servants, beggars, bankrupt relatives, and kindness would never be openly claimed. Experience the relief of being an unknown transplant to the locals and hide the perspective granted by journey.

Vikram Seth is a writer who uses a pure English and more realistic themes. Being a self-confessed fan of Jane Austen, his attention is on the story, its details and its twists and turns. Vikram Seth is notable both as an accomplished novelist and poet. He is also a prolific poet. His famous novels are *The Golden Gate* and *A Suitable Boy.* Vikram Chandra is another author who shuffles between India and the United States and has received critical acclaim for his first novel *Red Earth and Pouring Rain* and collection of short stories *Love and Longing in Bombay*

Shashi Tharoor, his *The Great Indian Novel*, follows a story-telling mode as in the Mahabharata drawing his idea by going back and forth in time. His work as UN

official living outside India has given him a point that helps construct an objective Indianness. Aravind Adiga is also the famous writers today's India. He received the Man Booker Prize for his debut novel *The White Tiger*. His other novels like *Last Man in Tower* and *Selection Day*. The present thesis is explained about the works of Rohinton Mistry.

Rohinton Mistry is an Indian born Canadian who writes in English. He was born in the Parsi community family of Bombay on 3 July 1952. He was the second of four children, three boys and girls. Rohinton's father was an advertising account executive. He recalls his mother, happy in the role of nurturer. Now resident in Canada, but continually raiding of memory for dusty but tangible remnants of the India he has left behind. He belongs to the parsi community and practices Zoroastrianism.

Like many of the characters in his stories, Mistry was of Parsi origin. He obtained a degree in mathematics and economics from the University of Bombay before moving to Canada in 1975. In the early 1980s he enrolled at the University of Toronto to pursue a degree in English and philosophy. He began writing short stories and won the university's literary competition two years in a row. Mistry attracted wider attention when he won *Canadian Fiction Magazine*'s annual Contributors Prize in 1985. His range of concerns is also admirable vast, politics, community life, urbanism, the cast system, economic inequality and national events such as wars, communalism and the subaltern classes among others. Mistry's fiction is about heroism in an age and context where mere survival is a heroic act.

Mistry is a writer with great honesty of imagination. He does not attempt to follow fads and fashion. His writing suggests sensitivity to both the beauty and the fragmentation and the cruelties of his world. He provides rich, diverse and sharply

critical insights into Post-Independence Indian in his fiction. Much of Mistry's fiction works with the humanistic premise that the universal lies in the ordinary. Most of his writings are marked as 'Indo-nostalgic'. His portraits of the Parsi community map the tensions of modernity and their struggle against marginalization.

Parsi, also spelled Parsee, member of a group of followers in India of the Iranian prophet Zoroaster (or Zarathustra). The Parsis, whose name means 'Persians' are descended from Persian Zoroastrians who immigrated to India to avoid religious persecution by Muslims. They live chiefly in Mumbai and in a few towns and villages mostly to the north of Mumbai, but also at Karachi (Pakistan) and Bangalore (Karnataka, India). Although they are not, strictly speaking, a caste, since they are not Hindus, they form a well-defined community.

According to tradition, the Parsis initially settled at Hormuz on the Persian Gulf, but finding themselves still persecuted they set sail for India, arriving in the 8th century. They settled first at Diu in Kathiawar but soon moved to Gujarat, where they remained for about 800 years as a small agricultural community. With the establishment of British trading posts at Surat and the Parsis' circumstances altered radically, for they were in some ways more receptive of European influence than the Hindus or Muslims and they developed a flair for commerce.

The Parsis, after settling in India, adapted Gujarati language but have preferred to express themselves in English. The triumph of the Parsi novelists in using English language is largely due to their westernization and exposure to English culture. They describe rituals and the Zoroastrian customs.

The Parsis have adopted Gujarati as their mother-tongue and contributed a lot to Gujarati right from the seventeenth century. However, they came into prominence in the literary field in the third decade of the nineteenth century through the medium

of journalism, after the launching of *Mumbai Samachar* in 1822. This was the first newspaper in the Gujarati language. Some stories based on Persian themes were published in this newspaper.

Mistry's Zoroastrian background informs each of his texts, providing both the subject matter and the coordinates by which his protagonists understand their encounters with the outside world. The Zoroastrian principles that inform their lives also direct their responses to the moral dilemmas they face. They can also provide interesting interpretative clues for the reader prepared to take a little time to find out more about the Parsis and their world. This ethnic identity also impacts on Mistry's style, complicating its inherent hybridity.

The enthralling history fiction interface that Mistry implies is undoubtedly captivating and ethnically momentous. The political concerns that have changed the lifestyle of many and are very close to the mind and spirit of the people are his main thematic concerns. He goes to the depth of relationships, tries to explore those where the self is at a loss at times accepting and at times rejecting the community values and traditions. The identity that an individual tries to create for oneself is so dependent on the factors around him that he fails to understand the genuine requirements of events around and is in a dilemma while acknowledging or eliminating a situation that might affect him in both ways.

Mistry became a writer almost by accident. In Canada, his wife prompted him to enter the Hart House Literary Contest. He wrote his first short-story *One Sunday* in 1983, and won the first prize in the Hart House Literary Contest. The following year, his work *Auspicious Occasion* (1984) won the first prize in the same contest. His first published work was a collection of short stories entitled *Tales from Firozsha Baag*. It

was published by Penguin Canada in 1987. It was warmly greeted by critics and general readers similar for its insights into the complex lives of the Parsi inhabitants of Firozsha Baag, an apartment building in Mumbai.

The work *Tales from Firozsha Baag* (1987) includes eleven short stories titled, *Auspicious Occasion, One Sunday, The Ghost of Firozsha Baag, The Condolence Visit, The Collectors, Of White Hairs and Cricket, The Paying Guest, Squatter, Lend Me Your Light, Exercises* and *Swimming Lessons*. This work was also published as *Swimming Lessons and Other Stories from Firozsha Baag* in the United States in 1989.

Mistry wrote three novels. They were *Such a Long Journey* (1991), *A Fine Balance* (1995) and *Family Matters* (2002). All his novels were a great success and were widely recognized. He became world-wide famous through his novels. His debut novel, *Such a Long Journey* (1991; film version, 1998), is an intricate tale of the triumphs and disasters of a kindhearted bank clerk's friends and family set in India in 1971, a time of domestic unrest and war with Pakistan. The book received the Governor General's award (1991), the W.H. Smith Books in Canada First Novel award, and the Commonwealth Writers' Prize for best book (1992) and it was shortlisted for Booker Prize (1991).

The plot is drawn on the political canvas, where Gustad Noble, a Parsi who is striving to become a responsible family head, amidst his rebellious son Sohrab, superstitious wife Dilnanaz, friend Jimmy Bilimoria and the death of a good friend Dishawji. He finds himself in the clutches of a dangerous government plot. The lives of the characters are deeply affected by the local corruption. It follows India's political turmoil under the leadership of Indira Gandhi. Through the novel *Such a*

Long Journey, Mistry criticizes Jawaharlal Nehru's temperament, his alleged political deceitfulness, his influence on his daughter Indira that, according to some people, spoiled her marriage life and her relationship with her husband Feroze Gandhi, who was a Parsi.

Mistry's second novel *A Fine Balance* was published in 1995. It also reveals his expanding field of vision, now moving beyond Parsi life to embrace the fate of the wider Indian community at the time of Indira Gandhi's infamous State of Emergency. The novel is set in 1970's. It is a story about a widow Dinabhai who manages her livelihood by sewing garments and letting of a room in her apartment. The other characters of the novels are her husband late Rustomji, her mother Mrs. Shroff, her brother Nuswaan, the priest Dustoor Framji and her tenants Ishvar, Omprakash and Maneck Kohlah. Nuswaan hates his sister because she is beautiful. Dina's mother is mentally unfit to be a protector for her.

After the death of Dina's husband her brother Nuswaan looks after her as per Indian traditions and customs. Dina was a strong lady who faces all the adversities of her life and decided to live alone even after her husband's death. Ishvar and Omprakash, her tenants, have to lose their house, due to city embellishment programme. They have come to Bombay in hope of finding work. Ishvar's legs are infected with gangrene and both of his limbs are amputated. He lost his job of tailoring as he is no longer able to work on the paddles of the sewing machine. Despite this he never loses his hope.

Maneck Kohlah, is a student from village situated somewhere in the Himalayas to study in the city school. Avinash, one of his friends, is tortured and killed by the police because of his anti-Indira and anti-Emergency outburst. Police

cover up the case claiming that it is merely a railway accident. *A Fine Balance*, which won the Commonwealth Writers' Prize (1996), the Giller Prize for best Canadian novel (1995) and Los Angeles Times Book Prize for Fiction (1996). It was also shortlisted for Booker Prize (1996).

Mistry's third novel, *Family Matters* (2002), was set in a tiny two-room flat in modern-day Mumbai and presented a compelling portrayal of a family of Parsis living in exigent circumstances during 1990s. At the focal point of the novel is an elderly person, a Parsi with Parkinson's infection. Nariman Vakeel is a resigned educator whose disease places restored strains on family relations. His recollections of the past open the perusers to prior minutes in the city's, and the country's history in a novel that moves crosswise over three ages of a similar family.

Recognizable slippage between open and private world is seen in Family Matters. Essentially the life of the inhabitants of 'House Felicity' (Nariman's previous living arrangement) and 'Lovely manor' (where he is compelled to move by his plotting step girl) review the universe of Firozsha Baag. Where the prior novels tended towards a conclusive conclusion be that as it may, the epilog of this novel appears to be significantly less ready to comfort. The novel depicts the sentiments of an immature that gets dependent on stamp collection and escapes. It additionally depicts how occasions hurt from various perspectives. Toward the end when Jahangir left the boxful of valuable stamps, which he gets from Dr. Mody, contact the peruser's heart. This won the Kiriyama Pacific Rim Booker Prize for fiction (2002).

The Scream is his latest book. It is a short-story which was illustrated by Tony Urquhart and was published in 2008. It is a story narrated by a man at the end of his life, who is angry at the predicament of old age and his isolation from his family and from a world that no longer understands him. He rails and raves in ways that are both

hilarious and moving. His novella *The Scream* (2008) is narrated by an aging, isolated resident of a Mumbai apartment building. In 2012 Mistry was awarded the Neustadt Prize.

Some of the recent critics like Meenakshi Kumar, Rajesh Kumar, Nadini Sharma, S. Vinod Kumar and P.S. Mary Christina are critics of Mistry's novels. Meenakshi Kumar (2011) explored 'Humanism' in the Works of Mistry. As a humanist, he upheld scientific spirit and a deeper understanding of human beings which convinced that he is a true humanist. In her work, she also examined the hurdles which the social and political power structures put in the path of humanism to which Mistry devotes a considerable part of his fiction. Mistry's character Gustad Noble in *Such a Long Journey* is true to his name a noble soul. His own cup of woes is full to brim with a limited salary, but still he discharges his duties towards the members of his family well.

According to Meenakshi, Mistry's character surely epitomizes human nature that transcends the socio-cultural surrounding. In his work *A Fine Balance* we see strong woman character Dina Dalal, whose explanation would warm the cockles of any feminist. Her attitude towards Om and Ishwar is quite humanistic. There is hardly any character created by Mistry who would embody evil only. The essential goodness of being a human is less or more prevailing in all the characters of the novel. Similarly, in the novel *Family Matters* one comes across Mr. Kapur, who is a true humanist at heart. He is in love with not only the buildings and roads of Bombay but also with its cosmopolitan spirit. Though a Hindu has Muslim and Parsi employers, he wishes to merge his identity with that of common Bombazine.

Meenakshi Kumar feels that, like a true humanist, Mistry focuses his gaze on the froth of the earth and upholds their human rights. On the basis of thorough

examination of Mistry's work, the researcher find that Mistry's humanism stands for essential human goodness despite individual differences, equal human rights, functionality of religion and end to socio-political exploitation of vulnerable sections of society.

Rajesh Kumar (2012) in his study, "Treatment of Parsi culture and Traditions in the works of Mistry", closely examined the element of culture and tradition in the wider sense of diasporic consciousness and reacted the history of Parsi community as well as history of nation. The culture and traditions are explored far beyond the refined activities of life of ordinary Parsi people and also encompasses variety of customs, rituals, food, ethnic bonds, religious customs, myth, displacement, dislocation, relocation, expatriation, assimilation and cultural hybridity.

According to Rajesh Kumar, the depth study of Mistry's writing proves that dilemma between farewell and welcome (Canada) has given birth to a double – diasporic consciousness from the fragments of past – present combination. The element of culture and tradition along with nostalgia in this study has dealt with the problem by balancing the glory of myth with more critical mode of reality. Mistry with the help of balancing strategy constructed a world where people can achieve a harmonious balance between self and society and succeeded in giving some meaning to the existence of Parsi community and its culture.

Rajesh Kumar critize, Mistry's first novel *Such a Long Journey* is the fine documentation of the culture and tradition of the Parsi people in the swiftly changing politics and society. In *A Fine Balance* one can find the crisis of balance where one character is identical with another and achieve a fine balance between memory and desire, myth and reality and culture and tradition. His third novel *Family Matters* seems to complete a cycle of belongingness, belongingness with the culture and

traditions of Parsi community by the various characters of the novel. Mistry has overcome the difficulties of human relations between people with different cultural identities.

Nadini Sharma (2013) in her exploration of Mistry's work highlighted 'India' and dwelling community of Parsis in India. Mistry's novel may rightly regarded as a domestic, social and political commentary concerning the Parsis. His works seek to evolve a vision that involves both the community centered existence of the Parsis and their involvement with the wider national frame work. He brilliantly captures the nerves of India. He painted the various colors of his community on the large canvas of India. India and Indianness is the core element of all his work. One cannot even imagine him with the flavor of Indianness and Parsiness.

According to Nadini Kumar, Mistry's first major work *Such a Long Journey*, he explored various attributes of his community and India. This novel deals with the basic and serious issues of the contemporary India. Mistry placed Indian history as a background and weaves the find fabric with various attributive characters including the main protagonist Gustad Noble. Mistry's second novel *A Fine Balance* is also a fine example of Indian-Parsi writing. The four main characters of the novel suffer from a sense of rootlessness as they all belong to different parts of country. The so called circumstances of loneliness, a sense of up-rootedness and need for association bring them together and create a bond of understanding to maintain a fine balance in their lives'.

Nadini Kumar also critize Mistry's third novel *Family Matters* can be called retreat into Bombay-Parsi world. He portrayed the life of middle class Parsi family in Bombay. The focus of the novel has shifted from 1970 to the more recent times of India. Mistry weaves the tale on the backdrop of post Babri Masjid event. The

novelist has covered the most volatile and violent spectrum of contemporary India which shook the social and political stagnation of the country. In all the three novels Mistry has highlighted the India in its historical, political and cultural significance. His novels showed India in its true sense.

S. Vinod Kumar (2013) in his work, "The Portrayal of Suffering of the Common Man in the Select Works of Mistry", showed the intense streaks of political imbalances and sufferings of common people as discerned in his novels. He not only shows the harsh realities of life but plunged the deep depths of the human psyche to explore its mysterious chaos in the mental frame work of various characters of his fiction. All the three narratives of Mistry follow the same essential structure and painted the tangled life and concerns of all Parsi protagonists. Mistry is the champion of the downtrodden and he depicts the untold miseries of the bottom of the society. Mistry is very much worried about the materialistic attitude of man at the time of state emergency.

According to S. Vinod Kumar Mistry's first novel, *Such a Long Journey* expanded the scope of his Parsi culture to the world of Mrs. Indira Gandhi's dirty political games. The novel illustrates sufferings of Gustad Noble who suffers at the hands of self centered politicians and heartless officials. Mistry describes that happiness and misery are interlinked and woven tightly in everyone's life through novel. Mistry also presents some social, political and religious aspects of the life of all the major and minor characters and also describes its effect on the life of common man. Gustad noble experiences struggle, disappointments, pains and problems in his daily life. He finds salvation that denies its existence and becomes a universal symbol of human survival and human triumph. In his second novel *A Fine Balance* he exhibits the sufferings picture of the society.

P.S. Mary Christina (2013) in her work, "Survival Amidst a Cross Culturalism: A Parallel Study of Michael Ondaatje's: The English Patient and Rohinton Mistry's: A Fine Balance" critically assessed the concept of survival amidst casteism and racism. The study revealed that the characters of Michael Ondaatje and Mistry have shown pure survival attitude amidst socio-cultural problems. Specific social themes like displacement and dislocation, love, victimhood, survival and identity are explored extensively in this study. The immigrant experience and emigrant sensibility are presented through the characters like Maneck and the maid in *A Fine Balance* and kip in *The English Patient*.

According to Mary Mistry's characters feel alienated and long to get back to their native place as they belong to a different race. The burden of poverty and discrimination they face in their homes, societies and communities which are further compounded by social isolation, emotional rejection and physical vulnerability. Loss and the inevitability of death loom at large in the lives of the protagonists. Ondaatje and Mistry communicate the message of unity amidst diversity through their novels. Mistry's *A Fine Balance* concludes by revealing that there is hope even after despair through his characters. In Ondaatje's *The English Patient* the writer concludes with Kip thinking of Hana in India who is half way across the globe.

As a writer of Diaspora, Mistry has occupied a remarkable place for himself. Nilufer Bharucha writes about Mistry in her *Writers of the Indian Diaspora:*

> As an Indian who now lives and writes from Canada, Rohinton Mistry is a writer of the Indian Diaspora. However, Mistry is also a Parsi Zoroastrian and as a person whose ancestors were forced into exile by the Islamic conquest of Iran he was in Diaspora even in India. This informs his writing with the experience of multiple displacements. (23)

Mistry draws his inspiration both from sharply recalled childhood and from the upheavals of migration. His novels can be described as novels of memory and this memory centre most vividly on Mumbai of his youth. He re-narrates the history of his community and country as it has been in the post-independence era. Mistry's novels are a perfect blend of love, intrigues, begrudges, politics, friendship and lewdness. There is also humor with lewd jokes, intentions and pretentions.

Mistry's characters grow in self-knowledge and fight against an aggressive social environment. His novels deal with the major Indian social problems and imbalances of Indian society, where the protagonists themselves are the downtrodden. We can find various themes like nationalism, alienation, oppression, human-relationship, fear and temptation. Mistry manages to convey a vivid picture of India through sharp affectionate sketches of Indian family life and a gift for erotic satire.

Mistry brings forth the issues that are extremely relevant in the day to day life of the common man and they feel a part of it. The writings of Mistry concern people to find self-worth while dealing with painful family dynamics and difficult political and social conflict. His works also address emigration, especially immigration to Canada and the difficulty they face in that society. Subjects like corruption, problematic political decisions, the common man's fears and traumas, caste and class problems and many more such applicable concerns are so well portrayed that people feel intimate and associated.

The main aim of this research is to describe the influence of society in the life journey of a common man who immigrates and struggles in the new place. The researcher aims to understand what diaspora is and about Persian people who are immigrated to India. It also explains about the social and political changes due to the

Emergency period in India in Rohinton Mistry's two famous novels *Such a Long Journey* and *Family Matter.*

The next chapter **Representation of Culture** deals with the exploration of Parsian culture and their struggles to live in India. The following also analyses the characters who express their concern that affect the Parsian community in Mistry's first and last novels *Such a Long Journey and Family Matters.*

Chapter Two

Representation of Culture

> Zoroastrianism is about the opposition of Good and Evil. For the triumph of Good, we have to make a choice. We can enlist on the side good by prospering, making money and using our wealth to help others. When a culture vanishes, humanity is the loser.
>
> - Rohinton Mistry

The term Parsi in the Persian language is a demonym meaning 'inhabitant of Parsi'. The first reference to the Parsis is a European language from 1322, when a French Monk, Jordanus, briefly refers to their present in Thane and Bharuch. The term appears in the Journals of many European travels, first French and Portuguese, later English, all of whom used a Europeanized version of an apparently local language term. 'Parsi' was also the term used in Iran to refer to Zoroastrains.

People in India are confused about the identity of this community. The Parsis are an ethno-religion minority in Indian living mostly in Mumbai, Karachi and Lahore. The Parsis left their home-land over twelve hundred years ago, to save their religion from being Islamized by the invading Islamic Arabian in seventh century A.D. The Zoroastrians hint their origin to the Indo-European branch of Aryans. Since their arrival in India, Zoroastrians have been known as the 'Parsi'. When the Zoroastrians decided to make their first settlement in Sanjan, the Chief Priest of the party asked the local Hindu King, Jadi Rana, for the permission to settle in Sanjan. In reply, the Hindu ruler made five conditions:

The high priest of the Zoroastrians would have to explain their religious belief to the King. The refugees would have to give up their native Persian language and learn local language. The women would have to adopt the 'Sari', the tradition Hindu dress. The men would have to lay down their weapons. The Zoroastrians would have to hold their wedding processions only in the dark. That is the reason that even today the Parsi wedding ceremony is performed after sunset, Parsi women wears the Sari like Hindu women.

Zoroastrianism philosophy that Parsi are the followers of Prophet Zorasthustra. The religion was found around 2000 BC. Prophet Zoraster preached the one true God, *Ahura Mazda*. They also preached that a battle between good and evil is between the high god *Ahura Mazda* and the evil *Ahriman* was being carried out on Earth. They do not believe in Casteism. The Parsi attached great value to the justice, truth and universal brotherhood. It is important to know the values stressed in Zoroastrianism.

Zoroastrianism stresses truth, more than anything else. A free translation of that prayer called *Ashemvohy* is: the truth is truth, the greatest virtue. In the very second prayer a Parsi child learns – the 'YathaAhuvairyo'. There is a saying, "Parsi, the name is charity". Purity of the body as well as that of the mind is the duty of Parsis as God created them. A Zoroastrian priest spent his entire life to follow a holy life. Parsi also stresses hard work and dignity of labour.

Zoroastrians are not 'Fire Worshipers'. The Fire is a symbol of Christianity. It is a symbol of the purity it also stands for the 'inner fire' in the human being. For the modern Zoroastrian the 'Sacred Fire' is the fire within oneself with a burning desire to away succeed. Jashan is another important ceremony observed by Parsis on the

second day of the eleventh month of the year. During this month the Parsis feed the astray animals or those who are brought at their door. They also offer grass and other similar food. On this day the Parsis avoid to eat animal flesh.

There are two symbols that Zoroastrians wear; one is 'Sudra', a white Muslim shirt which simplifies purity. The other symbol is 'Kusti', a sacred thread tied three times around the waist. The first time a Zoroastrians wear 'Sudra' and 'Kusti' is when he or she is formally inducted into, usually at the age of seven and eleven. This ritual in Zoroastrianism is known as Navjote. Navajote is included in Zorastrian religion. According to Jivanji Jamshedji Modi,

> The ceremony of investing a child with sacred shirt and thread (sudra and kusti) is called navjote. A Zoroastrian may put on any dress he likes. He may dress as a European, Hindu, Mahomedan or as a person of any nationality, but he must put *sudre* and *kusti*. . . . (143)

Marriage is very important to the member of the Parsi community. Until the mid-19th century child marriage was common even though the idea of child marriage was not part of the religious doctrine. When social reform started happening in India, the Parsi community discontinued the practice. The wedding ceremony begins with a cleansing bath. The bride and groom then travel to the wedding in florally decorated car. The priests from both families smooth the progress of the wedding. The couple begins by facing one other with a sheet to block their view of one another. Wool is passed over the two seven times to bind them together. The two are then supposed to throw rice to their partners symbolizing dominance. The religious element comes in next when the two sit side by side to face the priest.

Funeral is also important in Parsi community. The pollution that is associated with death has to be handled carefully. A separate part of the home is designated to house the corpse for funeral proceeding before being taken away. The priest comes to say prayers that are for the cleansing of sins and to affirm the faith of the deceased. Fire is brought to the room and prayers are begun. The body is washed and inserted clean with a Sudra and Kusti.

The ceremony then begins, and a circle is drawn around the body into which only the bearers may enter. As they proceed to the ceremony they walk in pairs and are connected by white fabric. A dog is essential in the funeral process because it is able to see death. The body is taken to the tower of death where the vultures feed on it. Once the bones are lightened by the Sun they are pushed into the circular opening in the center. The mourning process is four days long, and rather than creating graves for the dead, charities are established in honor of the person.

Mistry's first novel *Such a Long Journey*, deals with parsi life, certain customs, rituals related to the microscopic community are gradually described. The inhabitants of the Khodadad building are representatives of a cross-section of middle-class Parsi expressing all the angularities of the dwindling community. The protagonist Gustad Nobel has been portrayed as a gentlemen, true to his 'Nobel'. In this novel, Mistry employs a combination of Parsi and Gujarathi expression even some Hindi words is seen like Glenn Carey a "serious flaw" (127). In this way of mixing various languages together that, the Parsis survive in India by adapting themselves to their new environment and new homeland.

Gustad Noble represents common middle-class man in general and Parsi community in particular. Gustad stays in the Parsi residential colony of Khodadad

Building in Bombay with his wife Dilnawaz and three children Sohrab and Darius, and a daughter Roshan. Gustad's ancestral family had a glorious and prosperous past. He was once grandson of a prosperous and highly esteemed furniture dealer, and son of a respected and apparent bookseller, had allowed himself to be betrayed into bankruptcy by an irresponsible brother, i.e. Gustad's uncle.

> Gustad remembered the sign on the store, he could see it even now . . . Noble and Sons, Making of Fine Furniture, and I also remember the first time I saw the sign -. . . . Some of it now here, in my home. Saved from the clutches of bankruptcy – the word cold as a chisel. . . . My poor father. Lost everything. Except the few pieces I rescued. (6)

Gustad despairs being reduced to the ordinary middle-class lifestyle in his Khodadad Building apartment with his wife Dilnawaz and three children. It reflects in his nostalgic daydream of building a bookcase with the help of Sohrab to arrange his collection of books. He has also inherited the purity of conscience and honesty of which the Parsis are very proud of.

Gustad, is shown as performing Parsi traditions and customs, he considers all religions equal. He believes prayer as an instrument to get peace and enlightenment. The matter of identity is obviously cleared through various incidents; one of such is the typical Parsi game *Kaakerya Kumar* which Dinshawji plays with his Wife and Roshan in the novel, "She played it for my sake, said Dinshawji. I am still young enough for it. Now we will play *Kaakerya Kumar*. . . . They went through the question and answer: *Kaakerya Kumar, ketlo bhaar? Munno bhaar*" (190). The ancient origin of the Parsi Community is seen in the dialogue between Malcolm and Gustad to prove their dominance over others.

Gustad is introduced through his morning prayers. A detail description was given about Parsi ritual and Cultural. The way he put on 'Kusti' and uttered his prayers would give a non-parsi a clear idea of Parsi ritual.

> Gustad finished retying the 'Kusti' round his waist and noted with satisfaction that the two ends as usual, were of equal length. He raised and lowered his shoulders to let his 'Sudra' settle comfortable around him. . . . He turned his face to the sky closed and begam reciting the Sarosh Baaj, silently forming the worlds with his lips. (15)

A comparison of Zoroastrianism with existing religions in India is also done in the course of the conversation between Gustad and Malcolm his college friend. Malcolm told Gustad that Christianity had come to India over nineteen hundred years ago with Apostle Thomas, long before the Parsis came on the western coast. Gustad retorted:

> That may be, but ours prophet Zarathustra lived more than fifteen hundred years before your Son of God was even born; a thousand years before the Buddha; two hundred years before Moses. And do you know how much Zoroastrianism influenced Judaism, Christianity and Islam? (24)

The rich tradition of the Parsi community in this novel are meant to establish the public and private identity of the Parsis by directly interacting with other social group. For the Parsi characters the religious element of identity are particularly significant. As Nandini Bhautoo in her book Rohinton Mistry: "An Introduction" argues that, "Mistry as a Parsi writer chooses to tackle religion and rituals (because these are important elements of the Parsi identity) in the context of the changes forced

upon the community" (25). It is also important to detect that the belief in religious ritual is not limited to one social group, but it also includes the Parsi and their unique religion.

Mistry and other Parsi writers in their work attempt to reconstruct their tradition, faith and identity. As A. K. Singh comments on *Such a Long Journey*:

> Mistry's novel, as a cluster of narrative, deals with the Parsi community And its identity, with its national consciousness and then with third Dimension, too viz its identity with the world and the novel is to be studied In this context, if we wish to know the Parsi community as perceived by the Novelist. The novel traces the history of the Parsi in India. (194)

To overcome Gustad presents irrelevant circumstances with the manager income as a bank clerk; he looks forward to recover his family's lost prosperity through his eldest son Sohrab when he got admission to the converted Indian Institute of Technology. He "who had made the success of his son's life the purpose of his own" (55). But it is Sohrab's careless act of disobedience, declining to join the IIT that leads frustration between the father-son relationships.

The joy of the dinner party to celebrate Sohrab's admission in IIT along with his beloved daughter Roshan's ninth birthday is spoiled by Sohrab's anger. The refusal offends and embitters Gustad when Sohrab bursts out: "I'm sick and tired of IIT, IIT, and IIT all the time. I'm not interested in it. I'm not a jolly good fellow about it, and I'm not going there . . . Fool yourself if you want to. I'm not going to IIT anyway" (48).

Gustad, broken-hearted, cannot hold his frustration speaks about his parental duty before his wife Dilnawaz to his son:

> What have we been all these years if not patient? Is it how it will end? Sorrow, nothing but sorrow. Throwing away his future without reason. What have I not done for him, tell me? I even threw myself in front of a car. Kicked him aside, saved his life and got this to suffer all my life. He slapping his hip. But that's what a father is for. And if he cannot show respect at least, I can kick him again. Out of my house, out of my life! (52)

Gustad also got upset by the daring letter of his friend Jimmy Bilimoria who had suddenly disappeared without informing him. His anger and frustration bursts out after reading the letter as:

> After the shameless way he behaved, he had a nerve, writing now to ask for a favour, as though nothing had happened. He could wait till his dying for a reply. . . . Once again, the furniture from his childhood gathered comfortingly about him. The pieces stood like parentheses around his entire life, the sentinels of his sanity. (6)

Mistry depicts how politicians use common Parsis as scapegoats for their own ends as prey to the politics of Prime Minister Office. When Gustad comes to know that Major Bilimoria has been used as a scapegoat and victimized by Prime Minister Office, he feels upset. Gustad feels very impatient because of Bilimoria's involvement as a member of Parsi community. Parsi people respect their community ethics and do not want such action which will bring humiliation to their community. They fear and feel sense of insecurity that such action will take them towards trouble for their community. Vennugopalan said regarding this action as: "The implication of a member of Parsi community in this crime not only brought ignominy to the

community but also a sense of fear about attempted wiping about the Parsis from this hemisphere" (94).

The Parsis have been successful in framing a positive identity by keeping a fine balance between absorption and resistance that respects the differences of the others including its own in the multicultural existential reality of the country. We are witnessed when on Sundays, Gustad used to visit the Crawford Market with his Christian friend Malcom Saldanha, he would go with him to the church first. He does not give offence to anyone, as attended the Mass, imitating his friend closely, dipping his fingers in the font of holy water, to fit in, and "The first time Gustad was quite intrigued by the church and its rituals, so different from what went on in the fire temple. But he was on his guard, conditioned as he had been from childhood to resist the call of the other faiths" (24).

All religions were equal, he was taught; nevertheless, one had to remain true to one's own because religions were not like garment styles that could be changed at whims or to follow fashion. Gustad's parents had been painstaking on this point, conversion and apostasy being as rife as it was rooted in the very history of the land.

> So, Gustad quickly decided that while music was good and the glittering icons and sumptuous vestments were highly impressive, he preferred the sense of peaceful mystery and individual serenity that prevailed in the fire temple. Sometimes, it made him wonder, though, if Malcom was not making an amateurish, half-hearted attempt at proselytism" (24)

Mistry underlying his world-view which is expressed through one of his mouthpieces, the pavement artist. One of the most important messages Mistry wants

to emphasize is religious patience on the basis of that all religions are equal. The wall enclosing the Khodadad building gives a sense of security and protection to the inhabitants of building. Gustad likes the wall as the "sole provider of privacy, especially for Jimmy and Gustad when they did their 'kustis' at dawn. Over six feet high, the wall ran the length of the compound, sheltering them from non- Parsis eyes while they prayed with the glow spreading in the east" (82). As Nilufer Bharucha voices similarly: "The wall both includes and excludes. It is protective as well as reductive. It protects the Parsis community from the ingress of the engulfing Indian world. However, it also makes this world isolationist" (123).

The wall is often used as a public urinal and polluted by the passers-by. The whole apartment annoyed by the malodor, it spreads, Gustad, in an insightful flash, invites the commercial pavement artist to use it as his canvas and adorn it with the murals of different gods and goddesses of India from all religions. The black wall, miraculously has transformed in to a shrine of races and religions as "A stinking filthy disgrace has become a beautiful, fragrant place which makes everyone feel good" (289).

Gustad never turns a bigot like Yezad in Family *Matters* because of the compassion deep seated within his heart and mind. He visits Mount Mary and prays for Roshan and Dinshawji so faithfully and wholeheartedly for their health and for the miracle to happen as:

> Gustad had learned more about the Church, how it had a tradition of welcoming Parsis, Muslims, Hindus, regardless of caste or creed. Mother Mary helped everyone; she made no religious distinctions.

> Gustad felt it was like their college Sunday again, those long-ago mornings of church and beef and Christianity. (222)

Mistry lifts this friendship to a much higher altitude with a wider spectrum in relation to Dinshawji whose death raises various questions in the mind of Gustad, makes his heart spin with emotions and his life's journey is exposed to new realizations. Gustad never had shed a drop of tear for anyone close and in Dinshawji's funeral too, though extremely shocked, tears do not trouble him:

> Crunch, crunch, crunch. A fitting sound, thought Gustad, to surround death. Awesome and magnificent as death itself. And as painful and incomprehensible, no matter how many times I hear it repeated. Crunch, crunch, crunch. A sound to stir the past, to stir up sleeping memories, to whisk them all into the flux of the present, all the occasions when I marched thus, up the hill, upon the gravel walk, as though to crunch, to grind, to crush all loss, all sorrow, into dry flakes, pulverize it into nothingness, is rid of it forever. (253)

Mistry has given a detailed description of the rituals which are observed after the end of a Parsi man. Gustad attended the dead body of Dinshawji on the way of the Tower of Silence and remained in the prayer Bungalows till the function was over. It is in Parsi tradition that the dead body is sponged with cow or bull's urine at home before taking the corpse to The Tower of Silence. But one character of Mistry (Alamai) defies the community members to follow the traditional method of sponging the corpse with Gomez (cow's urine). "The traditional method. . . . All this nonsense with bull's urine is not for us; she said, 'We are modern people. Use water only, nothing else' " (246).

Death is regarded as the ultimate impurity, and the Parsis refuse to defile the earth with funeral; instead, the body is exposed within a circular, unroofed tower known as dokhma or the Tower of Silence, where vultures devour it. The bones of the dead bodies finally fall on to a bed of ashes below. Quite a few Parsi social reformers seriously think that the traditional method of disposing the dead bodies in the Parsi community needs to be changed. However, except a few Towers of Silence that now operate through solar energy in a few cities, the traditionalists have not allowed any change.

At the conclusion of the novel Gustad becomes mature enough to acknowledge the authenticities of life and understands that it is clearly impossible for him to oppose such forces at work which are actually beyond his reach. He sits by the motionless body of Tehmul, with prayers on his lips and tears in his eyes, as if finally he has got a chance to cry not just for Tehmul but for all those who had left him and he had escorted their lifeless body to The Tower of Silence – his grandpa, grandma, mamma, Pappa, Dinshawji, Bilimoria – all who had to wait for so long. It is not just the pinch of pain that he recognizes; it is the quintessence of perceptive that administers his actions. Emotionally broken and ethically balanced, he augments his life towards an affirmative track. Forgetting all differences he accepts his son's return with an open heart -

> Gustad turned around. He saw his son standing in the doorway, and each held the other's eyes. Sohrab waited motionless in the doorway, till at last Gustad got to his feet slowly. Then he went up and put his arms around him. 'Yes', said Gustad, running his bloodstained fingers once through Sohrab's hair. 'Yes', he said, 'yes', and hugged him tightly once more. (337)

The long journey is already taken by Dinshawji, Bilimoria and Tehmul and may be a journey from hopelessness to hope. The hard times are over in the life of Gustad and he learnt that the everyday life is bound up with some uncontrolled forces over which man has no control. Thus, *Such a Long Journey* celebrates symbolically the journey of the all richness of life.

Mistry's third and finest novel, *Family Matters*, is centred round the aged Parsis, retired Professor of English. In this novel he shows how Parsi maintains their purity. The protagonist, Nariman Vakeel, seventy-nine year old Professor live with his two step children Coomy and Jal lives in Chateau Felicity. He is a patient of Parkinson's disease look after by his step children's as unmarried adults stay with Nariman. Coomy and Jal had a half-sister Roxana, daughter of their mother Yasmin Contractor and their step-father Nariman. Roxana married to Yazad Chenoy had two children, Murad and Jehangir. On Nariman birthday, the Chenoy's and the Contractor's assemble at Chateau Felicity.

Mistry described some of the rituals are observed by the Parsi. Coomy enters with the sliver thurible, ready for loban. Her head is covered with a Mulmul Scarf.

> The fragrance of frankincense delighted Roxana, for ritual and religion meant more to her than it ever had to Yezad. After her mother's sudden death, her training had been taken over by the Contractor side of the family, and Nariman's heavy conscience had refused them nothing… prayers performed her navjote, taken her to the fire-temple for every holy day. (24)

Parsis beliefs and their aversions have also been mentioned by Mistry. Nariman tell his grandson, Jehangir, of Parsis aversion for cats and their belief in spiders and cocks. He says, "No. No cats. Parsi families never keep cats. They

consider them bad luck, because cats hate water, they never take a bath" (162). He tells how "Well Parsi do not kill spiders, and they only eat the female chicken, never a cook – you must know that, from the story of Zuhaak the Evil one" (162).

The Parsi community known for its exclusivity, racial purity and cultural superiority never likes to have any sort of contact with the outsiders. Though the Parsi community was educated, cultured and liberal in day today secular practices, they were not ready to accept other community members in their culture. Parsis consider themselves to be superior race on this planet, and think that if they will marry outside the community then the purity of the race will be spoilt. Hence, due to this believe the Parsi community is diminishing day by day. Mistry in *Family Matters* raises this problem through the portrayal of Nariman Vakeel and Lucy Braganza. Both love each other and want to marry. However, Nariman is a Parsi while Lucy is a Christian.

For eleven years, Nariman and Lucy struggle to create a world for themselves. Nariman's parent does not give their consent to marry her. But finally Nariman surrenders to the will of his parents by agreeing to end his ". . . ill considered liaison with that Goan women . . . and agreed to settle down," (11). Nariman at the Breach Candy beach tells Lucy about ending their relationship- "They had been ground down by their families." (13)

Lucy's parents too are seen against her marrying a non-catholic outside her religion. Nariman finally accepts that "traditional ways were the best" (16) and realizing his responsibilities to hold up the values and the purity of his community, he had forced to marry a widow named Yashwin Contractor. She has two children. The interference of the community members can be superficial in the novel "Now Mrs. Kotwal scuttled across the room, pinched his cheek, and said, 'When the naughty boy at last becomes a good boy, it's a double delight'" (13). Then Nargesh aunty said, "No

happiness is more lasting than the happiness you get from fulfilling your parents' wishes. Remember that Nari" (13).

Inter religious marriage has been a problem to different communities also seem to be a problem to the Parsi community. Being a Parsi, Nariman has no right to choose his life partner because his allegiance to his community is in his "flesh and blood" (10) that decides his life. Mistry portrays in his works Parsi boys falling in love with other community girls, but he does not show any Parsi girl falling in love with other community boys.

The position of women in Parsi community at present has deteriorated. Though, Mistry in his *Family Matters* writes,

> Housewifery is a most important calling, requiring umpteen talents. Without housewife there is no home, without home there is no family. And without family, nothing else matters, everything from top to bottom falls apart or descend into chaos. (182)

But in reality all his women characters are confined to household work, while all the male characters go to office.

All the decisions are taken by men characters without asking the women. Louri is the only character shown in a bank office but is disgraced by Dinshawji and other men. She was planning to complain to the manager or to leave the job. Miss Kutputia in *Such a Long Journey*, Roxana in *Family Matters*, all the women characters are circumscribed in household works, they are always ready to serve their husband and children without caring for their own health and freedom.

When a child takes birth a "Brahaman is invited to the house to caste nativity of the child . . . The paper on which the day, hour, minutes and seconds were noted is

produced . . . Joshi predict the future life and prospect of the baby" (46). However, the name of the child does not produce value in the child. As Mistry notes:

> It (Jahangir) means "conqueror of the world"
>
> Jahangir was impressed . . .
>
> Murad come into the front room . . .'what does my name mean? He asked:
>
> You are a boon, a blessing,' said his father
>
> And mummy's name?
>
> 'Roxana means the dawn'.
>
> And yours?
>
> 'Guardian Angel' . . .
>
> Their names taken together thought Jahangir, made the perfect family. . . Yet
>
> mummy and daddy were fighting and unhappy. . . .(289)

In *Family Matters* migration is an important theme. Parsis in India immigrate to foreign countries in search of money. Narendra Kumar attributes:

> The parsees prefer the best since it offers unlimited scope for growth and prosperity. Dislocation is part of the parsee psyche. Exiled twelve hundred years ago, they came to India. Now they are migrating to west in search of greener pastures. Thus there is "double migration" in the case of parsees. (14)

Roxana's husband Yezad is eager to migrate to Canada, he wants "clean cities, plenty of water, trains with seats for everyone" (137). To Nariman, "emigration is an enormous mistake. The biggest anyone can make in their life. The loss of home leaves a whole that never fills" (524). Finally Yezad realizes his blunder and decides not to

immigrate to Canada. He is firm to destroy the letters, forms and photocopies related to his future emigration. When he is tearing the papers, Roxana comes in and asks what he is doing. He answers, "Getting rid of garbage" (255).

In Mistry's *Such a Long Journey* the Parsi tradition is based on acquiring knowledge, peaceful living and working hard for development. The community proved it well. They also believe that the soul of the dead man hovers around the body for three days. A dog is brought near the body, and if the dog moans, it symbolizes that the soul is suffering. And for the peace of the soul prayers are recited:

> The Dustoorji cantillated the verses of the ancient Avesta. And as the notes and syllables were intoned, they mingled with the sounds of night. Steadily, from the trees and bushes rose the voices of night . . . around the Tower of Silence. The murmuring of leaf-hoppers and tree dwellers, winged and crawling ascended Doongerwadi, up towards the Tower of Silence. . . . (248)

Mr. Kapur, a Hindu, boss of yezad, is killed for his moderate views that do not fit in with the exclusivist demands of the Hindu fundamentalists. He presented himself as a person not only as a businessman but a person who has the deep feeling to understand all humanity across religious divides. Thus, he has a Parsi and Muslim, Yezad and Husain working for him.

After Kapur's death, Mrs. Kapur announces that her intention of closing the shop and gives Yezad one month's salary in advance ignoring his service of fourteen years. Yezad's hopes for the betterment of material circumstances, his son's future and his unemployment come to an end and he resorts to search for peace of mind at the Fire temple. This marks a gradual transformation of a cheerful young man challenge to the belief the Parsi community into a religious chauvinist. Jal shows

Yezad, a way out from a depressing future by reuniting the family in his building Chateau Felicity.

The Parsi community faces a real human tragedy and this is portrayed with great sensitivity in the novel. Parsis in India have zero birth rate today and the aged within the community do not have any support system provided by the young and the able as in the case of Nariman Vakeel, in the novel symbolizing the community, on the verge of extinction. Discussing the future of the community the Parsi Inspector Masalavala remarks: "The experts in demographics are confident that fifty years hence, there will be no Parsis left" (412).

Dr Fitter who shares the grief and concern over the future responds: "Extinct like dinosaurs. They'll have to study our bones that are all" (412). Their grief brings to light that Parsis were the one who built the beautiful city of Bombay and made it prosper, but now "it will be a loss to the whole world. When a culture vanishes, humanity is the loser" (415).

Talking of the falling birth rate of the Parsis, Dr Fitter draws a comparison between the Parsis and the other Indian communities to state that:

> Worth trying. . . . There are lots of wealthy couples living alone in new flats who produce just one child. Two, if we're lucky. Parsis seem to be the only people in India who follow the family planning message. Rest of the country is breeding like rabbits. (413)

Further he says "your demographers will tell you, the more educated a community, the lower the birth rate," (414). Ironically, Inspector Masalavala puts forward a suggestion that would increase the population of the Parsis:

> Then we need to fix that. I have two suggestions. First, our youth must be prohibited from going beyond a bachelor's degree. Give them cash

> incentives to study less. And those who want to do post-graduate studies tell them they will get no funding from Panchayat unless they sign a contract to have as many children as the number of people over age fifty in their family. Maximum of seven-we don't want to spoil the health of our young women. (414)

The Parsi family handing their intolerant belief through the character of Yezad, he feels on overwhelming sense of cultural belonging when he was asked to wear 'Kusti' to enter fire temple he defines religion as basic bread and water for his spirit. We come across a similar effort of the Parsis to preserve their racial purity in an episode involving Nariman's grandson Murad who develops intimacy with Anjali, a non-Parsi girl.

Yezad, Murad's father gets terribly upset when he finds Murad kissing Anjali in the stair well. Disappointed at this, he shouts in anger, "I'm warning you, in this there can be no compromise. The ruler, the laws of our religion are absolute; this Maharashtrain cannot be your girl friend," (482). He further warns his son, "You can have any friends you like, any race or religion, but for a serious relationship, for marriage the rules are different" (482).

Yezad who strongly believes in preserving the purity of his race says: ". . . because we are a pure Persian race, a unique contribution to this planet and mixed marriages will destroy that," (482). Towards the end we see that Yezad himself turns a bigot and opposes his elder son Murad's relationship with a non-Parsi girl. The love experiences of both Nariman and his grandson with non-Parsi girls reiterate that the Parsis can never change their convictions whatever be the whims and fancies of the individuals. So, inter-religious marriages in the case of Parsis can be considered in the context of their fast diminishing number.

The main concern for this weak community in *Family Matters* centre's on issues of numerical decline and the merits or otherwise of traditional notions of ethnic purity. Luhrmann records how: "Until 1941 the Parsi population was slowly but steadily on the rise in India. But in 1961 they were down to over 100,000; in 1971, over 90,000; in 1991 there were 76,000 Parsis in India, with around 50,000 in Greater Bombay" (25). *Family Matters* clearly portrays the anxieties, alienation and feelings of insecurity of modern day Parsis and Mistry's concern of the past and the present.

Culture is a problematic word. It cannot be and does not confine to a particular definition, as culture is unstable. Hence the concept of culture is in constant instability. Indians adapt themselves to the Western culture with their eyes closed. Every culture has positives and negatives and culture is indispensible from our lives. Hence only judgment can help us to make the right choice. In India the Parsi are minorities. The Parsi culture and the middle class family culture as witnessed in the novels points to the relevance of culture in all dimensions. The study of 'culture' in terms of all of its connotations thus remains crucial for all times.

The next chapter **Representation of Socio-Political Changes** explores the corruptions in India. The following also brings out the history of India during Pre and Post Independences in Mistry's first and last novels *Such a Long Journey* and *Family Matters.*

Chapter Three

Representation of Socio-political changes

> Democracy is a see-saw between complete chaos and tolerable confusion. The law is a grim, unsmiling thing. Not Justice, through. Justice is witty and whimsical and kind.
>
> - Rohinton Mistry

The Indian Politics works within the frame of the country's constitution. India is a federal parliamentary, secular democratic republic in which the President of India is the Head of State and the Prime Minister of India is the Head of Government. India follows a double Government that consists of the Central influence at the Centre and States at the side-line. The Constitution defines the organizational powers and limitations of both Central and State Governments, and it is well recognized, rigid and considered supreme; that is the laws of the nation must confirm to it. India has a large number of political parties during its history under Democratic Governance. It has been probably 200 parties were formed after India became independent in 1947.

A bicameral legislature consisting of an upper house, the Rajya Sabha, which represents the states of the Indian federation, and a lower house, the Lok Sabha, which represents the people of India as a whole. The Indian constitution provides an independent judiciary, which is headed by the Supreme Court. Governments are formed through elections held every five years, by parties that sheltered a majority of members in their respective lower houses. India had its first general election held in 1951, which was won by the Indian National Congress, a political party that went on to dominate succeeding elections until 1977.

Leadership of political parties in India is commonly interwoven with well-known families whose dynastic leaders actively play the dominant role in a party. Further, party leadership roles are often transferred to subsequent generations in the same families. The two main parties in India are the Bharatiya Janata Party, also known as the BJP, which is the leading party now, and the Indian National Congress, commonly called the INC or Congress. At present, there are eight national parties and many more state parties.

India has a multi-party system, where there are a number of national as well as regional parties. A regional party may gain a majority and rule a particular state. If a party is represented in more than 4 states, it would be labeled a national party. Out of the 72 years of India's independence, India has been ruled by the Indian National Congress for 53 of those years, as of January 2020. The party enjoyed a parliamentary majority save for two brief periods during the 1970s and late 1980s. This rule was interrupted between 1977 and 1980, when the Janata Party combination won the election owing to public displeasure with the controversial state of emergency declared by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. The Janata Dal won elections in 1989, but its government managed to hold on to power for only two years.

India has also seen political corruption for decades. After the British left the subcontinent, the corruption became to be increasingly pronounced in the country. The political corruption in India is weakening its democracy and has led to the erosion of trust by the general public in the political system. A good amount of money is required in elections which is source of political-capitalist nexus.

Mistry is a chronicler who sketches India in all his novels. He uses a history-fiction interface to bring out the socio-political events as well as the trends and patterns of culture and politics. He is one of rare authors who have effectively weaved

together the burning topics of the Indian political scenario like the Era of the Emergency in 1970s, the destruction of the Babri Masjid and its aftermath in the 1990s as well as the corrupt Indian political system and the class, caste and gender discrimination in India to bring out a holistic socio-political scenario of India. India in general and Bombay specifically is the subject matter of Mistry. Every character in Mistry's novel is influenced by the Indianness in his or her mindset, behavior and psychology.

Mistry's own concept of dealing with politics in India which forms the backdrop of his novels is larger than life size, a mixture of joy and woe, heaven and hell. His novels are remarkably strong and mysterious in dealing with a wonderful mixture of colorful and powerful characters. Mistry mention at corruption that prevails in every nook and corner of India. Jaydipsinh K. Dodiya in his "*A Fine Balance* between hope and Despair: A Critical study of Rohinton Mistry's *Such a Long Journey* and *A Fine Balance*" observes, "Corruption, politically motivated schemes, political decisions, layman's sufferings, caste problem, dominance of zamindars over the downtrodden masses occupy considerable space in his novels" (3).

Mistry's first novel, *Such a Long Journey* is written in 1991, set against the backdrop of political events in India during 1970s. The novel is set in 1971, the unstable year of the struggle between East and West Pakistan, which eventually drew in India and culminated in a brief, two week war and the creation of Bangladesh. However, it also harks back to the political history of India in the 1960s, the decade that saw the death of Jawaharlal Nehru, who had led India to independence from Britain and become first Prime Minister, and the accession of his daughter Indira Gandhi. Events in the 1960s – including the Indo-Chinese War, the sudden death of Nehru's successor Lal Bahadur Shastri, superpower meddling, and the rise of Indira

and her tear away son Sanjay are all mentioned in the text and seem to be characteristic of a political landscape of decline, deceit and corruption.

The most important background feature of all, described in the latter part of the novel, is the Indo-Pakistan War of December 1971. This was triggered by a divided election result in the two 'wings' of Pakistan left, mostly Muslim but physically and culturally separate, after Partition in 1947. In this novel, apart from concern of religion, the historical awareness forms the shape of the collective identity of the Parsi community. Incidents in the novel like Indira Gandhi in political trouble, Nagarwala incident, Indira Gandhi's guiltiness of corruption and murder etc. are narrated from the perspective of Parsi community. His novels often focus on current political issues. M. Mani Meitei observes:

> Though Mistry is highly imbued with an original writer's imagination in the development of a flawless story in *Such A Long Journey*, his awareness of the contemporary social and political situation of India, particularly the period of the 1971 Indo-Pak war, is extremely exciting. As a realist, he wields the weapon of satire, which makes him a ruthless artist, a stern political satirist and a devout critic of war. His attack on Nehru and Indira Gandhi is unprecedented. (82)

Mistry set this novel at a very crucial point in contemporary Indian history. In period 1962-1972, India had to take on three successive wars, with China, Pakistan, and for the liberation of Bangladesh. This period also witnessed the rise of joint politics, the emergence of new political policies, politics of votes by the dominant Hindu or Brahmin community of India. The theme of *Such a Long Journey* revolves around history, political and the common anxieties of a middle-class man Gustad Noble, protagonist of the novel.

Major Jimmy Bilimoria, Gustad's close friend from the Khodadad Building, suddenly disappears, leaving no other explanation than that he has embarked on a covert mission in the interests of national security. Eventually he was involved in the activities of RAW – the Research and Analysis Wing of India's secret service. It seems that he was engaged in providing funds for the cross-border guerrilla groups. The outline of his story was based on that of a parallel historical figure – also a Parsi and, by all accounts, an agent of RAW – Captain Sohrab Rustom Nagarwala.

Mistry, as mouthpiece of Parsi community, has shown his anger and sense of lack of self-confidence towards Indian politics and Indian politicians like Nehru, Indira Gandhi and towards politics of Shiv sena of the period. As Parsis feels that Nehru never liked Feroze Gandhi from the beginning do not believe in natural death of Feroze Gandhi. Even they think that the heart attack on Feroze Gandhi was not real reason of his death. They suspect about his death and cherished a sense of insecurity. Dilnavaz, Gustad's wife and Dinshawji, Gustad's friend had always doubt on the death of Feroze Gandhi as Nehru never liked him as his son-in-law from the beginning. Dilnavaz as expresses her doubt, Dinshawji agrees and says: 'That was tragic', "Even today people say Feroze's heart attack was not really a heart attack" (197). Parsi men and women express their sense of anxiety in India in *Such a Long Journey*.

Parsian people were disinclined towards Mrs. Indira Gandhi's decision of nationalization of the banks. As it was usual in the larger interest of down trodden masses of India to maintain the social and economical equality among the masses like the Government of India has implemented 'jan-dhan yojana' to bring the downtrodden masses into the flow of society who was deprived from the bank system. Mrs. Indira Gandhi's decision had displeased those Parsis of India who were the

owners of private banks but she was right in her decision. Due to this Private Bank Holders, Parsian people lose their banking business. She does not have any selfish motive behind the nationalization of banks in India. The whole atmosphere of banking has been spoiled due to the decision of Mrs. Indira Gandhi. In the novel Dinshawji says to Gustad in this connection and recollects the past status of Parsis as:

> What those days were, yaar. What fun we used to have. Touched corner his lips to wipe the foam. Parsis were the kings of banking in those days. Such respect we used to get. Now the whole atmosphere only has been spoiled. Ever since that Indira nationalized banks. (38)

Gustad states that "nowhere in the world Nationalization worked" (38). He charged that her action of demanding separate Maharashtra and all these policies was because of supporting racist buggers and Shiv Sena which results riots, and doubts that Parsis remained as a second-class citizen in the country. Gustad said to Dinshawji that:

> Believe me. She is a shrewd woman; these are vote-getting tactics. Showing the poor, she is on their side . . . Remember when her pappy was prime minister and he made her president of congress party? At once she began encouraging the demands for a separate Maharashtra. How much bloodshed, how much rioting she caused. And today we have that bloody Shiv Sena, wanting to make the rest of us into second-class citizens. Don't forget, she started it all by supporting the racist buggers. (38-39)

The blow of circumstances and a source of anger was the supposed 'betrayal event' of Major Jimmy Bilimoria who had been "more than just a neighbour" and

"had been like a loving brother" (14) of Gustad. The Major had suddenly vanished one morning without saying a word of farewell to anybody, not even to his close friend Gustad, who comes to know later that Bilimoria had joined RAW, a wing of Indian Secret Service. This sudden disappearance of the Bilimoria wounded Gustad very much. Still remembering Bilimoria and his favours, the gratitude that he owed to him during the time of his accident, Gustad failed to equate the terms of friendship and the prospects of such intimate attachment. The shock was Gustad loses his self-control and has doubt about the very intimacy of friendship. Questions related to friends and friendship kept haunting his spirits and his outburst justifies his disappointment:

> Gustad could contain himself no longer. 'Friends? Friends? Don't talk to me of friends! If you have good reasons, I will listen. But don't say friends! You must be blind if you cannot see my own example and learn from it.' 'What happened to the great friend Jimmy Bilimoria? Our Major Uncle? Where is he now, who used to come here all the time? Who used to eat with us and drink with us? Who I treated like my brother? Gone! Disappeared! Without saying a word to us. That's friendship. Worthless and meaningless!' (48-49)

After a long wait, Gustad receives a letter from Bilimoria, requesting him to receive a package from the Chorbazar. To the sorrowful Gustad and his family the package turns out to be a huge sum of money; ten lakhs to be deposited in a fictitious account for Bilimoria's guerilla operation. Gustad with the help of his colleague and friend, Dinshawji deposits the money in the bank. As the episode reaches its climax, the arrest of Major Billimoria on charges of corruption was published in the paper which caused fear, doubt and restlessness to Gustad. Gustad was confused thinking

how a mature and solicitous man like Bilimoria trust the lady in charge of the Government so completely –

> It baffled Gustad. The worldly-wise Jimmy Bilimoria, the cynical Major he had known for so many years, whose motto in life was: when in doubt, keep doubting. Could he really have done the foolish things he is describing? What kind of woman is she? (277-278)

Ghulam Mohammad, Gustad's friend called Gustad in a respected tone to withdraw the whole amount in a month's time as to save Bilimoria's life. To make things worse, Roshan Gustad's son's illness persists. The misfortune came with the death of Dinshawji who had risked his job and pension by helping Gustad in depositing and withdrawing Bilimoria's money in the fake account. Gustad as a father and a friend had prayed at Mount Mary for the lives and recovery of both Roshan and Dinshawji.

Despite of his anger, Gustad decided to visit Bilimoria in Delhi who wants to explain exactly what happened. Bilimoria tells about Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister and the betrayal of his faith in her. It was a big fraud of sixty lakh rupees in which the Prime Minister was directly involved as Bilimoria was instructed by the Prime Minister to get the money from the State Bank of India Director on an emergency basis and later to cover it up as somebody impersonating the Prime Minister's voice on telephone. Thereafter Bilimoria was asked to write a confession which he did without a second thought trusting the Prime Minister. But as soon as the money was received, the Prime Minister's office blocked the money before it was used for the aimed purpose. By knowing the trick, Bilimoria kept ten lakh rupees aside for his friend.

Bilimoria was concerned and arrested on the charges of corruption and stealing the money. He was tortured ruthlessly till he returned the money. After some months, he died a dubious death during his imprisonment. Bilimoria was none other than the fictional counterpart of Sohrab Nagarwala who was chief cashier of the Parliament Street branch of the State Bank of India in New Delhi. Relating to the episode Nayantara Sahgal has said:

> On 24 May 1971, the chief cashier of the State Bank of India received a telephone call, apparently from the Prime Minister, instructing him to withdraw six million rupees . . . Captain Nagarwala, who had taken delivery of the money, was swiftly arrested. He seemed to have left an easy trail for the police to follow, and confessed that he had impersonated Indira Gandhi's voice to obtain money to support guerrilla activities in Bangladesh. . . . Three different judges presided over the case in just three days, at the end of which he was sentenced to four years imprisonment. . . . A few months later Nagarwala was removed to hospital, allegedly complaining of chest pains, where he died in March 1972. (82)

Mistry has taken the Nagarwala incident of this sham as his major plot in the novel, only to defend his community against the corrupt and crooked Government of Mrs. Gandhi. It was clearly depicted by Mistry that Bilimoria was a good person who was falsely implicated in this case, an innocent man victimized by the mean and crooked authorities of the government. Maja Daruwala reveals what the community felt about such a blot on their image at that time:

> The Nagarwala incident, because it involved a Parsi, jolted the self-image of the community no less. Having long ago lost their literature to the vandalism of Alexander the accursed, and their dance, music, art, poetry and even their language to the process of adapting to a new home in India the Parsis have developed a particularized culture culled from a mixture of ancient myth and legend overlaid by a life-sustaining sense of recent achievement. Gratified to have earned an honorable place in the country of their adoption through their contribution to every field of endeavour and proud of having retained a strong ethical tradition the Parsis were deeply anguished by the ambivalent role Nagarwala had played in the sordid story. (29)

Gustad's friendship had a chance as he thrashed the cane of betrayal and Mistry desperately tried to set things right so that fingers were not raised on such a pious affiliation. Mistry introduced Ghulam to bridge the souls that have fallen apart by trying to convince Gustad about Bilimoria's mistaken identity – "You are wrong, he did care. He made sure you did not get into trouble after he was arrested." (234). It was through Ghulam that Gustad came to know how Bilimoria had made certain that Gustad does not get into any kind of problem with the amount which he had asked him to deposit in the bank by even refusing to confess to the authorities anything regarding the hidden money. Equations were sorted out and friendship was restored with high value with the Bilimoria's final apologetic clarification:

> Had to protect you and Ghulam . . . did not want any trouble for you. Once money was returned, everything fine. Transferred to hospital, proper treatment . . . 'Gustad, it is beyond the common man's imagination, the things being done by those in power. But I did not call

> you here to make you worry . . . to feel sorry for me. What has happened has happened. I just wanted to talk to you. To make sure you don't think I tried to trick you. You were so angry, Ghulam told me . . . in your place I would also have been. But I was hoping . . . you will forgive me now. (280)

In this novel to portray the political disorder in the life of the nation, Mistry brings in metaphors of sickness and medicine in *Such a Long Journey*. Dr. Paymaster, the irresistible physician in the novel, compulsively uses images of a diseased body to discuss the plight of Bangladesh:

> East Pakistan is suffering from a diarrhea of death…attacked by a strong virus from West Pakistan, too powerful for the Eastern immune system. And the world's biggest physician is doing nothing. Worse, Dr. America is helping the virus… Only the complete, intravenous injection of the Indian Army will defeat the virus. (164-165)

Dr. Paymaster speaks to friends and neighbors, compares India to a declining gangrene patient and admits that the only way to end corruption was to remove the gangrenous focus, or, in other words, India's Central Government:

> Imagine, he said, that our beloved country is a patient with gangrene at an advanced stage. Dressing the wound or sprinkling rose water over it to hide the stink of rotting tissue is useless. Fine words and promises will not cure the patient. The decaying part must be excised. You see, the municipal corruption is merely the bad smell, which will disappear as soon as the gangrenous government at the centre is removed. (313)

Gustad stood for the marginalized in the novel and challenges the power of the country. It was a significant attempt at self-assertion, which was typical of all post-

colonial literatures. Through Gustad, Mistry expressed the sense of insecurity and apprehensions of the Parsi community. He attempted to depict the Parsis predicament as minority community in India.

Mistry's second novel, *Family Matters* set during, 6 December 1992, the Babri Mosque at Ayodhya was destroyed by a large crowd of Hindu militants, claiming the site on which it stood as the birthplace of the God Ram and therefore blessed to their religion. In that place they proposed to the construction of a Ram Temple. Within hours of the news reaching Bombay, angry Muslims had taken to the street in protest. But they soon found themselves confronted by highly organized groups of Hindu activists celebrating the victory at Ayodhya. The terrible violence continued throughout December and January. By the time it came to an end almost eight hundred people were dead and many more had been made homeless. In a few short weeks Bombay's reputation as a refuge of tolerance and communalism lay in tatters.

The Maharashtrian state elections of 1995 took place against a background of anti-Muslim sentiment resulting on the civil unrest which had followed the destruction of the Babri Mosque two and a half years earlier. At the polls the Shiv Sena, depicting as the 'defender of Hindus', won enough support to form a union government with the Bharatiya Janata Party.

On coming to power in the 1995 elections, the Shiv Sena or Bharatiya Janata Party administration oversaw a number of measures designed to merge its power and advance the cause of *Hindutva*, including abolishing the Minorities Commission, ending the Sri Krishna Commission into the Bombay riots, and withdrawing stimulation charges against Bal Thackeray in relation to the same events. One of the most prestigious initiatives involved the renaming of Bombay as Mumbai, seen as the first blow in a battle to delete all 'non- Hindu' place names from a 'purified' Hindu

homeland. Nilufer E. Bharucha also made a reference to the heavy dependence of the novelist on the press reports for minor as well major details used for building the city environment in *Family Matters*:

> . . . This is post-Babri Masjid Bombay where the religious chauvinism of the Shiv Sena has been augmented by the pan-Indian militant Hindutva of the BJP. The focus has thus shifted from the 1970s and the years of the Emergency under Mrs. Indira Gandhi, to more recent times. Hence the diasporic time-warp has been minimized here to a considerable extent. However, the 'reality' captured here of Bombay, re-named Mumbai . . . is largely based on hearsay and there is still a heavy dependence on newspaper reports of these years. (168)

Yezad, Nariman's son-in-law, life in the novel introduced the horrors of Mr. Kapur, Yezad's boss, the victim of the 1947 Hindu-Muslim clashes, who speaks about the Partition days. It gave an extent to identify a narrative of the contemporary India. Yezad feels that Punjabi migrants of a certain age like Indian authors writing about that period,

> . . . whether in realist novels of corpse-filled trains or the magic-realist midnight muddles, all repeating the same catalogue of horrors about slaughter and burning, rape and mutilation, fetuses torn out of wombs, genitals stuffed in the mouths of the castrated. (151)

In this novel, Mistry also shown to have a finger in the *Matka pie*. The underground lottery helped to fund the Shiv Sena machinery. It also financed the organized crime that had infected the city and its institutions, causing the clever Vilas Rane, Yezad's friend to observe: "Matka is Bombay and Bombay is Matka" (207). Even cricket, that slogan for goodness and fair play, was now crooked, as Vilas

remarks, referring to the match-fixing scandals that rocked the sport in South Asia in the late 1990s. The last development impinges on the world of *Family Matters*, as it was Mr Kapur's refusal to change the name of his shop from Bombay to Mumbai Sporting Goods that attracts the attention of the brutal Shiv Sena goondas.

In addition to its ties with gangsters, the Shiv Sena had implemented a cultural restriction program, much to Yezad's frustration, and opposed a weird diversity of events and activities corrupting the culturally homogeneous and 'pure' nation it envisaged; target that had included certain artworks, Valentine's day, men's magazines and women working in bars. "Top of the list, as always, are those ubiquitous 'national enemies', Muslims. Yezad shakes his head: 'What a joke of a government. Clowns and crooks. Or clownish crooks'" (265). Yet there was real danger in crossing them.

Husain, the Muslim peon was hired at Mr. Kapur's Bombay Sporting Goods Emporium several months after the Babri Mosque riots at the influence of the Ekta Samiti, which was asking business to help recover riot dead. Mr. Kapur nursed battered emotions till he was ready to resume his duties. Whenever Yezad found himself getting annoyed by Husain, Kapur reminds the peon's story about the burning chawls in Antop Hill, goondas setting people on fire:

> . . . Husain and his Muslim neighbours watching as their chawl went up in flames, wondering where his life and three sons were….and then four burning figures tumbling down the steps of the building, their smoking hands beating at the flames . . . while the goondas sprinkled more kerosene from their cans over Husain's family. . . . (144)

Besides the hatred for the Shiva Sena and its narrow provincial ways, Kapur, Husain and Yezad worried about the destruction caused by mafia dons and the city's

nexus of politicians, criminals and police. The government played a mute role as the city which was not in connected to the Babri Masjid riots became a victim to it, where the religious chauvinism of Shiva Sena was enlarged by the Pan-Indian militant Hindutva of the Bharatiya Janadha Party. The newspapers boldly write about the Hindu fanaticism and its anti-communal bloodshed, "Everything was on the point of being exposed: Shiva Sena involvement in looting and burning, police helping rioters, withholding assistance in Muslim localities" (154).

Shiv Sena was implicated in the murder, during the Bombay riots, of the family of Husain, but Mr. Kapur himself falls prey to those representatives of the forces of sectarianism he had briefly resolved to oppose. The guardians of the law behave like gangsters in the riots and shoot their guns at innocent people. Years pass by but there was no justice to the victims where as the Shiva Sena that hired and polluted the police has now become the government. Mr. Kapur decided to contest the Municipal elections to deal with the Lawlessness and acting as a buffer against the fundamentalists. To rekindle Mr. Kapur's enthusiasm for social reform, Yezad persuaded his friend Vilas to get Shiva Sena activists to threaten Kapur with extortion. However, Vilas said that it was not right to play such dangerous games with fundamentalists. Nowadays the enemies and defenders of the state were identical and funded from the same illegal sources. Vilas predictions about the real violent destructive potential of Shiva Sena turned to be prophetic when the real Shiva Sena activists burst into Kapur's office and kill him in front of Husain's terrified eyes. Husain, who was reconstituted his life with the kind help of Kapur, has witnessed Mr. Kapur's death.

Urban and rural oppression were drawn together, when Vilas, Yezad's friend told the story of a pair of lovers from different castes whose relationship was felt to

threaten the status in their village, and who were mutilated and killed as a warning to others. This sorry state of affairs provoked a discussion between Gautam and his fellow theatrical, Bhaskar, over a central moral question confronting the modern Bombayite. This one act when faced with injustice in a situation where law and order had either broken down or complicit with the wrong doers. The actors consider:

> Isolated incidents, they call them,' said Gautam. 'Exactly,' said Bhaskar. 'They say that our nation has made so much progress – satellite TV, they say, Internet, e-mail, best software designers in the world.' Gautam chuckled. 'Hamaara Bharat Mahaan, they repeat like that government slogan', and they laughed . . . 'What to do? People are afraid to accept the truth. As T. S. Eliot wrote, "Human kind cannot bear very much reality. (210)

The socially committed actors, Gautam and Bhaskar, had another explanation for events. Discussing the desired effect their 'performance' as Shiv Sena ruffians was to have on Mr. Kapur, they rehearse the question of the role of the audience, free will and destiny. They acknowledge that their performance will be unorthodox: while an audience for the kind of street theatre they specialize in always knows it is watching a performance, Mr Kapur will be unable to distinguish between performance and reality. Unaware, he will be both actor and audience:

> I would say he himself will be both audience and actor, except he'll be unaware of it, said Bhaskar. 'An actor without awareness is a wooden puppet,' declared Gautam grandly, believing he had scored a decisive point. 'In a culture where destiny is embraced as the paramount force, we are all puppets,' said Bhaskar with equal grandness. (331)

Their performance is designed to be:

> A call to action for Mr Kapur, and an unstated moral: that evil must not be ignored by those able to oppose it. . . . Basically, Mr Kapur needs to experience an epiphany. So we must convey more than just present danger to him and his shop. We must transcend the here and now, move beyond this bank and shoal of time, and let him glimpse the horrors of a society where the best lack all conviction while the worst are full of passionate intensity. (332)

The actors were strongly anti-Shiv Sena, and their street theatre has the Brechtian aim of the politicization of the audience, moving it "beyond catharsis" (324). Yet their formalist preoccupations, symbolized by their second-hand rhetoric and abstract theorizing, meat that they missed the essence of the situation. Despite their good intentions, they end up creating the same terror as the real Shiv Sena thugs, effectively paving the way for them.

In this novel, Yezad, recalled his father's heroism and honest actions, he told his kids, "Remember, people can take everything away from you, but they cannot rob you of your decency. . . . You alone can do that, by your actions" (234). This reference to how everything might change through one's actions proves to be true, when the novel unfolded, corruption spreads and extends, even over the most honest, though their only purpose behind such immoral actions, was often to fulfill their daily basic needs. It was, on several occasions, more a question of survival than of real crime. For instance, Yezad, out of desperation, ends up taking the few savings that his family has at home to gamble on the illegal lottery. His true intention, however, was to gain some extra money in order to manage with the costs arising from the care of Nariman, who after an ankle accident, now living with him and his family.

One of Yezad's two sons, Jehangir, the teacher's 'golden boy' because of his very good grades and good nature, was tempted by three rich boys to took some money from them, so he could improve their low grades while working as a homework monitor. Yezad, in a moment of desperation, talking to his wife after visiting the teacher says, "

> The same corruption that pollutes this country is right here, in your own family, in Jal and Coomy's shameless trickery and betrayal. Think of the example they have set. Is it any wonder Jehangla took the bribe?
>
> Roxana responds,
>
> Do you know what nonsense you are talking? Can you hear yourself? Our son did not take the money to buy bubble gum or ice cream for himself. He did it to help his parents with food, and with his Grandpa's medicines" (283).

Morey maintains, "The question of how to identify the good course of action in a world seemingly devoid of moral absolutes casts a shadow over the best intentions" (127). Therefore, corruption, like weeds, was virtually impossible to boot. In a conversation between Yezad and his boss, the latter compares corruption with the way in which a banyan tree grows:

> "Have you ever seen a banyan tree, Yezad?"
>
> He nodded.
>
> "You know how it grows? Its long branches send down aerial roots that go deep, become columns to support the branches that grow even larger while the roots spread over acres and acres."
>
> "Yes, I've seen pictures. So what's the connection?"

> "A municipal councillor tackling corruption is like a penknife trying to dig up a banyan tree." (319-320)

The domestic crises of one middle class Parsi family, Mistry conveyed everything from the dilemmas among Indian Parsis as a marginalized community to the wider concerns of corruption and communalism. This novel like his first one presented Shiv Sena as a Hindu fundamentalist force fully involved in rioting, looting and burning the poor and the innocent people.

The fundamentalist forces used to set free fear over people's minds. The novelist wailed over the ruthless and oppressive measures taken by these religious fanatics. They were responsible for ruining the multicultural and multilingual peaceful coexistence of the nation. Yezad also sums up the attitude of the Shiv Sena as: "South Indians are anti-Bombay, Valentine's Day is anti-Hidustani, and Film stars born before 1947 in the Pakistani Part of Punjab are traitors to the country" (32). Mistry seemed to put a negative propaganda and the politics of cultural terrorism through the description of this communalism. Coomy in the course of the novel also pointed out the dangers lurking home and abroad. Here she mentioned the incident of burning down of an old Parsi couple by Hindu radical mobs. Bombay burnt for months after the razing of the mosque in Ayodhya. "How often does a mosque in Ayodhya turn people into savages in Bombay? Once in a blue moon" (4-5) Jal, in the course of the novel, emphasized the minority Parsi community's predicament as he said: "Just last week in Firozsha Baag an old lady was beaten and robbed inside her own flat. Poor thing is barely clinging to life at Parsi General" (5).

Parsis were sensitive to the religious prejudice prevailing in India. The incident where the Shiv Sena goondas burned Husain's wife and three children was described by Husain,

> In those riots the police were behaving like gangsters. In Muslim Mohallas, they were shooting their guns at innocent people. Houses were burning; neighbours came out to throw water. And the police? Firing bullets like target practice. These guardians of the law were murdering everybody! And my poor wife and children ... I couldn't even recognize them. (155)

In this novel, porosity appears fundamentally through the topic of immorality. "Corruption is in the air we breathe. This nation specializes in turning honest people into crooks" (31). Throughout the novel, political corruption, represented by the abuses committed by the Shiv Sena towards the more disadvantaged classes, is irremediably transfused into individuals. The unethical and immoral political world depicted, becomes irremediably fused with the private common people's life.

Corruption in government institutions is a reality in India and Mistry exposes that reality in his novel. He has a great concern for the society in general and the Parsis in particular. He has a sharp insight into the core of the society which he recreates through nostalgia. The duplicity of the political leaders and their hunger are also rudely exposed. Fund - Rising at the time of war or any natural calamity is a common practice in India, but it is never made clear to the public how the amount raised through collections from the poor and underpaid is spent. Mistry has deliberately ignored the positive aspects of Indian politics, religion, social integrity, culture, tradition, sense of sacrifice, ideal human relationship, love for humanity and etc. while planning his novel.

The next chapter **Representation of Reminiscences** brings out the tool of memory that exist in-between the past and the present World. The following also

express the immigration of the Parsian Community people for the financial purpose in Mistry's first and last novels *Such a Long Journey* and *Family Matters.*

Chapter Four

Representation of Reminiscences

> Memories were permanent. Nobody ever forgets anything, not really, though sometimes they pretended, when it suited them. Sorrowful ones reminded sad even with the passing of times, yet happy ones could never be recreated – not with the same joy.
>
> - Rohinton Mistry

Memory is the acute pain and feeling of not being with the people who are a like you, speaks the same language. They are better felt and expressed by exiled or immigrant writers. Such people might be physically away from their own motherland but deep in their hearts always keep on missing their motherland. It is device of memory which capture the past in the present. According to Hudson,

> A nation's life has its moods of exultation and depression, its epochs a strong faith and strenuous idealism now of doubt struggle and disillusion, now of unbelief and flippant disregard for the sanctities of existence and while the manner of expression will vary greatly with the individuality of each writer the dominant spirit of the hour whatever they may be will directly or indirectly reveal itself in his work. (1)

Alienation means separation or rejection of human beings by dominating society. In literature, alienation is often characterized as the process of social tensions among different social groups where humans' awareness of their difference may distance or isolate from being united or involved with them. Alienation is a common theme in the major works of Mistry. The issue of alienation in immigration stories in Mistry's novels *Such a Long Journey* and *Family Matter,* not only appeals to the

immigrants of Parsi community, but also to other immigrants from different communities all over the world. He also points out that human loneliness, alienation and personal pain that arises out of male and female relationship and personal conflicts with social organizations in his award winning novels.

Immigration and diaspora are not new phenomena in India and the literature produced by diasporic Indian writers explores the multi-dimensional anxieties of emigrant life. Recently, there have been more shifts in perceptions and perspectives of these writers' notions of individual and their national and cultural identities. Several kinds of identities push with each other and create a crisis of identity in the works of reputed writers like Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh and others. The interaction of various cultures certainly open new routes and modes of thinking about the individual and group identities of diasporas and help them to outgrow the stereotyped experiences of uprootedness, displacement and marginalization.

Mistry was born and brought up in Mumbai in the mid fifties, migrated to Canada at the age of 23. Mistry belongs to that class of the Indian authors who shifted their base from India to somewhere else but throughout their lives continue missing their mother land. Such people might be physically away from their own motherland but deep in their hearts always keep on missing their motherland.

As a Parsi and also as an immigrant in Canada, Mistry looks at him as a symbol of double displacement. He deals with severe identity crisis which is the outcome of loneliness and a sense of exile which is the root cause of diasporic existence. Nilufer Bharucha has explored the multiple aspects of Mistry's works: his search for identity, his need for roots, and the desire for location in history.

People today are migrating to different parts of the world for one reason or the other. Even from India, millions of people have migrated to various foreign lands

under forced or self-imposed exiles. Some of the immigrants have made a mark in the field of writing. Mistry himself had left for Canada seeking good fortune. Savita Goel comments on this

> As a parsi and then as an immigrant in Canada, he (Mistry) sees himself as a symbol of double displacement and this sense of double displacement is a recurrent theme in his literary works. His historical situation in involves construction of a new identity in the nation to which he has emigrated and a complex relationship with the political and cultural history of the nation he has left behind. (119)

Mistry brings out the reality of life. The novel becomes a commentary on social life, political life and morality. His focus is on the Parsi community and their problems in life. There is a focus on life in Bombay in the early 1970s, a city in transition with the backdrop of the war. Mistry's three novels were all set in Mumbai. Mumbai is the most inhabited space of India and the fourth most populated city in the world. His work focuses on the life of the marginalized and their struggle to survive against human ambition and political corruption, and Mumbai is usually the meeting point of many of his characters.

Mistry captures the essence of Bombay as the good, as the bad and as the worse, dwelling upon the cosmopolitanness, certain landmarks whether of universal interest or religious interest like Craford Market, the Irani restaurants, the dudhwalla bhaiya, the water problems of people in the city, the red-light areas etc. He uses typical terms like the native of the language adopted by the Parsis, which is Gujarati and refers to the Parsi customs, food, religious ceremonies all of which contribute to Mistry's realism. Nilufer Bharucha says, "The wall both includes and excludes. It is

protective as well as reductive. It protects the Parsee community from the ingress of the engulfing Indian world. However, it also makes this world isolationist." (123)

Mistry's first novel, *Such a Long Journey*, the protagonist Gustad Noble faced many trials in his life. This novel explored the loss of material belongings as well as the loss of death or separation. Two events were significant in this Context. First, material loss in Gustad's life was his family's depression during his father's bankruptcy. On the other hand, there was great love and compassion for Gustad shown at different other parts in the novel. There was a great gathering underway and Dr. Paymaster is at the controls of affairs. He also endured with the loss of deaths of his friends Jimmy, Dinshawj, and Tehmul.

The personal and political realities were intertwined. Mistry's focus was on the disturbing forces which threaten the peace of Gustad's family life. For the better understanding of family melodrama in the life of common man, it was necessary to go through descent of Gustad. Gustad, his wife Dilnavaz, their two sons Soharab and Darius and daughter Roshan lived in the Parsi residential colony of Khodadad Building in Bombay.

Gustad's dreams regarding Sohrab, his eldest son were shattered when he declined to join the prestigious IIT despite clearing the entrance examination. Not only this he also rebelled against his father and leaves his home to try his luck in music. In complete desperation he stated that,

> Throwing away his fortune without reason. What have I not done for him, tell me? I even threw myself in front a car. Kicked him aside, saved his life, and got this to suffer all my life. He slapped his hip . . . I can kick him again. Out of my house, out of my life. (52)

Gustad pitted against his son, he recognized his own mistake and so forgiven his son Sohrab. Gustad worried that there was no life and occupation for the minorities in Bombay mainly due to unlawful government. Dinshawji reminded the good old days of the Parsis, “what fun we used to have parsis were the kings of banking in those days. Such respect we used to get. Now whole atmosphere only has been spoiled. Ever since that Indira nationalized the banks” (38).

Gustad also entailed a feeling of alienation and dissatisfaction with the present. The semantics of loss implied a dispossession against the subjects that the result of which could be poverty, isolation, confusion, disillusionment, and disillusionment. It was clear through the following detail the causes and effects of loss made its impact on the protagonist of the novel. The past was given special importance to Gustad in the novel.

Dinshawji, a friend of Gustad who also expressed his fear and grief over the matter of changing names under the pressure of Shiv Sena. For him, names were not only names but an identity and changing names meant changing identity. Dinshawji reacted to Gustads question, “What in a name?” (74). He counter asserted that renaming was an infliction of linguistic violence on social identity, the removal of family names that connected with the colonial past was seen as an removal of a personal historical connectedness. He revealed his anguish as:

> You are wrong. Names are so important. My whole life I have come to work at Flora Fountain. And one day the name changes. So, what happens to the life I have lived? Was I living the wrong life, with all wrong names? Will I get to second chance to live it all again, with these new names? Tell me what happen to my life. Rubbed out, just like that? Tell me. (74)

Counter balance to the indignity and struggle of the present were actually the memories of the security and cultural of the past. These governed emotions of loneliness, fear and insecurity was all pervading sense of loss of what the past had symbolized.

Although Gustad's grandfather was a furniture maker and the family had actually owed and enriched a lot from the 'wood and dowels', his father does not proceed with the business, rather linked his profession with his liking and ensured the finest bookstore in the country. But with time, during his illness, the prosperity of the store was reduced to fiasco due to the negligence of his younger son. Poverty overwhelmed the family and Gustad's 'once invincible father' was 'completely broken'. The shame and the sorrow snatched the life of Gustad's humble and uncomplaining mother as well. Gustad felt the pain and tamed the poison and his present depression sneaked into his past depression.

For the protagonist Gustad, there was no God who would appear to end the tribulations and solved his problems and to assure and reassure him that everything would be fine at the end. Yet he survived without surrendering himself to any kind of slow sadness and still in control of his fundamental human dignity. But his journey through these days of commotion and confusion was undoubtedly a long one and often Gustad loosed his calm in handling the difficult extremity that he faced unexpectedly without any prior warning. When his wife asked him to be patient, he said "What have we been all these years if not patient? Is this how it will end? Sorrow, nothing but sorrow" (52).

Gustad Noble was a pleasant middle-aged man of modest dreams and aspirations. His relationship with his daughter Roshan was more lovable than sons. On the contrary father and son relationship was filled with anger, quarrels,

authoritarianism, rebellion etc. For the better health of his daughter and best friend Dinshawji, Gustad prayed in the holy shrine of Mount Mary. While Soharab and Gustad were hostile to each other, Dilnavaz becomes a mediator between them. She accepted Miss. Kutpitia's help to bring a reunion between father and son. But Sohrab think that there was no chance to get reunited with his father because he knows that he was responsible for his father's unhappiness.

Gustad experienced the challenges of panic and persuasion one after the other. In spite of his worries and concern he confronted the crucial chance scheming against his confidence and temptation so as to reward his failure of fortune and pleasure. Mistry seemed to put forward the vision that man was chained to the controls of destiny and had to struggle incessantly against the verdict of providence –

> Over the years, a precise cycle had entered the rhythm of his life, the cycle of arrival, creation and obliteration. Like sleeping, waking and stretching, or eating, digesting and excreting, the cycle sang in harmony with the blood in his veins and the breadth in his lungs. He learnt to disdain the overlong sojourn and the procrastinated departure, for they were the progenitors of complacent routine, to be shunned at all costs. The journey – chanced, unplanned, solitary – was the thing to relish. (184)

The concept of 'We' consciousness was explored throughout the novel. The Parsis had been living in India for more than one thousand years; still they are in the category of diasporic entities. The threats to Gustad's cocoon of security stem from disease, filial disloyalty, poverty, fear of unemployment, losing his nerve and getting caught up in criminal activity out of friendship. Gustad has to learn that there is no permanence in the absolute security of cocoon of the family.

In *Such a Long Journey* Mistry presented a truly excellent characters that provoked our laughter and sympathy, but the protagonist would remain in the minds and hearts of readers for a long time, because the writer succeeded by making us see and respond accordingly. Through his innumerable characters, Mistry also showed the awareness of differences among human beings.

Zoroastrian religion emerged in Iran and king Vistap was so impressed by Zarathrustra's message that he publically accepted the new religion and it rapidly spread throughout Iran. But due to emergence of Islam and attacks of Arabs Parsis were forced to convert into Islam or were killed. A group of people migrated to India and other parts of the world. However, when they arrived at Sanjanpur, Gujarat in India they accepted the conditions put to them by Jadhav Rana, - they will dress themselves like Indians, they will treat India as their motherland, they will not slaughter the cow, they will conduct their marriage at night and they will be loyal to India.

During the English colonialism Parsis became closer to the English and started living elite class life. They proved to be more good and loyal servant for the English, they learnt English and served them in the field of Banking, Administration etc. However, Parsis during English Colonial regime started learning English language, playing cricket, listening to English music, reading English legends and stories, and migrating from India to Canada. Mistry chooses realism as his style and focuses on the human conditions located in time and space: the Parsi middle class in suburban Bombay and rural migrants.

Mistry's third novel, *Family Matters* migration was an important theme. Parsis in India immigrated to foreign countries in search of money. Narendra Kumar attributes:

> The parsees prefer the best since it offers unlimited scope for growth and prosperity. Dislocation is part of the parsee psyche. Exiled twelve hundred years ago, they came to India. Now they are migrating to west in search of greener pastures. Thus there is 'double migration' in the case of parsees (14)

Being an emigrant, Mistry clearly exposed Yezad's, Nariman's son-in-law, dream of immigrating to Canada. Mistry given autobiographical touches to his portrayal of Yezad. The striking similarity between himself and Yezad was clearly felt in the novel. In order to ensure materialistic security Mistry was migrated to Canada in pursuit of a career. He wanted to earn money and led a rich living. Since Yezad was an autobiographical character, Mistry too experienced the sense of alienation like Yezad. He wished to come back to India, his homeland, to rejoin his community. Parsis immigrated to foreign countries for the financial security. In this regard Narendra Kumar writes:

> The Parsees Prefer the West since it offers unlimited scope for growth and prosperity. Dislocation is part of the Parsee psyche. Exiled twelve hundred years ago, they came to India. Now they are migrating to west in search of greener pasture. Thus there is 'double migration' in case of Parsees. (14)

Yezad was eager to migrate to Canada for he wanted "clean cities, plenty of water, trains with seats for everyone, where people stood in line at bus stops and said please, after you, thank you. Not just the land of milk and honey, also the land of deodorant and toiletry." (137). To Nariman, "emigration is an enormous mistake. The biggest anyone can make in their life. The loss of home leaves a whole that never fills" (254). Finally Yezad realized his blunder and decided not to immigrate to

Canada. He was firmed to destroy the letters, forms and photocopies related to his intended emigration. When he was tearing the papers, Roxana came in and asks what he was doing. He answered, "Getting rid of garbage" (255). Roxana first tried to save the documents but then she understood, "Yezad was right, it was not worth keeping" (255). Mistry here seems to confirm the fact 'East or West Home is best'.

Mistry has tried to show a Parsi community struggling to strike a balance between the past dignity and the present circumstances depicting the tension arising out of an overlapping culture and its contexts. Amin Malak in his essay "From Margin to Main", contests that:

> The immigrant imagination is dichotomous by nature, locked on the horns of a dilemma, neither affiliated with the old root culture, nor fully fitting with the new adopted one. Accordingly, writers negotiating and articulating such an experience have to inhabit an alternative world, a third world: a world of their imagination, their memory, their nostalgia. (19-20)

If mass migration within the West was the defining feature of modernity, large scale migrations from the East to the West, not only of the elite but also of subaltern cosmopolitans mark the postmodern era. Migrations were mostly forced pertaining to natural, economic or religious reasons. But in the modern day world most of the migrations are voluntary. There is a two fact behind the migration, that whatever the reason of migration, man always yearns to return to his roots. His immigration or exile excommunicates him from his community and his identity is dislocated from its human centre. This sense of dispossessed, dislocation when turned into writing becomes a suffering and often these narratives are nostalgic in nature. Sense of the past is overbearing in these narratives. Though, colonialism does not involve a

physical displacement of the subject race yet there is a sense of displacement, culturally, one is dispossessed of his culture, language, tradition and even identity. Hence, it is most natural for man and especially the post-colonial writers to return to their past because it is past that holds the meaning of their present.

Mark Day in *The Philosophy of History* stresses the need of our understanding of past in the following words:

> In questioning the present world, we learn about the past and so answer our questions about the present. By such questioning we make explicit our understanding of the dependence of present upon past and thus permit a more critical history. (Day, 4)

The inter dependence of past and present, thus, needs re-interpretation of community and globalization has brought together people from different religions, castes and faith and created new communities bonded by need rather by force.

The past never had a separate existence in human lives. It always lingered in the minds of every human being. Mistry presented Nariman's past in italicized paragraphs in the novel. Nilufer E Bharucha's article *"Repossessing the Master Tongue, Subverting the Master Narrative and Challenging the Met narrative of History: Rohinton Mistry's Fiction*" states, "The narrative technique of the flashbacks given in italics reconstructs Nariman Vakeel's guilt-laden past" (50).

The Parsis find it very difficult to let go off their past. They often tend to live in the past, pondering over their past even in the present. Dr. Fitter was one such character who keeps pondering over the past.

> When you think of our forefathers, the industrialists and shipbuilders who established the foundation of modern India, the philanthropists

> who gave us our hospitals and schools and libraries and baags, what lustre they brought to our community and the nation. (51)

The lack of enthusiasm to wipe out past from human memory was one of the causes for rifts in families. This was obvious in the tension in Nariman's relationship with his stepchildren. Coomy and Jal hanged on to the memories associated with their deceased father. Coomy in particular often reflected on the years past to her mother's death and holds grudges against Nariman.

> 'In my youth, my parents controlled me and destroyed those years. Thanks to them, I married your mother and wrecked my middle years. Now you want to torment my old age. I won't allow it.' 'Such lies!' flared Coomy. 'You ruined Mamma's life, and mine, and Jal's. I will not tolerate a word against her.'(7)

Their father Palonji Contractor could no way be replaced by Nariman, the 'New Pappa'. This affected Nariman as well:

> The word stung like a pebble each time it was hurled to his face. He made light of it at first, laughing it off: 'That's all- just New Pappa? Why not a longer title? How about Brand New Improved Pappa?' . . . Jal told him coldly that no one could be an improvement on their real father . . . Merely calling him Pappa . . . did not make him one. (9)

The arrival of Roxana, the younger sister and daughter of Nariman brought much peace to the household. Both Jal and Coomy were affectionate toward her. This affection was put to test often in their later years.

> But Jal and Coomy's devotion to Roxana- even that had come to an end, felt Nariman, after she married and left to live in the flat he had procured by paying an enormous pugree. That was the time when they

> first began throwing at him the 'flesh and blood' phrase, accusing him of partiality. (10)

Nariman's kindness to Yezad owing to his circumstance, in the form of Pleasant Villa always posed as an opportunist hindrance for Coomy to give vent to her resentment towards Nariman. She often overlooked the fact that Nariman had put his flat in their names.

Vikram Kapur, boss of Yezad, had desire to become more familiar with the city prevails due to the fact that he was a migrant himself. His family had fled from Punjab in 1947, when he was just six months old. Hence Bombay has a special place in his heart. He celebrates the city in most of his conversations with Yezad.

> Bombay endures because it gives and it receives. Within this warp and weft is woven the special texture of its social fabric, the spirit of tolerance, acceptance, generosity. Anywhere else in the world, in those so-called civilized places like England and America, such terrible conditions would lead to revolution. (159).

Mr. Kapur has a particular fascination in collecting photographs of Bombay of the past. These photographs renew nostalgic memories in Yezad about his childhood and the city of those times: "Hey, it's a shot of Hughes Road. Where I grew up. Why do you think I brought it? And for your info, the name was changed to Sitaram Patkar Marg years ago. It'll always be Hughes Road for me" (223).

The place where one grows up is always one close to the heart. Not a single place remains the same forever. Development and progress necessary as well as unnecessary will make inroads and makes them no longer recognizable to the familiar eye:

> The photographs had made him aware how much the street and the buildings meant to him. Like an extended family that he'd taken for granted and ignored, assuming it would always be there. But buildings and roads and spaces were as fragile as human beings, you had to cherish them while you had them. (228)

Love for Bombay and the desire to clean it from social evils, instills in Mr.Kapur, a desire to contest in the elections. This was much seconded by Yezad who seen it as an opportune moment to gain a promotion. At a later point of time Mr. Kapur decided against his decision. "I don't think I'm going to run . . . It's too dangerous. My wife made a good point: she said elections these days are nothing better than fights between gangsters" (294-295). He stated that he was an ordinary man and not a hero and can't change the dictums in the city.

The novel presented the situation of Nariman, an old man, aged seventy nine who was affected by Parkinson's disease. Parkinson's disease is a chronic and progressive movement disorder in which the symptoms continue and worsen over time. There is no way to cure this disease but there are medication and surgery to manage its symptoms. The specific group of symptoms that an individual experiences varies from person to person.

When one becomes old, remembrance of the things past becomes a prominent past time. It often leads to lack of consciousness about the present. Similarly loss of memory was common in old people, and Nariman's case was worsened due to Parkinson's disease. Nariman claimed to know the quantity of his medicines, but it was not the case always. Coomy said, "He forgets, and sometimes gets mixed up with his words" (108).

Nariman was the central character and also mentioned other elderly characters. One of them was the neighbour of the Yezad, Villie Cardmaster, the Matka Queen next door had an elderly mother.

> Her days were occupied with housework and caring for her ailing mother, who had shrunk to the size of a six-year-old. Villie was able to lift her without much effort as she took her from the bed to the bathroom, and to her easy chair on the balcony, or to the dining table, carrying her around like a wrinkled doll. (123)

Issues of mobility against immobility, decay and death were explored through Nariman's fate. From a life lived fully through the body, he came to exist solely in the life of the mind. As he think back of his love for Lucy. Nariman struggled to perform the simplest tasks which become the most acute expression of the labours of other characters, such as Roxana and Yezad, struggled everyday to make ends meet, or Coomy was fighting vainly to hold back the tide of bitterness she feels for the old man she blamed for her mother's untimely death.

Yezad's life in Bombay like that of millions of other Bombayites was full of the stress and strain of a daily travelled to work on overcrowded trains and the far from sufficient salaries and unhealthy working conditions. Given this context it was not difficult to see why he should yearn for the dream of immigrating to Canada, even though he had been turned down by the immigration authorities many years ago. Ironically the man, who had interviewed Yezad and Roxana and had turned them down, had been an ethnic Indian. He had been extremely rude to them and at the end of the interview Yezad had let him have it back with,

> You sir, are a rude and ignorant man, a disgrace to your office and country. You have sat here abusing us, abusing Indians, and India, one

> of the many countries your government drains of its brainpower, the brainpower that is responsible for your growth and prosperity. Instead of having the grace to thank us, you spew your prejudices and your bigoted ideas. You, whose people suffered racism and xenophobia in Canada, where they were Canadian citizens, put in camps like prisoners of war- you sir, might be expected, more than anyone else, to understand the more enlightened Canadian ideals of multiculturalism. But if you are anything to go by, then Canada is a gigantic hoax. (253)

Yezad was rejected by a Canadian-born Japanese immigration official when Yezad failed to answer some stupid and tricky questions relating to ice hockey. Yezad soon realized that Canada and Bombay are plagued by similar problems: "unemployment, crime, housing problems, language laws, beggars, and separatist issues" (137). His fantasy about the new land was dissolved and he was rather stucked in a retail job. Mistry shows Dr Rangarajan who was also eager to migrate from the city and send applications to several foreign countries to find an avenue to improve his financial prospects.

The theme of suffering, a sense of belongingness and the crisis of uprootedness had been treated through the character of Nariman who was the personification of Parsi community. "The subjects of mobility versus immobility, decay and mortality are explored through Nariman's way of life" (Vinodkumar 108). His broken ankle adds more tragedy to his already existing diseases. '*Family Matters* provides an intimate and compelling depiction of matters to families in the universal situation of parents' need for home care" (Vinodkumar 101). He neither found peace in Chateau Felicity nor in the Pleasant Villa. Mistry with his subtle touch told Nariman's younger days full of mental agony when he was denied of marriage by his

orthodox parents with a non-Parsi lady, Lucy Braganza. He had to lead a miserable life by marrying a Parsi widow Yasmin but cannot forget his unfulfilled love for Lucy in his old age. "His memory of the past destroys his will power and brings him back to his love for Lucy" (Dodiya 86). Nariman was suffering from the crisis of belongingness. The crisis took him back to the roots of his community as well as to the bye gone days and he narrated the stories of Parsi traditions.

Mistry while mentioning the theme of suffering employed inter textual references from Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *King Lear*. The bad smell in Nariman's room annoyed Coomy and she entertainingly told to Jal: "All the perfumes of Arabia, all your swabbing and scrubbing and mopping and scouring will not remove it" (109). Mistry seems to equate the life of Nariman to Shakespeare's *King Lear*. Here Nariman met the same tragic fate as of Lear. The children he trusted so much proved to be cruel and unkind to him in his old age. But he loved both of his daughters that shown his loyalty and decency towards them. Though, he felt he made many mistakes but he had never regrets them. He dumped his agonies and sorrows within himself. At last he felt as foolish as *Lear* must have felt when he was treated badly by Reagan and Goneril. So Nariman retorts:

> 'To so many classes I taught *Lear*, learning nothing myself. What kind of teacher is that, as foolish at the end of his life as at the beginning?' again, 'What is *Lear*, asked Jehangir. Nariman swallowed the potato. 'It's the name of a king who made many mistakes.' (196-197)

It was important to realize that Nariman's character was not only his tolerance but also the contrast favorably with his parents. During old age, he needed the help from others that provoked the memories his of past and long lost life. The past had even more secrets in which Nariman's first love with Lucy was withdrawn by his

parents' compulsion. Ultimately, Lucy had provoked jealousy to his wife Yasmin that led to both their deaths in a fall from the roof.

Most intractable of all, the sequence of events appeared to initiate all the Chenoy family's subsequent troubles. That was Nariman's inability to give up his relationship with Lucy Braganza, even after his marriage to Yasmin. After his marriage, Lucy followed him and took a job with a neighbor in order to be near him and repeatedly threatens suicide. Again, Nariman followed her up to the roof of Chateau Felicity to advice against her from jumping. Even though, he tried to calm his former lover and he worried for Lucy in her distressed obsession. At one point, he wondered himself that was Lucy's endless love.

Family Matters was characterized by author's hard-to-be suppressed yearning to return home and reintegrated into the Parsi community in India. His autobiographical feel was more in this novel. *Family Matters* clearly portrayed the anxieties, alienation and feelings of insecurity of modern day Parsis and Mistry's concern of the past and the present.

Mistry is concerned for him these fragments of memory are great enough to recapture the time he has spend on the streets of Bombay, the moments lived with him are being relieved by him during this depiction of his homeland. Even at one phase, the fiction of Mistry seems to have a nostalgic look at the community he has left behind. His novels are concerned with the experience of the Parsi in India so along with cherishing the partial memories of his own country. Mistry keeps on smoothen his inner self by writing about his own community. Mistry has a vision that involves both the community centered existence of the Parsi's and their involvement with the wider national framework.

Mistry has mastered not only the art of weaving and knitting nostalgic memories like many of exiled authors of his time and genre are having but at the same time he has a smart sense, he was sharp enough to capture all the social, political events and incidents taking place in India even if he was not present here at that time. All the characters of Mistry speak his heart.

Human suffering takes many forms: Physical, Psychological, Natural and Moral. All these sufferings are always equally harmful and they are interconnected. Sufferings can collapse a person or it can make one strong. It always depends on one's sufferings in a positive way or a negative way. It has an unavoidable role in the human journey of life and the literary world. Particularly in literature, novels tell about people's struggles, sufferings and hopes that give to clear picture of a better understanding of real life. Mistry is a famous writer who has an extraordinary sensibility and a soft corner for the suffered and innocent people.

The Final chapter **Summation,** sum up all the representation of culture, socio-political changes and reminiscences which discussed and established the finding in Mistry's first and last novel *Such a Long Journey* and *Family Matters.*

Chapter Five

Summation

> The heart has its reasons which reason knows nothing of. After all our life are but a sequence of accidents – a clanking chain of chance events. A string of choices, casual or deliberate, which add up to that one big calamity we call life.
>
> - Rohinton Mistry

The Parsi community for centuries together has made several diasporas all over the world. At first, they migrated from Iran to India and they lived under the dominant Hindu leaders of India. During the British rule, the Parsis enjoyed elite status. After the partition of India in 1947, they lost their importance in India. So, most of them started to migrate to foreign countries. But even in the new lands, the Indian Parsis feel alienated and depressed.

Rohinton Mistry is a novelist who, as a Parsi in India and as an Indian in Canada, is the part of minority or ethnic culture in both the countries. For him, the minority status is a felt and fated experience in both the worlds. It is not surprising that he does not attempt to focalize or problematize questions of marginality in his writings. Mistry's characters represent the Parsi community, whose identity has been historically problematized. It is a community which has outstanding past and gloomy future. Mistry attempts at giving details about the lifestyles and culture of Parsis wherever he gets an opportunity in his fiction.

The Zoroastrians are fire worshippers and believe in metaphysical dualism and the practice of good thought, word and deed. For over thirteen hundred years, they

have kept reserved to their individuality and strong independence of habit and customs and a mode of living which is more westernized than other Indian communities are. It is beyond doubt that the Parsis have retained almost all the beliefs and customs of their ancestors. They observe the prohibitions against the infectivity of the sacred elements of fire, water and earth.

Rituals and sacrifices that deal with every aspect of life from birth to death govern their lives; and they practice the strict percept of morality laid down by Zoroaster who got them from Ahura Mazda himself. Thus the literary journey of Mistry which began with *Tales from Firozsh Baag* has progressed gradually but meaningfully to the current successful novel *Family Matters* 2002. Mistry in this literary journey outlines the Parsi tradition very minutely. He shows both positive as well as negative aspect of the Parsi tradition since its beginning, and its acceleration to the contemporary age. The Parsis are confronting the majority Hindus and struggling to preserve their tradition that is rapidly deteriorating.

Mistry records atrophy, anxiety, uneasiness, sense of insecurity, ethnicity and feeling of threat in his community through his novel *Such a Long Journey*. There is a message that race, ethnicity or majority are controlling factors on the ideology and cultural make up of particular place where cultural diversity exists. It is necessary to steam out the hatred, religious chauvinism and misconceptions through proper channels. Mistry, in his works seek to contribute the process of changes and reconsideration of minorities, their rights and status, and radical restructuring of a social thought. He like other Parsi writers distributes the world which is free of dominance and hierarchy, a world that rests on the principles of Justice and equality.

Mistry's works typically reveals an inconsistency of circumstances or a huddle of anxieties fixed within the customs itself as the consequence of interaction between

assurances and obligations of the past and the reality of the present. In his work, cultural find international acceptance and adaptation through the narratives of the individuals. His strategy of incorporating terror and temptation administers the contemplation and proceedings of his annoyed yet optimistic characters. And, his novels cleverly follow the perceptions of the Parsi community that actions to overcome their fright of extinction with the bait of patience.

In *Such a Long Journey* if the major events of history during the post-independent period, is the main plot, then the history of Parsi community can be considered as a sub-plot in the story. In the novel the plot is intended in such a way that the main protagonist, Gustad Nobel, is acknowledged as a spokesperson of the common public. He has tangled history to explore into the extensive concern of Parsis and also of national individuality with destiny and war as the two major themes of the novel and has also encroached into great struggle in order to reflect on these issues at individual, social and national levels. Some of the thoughts incorporated in the novel, like fate overriding the lives of the human beings, the hypothesis of *karma*, the sequence of birth and death, the uncertainty of life, the practice of black magic, etc. are speckled all through the novel giving the readers a feeling that it is very difficult to come out of such extraordinary things in life.

Mistry also uses metaphors and symbols in his novels: 'Khodadad Building' might represent India with all its splendors and limitations; the 'collapse of the wall' might link the past with the future through the present, etc. Myths incorporated from the Hindu, the Persian, the Greek and the Christian resources are associated to numerous permanent facts by Mistry, in order to portray the difficulty of the modern man. He even includes a pinch of salt to give his novels a hint of satire. It is because of this sparkling wit and consistent humor, which is cautiously structured into the

texture of the novel that permits the characters to register a stamp of accomplishment in spite of abnormalities.

Mistry is a commanding chronicler of social and political life. One of the remarkable features of his fiction is that it incarcerates the crowded burning life of India. The political concerns that have changed the lifestyle of many and are very close to the mind and spirit of the people are his main thematic concerns. He goes to the depth of relationships, tries to explore those dome where the self is at a loss at times accepting and at times rejecting the community values and traditions. He also shows how fundamentalism and twisted political thinking have altered the very social structure in such a way that even the common man – dissociated from politics – is scared and affected.

The pain of alienation and the severe identity crisis one faces due to immigration to distant lands is expressed best by the writers of the Diaspora. Amongst all the writers who can be categorized as Diaspora writers, Mistry is one writer who has created a distinct name for himself because of his brilliance as a writer and also because of his unique craftsmanship of honest portrayal of the subaltern through his short stories and novels.

In *Such a Long Journey* and *Family Matters*, he portrays geographical location where regionalism and parochial sentiments run very high, due to the manipulation of political and administrative institutions and the public opinion for narrow selfish political ambitions by certain individuals, symbolized by Indira Gandhi at the national level and Shiv Sena at the local level. Being a Parsi and then an immigrant in Canada, Mistry sees himself as symbol of double displacement. The dominance and suppression of the society and forces of their ancestor move them into the trade of tailoring. It illustrates that these men continuously aware about their roots in the social

structure. Because of economic compulsions, they go away from their native place and environment. They are struggling for the safe place in the crowd of the urban place. The emotional displacement of accepting new profession of tailoring and physical displacement of moving to the new city for earning, and the feelings of alienation, dislocation and isolation force them to become beggars on the roads of metropolis.

Migrations in the past were mostly forced pertaining to famine or flood, in search of resources or the exodus of the Jews reasons. If mass migration within the West was the defining feature of modernity, large scale migrations from the East to the West, not only of the elite but also of subaltern cosmopolitans mark the postmodern era. But in the modern day world most of the migrations are voluntary. Yet, what binds the two is the fact that whatever the reason of migration, man always yearns to return to his roots.

The Bombay to which the Parsi community migrated, the city which flourished under their able hands has changed in the course of time. The presence of people pertaining to different cultures did play a decisive role in transforming the city. The present day city has many foreign residents as well. The turn of the century has turned the face of the city as well.

The Bombay city where one resides influences his or her life in a great deal. The presence of many cultures invariably influences the citizens. Similarly the development of the city encourages each person to aspire for achievements at all stages of his or her life. But each individual has to separate the good as well as bad influences in order to avoid a repentant choice. The youngsters are able to make their own choices, but whether the aging elders are also able to do so is worth a thought.

The later works of Mistry *Family Matters* is broader in concept and canvas. Though his concern for the community still exists in his works, the definition and the extent of community have taken a new format. One of the prime reasons for this change is growing globalization. Advancement in travel and communication technologies has certainly made the world a global village and all of us have become inhabitants of a space without borders of nation, place, community, religion et al. The process of migration and exile are two factors that have always led man with damage of the fixities of space, place and nation. *Family Matters* is characterized by author's hard-to-be suppressed yearning to return home and reintegrate into the Parsi community in India. His autobiographical feel is more in this novel.

Mistry can describe daily life among the Parsis of Bombay touching, at the same time, meaningful themes and significant issues of contemporary multicultural and migrant realities. The melting pot of religious ideologies and political ideas was at a particularly confused point in the early 1970s that Mistry makes the ideal backdrop for the novel that will remain socio-politically relevant for years to come. In addition, Mistry is able to project the emotional life and personal relationships of the Parsis as a valuable part of the wider human experience at the international level by writing about these things from across the world. The novels display the characteristic diasporic features of a sense of loss, nostalgia and problems of identification with the host country. Mistry generates India and Parsiness from a Parsi's point of view.

Mistry's nostalgia is not only physical presentation and the purpose is not only to present the eccentric life styles and sense of superiority as it seems on the outset, it is a cry of the heart of the novelist to reconnect the two points of space and time. Due to the sense of alienation, fee ling of insecurity and identity crisis in India, the Parsis

are given up to nostalgia. Memories of their glorious past hover around them and they are still not able to detach themselves from their native land.

Such a long Journey has a background set up of the early 1970s during the war against Pakistan. *Family Matters* depicts and deaths, with the India of the 1990s where Hindutva ideologies and his repercussions on the life of common ordinary citizens of India, can be seen. Mistry is simultaneously a writer of the diaspora through his writing on India do not work only with the traditional diasporic themes of nostalgia for motherland he also has a sense of exile.

In *Such a Long Journey* Gustad is nostalgic about the past, the happy carefree days of his childhood, the family gatherings, the holidays and the rich smell of his father's carpentry business, the personal grief and nostalgia helps Mistry with deeper and sharper his vision and giving the layers of intensity to every character Mistry is shaping up or framing in his novels. The chronological journey of Mistry's various works of fiction shows an interesting gradual movement towards the contemporary.

Mistry seems to be deeply concerned about the marginalized Parsi existence which is severely threatened under the impact of modernity and is best exemplified in this narrative through the incidents of late marriages, prohibition of inter caste marriages, low birth rate, high death rate, strict family planning message, generation gap and several other reasons. The novel is an elaborate discussion on the slow but steady decline of the Parsi race. It also plans a strategy that can be executed to prevent the extinction of the Parsi race. The author foregrounds the Parsi community and the Zoroastrian faith. Thus the novel ends with a note of promulgation of the Parsi religion. 'Family matters in a particular way in *Family Matters*. It is not merely a Parsi family that Mistry is ultimately interested in but the family of man.' (Genetsch 187)

Such a Long Journey is set against the backdrop of war in the subcontinent and the birth of Bangladesh. The novel depicts the story of Gustad Noble, a middle class common man and the peculiar way in which the conflict impinges on his life and the lives of his family members. It is journey of common man, father, husband and friend which walks between hope and despair and his lives is highly disturbed by the political atmosphere created in India by the Government of Indira Gandhi, they feel uprooted from the society and the feeling of insecurity is raised in the entire Parsi community.

The dream of middle class man of launching his son as a competent engineer but dream shatters in to pieces. The inside plight in the heart of Gustad Noble that gave him a lot of trouble for son's career and it was a concern of the father which could not be understood by the son. Gustad Noble has face problem at every stage of life, his daughter Roshan suffers from diarrhea which is complicated case of illness. He received the package from Major Bilimoria which was big trouble for because hiding ten lakh rupees for an average middle class man is very hard task. His dear friend Dinshawji falls ill and his death shocks Gustad too much he was the only man mourner at the death of him. He has some conflict with Mr. Rabadi, another patient of building over the latter's charge that Darius has an affair with his daughter; this feeling creates the insecurity about his daughter's safety. Gustad saved his son Sohrab's life at the cost of his hip that got fractured causing him limp. The news regarding the Major Bilimoria on charges of corruption is published in the newspaper which affects a lot to the Parsis and character like Gustad Noble.

The problems in the life of Gustad does not come to an end Dr. Paymaster reports to Gustad about Roshan's prolonged illness which is out of recovery. Due to the economic uncertainty he is compelled to sell his camera and his wife's two gold

marriage bangles. After that Gustad visits Bilimoria who tells him everything about his case. He tells Gustad that the Prime Minister's office involved in that money scandal, it was shocking for him and such kind of disturbances created by the people in Government Billimoria is arrested and tortured beyond the limit until he has been keeping with him, when Gustad sees him bedridden his pitiable condition makes him weep. Bilimoria was prisoner for four years and he dies of heart before the completion of his imprisonment is over. The life of the Parsis is biased by the decision taken of the Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi such a kind of rage is created in the mind of Gustad about the Government and they feel that they are not safe in the hands of Congress Government; here we can find the anguish against the power of politics.

Family Matters is narrated by an omniscient narrator and takes place in 1995, two years after the Bombay riots. The power of politics explains throw the two characters, Mr. Kapur and Vilas. When Mr. Kapur named his Sport Shop which is not liked by Shiva Sena and he send his goondas to Mr. Kapur shops to change the name. This led Mr. Kapur to enter into politic. In the Bombay riots, Muslim people were brutally killed by Hindus with the help of Shiva Sena's Political Power. Mr. Kapur feels that people are not in the safe hand under Shiva Sena's ministery. So, we can realize political power during 1970s.

Mistry differs from other diasporic writers in the attitude which possess for the Indian community. Where Mistry keeps his people distant from the host country and perceives the latter with contempt, other writer completely assimilates with the Indian culture and is conscious of their anxieties and miseries. They could feel the shock and struggles of the Indians thereby making attempts to extend their help with sensitivity. The language, the insight into the Indian philosophy, the understanding of the Indian psyche is a superb testimony to other writers' assimilation into India. Interwoven into

this dark and dirty talk of social and political betrayal is their Parsi identity. Unlike the writings of Mistry, the Parsi ethos is not stressed in their works but subtly interwoven into the narrative. This is the basic difference in the writings of other diasporic writers and Mistry.

Mistry's writings will be a constant source of inspiration for the Parsis to preserve the identity in future. His narratives seem to be a constant battle with the changing time and pace of modernity to preserve the customs, traditions, heritage, rituals, ethics and language which will serve for the coming generations to understand the Parsi ethos. 'The microscopic Parsi community of *Family Matters* is a miniature India and macro humanity rendered artistically into a finely woven tale of universal import by the novelist.' (Myles 123) Thus Mistry with his scholarly acumen develops and intermingle various themes through the texture of his three narratives for the readers to satiate. Mistry's characters had dream about the immigration to other country for the financial purpose but it is ended in failure to the characters like Yezad in *Family Matters.*

The identity that an individual tries to create for oneself is so dependent on the factors around him. Mistry fails to understand the genuine requirements of events around while him or eliminating a situation that might affect him in either ways. Closely connected to the social and political environment, Mistry brings forth the issues that are extremely relevant in the day to day life of the common man and they feel a part of it. Subjects like corruption, problematic political decisions, immigration, the common man's fears and traumas, caste and class problems and many more such relevant concerns are so well portrayed that people feel intimate and associated. The cultivation of such a wonderful socio-cultural essence intermingled with the beauty

and creativity of form and language gives the novels of Mistry a perceptive approach and a trendsetter in English literature.

Mistry is a writer with a great and strong power of imagination and deep insight into the human psyche, even all the political ups and down and social scenario is painted with all realism by Mistry. He is such an artist with pen that he has poured all his emotions on paper with all the reality into it, be it the political affairs of India, or the religious issues. The study is validities the title.

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HISTORICAL CATASTROPHE AND PATCHY IDENTITY IN SALMAN RUSHDIE'S *MIDNIGHT'S CHILDREN*

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THOOTHUKUDI

Salman Rushdie is the multinational writer. One of the famous novels of Salmon Rushdie is *Midnight's Children*. It is the second novel of Salmon. It is the autobiography of Salmon because the protagonist life story is compared to the Salmon's life. Saleem Sinai, the protagonist of the novel. He was born on 15th August 1947 which was the time India got independence from the British Empire. The fantasy in this novel is the children who are born in this day and in-between the time of 12 AM to 1 AM have the supernatural power. As the novel is represented after the independence it was said as the post independence era and it also deal with the historical events. The novel is divided into two parts and three generation of Muslim family living in Srinagar, Amritsar, Agra, Bombay and Karachi. The theme of the novel is displacement, dislocation, alienation and identity crisis. The novel would as the narrator constructing his own story to his wife Padma from his birth to his death bed.

Salman Rushdie's most famous novel is the *Midnight's Children*. It is the second novel of Salman. He is mainly expressed about the ancient history and the post

independence events. Salman's *Midnight's children* first published in the year 1980. It subsequently won the booker prize award in the year 1981. This book *Midnight's Children* has been translated into twelve languages. It deals with the incident of post independence from British Empire in 1947 and it mainly covered the issue of politics, religion and fanaticism. The theme of the novel is displacement, dislocation, alienation and identity crisis. The author or narrators major events are found parallel to many political and historical events in the country. "Such historical coincidences have littered, and perhaps befouled, my family's existence in the world". (1)

The critics expressed this novel as the autobiographical novel because the narrator and protagonist Saleem Sinai's story is compared to Salmon Rushdie's life. The fiction *Midnight's Children* had deals with the Post Colonization. It covers the major issue of political events of modern India, Pakistan and Bangladesh independences. The novel can be divided into two parts. First, it deals with the birth of the narrator and second, deals with the alienation and dead end life of the narrator. Fiction is about, the narrator, construct his own life story to Padma who, the caretaker and his wife at his age of 31.

Midnight's Children is the story of three generation of the Muslim family living in Srinagar, Amritsar, Agra, Bombay, and Karachi. Saleem Sinai, the hero of the fiction, the child of the midnight, born on 15th August 1947. At the time between 12 AM to 1 AM or at the different time, 1001 children's are born through India. The children who are born at that time had the power which is the fantasy of the novel. It starts with his grandfather Adam Aziz who, the doctor and optimistic person and followed politician is the first victim of identity crisis. He married Naseem and they have three daughter and two sons. Saleem's mother Mumtaz who first had affair with

politician and secretly married him and broken up with him. Later, she married Ahmed Sinai and changed her name as Amina Sinai and moved to Amristsar.

Saleem Sinai was not biological son of Ahmed Sinai and Amina. He was the mismatched by Mary, a nurse. Soon after, she became the caretaker of Saleem. Saleem born with the telepathy power and had cucumber nose. On, one incident Saleem's parents knew about the birth of the Saleem and he was send to Delhi to his uncle home. The novel travels around the World War II, a war between India and China. Due to Saleem's father's death, he returns to his home and had an operation and he loses his power. Then, Saleem family travelled to his aunty home. There he had an inspiration to become an army man. As it was the time of World War Saleem loses his family except his sister whose name is Jamila.

Saleem and Jamila travelled to places. Jamila become singer and Saleem lose his memory in accident due to severe head injured. With the army man Saleem went to Sundarban and gain the power back. In sundarband, he met a Witch, whose name is Parvathi. She is one of the children at midnight. Parvathi had first sighted love with Saleem. But he does not want to marry her. Once he returns back with his power, he made an immediate meeting with the children, who is born on the same day at same time. Probably, 581 children only alive among 1001 children were born at that day. Everyone had different power. The meeting was collapsed by Siva, who is the biological son of Ahmed Sinai. Siva and Saleem, they did not like each other. Siva and Parvathi had an illegal relationship. Parvathi give a birth to a boy baby of Siva.

Saleem travelled to many places at once he knew about Parvathi and her baby. He met parvathi when she is at her dead bed. Saleem is ready to take care of Parvathi's son but he doesn't want to marry her. Saleem with his son, who is named

as Adam, want to Bombay. In Bombay, once he enjoys the dinner saleem taste a food which was the resemblance of the same food he tasted in his childhood. He decided to meet the person who made these dishes. There he met Mary, a nurse and a caretaker of Saleem. Mary over enjoyed with that meeting and revealed the secret of Saleem birth. The guilt which she faced throughout her life had ended. Mary, who own Pickle Factory, Saleem started to work. At he had a pleasant and beautiful life with Mary and his son.

Meanwhile he met Padma, a young and beautiful girl who work in the factory and wanted to marry her. Padma also except the baby and they get married. At the age of 31, Saleem revealed his life story from the birth till now to Padma and also told about the realistic truth of his death. The person who were born at 15th August 1947 with the supernatural power had the fate that they can only live there life up to their age of 31. He clarifies the doubt asked by his wife. With the explanation of his life the story ends.

Saleem identifies himself with India. However his identification with the nation becomes bane rather than a boon to him. His physical appearance exactly simulates with the geography of nation with two large moon face, which was too perfectly round, something lacking in the region of chin, dark stains spreading down his western hairline, a dark patch in his ears, temples like stained horns, a large nose which can be compared with the vegetable cucumber only and legs that irretrievably bowed. These features constitutes together to create an ugly creature like Saleem, who in the course of his life moves on adding one and another to his deformities. He loses his figure when fighting with his classmate. He loses the hair on his head when his geography teacher pulls his hair hard. When he announces that he hears voices, his blasphemous announcement makes his father slap him and that causes him to become

deaf in one ear. He loses his memory in the bomb blast. He becomes impotent when Shiva along with the doctors attacks him and castrates him. Thus these deformities make him the ugliest creature and complicate his identity.

The novel is a curious mixture of Saleem's life as well as the history of the nation. It includes the historical events like Quit India Movement, Cabinet Mission, Muslim League Activity, Riots, Five Years Plan, Pakistan War, Liberation of Bangladesh and Stealing of Sacred Relic of Hazratbal Mosque. The novel indicates the national events which have realistic description. For instance when the novelist is representing the National Movement at Amritsar as –

> It is April 7th, 1919, and in Amritsar the Mahatma's grand design is being distorted. The shops have been shut. The railway station is closed, but now rioting mobs are breaking them up. Doctor Aziz, leather bag in hand, is out in the streets, giving help wherever possible. Trampled bodies have been left where they fell. He is bandaging wounds, daubing them liberally with Mercurochrome, which makes them look bloodier than ever, but at least disinfects them. Finally he returns to his hotel room his clothes soaked in red stains. (39)

The novel is also a parody of the epic form. The structure of the novel is of a comic epic, with a fusion of Homeric, Mythic and tragic connotations. This novel spreading through six decades and almost three generations of India's pre-and post-Independence history, is also the history of Saleem's family. The novel is a parody of the epic form because, "it tries to describe" or contain "an India whose stories are too innumerable to be contained". Throughout the novel, one finds the novelist stepping towards "that involvement with mighty events and public lives from which I would never again be free (...)". (2)

Another important parody is the newspaper photograph of Mrs. Gandhi. The photograph is a parody of the rampant corruption and the Emergency imposed in India. The photograph of Mrs. Gandhi shows her hair, parted in the centre, white on one side and black on the other side. The white hair symbolizes the official side of the Emergency, while the black hair symbolizes the police atrocities committed during the Emergency, which were denied by the authorities.

Thus to conclude, *Midnight's Children* is the story of India growing from promising childhood to its corrupt manhood. This is a story of the denial of fulfillment, betrayal of promises and ideals and the ultimate triumph of the forces of darkness, "gone forever (...) the originally-one- thousand-and one marvelous promises of a numinous midnight". (439)

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Reliving Haitian History: A Study on Edwidge Danticat's *The Farming of Bones* and *The Dew Breaker*

A Dissertation submitted to

St. Mary's College (Autonomous)

Thoothukudi

affiliated to

MANONMANIAM SUNDARANAR UNIVERSITY

in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the award of the Degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN ENGLISH

By

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SEPTEMBER 2020

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **Reliving Haitian History: A Study on Edwidge Danticat's *The Farming of Bones* and *The Dew Breaker*** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is a work done by Srimathi. J during the year 2019-2020, and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

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EXAMINER

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled **Reliving Haitian History: A Study on Edwidge Danticat's *The Farming of Bones* and *The Dew Breaker*** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is my original work and that, it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

J. Srimathi

SEPTEMBER 2020 **SRIMATHI. J**

THOOTHUKUDI

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PREFACE

Through the study of Edwidge Danticat's novels, *The Farming of Bones* and *The Dew Breaker*, the thesis draws an understanding of the unforgettable Haitian history and its political violence. Danticat addresses the Haitian history and cultural clash and the atrocities of Duvalier regime through the Parsley Massacre. The immigrants who settled in Dominican Republic tattered between two different cultures and the native people forced them to leave their homeland because of their poor condition. A migrant like Danticat can understand the feelings of victims and think about their natives survival on the native land. As she is the first generation of Haitian-American writer, she deals with the diasporic elements such as the feelings of nostalgia and trauma of victims.

The thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter **Introduction** throws light on the perception of Literature in general, Caribbean Literature, Contemporary writings in Haitian-American Literature, Edwidge Danticat and her works.

Chapter two entitled, **Historical Elements** analyses the New Historicism theory. It deals with Parsley Massacre in 1937 and the political violence in Haiti. Haitian history is told through the protagonist and the political violence is portrayed through Papa. It highlights the mass murders and the methods used by the Dominican Republic.

In the third chapter, **Nostalgia** deals with the homeland of Danticat. It throws light on the migrant people to recall their homeland through Haitian immigrants who settled in Dominican Republic and United States. It highlights the Haitian way of life, their job, their rituals and ceremonies of Dominican Republic.

The fourth chapter, **Trauma** highlights the pain of victims and the loss of loved ones. It highlights the physical, mental, and cultural trauma of the Haitians in the immigrated land. It throws light on the cultural trauma between Haitian and Dominican Republic. It deals with physical trauma of the dew breaker and the mental trauma of Father Romain.

The final chapter sums up all the important aspects dealt in the preceding chapters.

The researcher has followed the guidelines prescribed by MLA Handbook 7th Edition for the preparation of the thesis.

Chapter one

Introduction

Literature is the expression of life as a whole. It is expressed through the medium of particular life of particular ages and generation. It is in the form of artistic creation. The writers of literature, being the product of society, reflect the social problem in their writings. All genres of literature whether it be poetry, novels, essays, drama or short stories as a whole, it grows and change from generation to generation. Each age has its own particular way of thinking and feeling about various things. According to taste of the readers, writers change their way of writing and introduce new kinds of style in their works. C. S. Lewis points out that "Literature adds to reality, it does not simply describe it. It enriches the necessary competencies that daily life requires and provides; and in this respect, it irrigates the deserts that our lives have already become" (1). William Dean Howells describes literature in *Literature and Life* as:

Literature is at once the most intimate and the most articulate of the arts. It cannot impart its effect through the senses or the nerves as the other arts can. It is beautiful only through the intelligence. It is the mind speaking to the mind, until it has been put into absolute terms, of an invariable significance, it does not exist at all. (10)

Caribbean literature is the combination of works from the islands of Caribbean. The Caribbean islands are also called as home of the noble savage because they were islands of creative men. These islands have no large mass of land and are distant from the rest of the world. The attachment of the dwellers to their individual islands have been a problem to growth of a broader and unified Caribbean culture. The landscapes of Caribbean writers play an important role in literature. The Caribbean writers have

similar issues that they raise in their text because they share similar social, political, historical and economic challenges. This is because literature writers write texts that mirror their societies. Issues that are raised in literary texts from the Caribbean texts vary from discrimination, role of women, violence, weak family units and disillusionment.

The Caribbean literature is exceptional, both in language and subject. Between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, more than a million Africans, along with many Indians and South Asians, were brought to the Caribbean. The arrival of the nineteenth century found the Caribbean in transition. At the beginning of this era, many of the former European colonies achieved independence. The Haitian Revolution (1791-1804) abolished slavery and made Haiti the only country born from a slave revolt. On the one hand, the century was marked by the abolition of slavery, the system on which the economic interests of the colonizing countries depended. On the other hand, by the construction of nations in those countries that gained independence and had been both economically and culturally dependent on the European colonial powers that ruled them. Some critics assumed, the nineteenth century was a period of 'foundational fiction', of novels that were part of Romanticism and Naturalism that tried to establish a sense of national identity. They were old territories conceptualising themselves as young nations, emerging from a mixture of cultures and languages, struggles and survival.

In Caribbean literature one can find, view, and analyse the interplay of language and culture, for an understanding of the struggle between indigenous and European languages. For the first part of the twentieth century Caribbean writers defined themselves and their culture in the languages of their colonizers. But after independence, with a new self-determination and period of origin, writers increasingly

use local styles and vocabularies. With a newly created concordance, Caribbean literature allows all the various languages, European and local to be analysed for the first time. Through themes of innocence, exile and return to the motherland, resistance and endurance, engagement and alienation, self-determination and domination, Caribbean literature provides a powerful new tool for postcolonial studies and its importance in the context of all literature. Countries like Spain, Cuba, Dominican Republic, and Haiti comes under Caribbean.

In the Dominican Republic, history played a role in the country's literature in å disastrous form. In 1795, the eastern part of the island passed to France through the Treaty of Basel. One result was a massive exodus of Dominicans to other Spanish possessions. In 1809, Spain recovered the eastern part of the island. Due to the political instability, the first newspapers were published on the island around 1821, when the country became independent from Spain. In 1822, Haiti invaded the Dominican Republic and cultural entities intensely promoted the use of French. In 1844, the Dominicans rebelled against the Haitians and finally achieved their independence in 1865.Clearly, all these political events negatively affected the cultural output of the country. Several important works were published, however, especially in the late nineteenth century.

Among these several genres were part of the legend and novella, such as *La Ciguapa* (1868) and *La fantasma de Higuey* (1869), both by Javier Angulo Guridi. The most famous work published in this period was *Enriquillo*, by Manuel de Jesus Galvan. The first part of this novel is published in 1877 and the complete version in 1882. The novel turns to the indigenous past to address the issue of national definition. Another work that should be mentioned is *Engracia y Antonita* (1892), a novel about traditions written by Francisco G. Billini.

In Haiti, literature's point of origin was the country's independence. It made its debut in 1804 with the work *L'Haïen expatrie* by Fligneau. However, island intellectuals remained submerged in French culture. Literature took on a patriotic tone and told of the achievements of the revolution and independence. Among the main Haitian writers of that period were Antoine Dupre, Juste Chanlatte, Francois Romain Lherisson and Jules Solime Milscent, who founded the newspaper *L'Abeille haitienne* in 1829. During this time, newspapers such as *Le Republicain* and *L'Union* published the first romantics. *L'Observateur*, founded in 1819, also published romantic poetry. In 1836, the group *Cenacle* was formed, which included the poets Ignace Nau and Coriolan Ardouin. Oswald Durand and Massillon Coicou joined later. Theatrical works were extremely important in Haiti, and the genre explored tragedies, drama and comedies.

In the late nineteenth century, Haitian literature was written in French, not Creole, and it was almost exclusively aimed at Paris. As a result, it was accessible only to the French speaking minority in the country. Despite its strong patriotic nature, it was not a part of the daily lives of Haitians. In 1895, Petion Gerome created the magazine *La Ronde*. The poets, Etzer Vilaire and Georges Sylvain around this project continued to use France as their point of reference. This continued into the first half of the twentieth century with poets such as Dante's Bellegarde and Ida Faubert. This can change later with the indigenist school, which could write the first works in Creole. The development of a Caribbean literature was as complex a process as the creation of Caribbean society. It was influenced by historic events of impressive magnitude that neither writers, nor the works they produced during this conclusive century, could avoid.

Haitian literature is closely connected with the political life of Haiti. Haitian scholars turned successively to African traditions, France, Latin America, the UK, and the United States. At the same time, Haitian history is always a rich source of inspiration for literature, with its heroes, its disturbances, its brutalities, and its rituals. In the eighteenth century, settlers published descriptive and political works in France. Haitian literature has its origins in the country's independence. At the end of the nineteenth century, Haitian literature is filled with the prestige of the French language and exclusively oriented towards Paris.

Haiti is located in the Caribbean. It occupies the western third of the island of Hispaniola, with the Dominican Republic in the eastern two-thirds. Haiti has two official languages: Haitian Creole and French. When Columbus landed in the island of Hispaniola on December 6, 1492, he found a kingdom ruled by a Taino Indian chief. In the eighteenth century, after the French arrived to continue European exploration and exploitation in the Western Hemisphere, the indigenous population was largely exterminated. As a result, Africans from West Africa were imported as slave labour to produce raw goods for international commerce. In the eighteenth century, Haiti was known as "the pearl of the Antilles."

Resisting their exploitation, Haitians revolted against the French from 1791-1804. One of the most important outcomes of this revolution was that it forced Napoleon Bonaparte to sell Louisiana to the U.S. in 1803, resulting in a major territorial expansion of the United States. When Haitians took their independence in 1804, they changed their colonial name from Saint Domingue to its Taino name of Haiti, or *Ayiti* in Kreyol. Saint Domingue name was given by the French, so they have changed the name. Haiti has a complex, rich, fascinating, and tumultuous culture and history with stories of resistance, revolt, and instability. But one of the fundamental aspects of Haiti

is its resilience. In spite of slavery, multiple coups, various occupations, and militarization, Haiti continuously fights to remain strong.

Haiti is not faraway land disconnected from the U.S. Haiti is the first Black Republic and the second independent country in the western Hemisphere. In fact, the ties that bind the two countries go back to the time when the U.S. was fighting for its own independence. A group of more than five hundred Haitians, known as Les Chasseurs Volontaires de Savannah, fought in the 1779 Battle of Savannah.

After the Haitian revolt started in 1791, many Saint Dominguans eventually settled in Louisiana. In fact, the Louisiana Purchase was a direct consequence of the Haitian revolt. This land deal doubled the size of the U.S. adding to its either in part or whole. As the first black independent country with a story of a successful slave revolt, Haiti was a ray of hope for African-Americans in the United States during the nineteenth century. Like France, the United States did not recognize Haiti's independence until 1862, precisely because white Americans worried that Haiti's existence challenged their slave-driven economy. There were several emigration movements led by leaders such as Martin Delany and James Theodore Holly, who encouraged African-Americans to settle in Haiti. Due to linguistic and climatic issues, the majority of those who moved to Haiti returned to U.S. Before the Civil war close to twenty percent of free blacks from U.S again went to Haiti. This migration between Haiti and America forged links between the two countries.

However, when the United States occupied Haiti from 1915-1934, it changes Haiti's constitution, and in many ways further contributed to its ongoing instability, and many African-Americans denounced the occupation of a sovereign nation. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), under the

leadership of Executive Secretary James Weldon Johnson, wrote a series of letters for *The Nation*, denouncing American injustice in Haiti. In 1932, the great poet Langston Hughes traveled to Haiti, where he met with one of the foremost Haitian intellectuals of the time, Jacques Roumain. In his 1956 autobiography, *I wonder as I wander: An Autobiographical Journey*, Hughes described his trip to Haiti and his meeting with Roumain. Hughes was very impressed by Roumain and eventually translated his seminal work, *Gouverneurs de la Rosee*, into English as *Masters of the Dew*. Before current terms such as "transnationalism' and "Black national consçiousness" were being used, such exchanges occurred between African-American and Haitian intellectuals.

Dimitry Elias Leger, Gina Athena Ulysse, Elsie Augustave and Jean -Claude La Marre are the famous Haitian-American writers. Leger is best known for his novel *God Loves Haiti* (2015), which the New York Times praised as 'a powerful portrait of a nation in peril and the citizens who inhabit it.' Elsie Augustave is best known for her debut novel, *The Roving Tree* (2013), which Edwidge Danticat described in The New York Times as 'a gorgeous new novel about a Haitian adoptee finding her way in many different corners of the world.' Among them Edwidge Danticat is one of the famous Haitian-American writers.

Edwidge Danticat was born in Leogane, a rural area of Port-au-Prince, Haiti. She was born on January 19, 1969 to Andre Miracin, a cab driver and Rose Souvenance, a textile worker. When Danticat was two years old, her father has immigrated to New York and her mother joined him two years later. During the corrupt and brutal regime of President Francois Duvalier, Danticat and her younger brother, Eliab are raised by their uncle, Reverend Joseph Dantica and his wife. Danticat and Eliab are joined their parents in the primarily Haitian-American vicinity in East Flatbush, New York in 1981.

She does not speak English at that time. Danticat has joined Jackie Robinson Intermediate School at Crown Heights, Brooklyn, but faced discomfort in fitting with her schoolmates and felt ostracized owing to her dress, accent and hairstyle.

After graduating from Clara Barton High School in Brooklyn, New York, Danticat has entered Barnard College in New York City and received her B.A. degree in French Literature in 1990. She is awarded Master of Fine Arts Degree in Creative Writing by Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island in 1993. She is intended to become a teacher and her parents too pressurized her to pursue a well-paid, respected profession, like medicine, but she could not resist her love for writing.

Danticat lives in Miami, Florida with her husband Faidherbe Boyer, a Haitian New Yorker, who owns a Translation agency, and their two daughters, Mira and Leila. Besides writing, teaching and giving public appearances, she helps young promising Haitian author's orientation in creative writing. Furthermore, she favours immigrant rights as well as bilingual education and involves in activities associated with human rights abuses in the United States, predominantly when the Haitian immigrants are brutalised and dehumanised by the US police.

Danticat draws literary inspiration from her family's own experiences, her early exposure to folktales and riddles and from Haiti's political turmoil. Danticat pays tribute to her female ancestors as she has been greatly influenced by their storytelling traditions, which is reflected in her fictional narratives. She acknowledges debt to writing of Haitian authors like Marie Chauvet, Jacques Roumain, Rene Depestre, Jan J. Dominique, and Jacques Stephen Alexis. The works of Maya Angelou, Paule Marshall, Toni Morrison, Junot Diaz, James Baldwin, Alice Walker, Amy Tan, Maryse Conde, Zora Neale Hurston, Ntozake Shange, Simone Schwarz-Bart and Jamaica

Kincaid have also had a massive impact on her and their influences can be traced in her writings.

Danticat made her first venture into the literary field when she was nine by rewriting the stories of Ludwig Bemelmans' *Madeline* books, which is about a little girl's adventures with a Haitian heroine. Later Danticat has joined *New Youth Connections*, a city-wide newspaper for New York high school students. Her first published work was an essay titled, "A Haitian-American Christmas: Cremace and Creole Theatre" and later wrote a story "A World Full of Strangers". Besides, she has penned several articles based on her immigrant experiences, her homeland, its history and its people.

The first seeds of *Breath, Eyes, Memory* (1994) sprouted when Danticat was studying French Literature at Barnard College. Later, at Brown University, Danticat continued it as her master thesis and titled it *My Turn in the Fire: An Abridged Novel*. Subsequently, Danticat published, *Krik? Krak!* (1995), *The Farming of Bones* (1998) and *The Dew Breaker* (2004). Danticat has written three novels for young readers – *Behind the Mountains* (2002), *Anacaona: Golden Flower, Haiti, 1490* (2005), and *Untwine* (2015). *Behind the Mountains* arises from Danticat's own childhood and through the voice of Celiane Esperance, Danticat shows how politics affects the lives of ordinary people. *Anacaona: Golden Flowers, Haiti,1490*, a story of Haiti's heroic queen, Anacaona, narrates the effects of European invasion from a Caribbean perspective. *Untwine* is about a girl who loses her twin sister in a devastating car accident and her struggle to regain her health and her life.

In the part travelogue and part memoir, *After the Dance: A Walk Through Carnival in Jacmel, Haiti* (2002), Danticat traces the heroic and tragic history of Haiti

as well as the carnival in the coastal town of Jacmel. The heart-breaking gripping memoir, *Brother, I'm Dying* (2007) is a moving family story, that centers around two men closest to her heart – her father, Mira and her brother, Reverend Joseph Dantica. In *Create Dangerously: The Immigrant Artist at Work* (2010), Danticat tells the stories of artists, including herself, who create the horrors that drove them from their homelands and that continue to haunt them.

Danticat has edited four anthologies. *The Beacon Best of 2000: Great Writing by Women and Men of All Colors and Cultures* (2000) is a collection of humane stories written by Asian, Caribbean, European and African writers, who live in the US. *The Butterfly's Way: Voices from the Haitian Dyaspora in the United States* (2001) is a compilation of autobiographical literary essays and poems written by Haitian writers living in America and Europe. *Haiti Noir* (2011) consists of written by eighteen authors, who live either in Haiti or associated with it. *The Best American Essays 2011* shows the finest American short fiction and nonfiction writings of 2011.

Danticat's short stories have appeared in numerous periodicals and have been anthologized several times and translated into Creole, Korean, Italian, German, French, Spanish and Swedish. She wrote the introduction to the anthology, *Let Haiti Live: Unjust U.S. Policies Towards Its Oldest Neighbor* (2004). She lent her words and voice to *Poto Mitan: Haitian Women, Pillars of the Global Economy* (2009), a documentary about Haiti and the global economics told through the lives of five Haitian women workers. Besides, collaborating with Jonathan Demme on filmic projects such as *Courage and Pain* (1996) and *The Agronomist* (2003), she coauthored the art book, *Odillon Pierre, Artist of Haiti* (1999) with him.

Danticat has received numerous awards including Woman of Achievement Award, Barnard College (1995), Pushcart Short Story Prize for "Between the Pool and the Gardenias" (1995), National Book Award nomination for *Krik? Krak!* (1995), Best Young American Novelist for *Breath, Eyes, Memory* by Granta (1996), Lila Wallace-Reader's *Digest Grant* (1996), American Book Award for *The Farming of Bones* (1999). She has also received the International Flaiano Prize for Literature, the Super Flaiano prize for *The Farming of Bones*, Story Prize for *The Dew Breaker* (2005), MacArthur Fellows Program Genius Grant (2009) and Langston Hughes Medal, City College of New York (2011). *Brother I'm Dying* gets National Book Award nomination (2007), National Book Critics Circle Award (2007) and Dayton Literary Peace Prize (2008).

Danticat's subject matter is absorbing and engrossing, whether it revolves around the world of woe and distress of the Haitians at home or the despondency and gloom of the Haitian immigrants living in the US. She articulates her deep anguish for Haiti's misfortunes and captures the intensity of its horrifying torture, genocide, rape, sexual abuse, child misuse, political strives, trauma, death and the burden of memory. Her novels offer a great deal of insight into poverty, colonialism and slavery, class and race, hopelessness, escapism and family relationships.

Some of her monumental themes, such as migration, exile, separation of families, abandonment, alienation, loss of self-identity, cross generational and cross-cultural conflicts, reconstructing oneself in an alien place and assimilation into a new world emerge from Danticat's own experiences. Amid this bleak scenario, a miracle of change is created by themes like forgiveness, love, hope, healing, reconciliation, resourcefulness, resilience, endurance and survival.

Danticat's themes are often sober, gloomy and heartbreaking, yet she is capable of rising above this darkness through her matter-of-fact tone, elegant and evocative prose, simple lyric style and poetic language. In a review, Rachel Grace Thompson writes, "Maryse Conde suggests that Danticat's choice of language modernizes Haitian literature" (209). Danticat's writing is again noted for its vivid portrait of situations, calm clarity of vision, narrative grace, precision, emotional depth and vibrant and colourful imageries. She writes clear, sharp, poignant sentences and brings nightmarish scenes of life. Despite the sprinkling of non-English words and phrases, her language is of high quality. Her Haitian Creole proves to be an advantage to her sensitive descriptions, moving narrations and uncanny ability to capture the dreams and hopes of her characters.

The feeling and warmth, which Danticat shows for her varied characters, is felt by readers as well. Even her minor characters leave a lasting impression. She depicts real people with damaged lives. Even though her characters are in the depth of despondency, she has hope for them. Danticat's characters, which are flesh and blood individuals rather than historical and fictionalized, will remain in the minds of the readers forever.

Her first novel *Breath, Eyes, Memory* is published in 1994. It becomes a bestseller and won numerous awards. The novel includes autobiographical elements from the author's life. Danticat was able to experience life from both America and Haiti. She includes her experience and thoughts in this novel. She focuses on how hard it is for an immigrant to a new culture and how this could end up affecting a person as she grows up. In fact, one of her major themes in the novel explores the process that one must go through to adapt a new culture. At the same time how the customs and traditions one has accustomed may negatively affect a person when that person is no

longer in an environment where those customs are considered the norm. Danticat deals with the themes like Haitian religion, traditions, and family relationships are also analysed in the novel. She focuses primarily on the relationships between women and those who stay in Haiti and those who leave. The novel also depicts the method used by Haitian mothers to test their daughter's virginity and analyses how it impacts those who have been tested regularly.

Krik? Krak! (1996) contains nine stories and an epilogue. Although the stories take place in Port-au-Prince or Ville Rose, Haiti, or New York, they do not overlap. The only exception is "Between the Pool and the Gardenias," which mentions women from earlier stories. All the stories are all about Haitian women trying to understand their relationships to their families and to Haiti. The epilogue, "Women Like Us," suggests that these women are related. The epilogue's unnamed narrator, possibly Danticat herself, notices her similarity to her mother and female ancestors. These women cook to express sorrow, but the narrator chooses to write. Her mother does not approve because Haitian writers are often killed. However, the narrator's female ancestors are united in death, and she uses stories to keep their history alive.

Claire of the Sea Light (2013) is a historical fiction. The novel portrays the lives of the various inhabitants of a small town in Haiti. It relaying a series of related events from several different character's perspectives. It explores the themes like the connectedness of small towns, the finality of death, and the difficulties of parenthood on both upper and lower classes. Several events in the novel appear through another character's perspective, emphasizing the importance of a reliable narrator and how ego can muddy retellings. Max Junior is an example of an unreliable narrator, as he fails to mention that he impregnated Flore through rape.

The Art of Death (2017) is a series of non-fiction essays written in the first-person, exploring how one should write about the experience of death. Danticat approaches this discussion of death by disclosing her experiences with death, specifically her experience with the death of her mother. As a result, her essays are extremely personal. Flawlessly she shifts between literary analysis to autobiographical anecdotes to amateur philosophy about the nature of death. In her introduction she says, "Writing has been the primary way I have tried to make sense of my losses, I have been writing about death for as long as I have been writing" (5).

Everything Inside (2019) is rich with hard-won wisdom and humanity. It set in locales from Miami and Port-au-Prince to a small unnamed country in the Caribbean. It is at once wide in scope and intimate. As it explores its forces pull the readers together and drive them apart, sometimes in the same searing instant. In these eight powerful, emotionally absorbing stories, a romance unexpectedly sparks between two wounded friends. The next story is about a marriage ends for what seem like noble reasons, but with irreparable consequences. The next is about a young woman holds on to an impossible dream even as she fights for her survival. The next story is about two lovers reunite after unimaginable tragedy, both for their country and in their lives. The next one is about a baby's christening brings three generations of a family to a precarious dance between old and new. The last but not least is about a man falls to his death in slow motion, reliving the defining moments of the life he is about to lose. This is the indelible work of a keen observer of the human heart-a master at her best.

This dissertation is on her second and third novel, *The Farming of Bones* and *The Dew Breaker*. *The Farming of Bones* was originally published in 1998. The novel set in the Dominican Republic and the surplus of the book takes place in the late 1930s. Amabelle Desir is an orphan and servant to Senora Valencia and her father, Papi. She

finds herself going above and beyond the call of duty as she delivers Senora Valencia's twin babies. When the doctor arrives, he comments on Amabelle's stellar abilities as a midwife, and suggests that she get a job as a midwife in her native place, Haiti. Before Amabelle can truly let this possibility sink in, Senor Pico, the twins' father, arrives and she has to return to her duties. While consoling with some of the other workers, she finds out that Senor Pico has most likely killed a sugarcane worker on his way to home that night.

Later that evening, Amabelle's lover, Sebastien, a sugarcane worker himself, returns to reveal that his friend, Joel, was struck and killed by a car earlier that evening. Sebastien then departs to help his roommate, Yves, as well as Joel's father, Kongo, to care for the body. With Joel's death weighing on Amabelle's mind, Amabelle receives another, far more urgent invitation to return to Haiti for work. The doctor warns Amabelle that danger is afoot and she should leave not just to improve her status but to save her life. Still unsure of the sincerity of the doctor's claims, Amabelle explains what happened to Sebastien and invites him to come with her. He consents and invites his spitfire sister, Mimi, as well.

That evening, as Amabelle is tending to an overextended Senora Valencia, a fight breaks out in the street below Senora Valencia's home. The fight consists of Senor Pico and some military men on trucks threatening a group of Haitian cane workers carrying machetes. The military men verbally and physically abuse the cane workers, eventually driving off with them in the back of their trucks. Amabelle makes the final decision to flee after this incident, despite the fact that according to those present at the fight, Sebastien and Mimi have already been arrested for attempting to escape. Amabelle ends up tracking down Yves and asking him to walk to Haiti with her, to see if there is any chance Sebastian and Mimi made it to the border. Through mountains

and multiple attacks, Amabelle and Yves make their way to Haiti, although both are severely injured.

Once they cross the border, they find out that they have just survived the systematic massacre of Haitians being carried out by the dictator of the Dominican Republic. In Haiti, they find Yves' mother, as well as Sebastien and Mimi's mother, but no sign of Sebastien and Mimi. Their mother finally reveals to Amabelle that many people have reported seeing them killed. Amabelle lives with Yves and his mother for the next few decades, forever searching for Sebastien and even risking a return to Senora Valencia's home in order to better remember the man she formerly knew.

The Dew Breaker (2004) focuses partly on life in Haiti under the totalitarian regime of Francois Duvalier and his son, Jean-Claude Duvalier. The Duvaliers are deposed in 1986 and the rest of the book. One of the main characters in the novel is a "dew breaker". At the beginning of the novel, a man trying not to merely escape his past (and its potential legal consequences), but also redeem himself for his crimes. In the final chapter, the readers learn his complicated backstory, which confuses their initial condemnation of his criminal past. The rest of the novel does not directly concern this character, but nearly all of the characters have crossed paths with him or other "dew breakers" in some way.

The intertwining stories feature a range of other characters from both the United States and Haiti. The connections between the characters demonstrate the complex relationships between Haitians and Haitian-Americans, as well as the fragmented nature of life for the survivors of a period that left no one untouched or unharmed.

The dissertation entitled 'Reliving Haitian History: A Study on Edwidge Danticat's 'The Farming of Bones' and 'The Dew Breaker' is organized into five

chapters such as 'Introduction', 'Historical Elements', 'Nostalgia', Trauma of Immigrants' and 'Summation.'

The first chapter entitled 'Introduction' gives brief account of Caribbean literature. In addition, it gives details about the themes of Caribbean literature. It provides in detail, her biography and literary career. Danticat's contributions have fetched her many prizes and awards for her novels. The second chapter entitled 'Historical Elements', deals with the history of Haiti.

In the third chapter, 'Nostalgia' says about the root of people and their homeland. The fourth chapter entitled 'Trauma of Immigrants' brings out the personal and emotional trauma of the main characters. The final chapter entitled 'Summation' gives an outline of the dissertation. The dissertation concludes by the researcher giving some suggestions for further researches.

Chapter Two

Historical Elements

New historicism looks at any literary work focusing on its time, circumstances and history. This theory which emerged and spread in the 1980s is applicable to Edwidge Danticat's novels, because of the crucial fact that Danticat is one of the many writers who was affected by certain historical events in her career as a novelist. The word 'New Historicism' was coined by Stephen Greenblatt. He has defined new historicism as "a method based on the parallel reading of literary and non-literary texts, usually of the same historical period" (175).

New historicism evaluates literature through a complete analysis of the social and cultural events. It surrounds the events being described and how these socio-cultural events help to build the event. New historicism aims at understanding history through literature and literature through the cultural context surrounding the historical event. According to Louis Montrose, new historicism deals with textuality of history, that is; "the fact that history is built and fictionalized and history of the literary text is without a doubt found within the socio-cultural and political conditions surroundings its conception and interpretation".

Claire Colebrook argues that new historicism studies "the relation between text and history" (22). However, the interaction between the text and the world, between the materiality of the text and its produced meaning and between art and history should be the object of investigation in any critical practice. The relation between the text and its historical context is described as dynamic, since not only is history itself accessible as a text, but the text itself is also the result of certain non-discursive forces. Greenblatt, sees that this critical practice should concentrate on the negotiation and exchange by

which the representation of history becomes possible. Supporters of new historicism focus on the material effects and circumstances produced by the text. This critical practice is against any theory of meaning in which the text determinates its semantic context and moves toward the idea of the text itself.

Catherine Gallagher says the process of reading a literary text in light of new historicist theories involves reading both literary and nonliterary texts as constituents of historical discourses that are inside and outside the text. Experts of new historicism trace the connections between texts, history, culture and the author's biography. In addition, new historicism has given new opportunities to researchers to cross the boundaries separating history, anthropology, art, politics, literature and economics. As this thesis deals with Danticat's *The Farming of Bones* and *The Dew Breaker* from new historicist angles, and its historical, biographical, cultural, social, and political contexts, the discussion concentrates on the contexts of the novels linking them to the new historicism principles.

Danticat's both *The Farming of Bones* and *The Dew Breaker* deals with historical context. In *The farming of Bones*, Danticat deals with the events of the 1937 Parsley Massacre, a mass killing of more than twenty thousand Haitians in the Dominican Republic. The Parsley Massacre occurred during the dictatorship of Rafael Trujillo, a violent and bloody period of history in the Dominican Republic. It is often called the Trujillo era. Intentionally, Trujillo fueled political tensions by spreading 'antihaitianism', or prejudice against Haitians, in his country. Furthermore, he was known to arrange assassinations for his rivals and opponents, and to interfere with other South American Countries' politics. Although Trujillo's official terms in office lasted from 1930 to 1938 and from 1942 to 1952, his actual dominion lasted from the 1930s through to his death in 1961.

The Dew Breaker revolves around the brutal dictatorship of Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier and his son Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier. While some of the stories are set during Duvalier regime, most deals with the regime's after effects, because the dictatorship was so oppressive with the *Tonton Macouts* (a government militia) imprisoning, torturing, and murdering so many members of the civilian population. Many Haitians fled the country during this era. As Danticat's entire childhood was spent in Duvalier regime, she decides to centre this novel around the dictatorship. Even after growing up, she could not understand the things people did in the name of dictatorship. She wants to revisit it through the eyes of someone who was a victim of dictatorship, and also through the eyes of a perpetrator.

When Danticat was a girl in Haiti, she remembers hearing the facts about the 1937 massacre of Haitian cane workers in the Dominican Republic. She does not know the incident in great detail, but a phrase here and there, from one of her relatives. She does some research about Haitian history and also about Massacre River. She has heard many incidents from the victims and from their grandchildren. Danticat reminds one of their names in her mind, and she decides to tell this history through the name Amabelle Desir. The reason is she could not forget the name as well as her story. The novel *The Farming of Bones* set in 1937 during a bloody border uprising between Haiti and Dominican Republic. In history the main reason for the killing is Rafael Trujillo, because he wants Dominican Republic to be a white country and the people should be white. So, he orders his military men to kill the Haitian people in the border. In *The Farming of Bones*, Danticat does not mention that reason for killing instead she gives more importance to the Parsley Massacre. Generalissimo is a nickname given to Rafael Trujillo.

Amabelle Desir, is a Haitian worker, a housemaid for the pureblood Spanish family of Don Ignacio and his daughter, Senora Valencia. When Amabelle was eleven years old she discovered by Don Ignacio in Massacre River, which separates Haiti from Dominican Republic. He raised her with his own daughter in the latter nation until the two were young women, when their relative nations became clear. Valencia's husband Senor Pico, a colonel in the militia, leaves his family, because the Generalissimo has put him in charge of a 'new border operation' that will result in the mass murder of Haitian workers. However, the family physician, doctor Javier hears that "on the Generalissimo's orders, soldiers and civilians are killing Haitians" (138). On hearing the rumors of this operation, he plots an escape for the servants. He warns Amabelle to escape from the place, but she doesn't believe him. When she encounters the fight between Senor Pico's soldiers and the group headed by Unel, she decides to escape from the place along with her lover, Sebastien, and his sister, Mimi.

Senor Pico asks the Haitian workers to surrender to him, but Unel's crew continues to reject the suggestion of being brought to the border. Senor Pico asks one truck to drive forward, and a man from the crew throws himself in front of it. The truck crushes his knees and legs. Other men try to help him, but they back away as the truck continues to move towards them. Amabelle runs into the road as her 'countrymen' are thrown into the back of the truck, and Senor Pico tells her to get out of the road. She feels a soldier's whip strike her back as she runs away.

As Unel is surrounded by a circle of soldiers he throws his machete, and he cuts one of the men's faces. The soldiers try to grab him, and Unel shouts that he has never lived on his knees. The soldiers grab his arms and hold them behind his back, and one of them uses a knife to injure him. Unel is tied up and thrown into the back of the truck,

while Senor Pico watches. Through these incidents Danticat deals with the socio-cultural problems, so the new historicism theory is apt to this novel.

> He had his back to us and could not see us. "Kneel or sit," Senor Pico repeated. "Lower your machetes. We will put you on the trucks and take you to the border." Unel motioned for his people to stand still. No one kneeled or sat. Instead they took small steps towards the truck where Senor Pico stood giving orders. "No kneeling!" Unel cried out. "What dò you do in the cane fields is worse than kneeling!" Senor Pico shouted back. (152)

Through this Danticat mentions the reason for the fight is that the Haitians does not have any work in Dominican Republic. The work they do in the place no longer belongs to Haitians. "you work like beasts who don't even know what it is to stand. Put down machetes. I have no cane for you to cut now" (152).

Amabelle travels to the church where she was supposed to meet with Sebastien and Doctor Javier. "The church was empty, with only a wooden Christ looking down at the silent pews from his uncomfortable place on the cross" (156). So, she begins to travel through a cane field, hoping to escape. The 'spears' of cane cut her legs, the wetland beneath the cane sinks under her feet, and she feels ants crawling all over her body. These show the fields are unwelcoming and are even physically dangerous. Although the fields are lifeless, they act in humanlike ways. It is as if the Dominican Republic's land is unfriendly and hostile to Amabelle, just like its people. Amabelle walks through the cane field and arrives at Kongo's room. Kongo cleans up her wounds, and tells her that Sebastien and Mimi were taken by army trucks. He even tells her that

the trucks will take them to a prison near Dajabon. He further explains the best location for her to cross the river.

Amabelle decides to go there and she finds Yves and tells him her plan to travel to Dajabon, and he agrees to join her. While they are traveling, suddenly the two hear an oxcart traveling along the path, and they hide as the cart gets struck in the road. Yves and Amabelle see a young girl out of the cart who has constant wounds from a machete. "The men did not notice that she had fallen from the cart. They raised the whips menacingly once more, but the oxen could not budge it" (166).

> A groan could be heard coming from the cart. One of the men picked up a fist-sized rock and pounded on the head – or it might have been an elbow - pushing up the sack. There was no more stirring. The man threw the rock away. They shoved and bumped the cart out of the ditch, then the oxen took over and continued down the meadow, towards the valley. The crowing of roosters echoed from the mountains… Yves said, "At least we survived the night." (166-167)

After watching the scene, Yves seems numb, and he tells Amabelle that at least they survived the night. When they get something to eat, a religious procession passes by. Even though they are Dominican women, Amabelle recognised their prayers and a woman holding up a portrait of a Dominican Republic's dictator who glorifies Dominican nationalism.

Amabelle and Yves are approached by a group of travelers, who look like the members of a massive family. Amabelle emphasizes that, despite her first guess about their nationalities, it is often difficult to truly tell whether someone is Dominican or Haitian. As the group unites, two members of the group, Odette and her partner Wilner

tells that they are from the 'Yanki' mills on the other side of the island. They are the two members from the same location and they have picked up others along the way.

Amabelle is drawn to one of the travelers, named Tibon, whose arms are mismatched. Then he recounts the story of his capture. He was thrown in a truck and taken with others to a high cliff over the rough seas in La Romana. He further tells Amabelle how the soldiers told groups of people to jump, six at a time. If they chose not to, they had to face civilians with machetes. He also describes how he was forced to jump off the cliff. "I say to myself, Tibon, today you and the birds become one. They say for a bird to stand on its two feet and not fly is laziness" (172). He compares himself to bird and decide to jump from the cliff. "He opened his arms and spread them, like the rare large butterfly that drifted past us now and then, testing new wings against the unfriendly currents of the mountain air" (172).

> "It's a long way from the cliff to the sea," he said, "I fall and fall, passing the rocks where many of the bodies land on the way down. And then me, I fall in the water. I know it too when I strike the water because it is so cold and sharp, the water, more like a big machete than water. I have many cuts on my body where the water sliced me, some tears on my ankles, which now cause me to limp." (172-173)

The two sisters Dolores and Doloritas explains that they are Dominicans, and Doloritas describes how her man, a Haitian, was taken from her bed. They decide to go to Dajabon to meet him. Through these incidents, Danticat describes the reason for their journey and their struggles to reach their home. It not only reflects their struggle but also reflects the Haitians' history.

While taking rest, the group wakes up and observes the smoke. The ash smells like burning flesh familiar to Amabelle. She notes that it smells like the bonfire of corpses that was lit on fire after the hurricane. So, the group decides to keep traveling and Wilner does not allow the two sisters to travel with them. The reason is they belongs to this country and wherever they go the people will welcome them. The group comes across abandoned huts and they discover that the huts belong to a large family of Haitian traders. However, the group further investigates, and finds twelve bodies hanging in trees near the huts. The travelers afraid of death and they feel that it is not safe for them to stay, so they leave quickly.

The travelers arrive in the midst of a public gathering, which was colorful and joyous. While Odette and Wilner split off to investigate the river, Amabelle jumbles into the crowd. A group of young soldiers' spot Amabelle, Yves, and Tibon. They surround the travelers, and isolating them from the rest of the crowd that is eagerly anticipating Trujillo's departure from the nearby church. Tibon goes for one of the young soldiers and begins to choke him. In vengeance, the soldiers steal a machete, which belonged to Felice and Dona Sabine, out of Yves's hand. The soldiers stab Tibon in the back. The soldiers gradually surround Amabelle and Yves, and hold up a spring of parsley. They ask those two to pronounce the Spanish word for Parsley. She believes she could have said the word properly and slowly. However, she notes that some of the word's consonants are too burdensome for her tongue. The soldiers do not wait for the response, and begin force-feeding her parsley. She feels that eating Parsley leaves does not harm her. "I told myself that eating the parsley would keep me alive" (191).

> Yves and I were shoved down onto our knees. Our jaws were pried open and parsley stuffed into our mouths. My eyes watering, I chewed and swallowed as quickly as I could, but not nearly as fast as they were

> forcing the handfuls into my mouth. Yves chewed with all the strength in his bulging jaws. At least they were not beating us, I thought. I tried to stop listening to the voices ordering the young men to feed us more. I told myself... parsley would keep me alive. (191)

Through the pronunciation of the word 'parsley', the soldiers identify the Haitians from the Dominicans. Since the Dominicans could easily pronounce the word but the Haitians couldn't, because they pronounce it as 'Perejil'. As Amabelle and Yves couldn't pronounce the word, they were cruelly treated by the soldiers.

> Yves fell headfirst, coughing and choking. His face was buried in a puddle of green spew. He was not moving. Someone threw a bucketful of water at the back of his head. A few more people were lined up next to us to have handfuls of parsley stuffed down their throats. (191)

Amabelle also suffered a lot. The soldiers threw stone at her and she fell on the ground. They also threw stone at Yves to wake him.

> I coughed and sprayed the chewed parsley on the ground, feeling a foot pound on the middle of my back. Someone threw a fist-sized rock, which bruised my lip and left cheek. My face hit the ground. Another rock was thrown at Yves. He raised his hand and wiped his forehead to keep the parsley out of his eyes. The faces in the crowd were streaming in and out of my vision. (192)

After this incident, Odette and Wilner come and they take Amabelle and Yves to a safe house owned by Alberto. When Alberto warns them that the soldiers are coming towards the house, the group leaves the safe house and moves towards the river. When they reach the river, Amabelle sees an empty dress floating in the river, and a

corpse of a man. She touches the body to check, whether it is Sebastien or not. Then she identifies that it is a stranger. As the group continues to travel through the river, the soldiers spot Wilner and shoot him. Amabelle seals Odette's mouth with her hand to keep her from making noise. She swims towards the shore with Odette's body in her arms. Odette has made her choice not to continue on the journey. Once they land in a safe manner, they are found by a doctor and priest. They are taken to a near camp.

The survivors of the massacre's violence share their stories with another. Through this novel, Danticat portrays the stories of victims who underwent sufferings during the parsley massacre. A person discusses how seven hundred people were placed in a courtyard and shot with rifles. Another victim discusses how two hundred people were forced to jump off a pier. A man describes how he was injured by a machete and left for dead. He recalls waking up in a pile of corpses. One of the victims reminisces about Haiti's past. He compares the present situation with the past situation. They further discuss the decisions they made during their escapes and the nearly dead friends they chose to leave behind. Through these discussions, Danticat shows the different methods of killing and the escapism of the victims. She further compares the past and the present situation of Haiti.

> A man who had taken a bullet in the stomach told how he had run for a half a day, not realizing he'd been shot. He thought a bullet, especially one from a rifle like the Krag, would hurt worse. He was lucky to have been shot from the distance, he said. At first it felt like an insect sting, a bee sting, not even a wasp bite, which can be deadly to some people. Another man spoke.... they shot all the horses. (207-208)

When Yves and Amabelle returned to Haiti they are welcomed by Yves's mother, Man Rapadou. When Man Rapadou serves food for them, she tells the story of her husband and his death. She explains that her husband was sent to a Yanki prison, where he agreed to spy on his countrymen after his release. In order to avoid this, she poisons him. She does this because she loves her country, and would not let her husband to sell out their friends to the Yankis for profit. Danticat reveals that some people like Man Rapadou kills their own relations, so that they could save the lives of Haitian people from the Yankis. She cooked for her husband and she served his favourite food for him. "And so, I cooked his favorite foods for him and filled them with flour-fine glass and rat poison. I poisoned him" (275).

> "I have not told this to anyone," she said, her hands patting her too wide hips, "but I believe there are many who suspect, even my son." The Yankis had poisoned Yves' father's mind when he was in their prisons here; he was going to spy on others for Yanki money after he left their jail. Many people who were against the Yankis being here were going to die because of his betrayal. (275)

Through these incidents, Danticat clearly explains the historical elements in *The Farming of Bones*. She further examines the methods of Dominicans to expulsion the Haitians from the Dominican Republic. Parsley Massacre is absolutely apt to these killings because the people use parsley leaves to clean their body and also it is good for their health. As it assumed by Amabelle, she further feels that the Dominicans uses these leaves to clean their country and thinks that it is good for their (Dominican Republic) nation. Danticat brings the history of Haiti in this novel as it happened in her own country, so the new historicism theory is suitable to this novel. As explained by Louis Montrose, this novel has all the historical elements and features. In *Professing*

the Renaissance: The Poetics and Politics of Culture, he elaborates on his now-famous slogan, "the historicity of texts, the textuality of history" (Montrose 24). The historicity of text refers to the truth that every text has a historical context. It maintains a relation with its historical background.

The title *The Dew Breaker* refers to torturer. In this novel, Danticat tells the story of a real person (dew breaker). She does not mention the name of the person because like him many of the people work for Duvalier regime's government as a henchman, who is also known as Tontons Macoutes. Even though most of the people are fictional characters, Danticat intermingles them with lot of real people. The year Danticat mentioned in this novel examines the representation of Haiti's history and the collective experience of violence during the Duvaliers' dictatorship. To analyses the role of new historicism theory, the historical context of *The Dew Breaker* needs to be discussed.

In 1957, a fifty-year-old country doctor won elections in Haiti and soon turned his presidency into a fourteen-year dictatorship. Francois Duvalier, as he is referred to here, was known to the world as 'Papa Doc.' In his quest for absolute power he has forced his presidency for life, and introduced an authoritarian regime. Duvalierism was known for its endemic brutality, and it was a period of terror and hysteria. Duvalier's Haiti was an epitome for state terrorism, corruption, and extortion. Governed by a tyrant exorcist and his irrational personal whims, the Caribbean republic became a social and economic ruin. It is the poorest country in the western hemisphere, where people had a life expectancy of forty years. The terror was threatened in every area of Haitian society.

The volunteers of National Security were known as the Tonton Macoutes, and established an effective network of suppression. They inherited the name from the

Haitian folk belief that a monster stalks at night to hunt down errant children and kidnaps them in his straw bag. The Macoutes acted as political crews, secret police and instruments of terror. The members of the Macoutes came from the poorest classes. They were often illiterate criminals who were raised to positions of power. Not only they execute Duvaliers' orders, but they also committed crimes of their own desire.

The regime continued when power was handed to Papa Doc's useless nineteen-year-old son, Jean Claude (Baby Doc). With another fifteen years of Duvalier rule, Haiti sank further into agricultural and economic ruin, despair, numbing poverty, and sluggish. Finally, people want change in their society and so they created a new movement. In 1986, the massive waves of protests, demonstrations, riots, and days of violent unrest caused the regime to collapse episode which Haitians called 'operation uproot'. It was the process of ridding the country of Duvalierism, which meant destroying buildings and the Duvalier family tomb, at the same time erasing the dynasty from the country's architecture. Danticat engages with such socially-defining events of her homeland's history in her novel, *The Dew Breaker*.

When the novel opens, Ka, one of the main characters of this novel tells that she and her father are in Florida and they are on their way to Tamba, to deliver a sculpture. She has created many wooden sculptures of her father, Papa. The sculpture which Ka made for Gabrielle Fonteneau, represents the Haitian history, because her father is a perpetrator, but she does not know this truth. She assumes her father as a victim. When Papa is gone missing Ka Bienaime tells the reason for her arrival. She describes her father as five feet eight inches with "thinning salt-and-pepper hair, and velvet brown eyes" (4). Without knowing the truth about her father's past life, she further describes him as,

> My father has had partial frontal dentures since he fell off his and my mother's bed and landed on his face ten years ago when he was having one of his prison nightmares. I mention that too. Just the dreams, not the nightmares. I also bring up the blunt, ropelike scar that runs from my father's right cheek down to the corner of his mouth, the only visible reminder of the year he spent in prison Haiti. (4-5)

When Papa was nineteen years old, he had gone to a Flag Day parade and watched the president speak. As he was mesmerized, Papa decides to join the Miliciens (Volunteers for National Security). Further he never wants to go back home. He has gained a reputation for being a particularly skillful, merciless torturer. They gave him an identification card and uniform and gun. He does not like the uniform. "He had gotten an identification card, an indigo denim uniform, a homburg hat, a .38, … the national holiday parades. He didn't like the uniform" (196).

> He thought it made him look like a dancer in a folklore show. And so, he asked to wear regular clothes, eagerly provided for him when he appeared at the rich merchants' shops and showed his Volunteers membership card. His favorite line for them was, "I volunteered to protect national security. Unfortunately, or fortunately as you like, this includes your own." (196)

Directly or indirectly, Anne's brother was killed and Dany's parents were affected by his enactment of violence on behalf of Duvalier's regime. Dany's parents were killed when he was six years old. He remembers hearing an explosion at night, then going out to the wooden porch of his house to see his parents' dead bodies lying on the ground.

> The night of the explosion, he had been at home with his parents and his aunt, who was visiting from Beau Jour, when they heard a loud crash outside. His father went out first, followed by his mother. Dany was about to go after them when he heard the shots. His aunt grabbed him and pinned him to the ground, but somehow, he managed to wiggle out of her grasp. (104-105)

A man demanded him to stay silent, or else he would shoot Dany too. Dany further tells that the man who murdered his parents lives in New York and has a barbershop. When he heard that Papa was renting out room, he met him. He spent days unable to sleep. When Dany had a chance to kill Papa, he did not kill him. He thought that if he kills the murderer, he could not know the answer for his parents' murder. When he tells these incidents to his aunt Estina, she points out that there is no answer to this question. Thus, he understands that answers cannot bring justice. So, here Danticat points out that, under the Duvalier dictatorship, countless innocent people were killed for no reason at all.

> Outside, most of the wooden porch was already on fire. The smoke was so dense he could barely see his parents, his mother slumped over his father on the ground. Behind him the front door was covered in flames. He ran out to the yard and called out for his aunt at the top of his lungs. "Shut up now or I'll shoot you too!" someone was shouting from the street. (105)

Anne's brother, the preacher is also murdered by Papa. The preacher is the minister of a large church in Bel Air, a neighborhood in Port-au-Prince. He is Anne's stepbrother, and he broadcasts sermons over the radio in which he tells stories from

Bible about people who stood up against dictators. Through this he gives a thinly-veiled message to Haitians about the importance of resisting the Duvalier regime. The preacher's activities lead to his wife being killed by poisoning. At the same time, the president of the republic, check the loyalty of the members of the palace guard, he announces the execution of nineteen young officers, who the president thought had betrayed him.

> The president, also known as the Renovator of the Fatherland, had listed the officers' names, roll-call style, on the radio, had answered "absent" for each of them, then had calmly announced, "They have been shot." So now every order from the national palace was a loyalty test, a warning that worse things could come. (189)

The president also sends a painful message both to the miliciens and to the people who were like the preacher.

> The preacher had already received his own warning. Six months before, the daughter of a rival pastor had been paid to slip a piece of poisoned candy to the preacher's wife during a women's auxiliary meeting. After his wife's death, the preacher had simply taken his wife's body to her village in the mountains to be buried in her family plot. (189)

The preacher himself becomes a target and Papa is assigned to kill him. The preacher is a man without fear. Against the wishes of his deacons, he goes to the church. His step-sister, Anne was there but she left early. During the sermon, the dew breaker (Papa) and his gang of criminals burst in, and seize the preacher. They further take him to prison, and beaten him severely. The government does not want the preacher to become a martyr and so they order Papa to set the preacher free. Papa indents to do so,

but the preacher ends up injury Papa with a broken chair leg. "He grabbed the piece of wood and aimed. He wanted to spiked stub ended up in the fat man's right cheek and sank in an inch or so" (226). Further, the preacher leaves Papa with a scar that reminds him of his violent past for the rest of his life. In retaliation, Papa shoots the preacher. "One bullet landed, then another, then another, hammering the preacher's chest to the ground. The single lightbulb was fading" (226-227).

> The fat man's shock worked in his favor, for it allowed him a few seconds to slide the piece of wood down the fat man's face, tearing the skin down to his jawline… He pulled out his gun, the same .38 he'd waved at the congregation at the church, and fired. The preacher knew that as soon as the burst of light that had left the fat man's gun landed on his body, it would be over. (226)

Like Papa, many miliciens obey the orders of the president. The Duvalier regime pressured these people to commit violence. During the Duvalier regime, Beatrice Saint Fort is cruelly treated by one of her neighbors (the guard), who works as a dew breaker. A man asks her to dance with him one night. "He asked me to go dancing with him one night, Beatrice said, putting her feet back in her sandals" (131). As she had a boyfriend she refuses. He arrests her and tortured her by whipping the soles of her feet. "I had a boyfriend, so I said no. That's why he arrested me. He tied me some kind of rack in the prison and whipped the bottom of my feet until they bled" (131-132). Then he leaves her to walk home on a tar road in the sun. She explains these incidents to Aline Cajuste, a journalism intern.

> "We called them chouket lawoze," Beatrice said, the couch's plastic cover squeaking beneath her. "They'd break into your house. Mostly it was at night. But often they'd also come before dawn, as the dew was

> settling on the leaves and they'd take you away. He was one of them, the guard." Beatrice removed her open-toed sandals and raised her feet so Aline could see the soles of her feet. They were thin and sheer like an albino baby's skin. (131)

Freda is a young Haitian immigrant. She tells that back in Haiti, she was a funeral singer. She began this occupation after singing at her own father's funeral. Her father was a fisherman. Before Freda's father was arrested, the president of Haiti, drove through Freda's town on New Year's Eve and threw money out of his window. He then hands out essential supplies like rice or cooking oil in an effort to win the people's loyalty forever. After her father's disappearance, she received an invitation to sing at the national palace, but she refused. "I was asked to leave the country by my mother because I wouldn't accept an invitation to sing at the national palace" (172). The reason is her father was attacked by the Macoute during the Duvalier regime.

> But I also left because long ago my father has disappeared. He'd had a fish stall at the market. One day, one Macoute came to take it over and another one took my father away. When my father returned, he didn't have a tooth left in his mouth. In one night, they'd turned him into an old, ugly man. The next night he took his boat out to sea and, with a mouth full of blood, vanished forever. (172)

Freda further tells to Rezia that she would never sing for the type of people who killed her father. She used to sing a song, "Brother Timonie, row well, my friend. Don't you see we're in trouble? Brother Timonie, the wind's blowing hard. And we must make it back to land" (166). She learned this song from her father and she sang it in her father's funeral.

Rezia is also a Haitian woman, who runs a Haitian restaurant in Manhattan. When she was a girl in Haiti, her parents could not afford to keep her. So, they send her to live with an aunt who run a brothel. They live in three rooms behind the brothel, and Rezia spend most of her time in that place. Her aunt once allowed a government agent to rape Rezia because he threatened to put the aunt in prison. This incident happened during the Duvalier regime. When her aunt was in her deathbed, she explained to Rezia about the man who had threatened to imprison her if she did not give him access to Rezia. "But on her death bed she asked for my forgiveness. She said this man had threatened to put her in prison if she didn't let him have me that night" (173). Rezia's aunt further asks her forgiveness for her misdeed.

> One night when she was sleeping, a uniformed man walked in. she dug herself into the bed, but it did no good, so she passed out. "I can always make myself faint when I'm afraid," Rezia says, fanning the smoke from the pots away from her face. "When I woke up in the morning, my panties were gone. My aunt and I never spoke about it. (173)

Mariselle is a Haitian immigrant, and member of GED class. When she was in Haiti, she met Jackie Kennedy. She observes that despite all the tragedy in her life, she is a beautiful woman, commenting, "she made sadness beautiful" (176). When Jackie first came to Haiti, her first husband had already been dead for ten years. Her second husband, a Greek billionaire, was friends with Baby Doc. Mariselle's husband has painted a portrait of her and was killed for painting an unflattering portrait of the president. "Mariselle left because her husband, a painter, had painted an unflattering portrait of the president, which was displayed in a gallery show. He was shot leaving the show" (172). She further tells her friends, "If you ever come across that painting, somewhere between the Port-au-Prince harbor and Jackie Kennedy, you will see me"

(177). She eventually gets a job in a gallery in New York, where she sells some of her husband's paintings.

> "My husband went to the pier to paint her portrait," Mariselle says, wiping the wet glass and bottle rings off the table with her palms. "He asked her what she wanted in her painting. She said in that whispery baby voice that she wanted the harbor behind her, the cargo ships and fishing boats and a few Haitian faces on the pier. So, my husband painted her on the pier and put me in the background. If you ever come across that painting… you will see me." (177)

Through these incidents, Danticat clearly portrays the things which happen in the Duvalier regime. When she was in Haiti, she encountered many incidents. Through this novel Danticat highlights how the Haitian Duvalier regime compelled many people to commit violence who might not otherwise have done so. Furthermore, she shows how the regime forced people to make difficult or impossible choices, which often placed them in the role of both victim and perpetrator. She also highlights the necessity of critically reflecting on the ethical decisions people make in the highly complicated context of a dictatorship. Papa was one of the many people tasked with enacting state violence on the civilian population. After fleeing Haiti and making a new life in the U.S., he not only covers up his role as a perpetrator, but in fact pretends that he was a victim of the regime. Through this chapter, Danticat's two novels express not only the history but also the migration. If there is a migration, there must be nostalgia. It has been discussed sumptuously in the succeeding chapters.

Chapter Three

Nostalgia

The word 'nostalgia' is derived from two Greek roots: 'nostos' and 'algos.' 'Nostos' refers to return to one's native land and 'algos' referring to pain, suffering, or grief. Begun with the writings of Johannes Hofer, nostalgia has been associated with a physiological and psychological symptom. Nostalgia is an emotion. It contains both pleasant and unpleasant components. According to Kilroy J. Oldster, "Nostalgia is a bittersweet emotion; it entails the act of recalling complicated memories of bygone days" (n. p). This 'bittersweet' quality of the emotion is a distinguishing characteristic of the nostalgic condition. In terms of time, it refers to an earlier period in an individual's life. It ranges from ten to seventy years, and draws on partial or selective memory of past experiences. Nostalgia may arouse memories of peaceful, pleasant times or of times of tension and turmoil. Most of the findings on nostalgia are based on anecdotal evidence or individual case histories.

Nostalgia and immigrant experience are correlated. When immigrants leave their homeland and move into the unknown place with hope to make a new home, they know quite well that they may never return to the old country. Even when people leave behind their homeland with a bitter experience, upon their arrival in the new country, they often find themselves remembering the positive aspects of their homeland and keep wandering back to their homeland through nostalgic reminiscence. Memory plays an important role in both novels: *The Farming of Bones* and *The Dew Breaker*.

In *The Farming of Bones*, Danticat illustrates how an individual's memory can keep personal legacy alive despite oppression. The protagonist of this novel has lost her parents in her childhood. Despite this loss, she tenderly remembers her mother who did

everything in her own time. When she thinks of her mother, Irelle Pradelle, she remembers her home in Haiti. Although she lives in another place, she still remembers her native country. Amabelle recalls her mother with trustworthiness, describing how she was unaffectionate and unemotional. Although this is painful truth, its further honours Irelle's memory, because it keeps her genuine character alive. Still, Amabelle's dreams of her mother's smile foreshadow her tendency to rely on fantasies to lessen her grief. Instead of confronting her mother's loss and accepting her mother's flaws, she literally dreams of happier circumstances. When Sebastien asks Amabelle what she likes most about her mother, she replies:

> "I liked her tranquility," I say. "She was a woman who did everything slowly, in her own time, as my father liked to say. She was a woman of few words. When she did speak, her words were direct and precise. 'The baby's old nest took its time coming out. It was like another child altogether.' (13-14)

She further describes her mother as "a stern-faced woman with a half gourd for a forehead, that is to say, her forehead was big, high and wide, like mine, a sign of a good mind, some say" (14). Irelle does not show any affection towards Amabelle, because she believed that it is not a good way to raise a girl. Contrast to Amabelle, Irelle does not laugh often.

In her dreams, she remembers her mother and the days she spends in Haiti in her childhood. She remembers Sebastien and where he came from. She describes Sebastien's past, noting that they are both from the north of Haiti. She tells that Sebastien's father was killed in a 1930s hurricane. His father's death, and the loss of most of his possessions, prompted Sebastien to leave Haiti and look for opportunities

in the Dominican Republic. His emigration to the Dominican Republic forces him to rewrite his sense of belonging. After losing his physical home in Haiti, Sebastien redefines his emotional home when he crosses paths with Amabelle. Whenever Sebastien hears the sounds of pigeons, he often mutters, "My poor mother" (24). The pigeons' cries which continue every night make him lament for his past. Even though he lives in Dominican Republic, the surroundings make him to think about his homeland, Haiti.

> Sebastien's father was killed in the great hurricane that struck the whole island – both Haiti and the Dominican Republic – in 1930. He lost his father and almost everything else. This is why he left Haiti. This is why I have him. A sweep of winds that destroyed so many houses and killed so many people brought him to me. Sebastien's mother is still alive in Haiti. (24)

Amabelle's memory of her dead father preserves his story from being lost to time. Instead of being forgotten, his character is being shared with further new person (Amabelle), whose memory will further keep his name from disappearing into history. She describes her father, Antoine Desir, with fondness. She claims that he was more joyful than her mother and always tried to joke around with her. She recalls his dedication towards finding new cures, and the generous aid he provided to his neighbours. She admits that she was jealous of the time he spent with the neighbours. Though death has taken Antoine from Amabelle, she attempts to recall his best qualities in order to honour his memory.

> "He used to pick me up and try to throw me up in the air, even when I became too heavy to be carried, even when everything he did ceased to

> seem like he was going to eat my food if he finished his plate before I finished mine. He spent a lot of time doing the birthing and healing work. (32-33)

She further remembers that her father used to discover new medicine for unknown illnesses. Aside from these birthing and healing work, Antoine and Irelle spends a lot of time to help other people. Especially they help the people to plow in their fields and dig waterways to their land.

Sebastien remembers his father's death in strong detail, a morbid counter example to Amabelle's fond recollection of her father's life. This juxtaposition suggests that memory is an important archive of both the good and the bad. He describes what happened to his father in the hurricane. He carried his dead father after a tin roof had cut his father's throat. He did not cry or scream rather he prayed that his father's blood would not disappear into the floodwaters. His fears demonstrate how memory is sometimes more powerful than grief. Sebastien is more worried about his father's life being forgotten than about the grief he was experiencing. By remembering his father's death, he gives lives to both the memory of his father and his homeland.

> He opens his mouth a few more times and moans. "If you let yourself," he says finally, "you can see it before your eyes, a boy carrying his dead father from the road, wobbling, swaying, stumbling under the weight. The boy with the wind in his ears and pieces of the tin roofs that opened the father's throat blowing around him". (33)

Amabelle recalls the day her parents died. She remembers their trip to Dajabon, a Dominican town, to buy special cooking pots. While they attempt to cross the river upon their return to Haiti, Amabelle's father sprinkled water on his face to salute the

river. When they cross the river, Amabelle's father realized his grave mistake. That day, a rainstorm caused the river to rise unexpectedly, and the water rise above her father's head. Her mother follows Antoine and is separated from him as he drowns in the river. Amabelle remembers throwing herself into the current, only to be dragged out by two young men. Her parents' death illustrates how memory helps the person to preserve the painful past. By recalling her mother's dreadful end, Amabelle further continues to fall victim to the strength of her memory. Though her parents' death seems to destroy her sense of home and family, again it reminds her homeland, the root of Haiti.

> The water rises above my father's head. My mother releases his neck, the current carrying her beyond his reach. Separated, they are less of an obstacle for the cresting river. I scream until I can taste blood in my throat, until I can no longer hear my own voice. Yet I still hold Moy's gleaming pots in my hands. "Unless... you will never see those people again." (49-50)

Amabelle remembers being struck by a fever in childhood. Her mother made her a doll, and Amabelle fondly recalls it, noting that it made her 'feel nearer to her mother.' At the time, she believes that the doll stood up, sang, played jump rope, comforted her, and told her she would get well. When the fever broke and she asked her mother about the doll, her mother claimed there was no such doll, and blamed the image on the fever. Amabelle's powerful memory clashes with her faith in her dreams, producing a confusing blend of fantasy and reality. This impact between memory and illusion is an ongoing occurrence in Amabelle's life, and it is in some ways a way to cope with a grief of her childhood. She reminiscence about her childhood days with her mother in Haiti. Whenever she goes to sleep, she recollects the memories of her homeland in her dream to preserve it.

> As I lie in bed with my doll and my fever, during the few moments when I'm alone, the doll rises on her corncob feet, yanks several strands of her thread hairs and uses them to jump rope. She sings my favorite rope jumping songs, plays with my osles, and says, "You will be well again, ma belle Amabelle. I know this to be true." (56)

Amabelle remembers a scene from her childhood, where she eagerly lifted the lid off a pot of beans her mother was cooking. She gets scaled by the steam, and recalls her father laughing. He tells her that there will be a time in her future when she will 'have to be near a pot every day.' Her memories of her parents continue to preserve their true character into the present. Her sharp recall brings them to life, making it seem as if they are still alive. This reveals the power that memory has to protect the past. The familial warmth of her memories also illustrates the sense of belonging that pass through Amabelle's childhood. Though the loss of Amabelle's parents took away her sense of home, this childhood scene makes her to recall her homeland.

> Finally, I am at the pot. The steam is rising, the lid clanking against the water's force. I reach over and raise the lid from the side and immediately my forearm is scalding and I am blinded by the fog of red kidney beans. I feel a hand descend on my burning forearm and I release the pot lid in the dust. It is my father and he is laughing. For now, you don't have to be and you should not be." (80-81)

Amabelle remembers Christmases she celebrated in Haiti. At Christmas, families would create and light lanterns. In particular, her father always made lantern shapes like monuments, which took many months of work. She remembers asking her father to make a lantern that looked like him, so that she could carry it with her the

whole year long. This shows that even as a child she wanted to preserve his features. The lantern, like memory, would safeguard his appearance against time and forgetfulness.

> My father always made me lanterns shaped like monuments, a task that took longer than most, the lantern of La Place Toussaint Louverture with a candle glowing inside, the plumed feather-capped hat of General Toussaint, the Cathedral of Cap Haitian with one set of course the citadel, which takes twelve months of secret work. (115)

Further she explains how the valley's dust storms make her joyous. She imagines people walking ahead of her in these storms. Although she cannot see them, she nevertheless hopes that they will reappear when the storm settles. She sees her mother and father in these storms. Though the imaginary people walking in front of her, leading her are representative of her ability to look forward the future, the image of her parents reminds the past.

When Amabelle hears that men from a neighboring mill have been in a car accident, she fondly recalls childhood memories to avoid thinking about the disaster. She then recalls her childhood memory of Henry I's citadel near her parents' home. Amabelle's remembrance of national iconography illustrates how memory provides comfort in the present, and prevents time from eroding history.

> The citadel had been conceived by Henry I, a king who wanted to conquer a world that once conquered him. My father loved to recount this tale of Henry I, a slave who, after the captives had rebelled against the French and formed their own nation, built forts like the great citadel

> to keep intruders away. As a child, I played in the deserted war rooms of Henry I's citadel. (45)

Additionally, the character of Father Romain, a Haitian priest, makes the connection between communal memory and unambiguous tradition. His sermons often discuss "language, foods, history, carnival, songs, tales, and prayers. His creed was one of memory, how remembering – though sometimes painful – can make you strong" (71). In this way, Father Romain represents the power of shared recollection. By encouraging his congregants to remember their past, he preserves their homeland into the future.

Even Don Ignacio remembers his homeland, Spain. When Beatriz came to greet Don Ignacio, he writes something in his notebook. When she asks him about the writing, he replies that he is trying to capture the details of his life. He further says that the notebook is only for his grandchildren, and admits that his memory is potentially falling. Here, Don Ignacio's notebook is a physical appearance of the process of memory. It is a record of his experiences and homeland that will be passed to future generations and will keep his story alive. He further recalls his adulthood as an officer in the Spanish army. He tells that Spain was in a splendid little war, and that he fled bloody battles to settle in the Dominican Republic. However, he also claims that he might leave his country, even in times of peace. Beatriz asks him if he enjoys the Dominican Republic, he reveals that the Dominican Republic makes him to feel foreign to him. This shows his love and longing to live in his country. Like Haitian immigrants, Don Ignacio is also a migrant to this country. Even though he belongs to upper-class Dominican Republic, he does not like the system and culture of this country.

> "So, you didn't like being an officer in the Spanish army, is that so?" Beatriz asked. "This was almost forty years ago," Papi said. "Spain was at war then too, a splendid little war, fighting for colonies with Los Estados Unidos. I fled from bloody battles to come here, the great battles of El Caney and San Juan Hill. (75)

He even has a bittersweet experience in Spain. He tells Beatriz about his childhood days which he spends with his father and the death of his father.

> "You want to know what I'm writing to my grandchildren," Papi said after catching his breath. "I've begun with my birth in the seaport of Valencia. My father was a baker there. There are times when we gave bread to everyone in our quarter for nothing. I was his only son but he would never let me eat until everyone else had eaten. He lived to be ninety years old only to be killed in this evil war." (76)

Further he tells his bitter experience to Kongo, father of Joel. When he went to meet Kongo to make a cross on Joel's grave, Don Ignacio tells him about his bitter experiences about death. When Kongo met Amabelle, he narrates the exact incidents to her. When Don Ignacio was young, he killed many people in Spanish war. He tells that he does not know how many of them he killed in the war. As a result, he lost his family members including his wife, son, and grandson.

> "He couldn't remember how many he'd killed but felt like each one was walking kot a kot with him, crushing his happiness. For his woman to die on the night his son was to be born, for my son to be killed the day his grandchildren saw the first light, he felt this was the doing of the

people he killed in the war, people still walking side by side with him. He thought his grandson's death showed this." (143)

Through this Danticat emphasizes how a community can bear witness to the past, in order to remember it. For example, Amabelle describes how people in the Haitian community sit for a whole evening listening to others' existence unfold. In this collective context, she claims that memory, is a way of returning home. By telling stories of the past, not only Haitians but also Don Ignacio preserve their sense of belonging, even when they are living elsewhere.

In *The Dew Breaker*, the scar on Papa's face highlights the theme of memory. Not only Papa, but also the other characters in this novel are haunted by their terrible past in Haiti. Though it is sweet or bitter experience, each and every characters of this novel remembers their homeland. Papa is born to landowning peasants in rural Haiti. He joins the Volunteers for National Security (Tonton Macouts) as a young man. He is disturbingly skilled at the torture and executions required as part of this job, and thus he earns a fearsome reputation. As greedy and selfish man, he enjoys the benefits that come with his position of power. At a certain point, he dreams of leaving Haiti and immigrating to the US, because he is morally troubled by his work as a Volunteer. After killing the preacher, Papa meets Anne and lets her believe that he was a victim of the Duvalier regime, not a perpetrator. He and Anne escape to New York together. In Brooklyn, he lives a quiet life, running a barbershop and being a loving husband and father. He is obsessed with the Ancient Egyptians, particularly their grieving rituals, which is perhaps a way for him to process his own past. The scar that runs on his face is always a reminder of the violence he enacted upon others in Haiti.

When Ka makes a sculpture of Papa to sell it to Gabrielle Fonteneau, Papa destroys it because it reminds him of the terrible days he spends in Haiti. When Ka demands to know where the sculpture is, he further takes her to the river where he destroyed it. He then reveals his past to Ka. He tells that he was not sent to prison, rather he worked in the prison, and it was one of his prisoners who gave him his scar. He further says that he killed the man who wounded him, along with many others. She further remembers that her father use to cover his face to prevent him from other Haitians. The reason is no one should identify him as a dew breaker.

> "I was working in the prison," my father says. And I decide not to interrupt him again until he's done. Stranded in the middle of this speech now, he has to go on. "It was one of the prisoners inside the prison who cut my face in this way," he says. My father now points to the long, pitted scar on his right cheek... "This man who cut my face," he continues, "I shot and killed him, like I killed many people." I'm amazed... one breath like a monologue. (21-22)

When Ka and Papa went to Gabrielle Fronteneau's house, Gabrielle's parents make him to remember his past. When Mr. Fronteneau asks Papa where he is from in Haiti, he tells a lie because he never wants them to identify him as a criminal. Whatever questions Mr. Fronteneau asked he did not give the full answer as it made him to think about the bitter experiences. Even Gabrielle's parents recall their homeland by decorating their room with Haitian paintings. "We move slowly through the living room, which has a cathedral ceiling and walls covered with Haitian paintings with subjects ranging from market scenes and first communions to weddings and wakes" (28). The Fronteneaus further remember their homeland by sharing their memories to Papa and Ka. Even they often visit to their homeland to enjoy the beauty of their

country. "We go back every year," says Mrs. Fronteneau, "to a beautiful place overlooking the ocean, in the mountains of Jacmel." "Have you ever been to Jacmel?" Gabrielle Fronteneau asks me. I shake my head no" (29).

> "We're fortunate says, "that we have a place to go where we can say the rain is sweeter, the dust is lighter, our beaches prettier." "So now we are tasting rain and weighing dust?" Mr. Fronteneau says and laughs. "There's nothing like drinking the sweet juice from a coconut fetched from your own tree." (29)

When Mrs. Fonteneau paints a picture of her homeland for Ka and Papa, she is attached to her narration and her voice became louder and high. Even her daughter also started recollecting the memory of her homeland along with her mother. Mrs. Fonteneau says that "There's nothing like sinking your hand in sand from the beach in your own country," Mrs. Fronteneau is saying. "It's a wonderful feeling, wonderful" (30).

Michel is a man who grew up in Port-au-Prince and moved to the US when he is nineteen years old. When he is thirty years old, he looks back his childhood days which he spends in Haiti, especially the day in 1986 when the dictator fled the country. The dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier has just been driven from power. The members of this dictatorship once feared for militia but after the regime *Tonton Macoutes*, are being attacked in the streets by the angry public. While the end of the Duvaliers' brutal control is certainly a long-awaited cause for celebration, ordinary people like Michel and his mother could not celebrate it. Like Dany, Michel appears to have lost his father to the Duvalier regime, although it is not yet clear whether Michel's father was killed like Dany's parents or whether something else happened to him. Michel's 'hero' and 'best friend' is Romain, eighteen years old boy. Michel himself is only twelve years old.

When Michel was eight years old, he met Romain and their mothers became friends. Despite their age difference and the enmity between their mothers, the boys always remain close. Michel seeks out his friend Romain, who was abandoned by his father, Regulus. Regulus is a militia member who is being sought by the local people because of the crimes he committed against them.

As Romain's mother is away on a business trip, his aunt Vesta greets Michel. She asks if Regulus has been caught, and Michel replies that he does not think so. Then Romain summons Michel through the curtain into his room. The both decides to escape from the place. On the street, the boys pass a mock funeral where people are pretending to mourn Baby Doc and his wife. They get into a taxi, and Romain asks the driver to take them to La Sensation Hotel. "We made our way out of the crowd and down an alley into a quieter street, where we found a taxi. Romain jumped in and told the driver, "We'd like to go to La Sensation Hotel." "That's not going to be easy," the driver said" (156). Romain asks the driver to go through the shortcuts.

> "Take all the shortcuts you know," … "You'll be paid well." The drive to La Sensation confirmed that we couldn't escape what was going on, short of leaving the city or the country. Everywhere we went, even through the narrowest side streets, byways, back ways, there were people jumping out of corners, waving flags, ripping old posters of the president and his wife, and carrying containers of kerosene, hoping to find a Macoute to punish. (156)

Romain plans to ask his old classmate, a porter at the hotel, to get them a room, but unfortunately, they could not get the room. They sit by a pool and both order Cokes. Romain reveals that Michel's father is Monsieur Christophe, not Regulus. Michel

begins to cry, not out of shock but because he is ashamed of the dishonorable secret that Christophe is his father. "As I sat there with the straw separated from the Coke bottle yet still hanging out of his mouth, it wasn't the shock of hearing Christophe declared my father yet again that made me cry" (160). Romain tries to comfort him, but Michel pushes him away.

> It was becoming clear to me that Romain was leaving, going off someplace where I couldn't follow him. "The taxi's waiting for you outside," he told me. "He'll get you back to your mother." I was too angry at him then to ask him where he was going. I didn't care. "I'm leaving the country," he said. "I'm getting out tonight." (160-161)

Romain further tells Michel to go to home and adds that he is going to leave the country. The huge weight that being Regulus' son make him feel very bad and Romain feels that the only solution is to flee the country. Michel gets into the taxi and does not look back. At home, his mother was angry but did not punish him. He wants her to admit that he is Christophe's son but then he decides to let her keep it as a secret. In the next morning, Vaval one of his neighbors tells Michel that in the night, a young man had spotted Regulus trying to get back into his home to gather his belongings. Meanwhile, Regulus shot himself to avoid being captured.

Michel remembers that before Baby Doc left, he denied rumors that he was going into exile, asserting that he was as rigid as a monkey's tail. Michel and Romain had laughed about this together. People felt that it was impossible for Baby Doc to give up his power, and Michel also thought that it was impossible for Romain to flee the country. Eventually, Michel's mother died of heart attack, and he suspects this was actually the result of her unanswered love for Christophe. "one day she collapsed from

what was said to be a heart attack, but what I believe was her heart shattering into little pieces because, unlike me, she had loved Christophe and suffered quietly from his not loving back" (164). He does not have the proof of his mother's love for Christophe. "I have no proof of this, of course, for my mother was a stern and guarded woman who never would have taken young boy, even as he became a man, as a confidant" (164). Soon after, when he was twenty years old, he left Haiti. He never saw Romain again and did not know if he's alive.

> Soon after my mother died, I left Haiti, at twenty, turning over my mother's house to Rosie and Vaval. I don't know what's become of Romain. I haven't seen or heard from him since that day at the hotel. His aunt Vesta moved out of the neighborhood soon after Regulus died, and his mother never returned from her business trip. I don't even know whether Romain's still alive or dead. (164)

He tells the same story to everyone who asks him about his father. Through these incidents Michel recollects his past memories and even decides to name his son as Romain after his true friend. These incidents show how Michel reminiscences about the days which he spends in Haiti with his mother and his friend. Though his experiences are bitter one, he could not forget his homeland.

Freda is a young Haitian immigrant who befriends Rezia and Mariselle in her GED class. When Freda gets a chance to introduce herself, she sings "Brother Timonie" song (166). She explains the reason for attend this class is she does not have a job. Another reason is when she was twenty-two years old, she expelled from Haiti. "I do nothing, I want to say. Not yet. I have been expelled from my country. That's why I'm

in this class at twenty-two years old" (167). She further tells that she has learned this song from her father, who is a fisherman.

> This is not the first time I've called on Brother Timonie. At least it's not the first time I've tried. I asked my father once, who was Brother Timonie? He didn't know. Maybe a fisherman who died at sea. Most of the songs he knew were about people who'd died at sea. When I stand to speak, tapping my feet against my chair, the teacher decides to turn my introduction into an inquisition.... That's why I'm in this class at twenty-two years old. (166-167)

Here, Freda's explanation of how she was expelled from Haiti is a reminder that many people never wished to immigrate, but they were forced to do so by extreme circumstances in their country. Rezia nicknames the teacher "flat Tit," Mariselle "Mother Mary," and Freda "the baby funeral singer," (167) because Freda was one among the few professional funeral singers of her generation. Freda further remembers the days she spends with her mother in Haiti. When she was a girl in Leogane, she and her mother used to play the game telephone. During carnival they used their telephone rope for a maypole dance. "we always thought, or she always thought, we were the wind, plating it into a braid as thick as the rainbows that were sometimes above our heads" (168). Whenever they got tired of this game her mother used to tell her that her father was watching them from heaven while eating coconut with God. She said that he made clouds out of coconut meat. "

> When I was a girl in Leogane, some days my mother and I would play telephone. We'd tie two empty condensed milk cans to the ends of a long rope and sing to each other from far away. Sometimes I'd hide

> inside the house, under our cedar table, and she'd remain outside, but we could still hear each other, without shouting... Look Freda, Papa listening to us up there. (167-168)

Freda remembers these incidents when she is in US and she could not forget her joyful days which she spends with her mother.

Claude is a young American Haitian man who was deported back to Haiti after murdering his father. Claude is adopted by Estina, aunt of Dany. When Dany returns to Haiti, he meets Claude, and Estina introduces him to Dany. She further tells that he knows only English, and is learning to speak Creole bit by bit. Without Estina, Claude might be homeless in Port-au-Prince. Claude is happy to see Dany, because he has found a person to speak with him in his native language. He shares his past life to Dany, but not the whole incident. He says that he spends the first three months in prison in Port-au-Prince, because he had no place to go. His mother introduces him to some family members in Haiti. He laments that he had became totally disconnected from his family members there in US.

> "When I first here," he continued, "I thought I'd get stoned. I mean, I thought people would throw rocks at me, man. Not the other kind of stoned. I mean, coming out of New York, then being in prison in Port for three months because I had no place to go, then finally my moms, who didn't speak to me for the whole time I was locked up, came to Port and hooked me up with some family up here." (101)

After the death of Estina, Claude reveals the truth to Dany, that he killed his father. When Claude was fourteen years old, he was addicted to drugs, while also selling them. His father found his supply and took it. Claude threatened him with a gun, and

when his father did not give the drugs back, he shot him. "I had a gun I was using to protect myself out on the street. I threatened him with it. He wouldn't give my shit back, so I shot him" (119).

> I wish I could say it was an accident. I wish I could say he was a bastard who beat the crap out of me and forced me to defend myself. I wish I could tell you I hated him, never loved him, didn't give a fuck about him at all. I was fourteen and strung out on shit. He came into my room and took the shit. 'It wasn't just my shit. It was shit I was hustling for someone else. I was really fucked up and wanted the shit back. (119)

Even though he is born in US and settled in Haiti, he too has feelings for his homeland. Through this, Claude remembers his past and he further recalls the bitter incident which happened in US. By recalling and sharing these occurrences he revisits his homeland.

Danticat expresses her own feelings in this novel. As she was born in Haiti and settled in US, her feelings for her homeland is expressed here. Though it is sweet or bitter, she expresses it through the characters in this novel. Not only in *The Dew Breaker*, but also in *The Farming of Bones*, she expresses the same feelings of nostalgia through every character. If there is nostalgia or memory about the homeland and the bittersweet experience undergone by them, there will be a trauma. It has been discussed sumptuously in the succeeding chapter.

Chapter Four

Trauma

The word 'trauma' is derived from the Greek word meaning 'wound'. Trauma is any physical or mental shock or injury, specifically a serious wound or injury caused by some physical action or violent assault and so on. It is also psychological damage. Trauma is physical, or psychological damage. It may refer to the injury done. Great emotional shock, physical injury, and physical shock is also defined as trauma. According to Peter A. Levine, "The paradox of trauma is that it has both the power to destroy and the power to transform and resurrect" (n. p).

Traumatic experiences shake the foundation of people's beliefs about safety and shatter their assumptions of trust. These events and experiences stir up reactions that are strange and crazy. These reactions are unusual and disturbing, but they are typical and expectable from such patient's and these are normal responses to abnormal events. Trauma involves exposure to a life-threatening experience and has an important effect on mental and physical parts. A mental health problem is considered a disorder. The problem of this disorder is, it affects the behavior or psychological condition that is associated with a painful symptom or damage in one or more areas of functioning. Trauma may be caused due to ill health, family problems, terminal diseases, sexual harassment, unemployment, poverty, accidents, disaster, even exam failure and social humiliation.

Everyone may undergoes into a traumatic event differently because the people in this world face them through lens of prior experiences in their lives. For example, if a place is destroyed by the cyclone or any other natural disaster the people lived in the place may lose their family and home. Further they encounter the death of their loved

one and undergoes into great trauma. In this case, one hurricane may bring up traumatic flashbacks of their terrifying experience, because trauma reactions fall across a wide field. Psychologists have developed categories as a way to differentiate between types of trauma. Among them are complex trauma, post-traumatic stress disorder, and developmental trauma disorder. In Danticat's novels, the characters are affected by these traumas in different circumstances.

Danticat deals with trauma in her novels, *The Farming of Bones* and *The Dew Breaker*. Each and every character of these novels face different kinds of trauma in their lives. In *The Farming of Bones*, various characters die as a result of violence and misfortune. As the novel unfolds, Danticat illustrates how death has two victims; it impacts the deceased, as well as those who remain. According to Cathy Caruth, trauma is "always the story of a wound that cries out, that addresses us in the attempt to tell us of a reality or a truth that is not otherwise available" (*Unclaimed Experience* 4). In *The Farming of Bones*, Danticat's characters carry within them the story of an individual and historical wound. The voice of the survivor of trauma is a voice that struggles to speak the unspeakable. The story of collective trauma is also the story of survivors and those who does not survive.

In *The Farming of Bones*, the narrator, Amabelle, holds on to the memory of her lover Sebastien, who is missing after the 1937 massacre of Haitians by Trujillo's army in the Dominican Republic. It is the unavailable truth of his story and of the massacre that Amabelle attempts to accept and convey. Amabelle's passion of keeping the past in the present reveals her desire to place her individual trauma in her larger context of a collective historical consciousness. *The Farming of Bones* reconstructs a history of Haiti and of the 1937 massacre through the struggle for representation and truth of its victims.

Amabelle is first to experience the trauma both physically and mentally. She has lost her parents in the massacre river and this affects her deeply in her mind. She often thinks about them in her dreams. Further she is physically affected by the Parsley Massacre in 1937. Not only Amabelle but also the people in Dominican Republic too face the trauma. So Amabelle provides a space for individual experience and oral transmission of history. She is the vehicle and the filter through whom all witnesses and experiences are rendered. After the massacre, she witnesses the survivor and heard their stories.

> As they ate, people gathered in a group to talk. Taking turns, they exchanged tales quickly, the haste in their voices sometimes blurring the words, for greater than their Desire to be heard was the hunger to tell. One could hear it in the fervor of the declarations, the obscenities shouted when something could not be remembered fast enough, when a stutter allowed another speaker to race into his own account without the stutterer having completed his. (207)

Through her observation, Amabelle recognizes the survivor's "imperative need to tell" (Laub 63), the need to share the experience with other survivors. The story of trauma must come out in the form of words and must leave the body. Though evidence is expressed in the form of shared stories, words alone cannot contain the story of trauma. Amabelle defines this imperative to tell as a kind of 'hunger,' that is, as a physical need originates and continues in the scarred body of the survivor.

Amabelle describes her own body as "simply a map of scars and bruises, a marred testament" (225). As Amy Novak points out, Amabelle's body "bears the record of the past" (14). It represents both individual and collective suffering as she carries in

her flesh the collective memory of the massacre. Her body symbolises the individual evidence that are not given to the justices of the peace who is in charge of collecting official accounts of the massacre. The image of Amabelle's body as a map and a testament contains the geographical and historical relationships between the Dominican Republic and Haiti. It bears witness to the unspeakable truth of historical trauma. Just as her body speaks without words about the suffering of Haitians, it suggests the indelible relation between tormentor and survivor, between the Dominican Republic and Haiti. Her body reveals the impossibility of telling the story of a trauma, a story filled with silences, unspeakable truths, collective stories that "bring us to the limits of our understanding" (Caruth, *Trauma* 4). Her disfigured body leaves its victim speechless. It reveals the reality of a story that cannot be told and thus remains unheard. The imprint of the marked body and the silent story suggest a break in the line between past and present.

Amabelle's body reflects the forgotten trauma of Haitian cane cutters, who were the targets of Trujillo's soldiers. Her body becomes a vehicle for the larger history of oppression and modern slavery in Dominican sugarcane fields. The description of her body connects her to Kongo, the elder in the community of cane cutters. Like Amabelle, his body is a map of scars, the result of many years working in the cane fields of the Dominican Republic. For the Haitian community of the border town of Alegra, ironically, Kongo becomes a father figure after the death of his son Joel. He is accidently killed by Valencia's husband Senor Pico. By creating a link between Amabelle's traumatized body and Kongo's scars, Danticat claims Amabelle as the embodiment of the memory of Haitian cane cutters. She further tells that Amabelle's body refers to the ancestral oppression of slaves in the sugarcane fields of Hispaniola.

The trauma of the massacre is linked through Kongo and Amabelle to the larger trauma of slavery, a past unrecognized by Dominican official history.

Amabelle is both witness and victim of the cane field. In search of Sebastien and his sister Mimi at the beginning of the massacre, she crosses the cane field that separates her mistress's house from Sebastien's cabin. In the words of Amabelle:

> A scorching foul-smelling heat rose from the ground; the marsh underneath the cane sank with each of my steps. I felt the short cane spears cutting my legs and covered my face with my hand to keep the tall ones out of my eyes. An ant colony marched up my thighs. The more I smacked them away, the more they crept up my back. (158)

It is the first instance in the text where Amabelle suffers from physical injury. The colony of ants indicates the attack of Trujillo's soldiers on Haitian cane cutters. In this process of crossing the field, Danticat expresses the trauma of the massacre in the larger history of the oppression of Haitian sugarcane workers in the Dominican Republic. Through the perspective of trauma and the medium of evidence, Danticat reveals the conflict between official history and the unheard voices of the victims of the cane fields and of massacre.

In *The Farming of Bones*, testimony relates to the art of storytelling. A testimony is a performative speech act, and a poetic literary act. It is both individual and collective, and the connection between storytelling and recording of history. The orality of this novel is informed by the spontaneous exchange of testimonies between characters. When Amabelle returns to Haiti with Yves, who is another survivor and companion of Amabelle, she is invited by his mother to share her story:

> Man Rapadou came out to the courtyard in her nightdress, smiling. She carried a low chair from her room and sat down next to me. "You don't need the justice of the peace, she said. You don't need a confessor. I, Man Rapadou, I know your tale." She pressed her face close to mine and whispered so the others in the courtyard couldn't hear. "I asked my son why there is no love between you and him, and he told me about Sebastien." (242)

In this novel, statements are told and heard in a communal setting and addressed to listeners who share a bond with the survivors. As Laub suggests, "For the testimonial process to take place there needs to be a bonding, the intimate presence of another – in the position of one who hears" (70). Amabelle's testimony functions as the shaping of a collective memory as she witnesses stories shared in the intimacy of the community. The representation of a positive listening is a rejection of the collective and national amnesia in Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Amabelle's memory challenges the tourist guide's affirmation that "Famous men never truly die, he added. It is only those nameless and faceless who vanish like smoke into the early morning air" (278).

Like Danticat, Amabelle listens to the voicesoutside her individual experience of trauma. The novel becomes a collection of unauthorized testimonies without an individual author and without an official audience. Haitians have to confront their traumatic past because they are left to find a way to be recognised by history. They do so by sharing their experiences and creating a collective memory that contradicts the official version put in place by the authorities. Both Amabelle and Yves choose silence and loneliness. As a survivor, his memory is burdened by feelings of guilt:

> For twenty-four years all of my conversations with Yves had been restricted to necessary prattle. Good-morning. Good-night…Good-bye. The careful words exchanged between people whose mere presence reminds each other of a great betrayal. I had often hoped that he would find a woman to love him and take him away from the courtyard. I couldn't escape myself because I had nowhere else to go. (268)

His evidence to Amabelle takes the form of a confession. Their relationship read as an allégory for the traumatized community as damaged place of support.

> For a while I felt as though he was carrying me, the way Senora Valencia had carried her son and daughter in her womb, the way Kongo might have carried his son Joel, after he'd died, the way first he and then the stranger had carried Odette. Then it was me carrying him. After a while … we were both afloat at the same time, joined in a way that we could never be speaking together, or even crying together. (247-248)

For Yves, unlike the other characters, the traumatized community no longer exists as an effective source of support and an important part of the self has disappeared. Yves responds to the shock of the event by separating himself from his community. He breaks the relations that bind him to the group. Yves explains his refusal to testify to the justices of the peace: "I know what will happen… You tell the story, and then it's retold as they wish, written in words you do not understand, in a language that is theirs and not yours" (244). His remark suggests the existence of two conflicting representations of history; Yves' untold truth and the legitimized testimonies collected by the government.

The collective memory of the community is exemplified through the characters' personal dreams of historical trauma. Early in the novel many of the characters are haunted by their nightmares. Sebastien's dreams of crooning pigeons are a displacement of his father's death in the hurricane that also killed Amabelle's parents. The characters share their nightmares with one another and in doing so find relief in confessing to one another. They even connect through their dreams; "Yves and Sebastien both mumbled in their sleep all night, as though traveling through the same dream together" (127).

Amabelle too is haunted by the dream of her parents' death. She repeats the traumatic experience of witnessing their drowning over and over in her dreams. Like Yves and Sebastien, Amabelle's memory of the death of her parents is always relived in the present. Each dream reveals a collective history that "literary has no place, neither in the past, in which it was not fully experienced, nor in the present, in which its precise images and enactments are not fully understood" (Caruth, *Trauma* 153). Amabelle cannot place the memory of her parents in the past and cannot create a place outside of her traumatic memory. She constantly returns to the site of trauma and relives the event in an eternal cycle of repetition.

Amabelle's dreams are filled with voices that represent the collective memory of her community. Her repetitive dreams about the sugar woman, a slave figure, trace the present history of Haiti in the original trauma of slavery.

> As always, she is dressed in a long, three-tiered ruffled gown inflated like a balloon. Around her face, she wears a shiny silver muzzle, and on her neck, there is a collar with a clasped lock dangling from it. the sugar woman grabs her skirt and skips back and forth around my room. She

> seems to be dancing a kalanda in a very fast spin, locks arms with the air, pretends to kiss someone much taller than herself. As she swings and shuffles, the chains on her ankles cymbal a rattled melody. She hops to the sound of the jingle of the chains, which with her twists grows louder and louder. (130)

Amabelle's dreams are given in fragmented bold print passages that express her silent trauma. The traumatic history of the massacre is structured around two narrative forms. Amabelle's dreams and the memories of Sebastien are narrated in bold print in the present tense, and the main linear narrative remembered by Amabelle is told in the past tense. The detached structure exemplifies Amabelle's traumatic memory. The bold print fragments resist integration in the main linear narrative. The text appears as a splitting of the narrative, one allows the gathering of collective voices and one informs the linear lives of Amabelle, Sebastien, her parents and the sugar woman. Those fragments remain at the border of the main narrative. Though it is touching it does not enter into the main plot. As they express the dissociating effects of trauma on the self, the fragmented memories represent a split voice of individual and historical trauma. Further, they submit next to the multiple voices of the collective trauma of the massacre.

The echo of the voice of trauma is the metaphor for the relation between the traumatic past and its reappearance in the present. The echo enacts the repetition of the traumatic experience in its failure to integrate the narrative memory of the massacre. It is "the enigma of the otherness of a human voice that cries out from the wound, a voice that witness a truth" that the survivor "cannot fully know" (*Unclaimed* 3). It invokes the voice that trauma survivors struggle to locate and put to rest. It is the delayed expression of a call, a voice that refuses to be silenced, a voice that has no address and whose meaning cannot be grasped. Amabelle hears the echo and answers to the

survivors' "hunger to tell" by an equally primitive desire to listen. The victims' voice possesses Amabelle, who in return needs to own the story. They further tell that she can both remember and forget:

> It is perhaps the great discomfort of those trying to silence the world to discover that we have voices that with each passing day, grow even louder than the clamor of the world outside. The slaughter is the only thing that is mine enough to pass on. All I want to do is find a place to lay it down now and again, a safe nest where it will neither be scattered by the winds, nor remain forever buried beneath the sod. I just need to lay it down sometimes. Even in the rare silence of the night, with no faces around. (264)

Father Romain personifies the power of memory and recollection. Despite the Dominican Republic's hatred for Haitian culture, he keeps Haiti's customs alive through shared memory. Unfortunately, Father Romain is captured during the massacre and tortured by Dominican soldiers; the trauma he tolerates forces him to lose his memory. He is only able to repeat racist Dominican propaganda. This is a paradoxical inversion of his former Haitian pride. Initially, Father Romain was a key promoter of Haitian culture, but he eventually becomes an unwilling spokesman of racist rhetoric against his own community.

> Perhaps finally tired of talking, he stopped and lowered his face, his chin down to his chest. "He was beaten badly every day," the sister said, stroking his shoulder. "When he first came, he told me they'd tied a rope around his head and twisted it so tight that sometimes he felt like he was going mad. They offered him nothing to drink but his own piss.

Sometimes he remembers everything. Sometimes, he forgets all of it, everything, even me." (259)

In search of a type of reconciliation between remembering and forgetting, Amabelle decides to return to the Dominican Republic years after the massacre in order to restore a range between her traumatic memories and her present life. Amabelle returns to the home of her employers and meets her old mistress, Senora Valencia who does not recognize her changed appearance: "Now it was as if we were doing battle and I knew I must win; she had to recognize me" (293). Amabelle's need for recognition from her mistress reads as a metaphor. It is a claim of acknowledgment of the massacre by the Dominican nation. In the absence of recognition, Amabelle returns to the Massacre River, the place where her parents drowned and where many Haitians died during the massacre.

Instead of returning to her Haitian home, she decides to stay by the river, to "lie on my back in it with my shoulders half submerged, the current floating over me in a less than gentle caress, the pebbles in the riverbed scouring my back" (308). She returns to the site of the border, the in-between space of separation and unification, past and present. Her body "half-submerged" in the river, she embraces the position at the "interstice" between the here and there, now and then, recognizing the irresolvable tension between remembering and forgetting. As she herself admits, "A border is a veil not many people can wear" (308).

Amabelle's story is an endless struggle to tell a story that has no end. Her refusal to forget Sebastien and the other victims of the 1937 massacre challenges the national amnesia imposed by official history. The string that links slaves to victims of the massacre to present day Haitians denies a concept of time that establishes fixed

boundaries between past and present. By collecting individual memories of traumatic experiences, Amabelle attempts to break the silences of historical trauma and to construct with individual voices a larger collective story of historical consciousness. Her testimony reveals the need for an imaginative language, one achieved in literature, a collaboration between historical facts, individual memories and interior voices to transmit a history of collective suffering and survival.

In *The Dew Breaker*, a trauma narrative shows the suffering of people from Haiti who have lived under the corrupt regime of the Duvaliers. Due to cultural trauma caused by the corruption of the government, the novel and the characters in the novel are preoccupied by the topic of suffering, death, and recovering from traumatic events. In one of the sections, called "The Funeral Singer," Freda explains that there are three types of death:

> My mother used to say that we'll all have three deaths: the one when our breath leaves our bodies to rejoin the air, the one when we are put back in the earth, and the one that will erase us completely and no one will remember us at all. I sometimes hear a dog bark and I'm startled that it sounds a little like the dogs that roamed around me that day as I sat on the beach, watching my father's fishing boat being hauled ashore without him in it. (177)

Freda's three stages of death signify the process that a family must enact as they mourn the loss of a loved one. They also correspond with the three stages that a person must go through to heal from trauma they have suffered, or for the trauma to symbolically die. These corresponding stages include voicing the trauma, taking action, and forgetting. In this novel, Danticat presents these three stages as model for the

victims to overcome from their trauma. The process of mourning the loss of loved one is an important stage. It prevent the person to suffer from the trauma. Through this novel, Danticat further suggests that healing from life-altering trauma is possible.

Each of the stories in the novel shows the trauma experienced by the characters. This trauma creates significant psychological damage beyond what may be considered normal life events and sorrow. The distress of the traumatic event leaves victims with a disturbed sense of self and sense of their lives. As Kathie J. Albright explains,

> "The narrative nature of daily life is breached. Trauma produces a rupture in the life story line of its victims and, as a result, survivors find it difficult, if not impossible, to untangle the now snarled or clipped threads of stories so as to create a new overarching story that makes sense to them" (400).

Then, trauma, not only makes it difficult for victims to voice their suffering, but also to create a narrative of their lives. As the trauma increasingly shapes the way they understand their lives and the way in which they act on this understanding after the traumatic event.

Through Freda's comment on the three stages of death, the novel demonstrates that mourning the loss of loved ones and finding peace in their deaths acts as a model for the process of healing from trauma. By contrasting Dany's experiences of mourning someone's death in "Night Talkers" with Anne's experiences with mourning in "The Book of Miracles," the novel expresses the great need of characters to have peaceful mourning at the death of a loved one. Dany experiences this peaceful mourning when he returns to Haiti to visit his aunt Estina and witnesses her death during his visit. As the only formal funeral in this novel among so many deaths, the funeral offers insight

into elements that contribute to the process of mourning and healing. In particular, the funeral suggests that certain elements, such as the rituals of branding the final clothes, and holding a wake, are necessary to the process of mourning to both prepare the dead for afterlife and prepare the living for peace in losing their loved one.

In Dany's case, the village held a wake after preparing the body for burial during which the members of the village shared stories about Estina that could evoke laughter to tears. This type of wake allows for the complexity of feelings that accompany death, both joy at remembering the dead and sadness over losing them. In *Culture and Customs of Haiti*, J. Michael Dash explains the symbolism of these rituals: "The most important aspect of the funeral and burial is the need to disorient the dead and prevent them from returning to haunt the living. The perpetual threat of the dead person's return preoccupies family members during the period of mourning" (70). Although the characters with whom Dany interacts at the funeral do not seem preoccupied with the dead person returning, the characters in other stories within the novel (like Anne) are haunted by the figurate returning of the dead when these funeral rituals are not performed. With the close connection of mourning death and overcoming trauma, the necessity of these elements in mourning suggest that overcoming trauma also has significant elements that cannot be overlooked.

The result of missing important elements in the process of mourning can especially be seen in the story of Anne because she is haunted by the death of her younger brother. This haunting comes both from being unable to put her brother's death to rest and from being unable to overcome the trauma of the situation that caused his death. Anne's younger brother drowned in the ocean when she was responsible for watching him, making his death particularly traumatic for her. If one considers her trauma in terms of the three stages of death, it seems that she cannot overcome her

trauma. The reason is, she is unable to fully mourn her brother's death without the symbolic and peaceful acts that are performed in the funeral rituals, as demonstrated in Dany's mourning of his aunt Estina.

The readers can see the fragments of Anne's trauma and the burden she carries in her haunted imagination of her younger brother's search for his grave:

> Every time she passed a cemetery, Anne held her breath. When she was a girl, Anne had gone swimming with her three-year-old brother on a beach in Grand Goave, and he had disappeared beneath the waves. Ever since then, she'd convinced herself that her brother was walking the earth looking for his grave. Whenever she went by a cemetery, any cemetery, she imagined him there, his tiny wet body bent over the tombstones, his ash-colored eyes surveying the letters, trying to find his name. (71)

This passage shows not only the trauma Anne has faced but also the significance of being able to literally put her brother's body to rest in order to go of the emotional pain of his death. The lack of conclusion in this situation has left Anne with "a hollow grief extended over all these years, a penance procession that has yet to end" (238). The trauma of this experience haunts Anne, leaving her unable to peacefully move forward with her life. In *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, Dominick LaCapra explains how a person becomes unable to move past a traumatic life experience: "One is haunted or possessed by the past and performatively caught up in the compulsive repetition of traumatic scenes – scenes in which the past returns and the future is blocked or fatalistically relives the experience of her brother's death and is haunted by the idea of him wandering the earth in search of his grave" (70). Since Anne can never go back

and perform these ceremonies putting him to rest, her situation brings up the important question of whether Anne will ever be able to overcome her trauma.

Voicing the pain of trauma can symbolically be represented by the breath leaving the body stage of death. Just as the breath leaves the body in death, the breath leaves the body in the act of speaking the trauma. Although characters struggle to express traumatic events, this stage opens the door to recovery. Judith L. Herman explains the well-recognized necessity of expressing trauma when she writes, "Remembering and telling the truth about terrible events are prerequisites both for the restoration of the social order and for healing of individual victims. . .. When the truth is finally recognized, survivors can begin their recovery" (1). Before victims can begin healing, they must tell the trauma. Herman offers verbal narrative as a prevention to or reduction of the haunting grief and trauma that many of the characters in the novel face.

In addition to verbal narration, Herman explains that "the core experiences of psychological trauma are disempowerment and disconnection from others. . .. Recovery can take place only within the context of relationships; it cannot occur in isolation" (133). Not only the victims voice the trauma, but it also seems necessary for the victims to share their trauma with others as they put words to it. In this way, they let go of the trauma as they place trust in those, they share it with. In a supportive social context, the three women in "The Funeral Singer" share with each other the narrative of their lives, including their traumatic departures from Haiti.

Freda initiates this storytelling: "I thought exposing a few details of my life would inspire them to do the same and slowly we'd parcel out our sorrows, each walking out with fewer than we'd carried in" (170). Freda not only places trust in the act of sharing to relieve individual stress at the moment, but also, she describes a

contradictory phenomenon in which the characters collectively have fewer sorrows as they share their problems. As their breath physically leaves their body, the trauma also begins to disperse. The experience of sharing their stories exemplifies both the need for recovery to occur within the context of relationships and the healing that comes from sharing the truth. The practice of sharing their trauma helps the three women to overcome their trauma. After sharing their stories, they feel as if they begun to heal and it makes them feel strong.

Another example of voicing the trauma is the confession of the perpetrator, the dew breaker himself. Even the perpetrator experiences trauma, which Aitor Armendariz explains, "The perpetrators are by no means excluded from this collective trauma, since they are among the most deeply haunted by those phantoms and vacant spaces that they themselves contributed to conjuring up" (41). In this novel, one can see the suffering of the perpetrator in the humanizing of the dew breaker. The dew breaker, who is Ka's father, suffers from frequent nightmares which he tells Ka consist "of what I, … your father, did to others" (23). Finally, in preparation to tell Ka the truth of his former life, Ka's father throws the statue she makes of him into the lake. This acts as a symbol of his first step in truth telling because he will no longer live what he feels is the lie represented by the sculpture depicting him as a victim.

Danticat writes that Ka's father "looks like a much younger man and appears calm and rested" (13) after throwing the sculpture into the lake, the beginnings of the relief of sharing his trauma. As Ka's father tells her about his former life, "each word is now hard-won as it leaves her father's mouth, balanced like those hearts on the Ancient scales" (21). This comparison to the Egyptian scales shows that not only Ka's father must lighten his heart in the afterlife to enter into the next life, so that his heart is not weighed down by guilt, but he also must lighten his heart by finding peace from

his own guilt. However, even after her father's confession, Ka still believes that "confessions do not lighten living hearts" (33), suggesting that healing and finding peace require more than simply voicing the traumatic event.

After voicing the trauma, the second stage of death in which the body is buried in the earth. It further helps the person to overcome from trauma. As Ka states, simply confessing or voicing the trauma is not enough to "lighten living hearts" (33). Putting the body back in the earth represents someone taking action to put a body to rest through burial. The stories in *The Dew Breaker* suggest that in order for healing to continue after voicing the trauma, the characters must take action and personally shape their own lives.

In "The Funeral Singer," after Freda, Mariselle, and Rezia have shared their stories with one another, one can see that Freda takes action to enter into the next stage of her life by return to Haiti to fight in a militia. In this decision, Freda shows that she will fight the source of her trauma and by doing so she will no longer remain a victim to the forces that hurt and killed her father. Her decision represents taking action to leave the trauma behind, a step that could not happen until she had initiated the healing process by voicing the trauma and sharing her experiences. Unlike the action of burying a body in the earth, taking action to overcome trauma requires just the opposite. Like Freda, making the choice, to no longer hide from the trauma of the past but to take action to fight against it.

Looking forward to the future rather than living in the past indicates another way of taking action to heal from trauma. In the story of "The Bridal Seamstress," Beatrice takes action in a way that looks like simply an escape from the haunting memory of her past, rather than a positive action toward the future. However, the critical

moment of change occurs when she retires from her job as a seamstress so that she can move away from the dew breaker's discovery. Beatrice's entire life has been haunted and defined by the traumatic torture she underwent. Beatrice often change her home because wherever she goes, she believes her torturer ends up living on her street. She explains,

> "I think the reason he finds me all the time is because I send notes out to my girls," Beatrice said, keeping her eyes on the street. "I let all my girls know when I move, in case they want to bring other girls to me. That's how he always finds me. It must be. But I'm not going to send these notes out anymore. I'm not going to make any more dresses. The next time I move, he won't find out where I am." (137)

Beatrice's acute memory of her torturer and her imagination that he always follows her, even in America, pervades Beatrice's consciousness and defines her life narrative, such as her retirement and her many changes of residence. Previously she had moved several times in an effort to avoid the dew breaker, but kept sending out cards and continued her same life in a different location. In this final move, however, she changes not only her residence but also her life narrative. Perhaps Beatrice's declaration that "the next time I move, he won't find out where I am" (137) is not so much a hope that he will not physically end up on her street, but rather the hope that she takes this active control of defining the terms of her own life. She will be able to finally leave behind the dew breaker and the scars he left with her. By leaving him behind in her thoughts she will no longer have to face the haunting reminder of him in her life.

The third stage of death, or "the one that will erase us completely and no one will remember us at all," (177) corresponds to the stage of no longer being influenced

by the memory of the trauma. It cannot be expected that a survivor could ever forget traumatic life experiences, but that they can perhaps live a life free from the oppression of those memories. An anonymous woman in the novel who was interviewed about her experiences as a prisoner in Casernes carries a permanent memory of her torturer, and this constant memory signifies the difficulty of forgetting such horrible trauma.

> When one of the women who had been his prisoner at Casernes was interviewed three decades later for a documentary film in her tiny restaurant in Miami's Little Haiti neighborhood, the gaunt, stood-shouldered octogenarian, ... would stammer for an hour before finally managing to speak, pausing for a breath between each word. (198)

Although she has forgotten her visual memory of him, her torturer is ever present. This example implies that the dew breaker will live forever in the nightmares of those around him despite their desire to forget him. "She couldn't remember his name, nor could she even imagine what he might look like these days, yet she swore she could never get him out of her head" (198).

Like his victims, the dew breaker also desires to be forgotten in the memories of those he tortured and to forget his own hand in those traumatic events. In the conflict with the sculpture, Ka's father shows her his desire to be forgotten. He tells her, "I don't deserve a statue . . . not a whole one, at least. You see, Ka, your father was the hunter, he was not the prey" (20). In comparing herself to the Egyptian statues that he has come to love, Ka's father believes that a statue that is not whole would better represent him. Ka makes a further connection to her father's knowledge of the Egyptians when she realizes that her father threw the sculpture into the lake because of his desire to be forgotten. Ka explains,

> And why he has never wanted the person he was, is, permanently documented in any way. He taught himself to appreciate the enormous weight of permanent markers by learning about the Ancient Egyptians. He had gotten to know them, through their crypts and monuments, in a way that he wanted no one to know him, no one except my mother and me, who are now his kas, his good angels, his masks against his own face. (34)

Although Ka's father admitted that he originally wanted to be buried with the sculpture, Ka understands that her father feels that being buried with the sculpture would permanently document him, along with all the pain he represents for others. After he dies, the sculpture would be a lasting reminder of the horrors he caused that could never be forgotten.

While the sculpture would prevent the dew breaker from being forgotten, the physical scar on his face given to him by his last prisoner was meant to prevent him from ever forgetting his own trauma. The preacher who gave the dew breaker the scar explains,

> There would be no resurrection. The wound on the fat man's face wasn't what he had hoped; he hadn't blinded him or removed some of his teeth, but at least he'd left a mark on him, a brand that he would carry for the rest of his life. Every time he looked in the mirror, he would have to confront this mark and remember him. Whenever people asked what happened to his face, he would have to tell a lie, a lie that would further remind him of the truth. (227-228)

While it gives the victim a sense of evidence to make the dew breaker forever remember both his victim and his guilt, this constant memory is problematic. Not only the dew breaker can never forget the trauma he caused others, but because of his remembering, those who have died cannot die the third and final death of being forgotten and thus be released peacefully into their afterlife. From this problem arises the question of the fate of all those who have suffered and cannot be forgotten. It seems that the dead who are still remembered must wait until they are no longer remembered to enter the peace of the final death. It suggests that the lasting memory of the scar and the statue will prevent numerous people from ever truly healing from the trauma.

Although none of the characters have reached the third stage of death in the story "The Funeral Singer," Danticat's novel suggests that this third stage of no longer remembering is possible after the characters have voiced their trauma and taken action to move forward. However, because the characters of this novel are interconnected in their memory of the trauma, none can forget while the others remember. Despite this hopelessness of ever forgetting and healing under the weight of the collective memory of society, the book ultimately offers the reassurance that "some wounds could heal, that some decisions would not haunt her forever" (63). In the collective memory of the trauma, the characters have a hope of collectively healing and forgetting as they each take steps to heal from the horrors they have suffered.

Through these novels, Danticat depicts the various traumatic situations. As Danticat hears and experiences the traumatic situations, she expresses the feelings through the victims and every character of these novels. Through these novels, Danticat not only writes about the trauma of Parsley massacre and the political events during Duvalier regime, but also the trauma of people who are still affected by these cruel historical events.

Chapter Five

Summation

Edwidge Danticat's *The Farming of Bones* is about a 1937 massacre of Haitian cane workers in the Dominican Republic. In Kreyol, this event is called as *kout kouto* which means stabbing. In Spanish it is called as *el corte* which means cutting. The author calls it the Parsley Massacre, because the Dominican use the Parsley leaves to identify Haitians by having them pronounce the Spanish word for 'parsley', which they actually pronounce as 'perejil'. Through this, the readers can understand the author's ideas of racial purity. While doing research for this novel, The Farming of Bones, Danticat speaks with survivors and their descendants. She published this novel in rich manner.

The book contains density of meaning. For example, the title of the novel, *The Farming of Bones*, comes from Kreyol, a phrase for sugarcane farming. Danticat further explains this title through Amabelle. Danticat writes about Joel that *travay te pou zo* which means the farming of bones. In harvesting the farmers use machetes and at the same time, the Dominicans use machetes as a primary killing instrument in Parsley Massacre. The majority of Haitians are massacred in Dominican Republic for work as farm labourers. Through this she further deals with the historical facts linked with the slavery of the sugar trade and also the unfulfilled goals of the Haitian Revolution. In this novel, farming is more important, because several characters in this novel are farmers. They farm beans or orchids and try to get a better life in a world of suffering and death. Through this Danticat picturises the inner feelings of farmers that they do not want to be the farming of bones as they once in Dominican Republic. The readers

can understand the massive meaning of this novel. Danticat not only portraits the farming, but also the idea of twins.

At the beginning of this novel Senora Valencia gives birth to twins. Danticat depicts this scene very frankly and deep. As a midwife Amabelle helps her to give birth. The first born is a boy. He is very healthy and paler boy. The second born is a baby girl. She is very dark and sick. She is named after Valencia's mother and the boy is named after Generalissimo, the father of Dominican Republic country. The idea of twins and coupling are flourished in the novel. In this novel, the most obvious symbolic twins are Haiti and Dominican Republic, Kreyol and Spanish. At the beginning of the novel, Danticat deals with the paired births and deaths. When she was a child, Amabelle's parents had drowned. Danticat further narrates that when Amabelle escapes from Dominican Republic, she accidently drowns Odette.

Throughout this novel, Danticat explores the pairing in many layers. Even though the symbolism is heavy, she explores it in a clear manner. On reading this novel, the reader calls Danticat as expert. In this novel, Danticat use the method of storytelling and deals with lyrical passages. She further deals with personal experiences of victims. On the whole the novel is rich symbolism of twins and farming. Some of the chapters deals with violent history of Haiti and some with trauma of the victims through minor characters of this novel. In an interview, she tells that after reading this novel many people come to know about Haiti and its history. Before that the people do not know where it is and even, they do not know it is a country. When she was settled in U.S, she takes efforts to write about her country. While writing this novel, she gives important events between paragraphs. It makes the readers to reread the important passages.

The important features of this novel are the interchange between chapters in bold and regular typeface. The chapters deal with the memory of Amabelle's parents and her relationship with Sebastien. The bold chapters are more internal and poetic. The regular chapters are main plot and it deals with the history of Haiti and Parsley Massacre. This massacre disappoints the bold chapters because this massacre deals with the huge experience of trauma given a kind of extended epilogue. It relates Amabelle's experience of trauma. Not

only Amabelle but also the other characters who lost their family experiences the trauma. After the massacre not only Amabelle but also her native people search their relative and enquire their whereabouts.

The last few parts of the novel narrate the events after 1961 and it is full of hollow. The reader defines trauma as an incurable wound and a hole that can never be filled. The Parsley Massacre leaves thousands of Haitians with life-long trauma. Danticat not only focuses on massacre but also the trauma which happened afterwards. The chapters which deal with the massacre and trauma are called an extended epilogue, because all the characters are traumatized and always look back history, their pain, and their enigmatic loss. Thus, Danticat writes that this novel *The Farming of Bones* in a brilliant way and is heart-breaking. Through this novel, she not only depicts racism, but also the cultural clash and language problems.

Danticat's *The Dew Breaker* deals with Haiti's bitter history of violence, corruption and vengeance. This history of violence affects all the characters' dreams and restrict their expectations. This history becomes a nightmare for these characters and they look back the past and try to erase it. The main character of this novel is Papa also known as dew breaker. He seems to be an ordinary Haitian immigrant who lives a

quiet life in Brooklyn with his wife and daughter. But he is not an ordinary man and hides a terrible secret. Back in Haiti, he is a member of the dreaded Tonton Macoute during Duvalier's regime. Danticat gives an explanation for the name the dew breaker which means a torturer, because they usually arrive before dawn, as the dew was settling on the leaves. They use to abduct victims from their homes and tortured them and kill them. Including a preacher, many innocent people who speaks against the government had killed by these torturers. The important symbol of this novel is the scar on Papa's face. Wherever he goes it reminds him of his violent past.

The other characters in this novel are none but the family members of dew breaker, former victims and their family members. Whether they are lived in Port-au-Prince or left for United States, they still haunted by the bitter past. Even though they try to live a better life like dew breaker, they could not because, the terrible past leaves them with broken heart and destroyed their hopes. Like her first novel, *The Farming of Bones*, Danticat follows the same language style in *The Dew Breaker*. She further demonstrates her emotional clarity between public and private, the personal and the political. She portrays the lives of Haitians and Haitian-Americans and shows that how the past anchors and shuffles the present.

Through this novel, she not only showcases these qualities but also her powerful and live performance is expressed. Though it is compelling this novel recount its traumatic tale in clear and simple prose. To tell the story of dew breaker in indirect method, Danticat use a looping structure of overlapping stories. By using the characters' experiences Danticat examines Haiti's own difficulties of violence and vengeance that continues today. Through this novel, the reader can understand the way of writing that represents jigsaw-puzzle pieces. Through this method, Danticat picturises dew breaker's terrible history and his victims' and his afterlife.

The thesis is entitled as 'Reliving Haitian history.' In this thesis the researcher tries to explore the themes of *The Farming of Bones* and *The Dew Breaker* which is expressed by the author, Danticat. The themes like 'Historical Element,' 'Nostalgia' and 'Trauma' is thoroughly analyzed by the researcher in the thesis. The thesis has five chapters. The first chapter entitled 'Introduction' deals about the origin and the development of Literature. It also tells about the growth of Literature and the division of Literature in Caribbean Island. Then it gives a brief account of the famous Haitian-American writers. The researcher also provides the biography and career of the author. The researcher deals with the details of her works.

The title of the second chapter is 'Historical Element.' In this chapter the researcher has clearly discussed about the new historicism theory which is suitable to Danticat's novels *The Farming of Bones* and *The Dew Breaker*. As the author deals with historical elements in these novels, the new historicism theory is apt to these novels. As Danticat hears about Parsley Massacre and experiences the political violence, she explores the history through the main characters of these novels. Through this chapter the researcher has clearly picturized the historical elements.

The third entitled 'Nostalgia.' In this chapter the researcher has clearly discussed about the author's nostalgia for her homeland. As Danticat settled in America, she remembers her native land through each and every character of these novels. She recalls her homeland, Haiti through the characters of Haitian immigrants of Dominican Republic and US. Through Father Romain's sermons Danticat reminiscences, the language of Haiti, foods, history, carnival, songs, tales, and prayers. Through Amabelle, Danticat remembers the places which she spends in Haiti, where she experiences the Duvalier regime's atrocities. The researcher has clearly discussed the theme of nostalgia in this chapter.

'Trauma' is the fourth chapter. In this chapter the researcher clearly dealt about the trauma of Parsley Massacre and the victims. Each and every character of these novels faces the trauma in a different way. Danticat clearly describes the cultural, mental and physical trauma. She explores the mental trauma through the characters of Father Romain and Beatriz. Danticat further explores the cultural trauma between Haiti and Dominican Republic. The physical trauma is expressed through Amabelle and Papa (the dew breaker). The researcher has clearly discussed these traumas in this chapter.

The fifth chapter 'Summation' sums up the entire thesis by bringing all the elements of the research together and analyses the impact of the novels on the reader. At the end of this chapter, the researcher also indicates that the novels, *The Farming of Bones* and *The Dew Breaker* have a lot of scopes for deeper research in these novels.

The other areas in these novels that can exploited for further research and analysis are: dreams versus reality, language and identity, hope, family, belonging, love and diaspora. Thus, Edwidge Danticat's novels, *The Farming of Bones* and *The Dew Breaker* has a lot of scope for further research.

The findings of the study are: Danticat recalls the Haitian History and its violent political events. Through this one can learn the history of Haiti and its importance.

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Gender Bias in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *We Should All Be Feminist*

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Abstract:

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie explores the gender bias in *We Should All Be Feminist*. Feminism is the advocacy of women's rights on the ground of the equality of the sexes. Gender bias is an unequal treatment in employment opportunity (such as promotion, pay, benefits and privileges), and expectations due to attitudes based on the sex of an employee or group of employees. Gender inequality is a multifaceted issue that concerns men and women. Some of the various gender inequality place men at a disadvantage. But in the society women are at a disadvantage in a several important ways.

Keywords: Favoritism, gender discrimination, inequality, male chauvinism, suppression.

We Should All Be Feminist is a book length essay by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, published in 2014. Adichie is a Nigerian novelist as well as a writer of short stories and non-fiction. *We Should All Be Feminist* is a speech which she has delivered at TedXEuston in London. Being an African feminist, Adichie shares her experiences and her views on gender construction through the essay *We Should All Be Feminist*. Gender is the major theme of this essay. According to Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, "Gender is the fact of being male or female, especially when considered with reference to social and cultural differences, not diffferences in biology" (Oxford).

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In *We Should All Be Feminist*, Adichie begins her talk with a number of personal anecdotes about growing up in Nigeria. In one of these anecdotes she recalls a male friend calling her a "feminist". Without knowing the meaning she continues to argue with him. But she knows that it is an insult. Then she offers another anecdote about her childhood in Nsukka, Nigeria. In primary school, the teacher has given a test to the students, promising that the student with the highest score would be given the title of class monitor. Even though she gets the highest score, the title is not given to her. Instead the title is given to the next highest scorer, a mild mannered boy.

> Then to my surprise, my teacher said the monitor had to be a boy. She had forgotten to make that clear earlier; she assumed it was obvious. A boy had the second highest score on the test. And he would be monitor. What was even more interesting is that this boy was a sweet, gentle soul who had no interest in patrolling the class with a stick. While I was full of ambition to do so. But I was female and he was male and he became class monitor.(Adichie 9)

Although Adichie knows this is unfair at that time, she does not understand that the teacher's choice has come from her own familiarity seeing men in positions of power. Finally, when Adichie asks the teacher why she did not get the position, the teacher replied that she thinks it is obvious for a boy to get the position. She connects this incident to the broader pattern that the society happens to see men in many high positions. She further states that one of her female friends who is in America has faced gender bias in her working place. She narrates,

> I have another friend, also an American woman, who has a high-paying job in advertising. She is of two women in her team. Once, at a meeting, she said she had felt slighted by her boss, who had ignored her comments and then praised something similar when it came from a man. She wanted speak up, to challenge her boss. But she didn't. Instead, after the meeting, she went to the bathroom and cried, then called me to vent about it. (Adichie 11)

Adichie also points out gender discrimination through various incidents. When a valet helps Adichie and Louis to park the car, she decides to give him a tip. When she gives him money the valet thanks her

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friend Louis, but not her because, the valet assumes that any money Adichie has must come from a man. Adichie feels that what she has understood is actually not realized by others as Louis fails to understand that the valet who thanks him for the tip Adichie paid for is being sexist. Through this incident she expresses the traditional Nigerian attitudes toward gender and money.

According to Adichie, Nigeria is not the only place for sexism and money. She also states that, in united states, women are still paid less than men, and a woman with the same qualifications as a man is almost invariably paid less for the same amount of work. She also points out the worst condition of sexist wage gap through her personal experience. When she walks into the restaurant with a man, the waiter greets the man not Adichie. Even though she is a regular customer to that place, the man does not consider her as a human being. She feels as if she is invisible to the waiter. Adichie cannot enter a hotel alone without a man because there assuming that she is a prostitute, and there are nightclubs to which she is accompanied by a man.

> What was the name and room number of the person I was visiting? Did I know this person? Could I prove that I was a hotel guest by showing him my key card? Because the automatic assumption is that a Nigerian female walking into a hotel alone is a sex worker. Because the Nigerian female alone cannot possibly be a guest paying for her own room. A man who walks into the same hotel is not harassed. The assumption is that he is there for something legitimate. (Adichie 10-11)

This very justifiable anger fuels her argument that unfair expectations are placed on women and their behaviour in and out of the economic field.

According to Adichie, however sexism does not begin or end in the workplace. Unknowingly it is taught by the parents to their children. Masculinity is defined by the people in a very narrow way. The boys are learnt that being a man means being *macho*. They are taught to behave as a strong and powerful man. It also means that disrespecting women and expecting the women to do all the household works including cooking, cleaning and taking care of the children. Adichie says these traditional gender roles are part of Nigerian culture just as they are in the United States. She argues that enforcing such gender roles are harmful to both

men and women. Simone de Beauvoir says that gender-equality is harmful to both female and male. She says, "Girls are weighed down by restrictions, boys with demands - two equally harmful disciplines" (Beauvoir)

Adichie further says that the narrow definition of masculinity teaches men not to feel or even cry, making their egos very fragile. In turn, women are taught to cater to the fragile egos of men and to value their own needs less than the needs of the men in their lives. For an example, if a woman happens to make more money than her husband, she is encouraged to lie about it in public. Because this lie can not emasculate him. In Nigeria men can do whatever they want, but the society asks the women to be silent. So Adichie writes that "The problem with gender is that it prescribes how we should be rather than recognizing how we are" (Adichie 14).

Even Adichie states that if there is a family meeting, she is not allowed to participate in it, because she is a woman. Even though she is interested in social gatherings she is not allowed to mingle with them because of her gender. These incidents helps her to speak about gender discrimination. The essay *We Should All Be Feminist*, highlights the theme of gender bias. As Adichie faces gender problems in her life, she explores her experiences in her essay. Though the society grants men and women equal rights, gender discrimination remains.

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Memory:More Bitter than Sweet in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*

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Abstract:

This article seeks to explore the memory of the main characters in *Beloved* by Toni Morrison. Memory is the ability to remember past experiences, and the power or process of recalling to mind previously learned facts, experiences, impressions, skills and habits. The novel *Beloved* is a detailed account of events that exemplify thoughts and memories of the past days to relieve the experiences of the African American as they suffered during the dangers of slavery. In *Beloved*, Toni Morrison takes a direct path to bring the little known past of the characters, to purposefully depict the present and the future. In *Beloved*,memory comes out clearly as both incapacitating and treacherous sense of the human consciousness.

Keywords: memory, consciousness, reminiscence, pain for the past, retention.

Toni Morrison is an African-American writer and professor. The novel Beloved is published in 1987. Toni Morrison has won Pulitzer Prize for the novel *Beloved*. It examines the destructive legacy of slavery as it chronicles the life of a black woman named Sethe, from her pre-Civil War days as a slave in Kentucky to her time in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1873. Although Sethe lives there as a free woman, she is held prisoner by memories of the trauma of her life as a slave. Marilyn Sanders Mobley's "A Different Remembering: Memory, History and Meaning in Toni Morrison's Beloved", examines "the complex relationship between history and memory by shifting from lived experience . . . to remembered experience as represented in the novel" (Morrison 190).

Memory is one of the dominant themes of the novel *Beloved*. When the novel opens, the protagonist, Sethe's house is haunted by the ghost Beloved, the baby of Sethe. When Sethe and her daughter Denver attempts to speak to the ghost it doesn't appear. At that time Sethe recalls the incident of burying her baby. While she engraves the tombstone, she writes only the word "Beloved". When Sethe gives suggestion about move from the house, Baby Suggs refuses by telling that each and every house of their country rafters with some dead Negro's grief. This comment prompts Sethe to think of her past, which she tries not to remember. Sethe cannot help

but recalls her past life in Sweet Home as a slave. Sethe endures a host of oppression in the self imposed valleys of memory.

> Ten minutes for seven letters. With another ten could she have gotten "Dearly" too? She had not thought to ask him and it bothered her still that it might have been possible-that for twenty minutes, a half hour, say, she could have had the whole thing, every word she heard the preacher say at the funeral (and all there was to say, surely) engraved on her baby's headstone: Dearly Beloved. (Morrison 18)

After the arrival of Paul D the other main character of the novel, Sethe shares her past life to him by remipiscences it. Sethe tells that when she is thirteen years old she comes to Sweet Home as a only female there. In that house Sethe chooses a man of her own and marries Halle, the son of Baby Suggs. She even recalls that when she is pregnant with Denver and still lactating to nurse her infant, two white boys not only physically violate her but also takes her breast milk. When she complains about the boys to Mrs. Garner, the boys has whipped her, leaving a tree-shaped scar on her back. The memory stays with Sethe just as the physical scar remains on her back.

> "After I left you, those boys came in there and took my milk. That's what they came in there for. Held me down and took it. I told Mrs. Garner on em. She had that lump and couldn't speak but her eyes rolled out tears. Them boys found out I told on em. Schoolteacher made one open up my back, and when it closed it made a tree. It grows there still." (Morrison 32)

Sethe's scar, a physical emblem of the painful past, causes Paul D to think of his own past. He remembers another slave named Sixo, who once walked 17 hours to see a woman, but had to turn back immediately upon reaching her in order to get back to Sweet Home in time to return to work. He also recalls his time working on a chain gang in Georgia. He is chained together to 45 other men who work all day sleep in wooden boxes like cages. They never speak each other, but somehow can understand each other by the looks in their eyes.This chain gang slaves are held together in bondage, but this shared oppression creates a strong community out of their shared suffering.

As a huge rain storm begins, the chain gang has stopped working. As the rain continues, the ground floods and dirt turns to mud. They dive through the mud and escapes to a near by forest and hide there. The slaves are rescued by the Cherokee people. Once free, Paul D does not know where to go, except generally north. Even

though Paul D is free, he doesn't have any home of his own. After his painful experiences, Paul D has to put the past behind him and repress his memories in order to survive.

After the arrival of Beloved, she continues to spur recollections of Sethe's past. Even though Sethe is not able to remember her happy days with her mother, she recollects a few incidents which clearly depicts the suffering of her mother. When Sethe is young, her mother use to work in smokehouse. Due to heavy work, Sethe and her mother couldn't spend much time to speak with each other. Even she doesn't sleep with her mother, because her mother is forced to sleep in the field which is far away from the cabin of Sethe. One day Sethe's mother takes her behind the smokehouse to show the burnt mark into her skin above her ribs.

Even her mother tells that Sethe can identify her mother by this mark. Unfortunately, Sethe's mother is hanged along with so many slaves and Sethe couldn't identify her mother even she is looked for her mother's mark. Sethe's memories of her mother shows how slavery separates children from their mother, and not allowing for maternal relationships. The in-discriminant killing of Sethe's mother along with other slaves shows how little slaves' lives are valued by their owners. The fact that Sethe could not even find her mother's body, nor know why her mother is killed. It emphasizes her lack of a relationship with her own mother as well as her total lack of agency in her own life.

The story of Sethe's birth represents the life of many African women. On the boat voyage Sethe's mother is raped many times by the white men but the resulting infants are threw away. Nan ,the other character keeps Sethe and gives her the name of the black man that is her father. Because she is the product of the black man. Beloved continues to operate as a force of memory, causing Sethe to remember something she has always forgotten or repressed. The story of her mother's journey from Africa evidences the cruelty of slavery that has persisted across generations.

In order to know about the past life of Sethe, Beloved asks about the diamond earrings of Sethe. On hearing the word diamond earrings Sethe remembers her wedding day. She tells Beloved that she gets the earrings from Mrs. Garner when she is married Halle. She has heard about Mrs. Garner's wedding and she wants some kind of celebration or meal to acknowledge her marrying Halle. But the Garner's doesn't allow Sethe to have any kind of wedding. As she wants a dress for her wedding she has stolen bits of fabric in order to eventually put together a dress. Mrs.

Garner discovers what Sethe is doing, and gives her a pair of earrings and even tells her that she want her and Halle to be happy together. Through this, Beloved encourages Sethe to revisit her memory.

Denver is so steeped in her mother's storytelling that she can recall the story of her own birth as if she herself remembers it. As Sethe has told her that, she is running away from Sweet Home while pregnant with Denver. She is in great pain and her legs and feet are swollen, but she is determined to get to her children (who has been sent ahead to Baby Suggs). Then, she hears someone passing by. She fears that it would be a white man, but it has turned out be a friendly white woman named Amy. Amy helps Sethe to deliver the baby and she leaves form the place. So Sethe names her baby as "Denver" thinks that it is a pretty name. Through this Denver's name memorializes Amy's kindness, keeping the past alive in a positive way.

Baby Suggs remembers her life as a slave in Sweet Home. When she and her son Halle comes to the Sweet Home, they thinks that it is the best place for them to live that too as a slave. When Baby Suggs is injured, her master, Mr. Garner doesn't allow her to work. Even her son does all the works for his mother and has brought freedom for Baby Suggs. Even she recalls the name which is given by her master, Mr. Garner. After getting the freedom, Garner sells her to the Bodwins and he gives her the name Jenny. But she doesn't like the name,but she keeps her name as Baby Suggs, because her husband use to call her Baby and her husband's name is Suggs.

Again, Sethe is forced to remember her past life. When Paul D shows the newspaper clipping, she recalls the incident of killing her own daughter. She even tells that in order to save her children from the slavery, she has killed her daughter out of love. In order to move into the future Paul D and Sethe remembering their past, recalls their memories. After knowing the terrible past of Sethe, Paul D is unable to live with her, so he leaves. Even Stamp Paid remembers the past life of Sethe and Baby Suggs. Sethe remembers more about Sweet Home. The slaves are treated like scientific specimens and animals by the Schoolteacher. This shows the cruel treatment of white owners towards their African slaves.

Paul D recalls the fleeing of Sweet Home with other slaves. The planned escape doesn't work, because Sethe becomes pregnant with Halle's child. When Paul D, Sixo and Sixo's Thirty-Mile Woman try to escape from the Sweet Home, they are caught. But the Thirty-Mile Woman escapes from the home. The Schoolteacher convinced that Sixo has gone mad and he has burned Sixo alive. After this incident, Paul D is

brought back to Sweet Home in chains. Through these memories, Toni Morrison depicts the bitter experience of the main characters.

Memory is the struggle of a human being against their self power and relative to Sethe's insatiable efforts to forget, it is plausible to argue that memory is the struggle against forgetting. Through this novel *Beloved*, Toni Morrison suggests that the crisis of Sethe is by no means unique and thus memory is self destructive struggle power. Some of them has sweet memories and some of them has bitter memories. Through this novel *Beloved*, Toni Morrison portrays the memories of the main characters as more bitterness rather than the sweetness.

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Aditanar College of Arts and Science
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Certificate

This is to certify that J. SRIMATHI, St. MARY'S COLLEGE, TUTICORIN participated / presented paper entitled MEMORY : MORE BITTER THAN SWEET IN TONI MORRISON'S "BELOVED" at the One Day State Level Seminar on " LITERARY THEORIES: BEFORE AND AFTER" organised by the Post Graduate and Research Department of English, Aditanar College of Arts and Science, Tiruchendur held on 27th September 2019.

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Displacement and Fragmentation in Amulya Malladi's *The Mango Season* and *A House for Happy Mothers*

A dissertation submitted to

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by

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled submitted **Displacement and Fragmentation in Amulya Malladi's *The Mango Season* and *A House for Happy Mothers*** to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University for the award of the Degree of Master of Arts in English Literature is a work done by Suriya Narayani A. during the year 2019-2020, and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

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SEPTEMBER 2020

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PREFACE

The thesis on Amulya Malladi's *The Mango Season* and *A House for Happy Mothers* draws the study of homeland, cultural identity and clashes, displacement, fragmentation, feeling of loss, hope, memories and ethnicity. The life of Priya from *The Mango Season* exposes the two different cultures of Eastern and Western culture. The other novel *A House for Happy Mothers* is about the loss of unborn child and the other feels about the child's future. The sense of emotional attachments to one another can be felt through the simple writings of Malladi. The feeling and affection is debilitating. The large part of the corpus of diasporic writings explores the theme of home and feelings of loss. Both these novels reflect the emotional attachments and how they connect everything with memories and hope.

The thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter **Introduction** throws light on the perception of literature in general, Diasporic Literature, Contemporary writings in the field of diaspora, Amulya Malladi and her works.

Chapter two entitled, **Cultural Clashes** analyses the deep roots of culture of both motherland and foreign land. Then it shows how the fragmentation occurs when the root tries to adapt to its new land. These divisions therefore bring the differentiation And clashes between the home and homeland.

In the third chapter, **Presence and Absence of Child** deals with the emotions, feelings and attachments to an unborn child and a born child. The importance of child in a family is firmly pointed out and also the importance of education to a child given by the parent and the environment.

The fourth chapter, **Memories and Hope** highlights the nostalgic moments brought by the memories and hope which gives hope, faith and confident to achieve something. Memories and hope brings happiness to all characters. Everything one does has a connection with our memories and those give hope. So happiness brings positive thoughts.

The final chapter sums up all the important aspects dealt in the preceding chapters.

The researchers has consistently referred to and resorted to the guidelines prescribed by MLA Handbook 7th Edition for the preparation of the thesis

Chapter One

Introduction

The term 'Diaspora' comes from the words dia meaning 'away' and speirein meaning 'scatter' or 'sow, a word of Greek origin, refers to the dispersal throughout the world of people with the same territorial origin. A descriptive notion, dispersion is often given religious or ideological connotations such as in the Hebrew concept of *galut* (exile), which is imbued with messianic aspirations of 'Return'. Understandings of the diasporic condition may vary both within and between Diasporas.

Diasporians may wish to be absorbed into their new environment, but when they attach to their dispersion a particular significance that merits enduring loyalty, they attempt to remain distinct from the 'others' as a diasporic community. Aviv says that Diaspora term was originated as a result of exile in Deuteronomy "thou shalt be a dispersion in all kingdoms of the earth" (3). Its use began to develop from this original sense when the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek. The word diaspora then was used to refer to the population of Jews exiled from Israel in 607 BCE by the Babylonians, and from Judea in 70 CE by the Roman Empire.

The first diasporic experiences of the Jewish people came well before the rise of Christianity. In Jewish history it represents a concept which has meaning for different periods in the millennial existence of the Jewish people. It has been used to describe the status of Jews during the Babylonian captivity in the sixth century B.C. Diaspora has also been utilized to characterize the flourishing Jewish community that lived in Alexandria shortly before the rise of Christianity. The more recent use of the term, however, has to do with the position of the Jews that resulted from the abortive revolt against the Roman occupation of Palestine in the first century.

The subsequent destruction of the temple at Jerusalem in 70 A.D. occasioned a mass exodus of Palestine's Jewish population. This led to the creation of a dispersed Jewish community which eventually scattered all over the globe. The Jews who lacked a 'homeland' for two millennia thought about it constantly and the idea of return to it remained part of their collective consciousness. For Jews, 'diaspora' has had a specific meaning historically, that of exile under conditions of minority status and of powerlessness. It has also connoted a continuing sense of insecurity, for Jews have been the proverbial 'Other' in terms of religion, dress, customs, cuisine, and languages. They were considered as scapegoats and have been subjected to forcible conversion, expulsion, and massacres.

William Safran has given a controversial definition which can be applied to expatriate minority communities whose members share several of the six characteristics that he lists: the first one requires that the members of the community or their ancestors be scattered from a place considered a centre to a peripheral one; the second requires that they keep a collective consideration of the place of origin, the third that they regard themselves, independently from the real situation, as rejected totally or partially by the host country; the fourth that they perceive their homeland as the true place where they belong and where they would return if this is possible; the fifth entails a moral or ethical commitment with the maintenance or reestablishment of the homeland; and the sixth requires that they relate to the homeland in some way and that "their ethno communal consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by the existence of such a relationship" (84).

Diaspora may result in a loss of nostalgia for a single home as people 're-root' in a series of meaningful displacements. In this sense, individuals may have 'multiple homes', at least in the broad compass of their mental horizon, throughout their

diaspora, with different reasons for maintaining some form of attachment to each. First used in the *Septuagint* diaspora suggests a dislocation from the nation-state or geographical location of origin and a relocation in one or more nation-states, territories or countries. If the gypsies were read as the absolute instance of a nomadic tribe the profound historicity of the Jewish people gave their diaspora a specially privileged position in diasporic theory.

Diasporic theory, then, uses the Jewish example as the ethnic model for purposes of analysis or at least as its point of departure. But Jewish Diasporas were never totally exclusivist and met the nation-state halfway in its border zones. Diasporic consciousness is also defined by Clifford as living "loss and hope as a defined tension" (312). Therefore, diaspora communities have their own particular vision of the claim, not easily translatable to other communities, and not even to the same community at different historical moments. Thence, such manifestations can be better analysed and interpreted by bearing in mind the fluidity and evolution of such engagements with the homeland.

Jewish 'homelands', for instance, were constantly being recreated: in Babylon, in the Rhineland, in Spain, in Poland, and even in America with varying degrees of autonomy (Smith 117). Another, but quite different, early historical reference is the Black African diaspora. Beginning in the sixteenth century, the slave trade meant forcibly exporting Africans out of their native lands and dispersing them into the "New World" parts of North and South America, the Caribbean and other parts of the globe that slave labour was exploited. These early historical references reveal that diaspora is not always voluntary (1996).

The Middle Passage marks one trajectory of the triangulated form of circulation, the movement of people across the globe in the early modern period

resulting in conquests, genocides, and the trade of spices, sugar, and slaves. Some scholars estimate that as many as twelve million West Africans were sold into slavery and forcibly exiled to the 'New World' during the almost 400-year period of legalised slavery which began in 1502 and ended in the mid-nineteenth century. This early trans-Atlantic African diaspora resulted in numerous fractured diasporas.

Another phase in the diaspora history starts around 1830's with the phase of transportation of indenture labour from Asia, especially from the Indian subcontinent to mitigate the demands for expansion of the colonial economy. The modern globalised world has experienced (experiencing) another phase of the diaspora in the 1960's and 70's, especially the migration of skilled labour from the former colonies to the metropolitan centers. Diaspora, in the rapidly changing world that one now inhabits, speaks of diverse groups of displaced persons and communities moving across the globe.

In this increasingly globalised world, it has become commonplace to have this diasporic experience. The nature of the human world has changed so drastically that it is not surprising to encounter a person pledging allegiance to four or five homes in different parts of the world. If we move away from the origins of the Jewish diaspora, the Indian one has acquired a multiplicity, the indentured labour, the early migrants in search of trade, adventure or prosperity, the political exiles, the professionals; the seventies witnessed the emigration of engineering and medical graduates, later came the IT professionals clustering Silicon Valley and now one can see the effects of globalization. Each one works differently. History tells us that these different phases overlap. They do not terminate when a new phase begins.

The Indian diaspora is the largest within the Asian diaspora as the community scattered around the world is over twenty five million. It is considered to be the

second largest diasporic community in the world. The Indian diaspora that has its own spatio-temporal dimensions just like any other diaspora refers to the people of Indian origin who have migrated to foreign lands from the territories that comprise the Indian republic.

The Indian diaspora is significant as a sizeable number of Indians; approximately twenty million are spread across the globe, constituting an important and in some respects unique force in world culture. Being the largest diaspora in the world, it has a significant global presence along with a history that dates back to the Buddhist era or even further back to the time of the Indus Valley civilisation. This builds up the significance of diaspora that provides India with whole new dimensions for reinterpreting itself.

Though a majority of critics date the seeds of Indian diaspora to the time when Buddhist missionaries from India travelled to new lands, especially to Ceylon and Southeast Asia under the Indian rule of Ashoka in order to spread the message of Buddhism, but history proves that at all times, trade has been a moving factor behind Indian emigration. The trajectory of Indian diaspora can be divided into three phases, ancient, medieval and modern.

The ancient phase generally refers to the movement of Indian labourers and craftsmen as well as others desirous of exploring avenues in new lands, and thus migrating more freely with the opening of trade routes in the Mediterranean. But some of the Indologists trace the history of Indian diaspora to remote antiquity and assert that the genesis of Indian diaspora can be traced to the times of Mahabharata, followed by the establishment of Indian colonies abroad at the turn of Christian era, while some historians date the beginning of Indian diaspora to third millennium B.C. when Harappan and Indus traders began moving to Mesopotamia.

Then came the second phase of the medieval times when European imperialism further aggravated the movement that had already begun in the ancient era. Trade took Indians to East Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East. The rise in Islamic conversion also perpetuated Hindu emigration for the purpose of propagating Hindu culture. But it was mainly under the British rule that Indians starting crossing the borders into new lands in more numbers as indentured labourers, a term used for referring to those who during the British rule in India went overseas, especially in other British colonies across the globe as labourers on contract basis in return for a pay.

These were popular then as the global working class of the British Empire and they formed the nursery of the modern Indian diaspora. These people dispersed over different corners of the world and remained there procreating further generations of diaspora. Caribbean was a major attraction for these indentured labourers in light of the abolition of slavery in the mid-nineteenth century and the lack of available labour there. Most of these labourers continued to stay behind long after their contracts were terminated.

The modern era that began twentieth century onwards saw a steep rise in emigration and Indians, forming a major chunk among world immigrants, especially due to the lure of other industrially advanced nations. And in contemporary times this is generally referred to as the 'new diaspora,' which pertains to postmodernist diaspora of advanced capitalism in contrast to the old one of the ancient and medieval eras comprising diasporas of indentured labourers, slaves and traders. The new diaspora to a great extent inherits its diasporic identities from the previous diaspora. The preferred destinations for Indian immigrants in the medieval and the modern eras have been America and the UK.

America has a long history of receiving Indians into its fold. Vinay Lal traces the history of Indians moving to the United States to the time when about a hundred years ago, peasants from Punjab landed on the west coast of America to work in lumber mills and agricultural fields. And soon Indian students followed, some imbued with the Indian freedom spirit and indulging in political activities in America for the sake of their homeland.

This particular section nurtured strong native sentiments and the fearlessness to express the same even in a foreign land. Their efforts to establish themselves smoothly in America met with opposition there. And then the game of discrimination started, beginning with the Immigration Act of 1917 to restrict Asians from entering the United States and later depriving natural citizenship to anyone there other than 'white.' Indians couldn't own land and by 1914, the number of Indians in California had gone down considerably. But then again 1940 onwards, things began to improve and then almost twenty-five years later America witnessed the regularised entry of Indian professionals.

Today Indians live in large numbers in America. They live as an integral part of the American society as doctors, politicians, and writers and so on. Traces of racialism still exist but largely things move on smoothly. The American society has slowly learnt to accept sharing its land with immigrants and making them a part of the American set-up. India and Indianness are now no longer a thorn in the American eye. In fact, there is a growing popularity of Indianness among the Americans in the form of food, healthy way to life and so on. Yoga for instance has become part of routine of everyday American life.

However, this is not to say that all Indians settled there are well suited with the American way of life, as problems of maladjustment do still persist. A famous

American travelogue says of India as the cradle of the human race, the birth place of human speech, the mother of history, the grandmother of legend and great grandmother of tradition. Practically speaking, diasporic literature is also instrumental in creating good will, a cordial relationship and in spreading values, virtues and universal peace and it serves as a link between India and the rest of the world.

Unlike in the past, today the Indian intellectuals and people all over the world are being enlightened by the writers of the Indian diaspora like, V.S. Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, Jhumpa Lahiri, Rohinton Mistry, Bharati Mukherjee, Anita Deasai, M. G. Vassanji, and in rediscovering the diverse cosmopolitan culture of India which was made possible by adopting the technique of reinventing India by depicting ancient legends, traditions, rituals, human values in a different and distinct form dipped in the fragrance of nostalgia than portrayed by fellow novelists. These writers have the advantage of looking at their homeland from a distance. The sense of detached attachment enables them to have a clear perception of their mother land and appear to discover their Indianness. This sense, help them to define and redefine India in a judicious way.

Naipaul's were Hindu Brahmins, back in India their ancestors were strict vegetarians but their life style was transformed in the new found society. Chicken, fish etc. found an easy way to Naipaul's menu. In the wardrobes of the females, skirts were replaced by sarees, also the Indian languages vanished and Naipaul and his sibling could speak only English. Naipaul's novel *A House for Mr. Biswas* is the story of Mohan Biswas, an Indo-Trinidadian whose sole aim in life is focused on owing a house of his own. The undercurrent of the story reflects the aspirations of Naipaul's father from a post-colonial perspective. The Tulsi family symbolizes the Hindu

immigrant's way of life specifically in Trinidad's traditional society and in the Afro-Asian world as a whole.

V. S. Naipaul's characters, like Mohan Biswas in *A House for Mr. Biswas* or Ganesh Ramsumair in *The Mystic Masseur* are individuals who are generations away from their original homeland India, but their heritage gives them a consciousness of their past. Naipaul's characters are governed by nostalgia and memories of the past associated with the land of migration. For them their homeland India is more than a geographical portrayal of an imagination. Their predicament can be explained in Rushdie's words: "the past is a country from which we have all emigrated, that its loss is part of our common humanity" (12).

Fictions by Indian women writers constitute a major segment of contemporary Indian diaspora literature. The women novelists of Indian diaspora are Bharati Mukherjee, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Anjana Appachana, Kiran Desai, Sujata Massey, Indira Ganeshan, Meera Syal and Jhumpa Lahiri. These writers have made their homeland memorable and popular by writing about it. The diasporic Indians too, do not break their relationship with the ancestral land. There is a search for continuity and 'ancestral impulse', an effort to look for their roots. Settlement in alien land makes them experience dislocation. Dislocation can be considered as a break with the old identity. They experience the sense of loneliness in an alien land feel as they face non acceptance by the host society and also experience ethnic discrimination.

Diasporic Literature is a very vast concept and an umbrella term that includes in it all those literary works written by the authors outside their native country, but these works are associated with native culture and background. In this wide context, all those writers can be regarded as diasporic writers, who write outside their country but remained related to their homeland through their works. Diasporic literature has

its roots in the sense of loss and alienation, which emerged as a result of migration and expatriation. Generally, diasporic literature deals with alienation, displacement, existential rootlessness, nostalgia, quest of identity. It also addresses issues related to amalgamation or disintegration of cultures. It reflects the immigrant experience that comes out of the immigrant settlement. Uma Parameswaran has defined it as follows: First is one of nostalgia for the homeland left behind mingled with fear in a strange land...The fourth is when they have 'arrived' and start participating in the larger world of politics and national issues. (165)

The immigrants attempt to assimilate, adapt and amalgamate with the society of their host country. The marginal groups try to guard themselves against the dominant host group. The first generation immigrants are always concerned with keeping the social, cultural baggage which consists of their religion, language, music, art, dress, cuisine, etc. intact. Conscious attempts are made by the diasporic communities to pass their traditions to the future generation. Some of these elements have vanished, some have persisted or survived, others have experienced assimilation, syncretism or change, and few elements ought to be rejuvenated.

The immigrants in these situations are compelled to feel that they stand on the borderline belonging neither to their motherland nor their adopted country. In their attempt to integrate with the adopted culture while maintaining their inheritance, they develop a dual identity. Their efforts for assimilation and failure to do so dishearten them. The feeling of rootlessness, alienation, confusion, nostalgia, dislocation and sufferings due to discrimination on the basis of race, religion, culture and language concludes into conflicts, fight for identity and on the other hand lead to birth of feeling of marginality in the minority group. This results in the creation of a fractured identity.

As they torn between the two places and two cultures and often languages; the expatriate writer navigates a new literary space. The diasporic literature arises under these circumstances. The broken psyche of the immigrants sheds off its psychosis into writing. Therefore, the migrant writer feels a forceful need to write and with their multicultural ethos and a profound understanding of social, cultural and economical realities around them, they have been successful in transforming their experiences into writings. Another important reason for writing by the creative talent in the diasporic community is to make their existence recognized. The very act of creation is a purposeful effort to form a cultural identity.

Diasporic writing unfolds these experiences of unsettlement and dislocation, at some or the other level. A diasporic text can be investigated in terms of location, dislocation and relocation. The changing designation of home and accompanying nervousness about homelessness and unfeasibility of going back are recurrent themes in diasporic literature.

The expatriate literature also deals mostly with the inner conflict in the context of cultural displacement. The immigrants away from the families fluctuate between crisis and reconstruction. They are thrice alienated from the native land they left behind, from their new host country and their children. Diaspora literature is in constant conversation with the metahome. The longing to regain lost home often culminates in the creation of a different version of home. As Salman Rushdie observers "physical alienation from India at almost inevitably means that we will not be capable of redeeming precisely the thing that was lost, that will, in short, create fictions not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indians of mind." (10)

Nostalgia, loss, betrayal and duty are the foundations of new homes as diasporic protagonist adjust to new countries. In adjusting to new countries, issues of acculturation and assimilation become the central point as these immigrants negotiate the unbalance of their hyphenated identities. Usually, the first generation diaspora clings to food and clothes as the most obvious markers of Indianness that sets them apart and highlights their difference. The insistence on this difference is often a conscious declaration of belonging to another place. On the other hand, second generation diaspora declines and removes such identity markers to assimilate the dominant culture.

The South Asian migrants, or their ancestors, left the subcontinent as part of various migrant patterns. In general, four currents of South Asian migration are emphasized. Each of these currents has had its own specific background, characteristics, and conditions. Some of which caused variations in the way migrants reproduced 'Indian Culture' abroad and/or how they were received by the host societies. Moreover, these patterns differ in terms of age, numbers, and the historical contexts in which they emerge. In some areas, like East Africa, South Asian communities have lived for six or more generations, while in other areas, like the Gulf States they are recent arrivals. In most areas, they compromise small minorities, although in Mauritius and Fiji they are politically and economically dominant.

The first and eldest migration flow was that of traders who began leaving the South Asian subcontinent in the earlier times and continue to do so until today in search of trade and business. Indian Costal Communities had already developed all kinds of profitable ties with East Asia, East Africa, and Central Asia in pre-colonial times. One of the key characteristics of this so called 'trade diaspora' may be the fact that most of it consisted of 'temporary' or 'circular' migration.

The second important current was that of Indian Indentured labourers who left to replace the freed slaves in the nineteenth-century plantation economies. Although most of them may have intended to return to the subcontinent, many ended up staying to create new homelands abroad. The main difference with the trade diaspora is the fact that much of this migration was 'forced' and not voluntary.

The third current includes various migrations after the Second World War. First, many Muslims migrated from India to East and West Pakistan, while Hindus departed from Pakistan to migrate to India. Hindus in Pakistan as well Muslims in India did not feel that the new governments were able to protect their minority rights. Meanwhile, many highly educated professionals left India to find jobs as teachers, lawyers and doctors in Europe, the US and Canada. This has recently occurred again with the exodus of many IT professionals. Furthermore, numerous migrants have found work as construction workers or housekeepers in the Middle East since 1970s. Here some of them have been 'temporary migrants', whereas others are intentionally or unintentionally never returned.

Rushdie describes his identity as an Indian writer in England as being made up of bits and fragments from here and there. In *Imaginary Homelands* (1991), Rushdie asserts that literature is an expression of nationality and books are always praised for using motifs and symbols out of the author's own national tradition … and when the influences at work upon the writer can be seen to be wholly internal to the culture from which he springs. (66)

This very idea influenced all diasporic writers worldwide. Living in one country and writing about their own has been the primordial purpose of diasporic writers nationalist in thoughts, native in culture and indigenous in languages are the main instruments of diasporic writings. Being an immigrant, Rushdie says that the

immigrant who loses his roots, language and social norms "is obliged to find new ways of describing himself, new ways of being human" (66). He clarifies what the fictional preoccupation of these writers is "exile or emigrants or expatriates are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back even at the risk of being mutated into pillars of salt..." (15).

Rushdie's second novel, *Midnight's Children*, published in 1981 won him the Booker Prize for Fiction. The novel narrates the main events in the history of India through the story of a pickle-factory worker named Salmeen Sinai, one of the 1001 children born when India won independence in 1947. Rushdie has put diasporic sensibility in his other eight novels also.

Indian Writing in English by women is a distinct phenomenon today. The creative output of the Indian women writers, especially novelists, is marked by the choice of English, the medium of expression and expression of a woman's reaction to the varied situation in which tradition and modernity clash as well as synthesize. Indian women writers are dynamic witnesses to the peculiar socio-cultural historic, political conflicts faced by women especially Indian. There are several Indian women writers settled in USA, Canada, Britain and other parts of the world. Mukherjee is one among the Immigrant writers.

Being a prey of racial discrimination as an immigrant and expatriate, Mukherjee understands the pain of violence and terror stricken people. Mukherjee's works communicate the pain, anger and varied emotions of people who face the violence in one way or the other. Most of the novels and stories of Mukherjee have their settings in colonial India. In *The Tiger's Daughter* (1972), Mukherjee tries to draw the attention towards the labour-employer problem and the rise of trade union leaders and their requirement of better working conditions and wages. She is also

voicing her worries about the poor relationships between the employers and workers of then India.

The end of the novel makes the readers think that if everyone gets justice and equal treatment there would be no violence and people would live in harmony. *Jasmine* (1989) is a novel through which Mukherjee tries to untie the complicated layers of cross-cultural reality through a sequence of adventures which the heroine undertakes. Through her protagonist, Mukherjee gives the message that one should not lose courage and heart and it is the fighter who is able to come out victorious from the difficulty.

Mukherjee's fiction echoes the contemporary social realities and problems and she interlaces her stories around those contexts. Mukherjee was born in a colonial India and she grew as a writer in Independent India, that is why settings of her some novels and stories are in pre-independent India and the story extends from there on. Thus, the fiction of Mukherjee depicts the concern and sensitivity by portraying the ill effects of violence in her works.

The East or West confrontation, or the clash between tradition and modernity, is the impulse behind the works of celebrated migrant writers, such as Syal, Shauna Singh Baldwin, Parameswaran, Divakaruni, Anjana Appachana and Desai. The theme of migration that leads to self-discovery, with a negation of the traditions of the country of the region, is a frequent one among migrant authors which can be seen in Bharthi Kirchner's *Shiva Dancing* (1998) and Ameena Meer's *Bombay Talkie* (1994).

The recent writers are Anita Rau Badami, Vineeta Vijayaraghavan and Divakaruni. Anita Rau Badami's *The Hero Walk* (2000) discusses the themes of home, identity, tradition and modernity in a subtle manner. In Vijayaraghawan's *Motherland: The Other side of My Heart* (2001), the protagonist is Maya. She is a fifteen-year-old

teenager who is sent to India after she met with a car accident with her boyfriend Steve, who had been drunk-driving after a party. Maya's family that appears in the story is from her mother's side, an absolute high-caste Malayali Nair family. It was here that she grew up until the age of four, after which she was sent to her parents in New York. She thought first that Ammamma was her mother.

Thus the comprehensive title of the book, *Motherland: The Other Side of My Heart,* is very evocative. For an immigrant writer, the act of writing itself becomes a form of purgation, an external projection of the inner chaos and the autobiographical mode, becomes the most suited vehicle for conveying the angst experiences during the course of becoming a foreign citizen. Divakaruni's writings do come under this purview. *Sister of My Heart* (1999) is the story of two cousins, Anju and Sudha. They tell their stories alternatively and the novel discloses through their bifurcated first person narrations. Anju and Sudha narrate their stories alternatively.

The novelist bestows them with not only the capacity to tell their own stories but also invests them with the power to figure out and shape their reality. The Indian immigrant woman arrives in the United States with mixed feelings. The mind frame merges the experience of displacement spurred by physical migration. Along with this the woman remains possessor of the culture, the preserver of heritage and it is psychologically programmed to perform preordained roles that have been defined for her by traditional patriarchy at home in India and by extension abroad.

The worldwide dispersal of South Asian peoples from countries such as India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan and Bangladesh is now a sociologically acknowledged phenomenon known as the South Asian Diaspora. Multiple migrations from South Asia to Europe and from Africa to Europe and the United States and multiculturalism are vital facts of dispersion of such magnitude and dimension. The tensions that arise

in works of immigrant writers come not just from simple craving and loyalties divided between the original and adopted homelands, but also from immigration's link to colonialism and neo imperialism.

Colonial powers exercised the influence of their culture and language on colonized peoples through both forceful and artful transmission. They also instigated migrations of large populations from one colonized place to another in the interest of their immeasurable transcontinental economic ventures. Neo-colonial or imperial powers maintain these legacies through the global dissemination of their politics, culture, language and business enterprises.

In the process, they also draw immigrants from different parts of the world to the centre of imperialistic power, with promises of better opportunities and rights, in comparison to their less developed homelands. Migration or immigration has directly or indirectly affected several generations of contemporary writers writing in English, engendering hybridity and cultural complexity within them and urging them to grapple with multiple cultures and countries and the tensions between them. Amulya Malladi is one among those immigrant writers. The celebrations of the promises of immigration are emphasised strongly in her works.

Malladi was born in 1974 in a small town Sagar, in the central state of Madhya Pradesh in India. Due to her father's occupation, Malladi lived all over the country ranging from the Himalayan foothills to the Southern city of Madras. Malladi first earned her Bachelor's Degree in Electrical and Electronics Engineering from Osmania University, Hyderabad. She followed it up with a Master's Degree in Journalism from the University of Memphis, Tennessee.

After graduating from the University of Memphis, she lived and worked in Silicon Valley. She is the author of seven novels, including *The Mango Season* and *A*

House for Happy Mothers. Her books have been translated into several languages, including Dutch, German, Spanish, Danish, Romanian, Serbian, and Tamil. She has a bachelor's degree in engineering and a master's degree in journalism. She works as a marketing executive for a global medical device company. After living in the United States for several years, Malladi currently resides in Copenhagen, Denmark with her husband Søren Rasmussen and two sons.

Malladi's journalistic interests in looking at the happenings of the world and their impact upon people have helped her a lot as a fictional writer. Malladi has acknowledged the fact that she has gained confidence through her exposition to transcontinental cultural aspects. And what she has felt about people and places in reality, she wants to present it in the form of an imaginative exercise.

Most of the influences that one sees on the characters have come from the novelist's association with the different places and countries she has lived in. Malladi's fidelity to real events constitutes the tale craft of Malladi's writings. The base structure of her tales is the real socio-politico-ethnic news events of the world from 1978 to 1984; but Malladi does not present the events objectively as newspaper reports. She subjectively renders them as stories with imaginary characters and conclusion. In other words, Malladi presents not only news but also her views and that distinguishes her tale craft. Malladi has to her credit seven novels. They are *A Breath of Fresh Air* (2002), *The Mango Season* (2003), *Serving Crazy with Curry* (2004), *Song of the Cuckoo Bird* (2005) *The Sound of Language* (2007) *A House for Happy Mothers* (2016) and *The Copenhagen Affair* (2017).

Malladi has also incorporated the features of journalistic writings to strengthen her analysis. From the literary survey it has been found that the recurring themes such as South Asian Diaspora experiences, Reflection of Cultural Clashes and Dilemmas,

Culinary Aspect. Food and transnational identities, Familial relationships, Gendering, Ethnicity, Multiculturalism and the conflict between modernity and traditional values are prominent in the works of Mallabi. In her article "Mother Daughters and Lost Fathers", Ruth Mavis has portrayed Bibi's problematic relationship with her mother in Mallabi's The Mango Season.

Chapter Two

Cultural Clashes

Portrayal of the various issues generated by the experience of migrancy and diaspora, such as displacement, alienation, rootlessness, fragmentation, racial discrimination, marginalization, crisis in identity, cultural confrontation and many others are largely portrayed in contemporary Indian Writing in English. In the present global scenario, with interaction and intermingling of the cultures, the new routes and modes of thinking about diaspora identities are escalating. Various theorists now believe that the discourse and narratives of nation, ethnicity or race, which are the types of belonging. These factors place individuals in the assurance of roots which are not appropriate any longer when the immigrants are thinking in different ways about their relations to the new place, home, and their past. As Uma Parmeswaran believes and claims, "Both exile and home is here, within the new homeland" (107).

The present chapter examines the reflection of Diaspora Theory and its various aspects in literature by discussing features of gender discrimination, rootlessness and the fragmentation of cultural displacement. *The Mango Season* is a novel by Malladi, in this novel the female protagonist Priya, explores the struggles of cultural displacement. Cultural displacement and dilemma are basically the results, which develop conflicting ideologies in the mind of the protagonist. The cultural clash is common in America and in India. It is important to study a psyche which is affected due to cultural displacement and due to a newly adapted culture. It is also essential to note that serious misunderstandings can and do occur not just in cross cultural interactions and encounters but also within one's own culture, among its own people.

The Indian family has traditionally asked Women to forfeit their own ambition and desires for the sake of family unity. Any challenge to the family or by extension to the Indian community, is seen as a betrayal of national cultural values as the site for preservation of India, its culture, all its tradition is precisely the family. There is an element of connection to one another and the historical understanding which needs to be taken into consideration. The strong sense of connection to family, home, and to the homeland is maintained by describing the cultural practices and the way of life.

Priya Rao left India and studied in America, the Western culture, whereas her family is stuck in the Eastern culture, India. She belongs to Telugu Brahmin family, who follow their tradition and culture strictly. Priya finds a job in Silicon Valley and lives there for seven years. When she comes back to India, she finds it odd. Even her homeland seems to be like a foreign land and there arises the difference between home and homeland. This temporary displacement appears as permanent and the permanent looks temporary to her. Soon she discovers that her parents have planned on arranging marriage to a suitable Indian boy. It was the season for the harvesting of the mangoes, the hottest time of the year and a time full of ritual and ceremony. As a child, she loves this season the best but, after years away, she finds the heat of an Indian summer overwhelming and everything about India seems different- dirtier and more chaotic than she remembers.

> Even though I was raised in a society where arranged marriage was the norm, I always thought it was barbaric to expect a girl of maybe twenty-one years to marry a man she knew even less than the milkman who, for the past decade, had been mixing water with the milk he sold her family. (1)

The cultural displacement and fragmentation of the roots starts here. The root which has been rooted for twenty years on the land has been pulled away and was

rooted in another land faraway from its homeland. The root which has been pulled away struggles to adapt itself to the new land and slowly consumes the western culture. The root withstands into a new culture, but when it returns back to its former homeland after seven years, the soil which is rich in development for twenty years seems like non fertile. When the talk of marriage takes place particularly about her uncle Anand, who married only for love, the family alienates the girl and mentally treats her badly. Priya can only guess what will happen when she reveals her own engagement that she has left behind a fiancé in America, who is of an entirely different race and religion.

The members within a society normally function on a grading or a hierarchical structure. Elders are accorded particular position within the community and their significant position is very plainly accepted. Western society is an activity centred society, whereas eastern society is relationship centred. Marriages are cultural as well as religious commitment in India. The respective families of both bride and groom arrange majority of the marriages. While selecting the spouse for their son or daughter both the parents favour the equality of the family in respect of status, financial position, religion, caste, and language. India has a large society of diverse cultures and communities.

In contrast, western society is an activity centred society. The leading characteristic of contemporary western society is emphasized on individualism. Nick's mother Frances doesn't think about Priya's background whereas she is immensely captivated by the Indianness. When they meet for the first time, she tells her, "I've never spoken to an Indian before, but I love curry" (70). Frances is a delightful woman who always greets Priya by giving her gifts on her birthday but such liking and sociability is absent in the relationship between Priya and her mother.

In the novel *The Mango Season*, the story was mostly set in Priya's grandparent's house in Hyderabad, where the women in the family gathered to make mango pickle. The one obsession that Priya does look ahead to is the fruit of her memories, mangoes. When she was at her teens, summer was all about mangoes, rich, flourishing, and grown sugary mangoes with juice that would trickle down her cheeks, hands, and neckline. This season matches with the monsoons and the wedding period in India.

There is an affectionate family custom where all the brothers, sisters and their spouses come together for a couple of days in their family home to make the mango pickle. Malladi expertly interlinks the procedure of making mango pickle. *The Mango Season* is an insight into the works of Indian families and their Hindu rituals, traditions and the hierarchies in which the male chief of the family reigns. The mangoes are just as tasty and mouth-watering as Priya recollects:

> I remembered stealing mangos from the neighbour's tree and biting into them with the relish of a theft well done. I remembered sneaking into the kitchen…I remembered sitting with Nate and eating raw mangoes with salt and chili powder, our lips burning and our tongues smacking because of the tartness. (9)

Priya knows her extended family is very strict in following homecoming ritual, which needs to be held properly. The fundamental rule is that "you cannot come home without a substantial amount of gifts, irrespective of your financial predicament" (37). Buying gifts is a diplomatic mission because one can't give gifts without diplomatic intentions because it may offend others. Therefore, Priya has to be a little diplomatic while fulfilling the norms of her family tradition. In the same house, she experiences family politics and cultural clash between the members of her extended family.

The battle between Lata and Radha is fought with taunts. Radha holds her head high because her husband is the managing director of an electronic company and they live rather lavishly compared to Lata. Radha is still irritated that her wedding sari costs less than the sari her parents gave to their daughter-in-law, Lata, for her wedding. Priya does not want to give up her live-in-relationship with the African-American Nick and does not dare to reveal bout him to her family in India. This has developed a sense of estrangement. The novel *The Mango Season* is an insight into the working of Indian families, their traditions, and their values. The main distinction came across while going through the storyline in this book. It came to an understanding of the two cultures, Indian and Western, relating to marriage.

Priya does not abide by Indian marriage institutional customs because she is engaged to an American boyfriend, Nick. While she came at a significant time to let her parents be acquainted with Nick, she is suppressed by the sounds of her family discussing about her marriage to a nice Indian boy, and talking about her uncle who for they committed a great mistake by marrying a woman from another Indian state for the sake of love.

The plot of this story brings about the most significant issues between this fictional tale and the conventional problems that have existed in India and amongst Indians in America. While Priya is struggling to inform the family, and is reared of the moment in all her being, family life goes on, with its tensions, opposition, acceptance, denial, and most of all cooking. Cultures are conflicting like huge tectonic plates below the earth, while on the surface the women are busy cutting up and slicing mangoes. An individual who is successful in adjusting to a new culture is often not wholly successful at readjusting to the previous culture.

A person, who adjusts willingly is amenable to new ideas, and be content with the varying models of overseas living. The same individual may find readjustment unsuccessful upon returning to homeland since the new ideas clash with tradition. It is necessary to note that the misunderstandings can and do occur not just in cross-cultural connections and daily encounters but also within one's own culture, among its own people. Culture clashes are usually thought of as occurring between native Indians and foreigners, but a culture clash can also occur within the context of an Indian family.

In *The Mango Season*, Malladi reveals the cultural distress and clashes that Priya experiences when she is removed from her adopted culture and is forced to re-examine her native culture in the light of knowledge which she received by her stay in the foreign land. This novel is about Priya's struggle to retain all her roles: daughter, granddaughter, sister, lover and Indian. The story is intermingled with the expectations of Priya's mother, her father's compassion, her grandfather's treatment of her, sounds and smells of India, and the India that is foreign, yet well known to Priya, by showing the reader the faults in India.

She blames everything that is a part of Indian life. She also hates Indian food, she thinks Indian food takes so much time and it is too spicy to eat every day. Once Sowmya tells Priya: "You should learn to cook...What are you going to do when you get married? Make your husband eat outside food?" (40). There is no contest between outside food and homemade food in India. The food cooked at home by the wife is the best food, no restaurant food can be compared with that and in any case people generally do not spend money going to restaurant when you get home made food. Her understanding of the cultural differences leads her to feel estranged from her extended family in India.

When Priya arrives to her native land, she comes to know well that her parents are searching for some matches for her. And they also insist her to marry soon after the match fixes. But Priya comes with a top secret of her relationship with Nick. The views that Priya kept back about her wedding have gone when she gets back to India. To reveal she admits:

> I didn't want to go because as soon as I got there, my family would descend on me like vultures on a fresh carcass, demanding explanations, reasons, and trying to force me into marital harmony with some "nice Indian boy". I had to go because I had to tell them that I was marrying a nice American man. (3)

Even though Priya is raised in a culture where arranged marriage is the rule, she always thinks it barbaric to wait for a girl of may be twenty-one-years to wed a man she is acquainted with not as much as the milkman who, for the past decade, had been mixing water with the milk he sold her family. Priya assumes that most Indian women are expected to find only Indian men nice-looking; may be, it has a little to do with centuries of training. She has a runaway arranged marriage in United States. She has to US do her master's in Computer Science at Texas A and M by conveniently finding a job in Silicon Valley. There she discovers a number of reasons not to return to India because she knows that her family would try to compel her into marital harmony with a nice Indian boy.

Now, for Priya it is tricky coming home and facing her parents and the rest of the family, especially when she knows that, they would not be happy to understand her feelings, when they discover about Nick. Knowing that her family is orthodox, Priya anticipates that her American boyfriend Nick will be killed and she will be set fire by

her family members. The sense of separateness results on account of the ground reality of Priya's choice of life partner and the expectations of her family.

Generally the first generation settlers are a little unwilling to accept the new nation's culture. However, in the present novel, Priya is a first generation immigrant, who is well informed and holds a job at Silicon Valley and actually gets used to the western culture without any misgivings. During the course of her stay overseas, she accepts the nationality of a worldwide world and fails to remember the racial inequity that she was fed on as a child. She was made to appear among the westerners as a strange being. She was made to realize that they have a diverse set of ethics and Indians are morally or ethically better.

Thus, as a new immigrant she started out with only Indian friends. Her circle grew as she mutually grew. She says, "I had somewhere down the line stopped looking at skin colour" (213). Priya carries a hybrid identity that transforms her from being an outsider to being the citizen of the host country and finally to being a world citizen. In India, no single culture exists. Too many cultures have crossed and combined here, and produced a hybridity in us which cannot be separated now. The Indian cultural identity has acquired a varied composition with today's youth who are on the move in search of better jobs.

Malladi's *The Mango Season* offers the reader an interesting trip into the life of Priya Rao and the tests and troubles in her life, as she is faced with the mission of telling her family that she is engaged to an American. Malladi demonstrates the cultural shock/clashes that many immigrants experience, once they leave their adopted culture and enter with diverse principles into their native land. She is so much impressed and absorbed in western values that she loses her unique Indian identity

and feels like a stranger in her own motherland. America has given her innumerable chances to discover her true self. The Indian culture is old fashioned. Everything that is not accepted in India is accepted in America.

Receiving permission from her Grandfather is a most important step for Priya. Her feeling of guilt closes the doorway to let her tell the truth. If she tells about Nick then she thinks that the entire family would desert her. Priya's contentment lies in the hands of her grandfather. When he accepts, everyone would follow him and Priya's path will be clear. Priya's dilemma becomes a personal anguish when she cannot inform her family that she is engaged to an American.

In the novel, Priya narrates the incident that she experienced in her adolescent age when she was with her mother on vacation in Kullu Manali in Himachal Pradesh. In a bazaar in Manali, her mother was trying to purchase a shawl and she was negotiating, as she had never haggled before. The bargaining has stopped over one single rupee. The man said fifty and her mother said forty-nine and they went on for ten minutes, after her mother just walked out of the store and then being called in by the vendor who believed that she was serious about one rupee. As the bargaining at the shawl shop dragged, Priya cried out "it is just one rupee, Ma, why do you have to be such a Kanjoos?" (10). As soon the word was out, she knew it was a mistake and her mother slapped her across the face in the centre of the market. She gets such experiences about her mother's bargaining habit at various places.

Once, she observes how her mother does bargaining while buying mangoes, and finds herself fortunate because the culture of bargaining is not in vogue in America. Being a young girl Priya hated her mother's behaviour in the public, because she has bargained even for a one rupee. The small changes make her to feel proud about her

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stay in America. The high standard of living in America makes her very happy. As she muses, "Thanks to happy memories like that I never, ever, bargained. It was a relief that in the United States I didn't have to do it for groceries and clothes; everything came with a fixed price tag" (11). It shows the bargaining nature of Indian people is entirely new to western people. Priya hates the bargaining culture of Indian people, particularly of her mother. Therefore, there is an ideological clash between Priya and her mother.

In this novel, the inter caste marriage of Anand and Neelima has taken place. Anand is a Telugu Brahmin while Neelima is a Maharashtrian Brahmin. In Priya's family, a Maharashtrian Brahmin is considered lower when compared with the Telugu Brahmin caste. Ananda's secret marriage breaks everyone's heart. All the family members are convinced that Neelima is not the right woman for him. They believe that Neelima is in fact a witch who has developed a vicious potion to catch their poor little innocent son into her web.

When Priya goes home, she finds her family, her mother in particular, practicing conventional customs and superstitions. She finds no comfort in her company. In the first chapter of the novel, she says, "It had just been three days, but I was already tired of being in India, at home, and especially tired of my mother" (13). Priya's mother is strongly occupied in Hindu traditions and beliefs. Priya gets rebuked by her mother for each and every habit she has learned in her seven years of stay in the Western country. In her stay, Priya was fed up by the roadways, behaviour of the auto man, and her mother too. Priya heavy heartedly explains the excuses given for committing mistakes. Further, she goes on to explain the daily state of affairs in India.

> The road was bumpy and the auto rickshaw moved in mysterious ways. I realized then that I couldn't drive in India. I would be dead in about five minutes... If a policeman caught you without your driver's license and registration papers, twenty to fifty rupees would solve your problem. (13)

All the commonplaces of culture clashes are shown in the novel. Priya deliberately hides her engagement to an American. As she says, "I had escaped arranged marriage by coming to the United States to do a master's in Computer Sciences at Texas A&M, by conveniently finding a job in Silicon Valley, and then by inventing several excuses to not go to India" (1-2). At the age of twenty seven, Priya returns to her home city of Hyderabad and runs headlong into a dizzying range of parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. She is frightened to tell anyone about Nick, fearing he will be rejected, and she even agrees to meet an Indian man, her parents would like her to marry.

Priya's family falls precisely into stock types: the arrogant mother who desires Priya to marry within her caste; the fashionable younger brother represents new westernized generation of Indians; and the cruel aunt who constantly passes judgment on her niece. Here, Priya faces the unkind truth of prejudice and cultural clash. Besides religion, caste, and financial status, there is the matter of skin colour. Lighter is better, and Priya is considered dark.

After coming back seven years later, Priya finds everything abnormal in India, which was never the case in the past. As she thinks, "Everything that had seemed natural just seven years ago seemed unnatural and chaotic compared to what I had been living in and within the United States" (14). She enjoyed the mango season more

than a few times with her brother. She has never paid her attention to the quality of food in the past, but now she thinks, "Now, I couldn't imagine putting that piece of white and green fruit inside my mouth. It was not about taste, it was about hygiene..." (9). She further recollects what her Indian friend who visited India after having lived in the United States said to her "Everything will look dirtier than it did before" (9).

Therefore, Priya is confronted with the polluted, infected, and unhealthy standard of living of the Indians. She starts sweating as if she has never been during an Indian summer before. She makes a remark on load shedding and power cuts in India. As she says, "The electricity was out. For six hours every day in the summer, the electricity was cut off to conserve it. The cut-off times changed randomly but were usually around the times when it was most hot" (16). Priya finds fault with everything in India. She finds India still in its old form, nothing seems changed here.

Malladi's language is simple but most effective. In *The Mango Season* the first person point of view, is the narrator, who describes the situation of the protagonist, Priya. Malladi has used a lot of cultural words in every novel and they are italicized for the benefits of the readers to realize that language have to be understood only in the context of social practices. In *The Mango Season* Malladi has used some specific words, musical terms, food terms and cultural terms such as "mallipullu"(8), "pachai"(10), "Ammamma"(12), "kanjoos"(16), "challis rupya"(22) Accha"(22), "Thatha" (25)"mangal sutra"(32), "payasam"(34), "avail"(60), "adapilla"(88), "Golisoda"(91), "prasadam"(94), "Namaskaram"(145), "GayatriMantram"(188).

The changing cultural practices and differences during her stay in America make her an entirely different personality. She successfully adopts American life style; so she does not find herself connected with her present culture anywhere in India. She

goes on blaming the Indian cultural practices, which are still based on old and irrational conventions.

Priya's family is deeply set in conventional Hindu values, where daughters are supposed to be obedient; they are supposed to marry Indian boys, and produce nice male heirs. Priya's mother wants her daughter to get married soon. As she says,

> 'If they have a good U.S. boy in mind and he is in India on leave like you, we can probably arrange something,' she explained. If it works out, you will be married and happy. It will be a load off my chest. An unmarried daughter... What must the neighbours think?" I glared at my mother. (23)

Priya's mother does not like the life style of her daughter. As she says to her:

> 'You go to America and you want to look like those Christian girls... Even when you were here, you didn't want the nice mallipulu, fresh jasmine, I would string. Always wanted to look like those... short hair and nonsense,' she complained on the phone before thrusting it in my father's hands. (8)

Initially, Priya's father Nana also shows reluctance to let Priya marry someone from other caste or ethnic group. He objects to her resolution by convincing her that "Marrying someone who does not understand your culture, your roots, your traditions, it will not work out" (211). Priya is annoyed of the conventional culture of her extended family. She loses her temper when Neelima says, "We are not like all those white women who have sex with hundreds of men. We marry the man we have sex with" (76). Priya's mother looks worried due to her daughter's dark colour.

However, Priya's boyfriend Nick couldn't understand the clever distinction between the various shades of Indian dark. As he says, "All Indians are dark" (29). Finally, Priya's experience as a 'semi-foreigner' in her own country gives her pain. She knows her family would not be able to see Nick beyond the colour of his skin and the fact that he is a foreigner. It would not matter if he were the kindest, richest, and most good looking man that ever walked on the earth. His ethnic group and race has already barred him as a potential groom for her. Now Priya thinks,

> This was not home anymore. Home was in San Francisco with Nick. Home was Whole Foods grocery store and fast food at KFC. Home was Pier 1 and Wall-Mart. Home was 7-Eleven and Starbucks. Home was familiar, Hyderabad was a stranger; India was as alien, exasperating, and sometimes exotic to me as it would be to a foreigner. (126)

At the end of the novel, almost all the members of Priya's extended family begin to realise the importance of acceptance, liberalism, tolerance, and negotiations along with empowerment that must be made in order to maintain and improve their relationships with their closely connected people. Priya's approach has its own impact. Sowmya discusses her future with the groom-to-be. Anand stresses appropriate status and respectful treatment for his wife, Neelima. Lata refuses to undergo the amino test. Priya is shocked to see the entirely different side of the Indian younger generation, which is so advanced and matured. She finds the Indian younger generation like Americans in every aspect of life.

Priya, the protagonist of the novel *The Mango Season*, wants to make the members of her family happy. At the same time she wants them to respect her sentiment and personal joys. The story situation reminds us of a poem *Mending Wall*

by Robert Frost's lines "Good fences make good neighbours". If keeping up relationship with neighbours is a matter of respecting the boundaries of each, family relationships can also be cherished in the same way. Tradition and modernity need not be pitted against each other in a given social set up.

Cultures can co exist and it is this co existence of different cultures, attitudes, genders and personalities is the main focus of Malladi in *The Mango Season*. An identification of Priya with either the Indian or the American life is a frustrating experience. Though she regrets at the separation from the culture of home, she likes to adopt the host culture due to her love for Nick. Nostalgia for a mango and the happiness are associated with her longing for India but living in India on a day to day basis has become almost impossible to Priya.

The Mango Season explores the subject of the gap between cultures and between generations. The gap has been filled with cultural displacement. Malladi shows how India slowly moves in to modernity, and the cultural displacement and problems arise between generations. Cultural displacement is the reason for Priya's social changes and her intellectual changes which make her to argue with her family. As Priya is Americanised in her view her father's compassion and her grandfather's manipulation are the sights, sounds and smell of India, the India that is foreign, yet familiar to Priya. They are also in the same age of Priya, and can act to the current generation system. They accept her decision and that is her life. Natrajan, her brother, also supports his sister's. He too hopes that his sister can live according to her decision, that she's still not a five-year-old kid, who can be controlled like a puppet.

The theme hope is emphasised in *A House for Happy Mothers* when Priya took Asha's son with her and Mona, wife of Vikas. Mona runs an organisation and also

participated in many social activities took Manoj with her, when Priya told about the surrogate mother and her family's situation and how they face financial crisis and couldn't give a hopeful future to their son. Priya took Manoj with Mona to a special school to test his ability and IQ. Priya gave a hopeful gesture to Asha by taking care of Manoj. So she sets her faith in Priya and lets Manoj to go with them. On one side Asha felt bad but on other side she felt thankful to Priya. Mona is far different from her family background. She took initiative in this and found a suitable school for Manoj on her own. Priya admires her and says, "Priya had not expected Mona to have much to offer beneath the surface...Apparently there was merit to the statement "Don't judge a book by its cover." Priya was impressed" (263).

Asha felt uncomfortable as she felt like giving her son's hand to a stranger. She did not have hope on Priya. She was annoyed with Priya as she looked completely fake. And that's why she never liked her. But when she finds that Priya took much effort to build her son's future education by finding him a scholarship and boarding school. The hope starts to bloom inside Asha. And on other hand, Priya was scared of letting another women to carry her child. The emptiness in her took away the hope when she heard about the fetus growing in Asha's womb. She thought about the past where she had three miscarriages. She finds hope when Asha took care of the child inside her belly carefully.

Thus the hope travels through these two novels. Without memories and hope there will be missing parts which cannot complete these novels. Anyone can achieve anything. The importance of positive thinking and hope helps each and everyone's life to reach their goal. Experience teaches something to everyone and experiences bring hope. Priya Rao from *The Mango Season* hopes for the light in her life, which can only be given by her parent and also the blessings for her future love life.

Priyasha and Asha from *A House for Happy Mothers* find hope in each other and encourage each other by supporting their needs. This brought them a family. "...they had given hope to each other, and this was what brought them together, closed that gap between them, and eliminated the social and class differences, made them sisters, mothers- made them equals" (310).

The longing to regain their lost home often culminates in the creation of a different version of home. It further tracks down the possibility and the impossibility of homecoming. It evokes different emotions. Home is not only the place or the building one lives. It is related with the members and the past memories, these makes a place home and a house a home. Home is not the same home when the same members are not there or the memory is not there. Other may return to find their roots. Every returning is not same but most of the time there is an urge of returning to the diasporas. Those who cannot return physically, they may return through memory by recalling it.

Chapter Three

Presence and Absence of Child

The birth of a child fulfill the happiness of a family. The family's growth and happiness depend upon the child's step by step progress. Thus a child makes a complete family. The love, affection and care given by the relations around the child help to achieve the goals in its life. Two cannot make a family. The word has shifted its meaning considerably since it entered our language. "A woman had to get pregnant, had to give birth- it was part of being a woman, as natural as having breasts and a womb. A woman who never became a mother was incomplete" (300).

The word currently contains many different senses, and in at least one of these senses may signify different things to different people. The earliest use of the word family denotes a group of persons in the service of an individual, a sense that is now archaic. Although this early meaning may seem far afield from the way that most of us use 'family' today, it is not surprising when we consider that this word comes from the Latin 'familia', which means 'household,' a designation that included both servants and relatives.

According to an Indian perception family plays a vital role. A good family helps to build a good society. A good society builds a good nation. Family and society ensures the growth, prosperity and development of a country. For the past two or three decades joint family organisation brought up the children physically and mentally well under the vision of both parent and grandparents. That brought mentally courage and the importance of love and tolerance. That ensured the child's safety in all hierarchy.

But in current decade the parents runs for a luxurious life to compete with others in every field. That leads to a machine life and the education become a business. So the children cannot enjoy the importance of education and it leads to mental pressure. Family is often encountered in legal use, but even within the jargon of the law it is not restricted to a single meaning. In many legal contexts family denotes individuals related by blood, marriage, or adoption, but in others the definition may be somewhat broader, encompassing groups of individuals not related by these things.

Nature has bestowed the beautiful capacity to procreate a life within woman and every woman cherishes the experience of motherhood. But, unfortunately some women due to certain physiological conditions could not give birth to their own off-spring. The urge of motherhood leads them to seek alternative solutions like Artificial Reproductive Technology (ART), In-Vitro Fertilisation (IVF), Intra-Uterine Injections (IUI), infusing hope into many infertile couples, who long to have a child of their own.

With advances in medical sciences and technology, particularly in assisted reproductive techniques which have come in with techniques like donor insemination, embryo transfer methods, and revolutionizing the reproductive environment such methods such as 'surrogacy' are also gaining popularity for varied reasons. As commonly understood, a surrogate mother is one who is hired to bear a child that she turns over at birth to her employer. The word 'surrogate' means 'substitute'. Besides surrogacy, the arrangement takes place within the family, the community, the state and within the country because of cheap medical facilities.

These facilities coupled with advance reproductive technological slowly but steadily India is becoming a popular destination for surrogacy arrangements to many

foreigners' notably rich westerners. With the entry of financial arrangements in exchange of the surrogate child, where the child becomes a 'saleable commodity' complications arise and issues got involved such as the rights of the surrogate mother, the child and the commissioning parents.

Surrogacy turns a normal biological function of a woman's body into a commercial contract. Surrogate services are advertised. Surrogates are recruited and operating agencies make large profits. The commercialism of surrogacy raises fears of black market and baby selling, breeding farms, turning impoverished women into baby producers and the possibility of selective breeding at a price. Surrogacy degrades a pregnancy to a service and a baby to a product. Experience shows that like any other commercial dealing the 'customer' lays down his/ her conditions before purchasing the goods.

> Traditional surrogacy was previously the only way to conceive a child via a surrogate mother. Since artificial insemination is easy, not painful, and importantly, significantly less expensive than IVF, traditional surrogacy continues to be used by many people (Pande, 2010).

Another argument for traditional surrogacy is the high success rate when the surrogate mother has proven to be fertile. Also, in general, traditional surrogates do not have to be on any special medication. Keeping track of their menstrual cycle and timing the inseminations around when they naturally ovulate will usually suffice. However, in order to increase the chances for twins or to fine-tune the timing of ovulation, some surrogates do take some mild fertility drugs.

Apparently people are ready to travel halfway across the world and hire a surrogate to fulfil their desire to share a genetic tie with their children. Clearly the

genetic tie remains a powerful and enduring basis of human attachment. Authors like Roberts (1995) and Field (1992) acknowledge that through this form of relationship surrogates form kinship ties that disturb the sanctity of biology and genes within a system that might well are the pinnacle of the commoditisation of the genetic tie.

In this novel *A House for Happy Mothers*, Malladi voices out two women's inner voice: one longs for a child and the other one long for her child's future. Priyasha and Asha are the two female protagonist of this novel. The chapters of this novel cover alternatively the lives of two Ashas, who live in different worlds, grown up with different perspective, studies, background, and These two worlds collide. Priyasha, was born half-Indian and half-American, has everything she needs a loving husband, a career, and a home- but the one thing she wants most is the child she's unable to have. She went through three miscarriages and three failed IVF treatments, each costing about $10,000. Surrogacy had become the only way out, the only way to have a child, a family.

On the other side, Asha, was born in Southern Indian village, doesn't has much like Priyasha. She and her husband lives under a tin roof over their heads and are raising two children, Manoj and Mohini, but the only thing she wants is a better education for her gifted son. Due to her family pressure she accepts surrogacy to lend her womb for a profitable amount to an overseas couple. Her relative Kaveri has also gone through this. They got the amount and found a flat in city afar from the village which is better than the tiny hut. Hearing this Pratap trembled and pressurized Asha to think about the treatment and the money which can be helpful for their children's future.

> Asha wondered if there had ever really been a choice for her. Could she have said no? Could she have never been selfish and said, "No, this is my body, I decide"? And now? Now it was too late. The seed had taken hold, and she could feel her body already nourishing this child that was not hers. (21)

'The House for Happy Mothers' is the clinic which connects Priya and Asha. Other than that there is no connection between them. Even here is no proper conversation between them. The clinic is the place where Asha could find many women like her, who has accepted this treatment for money and are living in that house to give birth to childless couples. But no one could understand the turmoil in Asha's mind. Physically she bears the child, but mentally she bears fear and worries. Asha thought that the treatment method seems wrong to do for money, but she wouldn't do it if their finances were better. But it's too late to return. The small creature had developed inside her belly. Her mother-in-law Puttamma has also supported her and told her that was a great idea. But Asha thought,

> Easy for her to say. The old woman cannot have children anymore, so she thinks it's a picnic for us to have one... She on the other hand had worried about it... She was still not sure they were doing the right thing. But there was no point broadcasting that fact. The baby was inside her. That was the end of the story. (25)

Priya came to know about surrogacy through one of her friend Poonam. She felt that surrogacy brings an end to her longingness for a child. She even discusses about the surrogacy and surrogate mother with her friends. Some accepted but some gave quizzical look. Bearing all those, Priya stands firm on her decision because she hoped

it as the last method she could give a try after all those failures. Even her mother picked on her. When she heard the good news from the clinic that the surrogate mother test resulted in positive, Madhu and Priya were happy to the extreme and at the same time there was some fear inside Priya which dwindles from fear to not-to-fear. "But what if she loses the baby? We've got no guarantees yet [...] Think positive. No negative vibes, please" (38-39). So they went to Hyderabad to visit the mother.

On the contrary side, Asha was screaming inside her. But she accepts to meet the baby's parent as the father and the mother, not to mention their names even when she knows. The whole thing was new to her. When she was pregnant with her two children she didn't go through Ultrasound scan, but now the cool gel was applied on her belly and was scanned. She and the parent could see the heartbeat through the monitor.

> Asha has no ultrasound when she'd been pregnant. The dai, the village midwife will check her once a while and deemed everything is okay. But this felt different. Asha again thought: She was just a vessel, not a human being. Their relationship, if it could be called one, was about the baby inside Asha. (51)

As a mother Asha sacrifices her womb not concerning of her thoughts and worries but for her children's education. And on the other hand Priya sets her hope and fears on the surrogate to deliver a normal and healthy child for her. Both had struggled on their inner mind.

The surrogate mothers were asked to recall their relationship with the commissioning couple before treatment had begun, during the few months of the

pregnancy, and during the last few months of the pregnancy. For the latter two time periods, ratings were obtained separately for the relationship with the commissioning mother and father. Surrogate mothers' description of the relationship was rated according to one of three categories: harmonious, dissatisfaction or coldness, and major conflict or hostility.

Asha was not sure of which category she placed the couple in her mind. But the current status brought dissatisfaction or coldness towards her husband as well as towards the couple. When Pratap discusses about the money with his relative Raman, Asha wanted to scream at them that it's her money and she earned it with sweat, blood, pain and nausea. But she pulled her thoughts inside her and kept quiet. The money matters here that nobody concerns about Asha's desires. This made Asha to think that the money belongs to her and she has the equal right to use it. She wanted to save it for her children's better school and education.

Asha told the importance of that money to Kaveri and she decided to spend it for her children's better education and not to buy flats or other unnecessary things. She wanted to use it for a purpose. And the same way Kaveri had felt but she couldn't speak, as a good wife one should not argue with their husband but must obey them. "I felt the same way. Now we have no money left. He spent it all on this flat and no other nonsense. The flat is a good thing. We will always have a home. But we should have been smart about the boy's education." (61) When Pratap comes around Asha and put his arms around her and smiled at her she sensed safe. She felt safe at that moment and forgets her problems and the strange life inside her.

It's was the first trimester, the conception date was January 10, 2013, which meant the due date was October 3, 2013. Based on the pregnancy calculator, Asha

was now five weeks pregnant. Priya scrolled through websites about pregnancy and the stages of growth of the child. Madhu asked her to calm down. But Priya had an amount of pressure running inside her mind. The long waited moment is getting step by step. Each step felt as if it she walked on the peak of the edge.

Both happiness and sadness were running in her mind. Physically she couldn't bear but mentally she is preparing herself through the times. "Will the surrogate keep the baby?, and if it isn't that, it's Will I be a good mother?" (73) She recalls her first sight love with Madhu when she was getting a degree in environmental studies. "Love at first sight" (69). They knew they were inseparable after that. Desperate for each other. The past accompanies till her sleep.

This is the first time Asha gets gifts and a letter from the parent. It was way to say and stay thankful to Asha. First she felt uneasy taking the gift box, but was also curious to see what she got from them. It was a set of six underwear, a watch, clothes and toys for children, and a beautiful silk shawl for Asha. She shared some of the toys with Kaveri's children. After reading the letter she could understand the couple's emotion, mainly the mother. "I think my mother will cry, too. She seems very emotional" (93). But her duality pops out: "Were they trying to buy her good behaviour by sending her presents? Or were they genuinely just saying thank you?" (91).

It was Mohini's birthday; Pratap bought her a pink cake. Asha gave Mohini the dress bought by Priya, Mohini wore the pretty dress and followed the ritual nearby the temple Lord Venkateshwara Swami and ate their Prasad that were said to be blessings from God. Asha touched her stomach and thanked God for bringing her this opportunity. She also dreamt that Manoj would learn bigger and better things. She

knew that unpleasantness lay ahead, but for now, they should enjoy their good fortune and of being positive.

When Priya got pregnant for the third time, she didn't tell Madhu about it right away. And that had been the sledgehammer that devastated their cracked marriage. She waited nearly six weeks. One late night, when Priya told him, but Madhu didn't expect that she hide it for nearly six weeks and that resulted in:

> "You wanted to wait and see if you'd lose it. And then what was your plan? Not to tell me at all?"... I don't know, Priya. Right now I don't know what the hell is going on. Why the hell are we even still getting pregnant? Why the hell are we trying again and again? I don't want children. Can't you understand that?" (105)

Priya was scared to tell about the results at first. On the other hand Madhu packed up and left when she told him she had lost the baby again, so in retrospect they were even. And when he returned he stood by the door like she had a plague, a horrible, contagious disease he was afraid of catching. Then the argument went to a point were both wished nothing has happened. That year was a nightmare for both. They were depressed, disinterested in everything and everyone. But she tried hard to cheer up herself. Again she was left all alone. She lost weight, nearly eight pounds in two weeks. She thought less about her miscarriage this time around and she was worried about Madhu.

Madhu came back on Sunday, nearly three and a half weeks after he left. She wanted to jump up and down and run to him, and cry with joy: "You're back, you're back, you're back!" (111), but she remained silent. Madhu apologized for his desertion. He was sorry and Priya had forgiven him. "When you left, I didn't even

think about the baby… I was only worried about you. Without you, there's no me and there's no baby" (111). They had become a closer team than they had both recognized how much they'd been before more honest, more comfortable with the truth. They had seen what life could be like without each other, and they had both recognized how much they loved each other.

> Priya had always believed happy couples agreed on everything, but now she realized that healthy couples learned to respect even when they disagreed…It was about trusting each other and the relationship to have that fight, to get it out there and have the love to heal the wound, temper the argument, and laugh about it. (112)

Asha on the other part of the world enters her first day at the Happy Mothers House leaving her children under the care of Pratap. She missed her children and Pratap. She missed her life back in village. She hated having this baby inside her. She described her house and the Happy Mothers House. Hygiene was important in the house. There were several rooms, single rooms, double bedroom which can be shared with other people living in this house. But Asha didn't feel any good. "Home was home.

No matter what place you went to, if it wasn't yours, if your family wasn't there, it wasn't better than home" (118). Her family can come on the weekends evening and can spend time with her. She felt a sharp pain in her heart. But she has to accept and avoid the society's talk about her third pregnancy, which is not her child. Overall, this made her temper and she couldn't help herself. Then there was a fight between Asha and Pratap:

"No one forced you into this," Pratap said defensively. "You volunteered. I asked you a hundred times". "No, you didn't," Asha said "You wanted me like this. You wanted the money. Counting money like an ugly businessman. And you know what you sold? Me. You sold me."(121)

They fought their real first fight where Asha had fought back. That had been a worry that tore her insides. She felt sorry for raising her voice against her husband. She knew it was her duty to listen to her husband but the inside scream came out of her mouth due to the pressure that she carried in her mind and heart. Asha weakened then and wanted Pratap to see the big picture that Raman was influencing him. So she had to be the sensible one and the stronger one. She waited for the day to leave that house and return to her home and to her life.

The conversation between Priya and Asha through the phone, they exchanged their feelings one misses for the unborn baby and the surrogate mother and the other misses the presence of her child, husband and home which is far away. Priya was sorry for her but at the same time she was happy at hear that her baby is fine in Asha's womb. Priya convinced herself that the baby would not die, because of the failures which happened for her. Priya's and Asha's world were parallel, but the concern about the presence and unborn child made their world to carry even more pressure psychologically. The struggles that both mothers' going through cannot be predicted by the father, i.e., the husband of both.

In the second trimester, Priya cried when Asha told that she misses her children. Priya could imagine how she worried, missed and kept away from her children for the sake of her baby. Through Priya's tears Asha felt that there is someone is here to share her sorrow. Asha missed dropping her son off and taking him back from school. She likes to walk with her son, as he shares what happened during the day. Those are

the most memorable conversation with her son. Then she counted her days. still eighteen weeks to go.

The weeks went by faster. She could see, even though they have comforts in that house deeply none of the women was happy. She saw it everywhere, being away from their families, humiliation of lying to everyone about their pregnancy, the baby inside them they mustn't bond with, all these frustrated her. The ironic is the name of the hospital and the feelings of the women in that clinic, "these were definitely not Happy Mothers" (154). Soon Asha finds that there is an interview with the surrogates from a foreign television channel to record the house and the women who are staying there, and their feelings towards this treatment.

Asha was selected as one among the three women. She scared and informed the parent of the child. They replied: "Do this only if you're sure... Just because you're carrying our baby doesn't mean you have to talk to anyone you don't want to about it" (164). Asha thought that they called because she was carrying their baby. So she hides her fear and for the sake of her son's good future she accepts the interview. But the parent didn't force her and they care about her. After the crew Pratap came to meet her with their children. Manoj handed her a piece of paper and she unfolded it. Manoj had written ten lines in Telugu:

"The ten things I love about my mother:

My mother's name is Asha- Asha means hope. I like her name

My mother has long black hair that comes down to her back. Her hair is beautiful.

My mother always kisses me good night.

My mother is the best cook. She makes the best ladoos in the world.

My mother always kisses me when I get hurt. The hurt doesn't get better. But I feel better.

My mother has pink lips and pink cheeks. She is very pretty.

My mother covers my school books in brown paper and writes my name neatly on the labels, Manoj Vardhan. No one else has books covered as nicely as mine.

My mother gave me little sister. Mohini can be annoying, but I like her.

My mother hugs me when I get scared. I don't get scared that much, but when I do, she hugs me. She gives the best hugs.

My mother has the best laugh. It makes me laugh when she laughs. I wish she would laugh all the time." (184-185)

Asha couldn't help herself but she laughed out loud even her emotion grabbed her throat. She thanked Manoj and planted a kiss on his forehead. The family leaves when the time is up. When she felt the first kick of the baby her family walked away. The kick is a gift to a mother's ecstasy for her motherhood. Asha shared that moment with Priya. She was on her third trimester, Priya could feel Asha's anger but Doctor Swati assured that pregnant women gets peachy and are just hormonal and tired. But on the other side Priya could sense that she was not tired but angry.

Priya did not have courage to ask Asha. She discussed it with Madhu and he brushed it off. "But what if she hurts the baby because she is having an off day?" (190). Priya thought about all the stories that she'd heard about kicking babies keeping mothers awake, and she wondered whether she stroked her belly or not. She heard all the delights and traumas of being pregnant. But the irony laughs at her, that she would never know the flutter of the small life inside her. Genetically Priya knew

that it was theirs, but Asha's blood was feeding and nurturing the baby, helping it to grow.

The third trimester started and Priya set off to India with her mom Sushila. At first she thought that it was annoying to take her mom with her, who opposes the idea of surrogacy. Asha on the other side was excited about to see the small life in the checkup room through monitors. She loved this part of lying down on the bed and a cold jelly like thing to be put on her stomach.

> ...Doctor Swati had in her checkup room and wait for the cold jelly like thing to be put on her stomach before Doctor Swati used the plastic thing that helped them see inside her womb. Asha loved this part. She would see the baby and feel anew the surge of love she felt for this life growing inside her. (229)

Asha remained angry after coming from the clinic. When her husband and children came to see her, she remained silent with Pratap but she talked with her children. She was trying to be nice and normal, but her mind was spinning around out of control. She sighed. She took Mohini's hand and placed it on her round belly. The baby kicked Mohini. Her eyes widened and she giggled. Asha's anger went away when she thought about her children and their future. She felt happy when her son Manoj fixed the rubik's cube (231) after mixed up for several times. She smiled deliriously.

Priya stayed at her mom's friend's house, the Parikshits. Their family was big. She met Mona, the daughter-in-law of the Parikshits. She seemed different comparing to others. Priya was curious about Mona and took Mona with her to discuss about the surrogacy and the clinic. The next day Priya and Sushila went to the clinic and took

some present brought Asha's children and they looked around the room. Asha felt comfortable when she speaks with Sushila and was annoyed with Priya.

> She seemed so nice, Asha thought, the mother's mother. Compared to the mother, Sushila was definitely more Indian and spoke telugu well...That was it, Asha understood: the mother was completely fake, and this is why she had never liked her. Sushila, on the other hand, seemed genuine. (248)

The doctor arranged for an ultrasound. The mother cried when she looked at the picture of her baby on the screen. Priya put her arm around and her head on the shoulder of her mother. Asha felt unnerved and felt silly on her thoughts of Priya. They came to know about Asha's children and when she was questioned about her son's education they were intervened by Divya. Sushila was stopped by Priya and they discussed about the matter with them. When the children came at the visiting hour, Priya and Sushila got to know about Manoj smartness. They gave the presents brought by them and they even presented a camera to Pratap. They took a group picture of them and Asha's family as the first picture with the new camera.

On the way to home, Priya and her mother Sushila discussed about Manoj's schooling issues and Asha's family state for not able to give him a proper education for his IQ (Intelligent Quotient). Her mother thought about finding him a scholarship through UNICEF (United Nation's Children's Fund). Priya also discussed about everything happened on the day with Madhu through her hand phone. The next day Sushila updated the Parikshits on the surrogate house and told about Manoj. Luckily General Parikshit said they give out scholarship once a year.

Priya found easy and she asked Mona about Manoj's IQ test. She flustered and said that it was not a big deal for her. Priya had not expected Mona to have much to offer beneath the surface. Mona promised to help with setting up the IQ test with

MENSA (264). His IQ was over one forty. They both felt proud of him. They visited Asha and her family and discussed about Manoj's schooling issues and scholarship offered by the Parikshits. Asha disliked Priya for interfering and she was trying to take way the precious moments she would share with her son while walking him back from school.

> "She's so determined to make sure Manoj's future is secure. I didn't think she would care... Asha hadn't wanted to like Priya. But she was impressed with her dedication toward Manoj. She was impressed with how she had gathered her rich friends to help her child. How could she dislike someone who was trying to save her child? (274)

Asha saw Manoj that she hadn't seen him this excited in a very long time and at the same time she had to send him away. Asha had been proud but also scared. She felt strange for handing over her child to a stranger but she felt rightness in it. She smiled unevenly. Every mother has to face this situation. No mother could bear the absence of her child, when the child goes far away from her. Asha also felt the same. She couldn't express it outwardly. But she thanked Priya for the first time helping her and Priya looked embarrassed and said "You're helping us and we're helping you. That's how the world goes around." (277)

As the days got closer to Asha's due date, she realized that she could not control her feelings towards the baby. By accident, she thought about having the baby with her, stealing Priya's baby, happiness and future from her. This was irritable inside her and made large unhappiness. She shook off the thoughts and brought the happy mood to cheer up herself. She thought it's time to celebrate and could go home now and be with her family.

The day labor and delivery comes and Asha went into labor at one in the morning. Madhu's phone rang. They were waiting for this call and they were prepared. They packed some baby stuffs and drove like a maniac. Priya took turns and laughing at Madhu saying, "Finally, Madhu, finally," (293). Priya wanted the baby more than Madhu did. They both walked inside the clinic, Priya's heart was pounding. After two hours of struggling, Asha gave birth to the child. She didn't see the child. She laid crying softly. She stroked her belly and felt there was no baby inside but soft, wet, clay like and saggy belly only. Asha couldn't face the father and the mother. She did not want to hear about the baby and managed her tears filled inside her. Priya thanked Asha for giving birth to their child and Asha thanked in return for helping her son's future education.

> Asha knew that she would never be able to repay that debt. Priya had saved Manoj's life and, in turn, Asha's as well... maybe Asha had given them a gift that they couldn't get themselves...Their bond, not something that would be renewed, could nevertheless not be broken. (300-301)

Thus, the mental state of the two mothers has been shared. On one side Asha has two children. She knows the presence of her children brings her happiness and the family is complete. Without a child the family is incomplete. Manoj is a gifted child and super talented, but due to lack of financial support, Asha had to go through this surrogacy method for a childless couple.

On the other side, Priya could feel the absence of the child and the failures attempting in making child. She could feel the emptiness in her. So she comes to this Happy House to find a woman to lend her a womb for her baby to develop and grow.

The two mothers psyche travels in different path but when it comes to a child every mother think about her child's health and future. They pressurize themselves and sacrifice their needs for their children. The two women have also felt how it feels when there is no child. One could mentally feel it and the other one could visibly see it.

Psychologically it has also been feared that the surrogate mother may prenatally form a bond with the baby that would make it particularly difficult for her to hand over the child to the commissioning parents. For those women who do relinquish the child, the risk of post-natal depression, as well as feelings of anger or guilt, may add further strain to the woman's psychological health. Such that woman may enter into surrogacy arrangements because of financial hardship without being fully aware of its potential risks. Other concerns relating to surrogacy include the impact on the surrogate mother's partner, her parents or any existing children, and its destabilizing effects on her family integrity.

On the other hand, case series that have explored the experiences of surrogates and commissioners, have not noted any substantial psychological problems and surrogates have not experienced a higher than average postpartum depression rate. By a comprehensive and precise consultation and support of an expert team, many of these surrogate mothers could experience this period positively. Surrogate pregnancy should be treated as a high risk psychological experience. In addition, it is recommended that surrogates receive professional counselling before, during and after pregnancy.

Malladi has given her two protagonists polar opposite histories: Priya was brought up and continues to live in privilege, while Asha was born into what is

assumed to be inter-generational poverty. Despite being a woman, Priya has the freedom to do as she pleases – work, climb the corporate ladder, be seen as an equal as her husband. However, Priya has an overbearing and overly critical mother, Sushila, who is very much against her daughter using a surrogate to become a mother. Surrogacy is a means of exploiting the poor, Sushila argues, though sadly Malladi does not back Sushila's argument with statistics and facts that the less fortunate get exploited by the rich. Additionally, Priya has panic attacks whenever she thinks of her baby growing in another woman's womb.

Asha's lot in life seems to be one of the have-nots, living on the margins of society. Although she is paid handsomely by Priya to carry her child, Malladi drives the point by repeatedly mentioning the money Asha receives would only sustain her family for three years at the most, and this is not taking into account sending Manoj to a school for gifted children. It has to be said that although the pace of the novel is almost evenly spread, the chapters that focuses on Asha seem more engaging and less whiny compared to Priya's storyline.

It almost feels as though Malladi has given more thought and heart to Asha due to her class status and financial situation, perhaps, making her more human by getting angry with the rich Americans, her uneducated husband and her lot in life. For Priya, it feels as if Malladi wanted to create an over privileged character that, despite her personal tribulations, can have what she desires because she is an American. Perhaps this is Malladi's way of highlighting the vast difference between the haves and have-nots, that money can buy almost everything, even a baby. The language Malladi uses is simple. She stays away from surrogacy jargon, which helps readers who are not female.

Chapter Four

Memories and Hope

India, Indianness and the relation of the Indian diaspora with the homeland and the adopted words largely feed the narratives of the Indian diaspora. On the other end we see feverish nostalgia, stinginess about the Indian landscape, icons, myths and cultural ethos eliciting the sense of "distinctiveness" that builds a comfort zone, then there is also the other diaspora which brings us the confused anger on being unbalanced from the native environment. There is a type of situation wherein the homeland retains a grip on the subconscious mind of the diasporic but at the same time one learns to attune himself to the new environment.

In this situation, the diasporic sometimes realizes his nativity all the more than he did when he was physically present in the homeland. This distance draws him even closer and the homeland is elevated to a higher pedestal. The prominent characteristic of diasporic literature is that it is not based on any theory or philosophy but on the life experiences of immigrants. It creates an emotional feeling to the diaspora by discussing their physical and emotional conflicts. Diasporic literature focuses mainly on themes like discrimination, cultural shock and reverses cultural shock, problems in adjustment and assimilation, orientalism, identity crisis, alienation and displacement, dilemma, nostalgia, depression, hybridity and generational gap. But memory plays a major role in diasporic writing.

Rushdie in his *Imaginary Homeland* says that, the Indian writer who writes from outside India has to deal with the world of his homeland in fragments, like pieces of a broken mirror, some of whose fragments have been irretrievably lost. However, he also highlights the fact that the fragments of memory are not any less valuable for that

matter. He says that the partial nature of his personal memories of India rendered them more evocative, in his words, fragmentation made trivial things seem like symbols, and the mundane acquired numinous qualities. He does not recommend dismissing the broken glass as a mere mirror of nostalgia, but considers it a useful tool with which to work in the present.

Even as they crossed boundaries the memory link was maintained and usually it became only stronger. India dominates the imagination at all times. The diasporic keep turning back to the homeland, its sacredness, rituals, culture, and thus adopt various families' symbols to help them freeze the image of the homeland in their being. They carry with them these symbols of nativity in order to strengthen their own indigenous in alien surroundings.

The Indian legacy is looked upon as a haven in a outwardly foreign culture. At the same time, there is struggle against the set norms of the society and attempt is made to create one's own definitions. Strong images of the native land, when carried into the land of inhabitation, become all the stronger and this disparity leads to nostalgia. One becomes profound towards the land of roots as the efforts to successfully negotiate in the diasporic space fail.

In some cases, the diasporic try to maintain their dual identities by participating in native activities alongside their adopted roles. This is the category that has assigned the two spaces more or less successfully and therefore even though India is referred to both in terms of its reality and the imaginary; the idea is neither to lash it's reality not to elevate the imagined. But rather there is a maintained style. In all cases the relation is unending and the diasporic are constantly involved with the homeland either to reaffirm this Indianness or prove their disowning of the same.

When diasporic people find themselves dislocated from the home society, they are upset mentally and strive to remember and locate themselves in a nostalgic past. Through nostalgia they try to escape from the reality of life in the settled land. Nostalgia, by its very nature, often produces a sentimentalised view of the homeland. Indulgence in these delusions evokes a virtual comfort and security which sustains the individual away from home and the motherland reconfigures into a shade of displaced paradise. The bond with the homeland eventually leads to a historical understanding of their homeland, which often takes the form of personal memories.

Most often the first generation of a diasporic community faces loneliness and alienation in the new country and due to this they do not mingle with others in the settled society. Even if they try to blend with the other community people, most of the time they find it difficult as they find that they are discriminated. A sense of alienation, loneliness and feeling of loss are inextricable for the diasporic people. Even though they face external problems like discrimination and identity crisis, their own inner problems like loneliness and alienation cause more suffering to them.

The two novels *The Mango Season* and *A House for Happy Mother* are written by Malladi. These two novels are entirely based on two different stories. But the thread which connects these two stories is memories and hope. First the memories play a major role in Diaspora. As an author, Malladi has also experienced the nostalgia of her past in India, her homeland. But she has settled in foreign, and made that land as her home. But thinking of her past and childhood memories in Hyderabad, some of her novels are written with the basis of her former homeland. Once Malladi told this in Wikipedia as writing this book was like taking a trip to Hyderabad, "I think it's easier to write about a place you've lived in. The research element definitely shrinks

and you can write more confidently...and I just feel that it would be such a waste if I wouldn't write about the places I have lived in."

In *The Mango Season* and *A House for Happy Mothers*, she brought out the characters nostalgic moments. These are the panorama of Indian tradition. Malladi artfully places Priya in a situation between two opposite worlds. She reverts to childhood when faced with the knowledge that she will break her grandfather's heart with the betrayal of loving a foreigner. Unable to shake the strong yoke of her domineering mother's demands upon her, she gives in to the idea that she will meet a young Indian man who desires a wife. The young woman must ultimately decide between dogmatic tradition and heartfelt emotion.

Priya thinks about the last time she had slept on their house terrace, when she was twenty years old, ready to face the world with the strength of the innocent. She was gearing up to go to the United States; she had gotten her F1 student visa and her bags were packed. She was spending her last weekend at Ammamma's house before heading over across seven seas to the land of opportunities. She had been so eager to leave, so excited that she had never thought that when she came back everything would be different to her. Priya experiences the feel of a 'semi foreigner' in her own country because of the cultural changes and this makes her uncomfortable: As she thinks

> This was not home anymore. Home was in San Francisco with Nick. Home was whole Foods grocery store and fast food at KFC. Home was Pier 1 and Wall- Mart. Home was 7- Eleven and Starbucks. India was as alien, exasperating and sometimes exotic to me as it would be to a foreigner. (126)

When she was a child, Priya used to visit her grandparents. Her hands would smell of turmeric and stay yellow for days. She hasn't done this for so long and she is stung by the loss. She feels she has lost so much since she has left India and has not even thought about it. She has become so much a part of America that the small joys of dunking pieces of mango inside gooey paste are forgotten and not even missed. She assumes "It was as if there were two people inside me: India Priya and American Priya, Ma's Priya and Nick's Priya. I wondered who the real Priya was" (69).

Priya finds it impossible to taste a slice of mango in the Monda Market, though she used to steal mangoes in her childhood days and eat raw mangoes with salt and chilli powder. When her mother picks up a mango and asked the mango seller to cut a slice, Priya looks horrified, at the slimy piece of raw fruit thrust under her nose:

> Was she out of her mind? Did she expect me to eat that? ... the strong smell of mango and it juices sank in... I shook my head when the man scratched his hair and used the same hand to find a piece of food between yellow teeth, while he waited for judgment to be passed on his mangoes. (8-9)

Malladi uses the mango as a symbol of the disparity between two traditions. She intersperses recipes throughout her chapters for delicacies like Avakai (South Indian Mango Pickle), Mango Pappu (lentils), Rava ladoo and Aloo Bajji. Sanskrit ceremonial words of enlightenment are quoted to emphasize religious traditions that guide the family, and numerous Indian words are used in italics. An occasional peek backwards is necessary to refresh the reader's memory about terms quoted.

In the next novel *A House for Happy Mothers*, Malladi portrays the two female lead characters indulged with their memories. Though each has lived on either side of

the world, memories remind them of the past where they lived happily, but the present represents the sufferings and sacrifices. Everyone has the nostalgic experience when they remember good old things when they are in difficult situations. On one situation Priyasha thought about her first meeting with her husband Madhu, when she argued with him: They had met out outside the library on a hot August afternoon…their paths had never crossed before…as he picked up his book and looked at her through his sunglasses, he fell in love. "Love at first sight," (69)

Asha, the other character when she was thinking of the decision that she has made was right or wrong, she sees her husband, Pratap, who was sleeping beside her while travelling in the bus to the clinic. She thinks of her first impression on him. Asha smiled back and then looked fondly at Pratap…He was tall and built well, like his father had been. When she had first married him, two things struck her: his size and the smell of turpentine and paint. (23)

These are the two major memories that had been shared. Among all other memories, the memory of her son Manoj is the sweetest. She shared her memory of walking Manoj to school and taking back him to home. Through the way Manoj shared his day at school. That feeling cannot be replaced. She liked to hear her son's speech even though she cannot understand about English words or other unfamiliar words. These memories were explained to Priya through phone and Priya felt emotional for keeping them separated for the sake of her unborn child. Every mother's happiness lies in the little moments with their children's childhood and their cute little talks.

The second major theme is the theme of hope. Priya Rao from *The Mango Season*, and Priyasha and Asha from *A House for Happy Mothers*, these three women have slightest hope in them to achieve their wish. Priya Rao hopes that her family will

accept her marriage with a foreigner, who is totally different in race and culture and she also hopes that her family will understand her decision. She brings a change in her with her hope. Even though her family opposes she didn't lose her hope and faith both on her parents and relatives. She stands sternly on her opinion that love comes through feelings and emotion, not just with force. Likewise marriage is also not simple. Either party should agree wholeheartedly, if one is not interested then one should not force him or her. Priya Rao went through these circumstances and finally her hope wins.

And in the other novel, *A House for Happy Mothers*, Priyasha and Asha are the two female leads. Their name meant "hope" (301). Priyasha: "Your name means 'dear wish.'" (5). Asha: "My mother name is Asha- Asha means hope" (184). One hopes for a child and other hopes for child's better life. Asha gave Priya a greatest joy imaginable and Priya gave Asha a bigger gift, hopeful future with scholarship.

The Mango Season is a vista of Indian custom. It deals with Priya Rao, who travels to America and lives there a multi-cultural life, which sets out against the principles of her extended family. The novel is about how Priya conceals her engagement to an American man from her conventional Brahmin family unit. Malladi cleverly places Priya in a state of affairs between two differing worlds. She has to set off with either the rigid custom of her family or her genuine feeling. She struggles to get the courage to inform her parents that she wants to marry her American friend.

Malladi captures Priya's struggle to make her family pleased, esteem her past, and pursue her stance. The places of cultural clashes are demonstrated in the novel. When Priya returns to India to tell her conventional family that the man she is going to get married is not an Indian, she faces the unkind truth of prejudice and cultural

clashes in her native soil. The psyche of foreign returned Indian Priya is affected due to the higher professional prospects and varied cultural practices that she received in the land of her migration. It is an effort to look at the cultural dilemmas and clashes faced by the protagonist in her own homeland.

The Mango Season rightly presents Priya's twofold-living. Priya is required to either fall or rise. If she wants to win the faith of her extended family, she will lose her golden future with Nick; but if she exposes herself courageously and opens the gates, then she will go up and triumph over the heart of Nick. Lastly, she by opening her heart gets her father's permission followed by everybody. Malladi craftily places Priya in circumstances between two conflicting worlds. Priya fights her own combat and comes out successfully. The novel is a journey into a composite cultural process of Indian girls of present-day India, who go away in large numbers to study abroad (165-66).

In the novel *A House for Happy Mothers*, Malladi points out the struggle and sacrifices but she has replaced all fears and challenges of a mother with hope. Through the journey of surrogacy and the heart wrenching emotions, Malladi skilfully and compassionately raises the story of two women yearning to protect their families. Malladi balances the inequality of power between a poor surrogate and a biological mother. The portrayal of the characters is realistic and the emotions indulged provoke the feelings of mothers all over the world. Priyasha the biological mother, who extracted her eggs and her husband's sperm ejaculated into a cup and were inserted into the surrogate, Asha's womb.

Asha, on other side, was new to this. The family economically lack but due to the sake of her son's better life she accepts the pressure from her husband, Pratap,

mother-in-law, Puttamma, and, Kaveri and Raman, the couple who went through this process already and gained an amount of five lakhs have settled in city and bought a new flat which is better than the tiny tin roofed hut where Asha and her family live. Priya's and Asha's worlds were different. They didn't meet each other before; destiny brought them close with the name of surrogacy. Half- Indian and half- American Priya has settled in Silicon Valley, but there was no Indian about her.

Madhu, a completely Indian husband helped her to discover the Indianness and had made her to feel complete. He also helped her rudimentary language skills develop. Asha was different from Priya, she feels complete about her language, Telugu and Indianness in her. Asha was brought up with strict rules and regulations by her parents. They made arrangements for Asha's marriage. The comparison between Asha and Priya and the way they were brought up proves Indianness in Asha.

Priya marries the man whom she loved at first sight; she did not go through bride-seeing ceremonies. She decided her life. Asha's life and marriage were decided by her parent. They were brought up with different rules and circumstances. Priya has money, husband, house but not a child. Asha has two children, house, husband but not enough economical balance for her son, who is gifted with super talents and for better life. In spite of their struggles and misunderstandings the hope and the faith on each other was filled with joy and closeness. In life everyone faces different struggles. Only hope and faith help us to overcome the problems in hardest circumstances. Hope is life and life is hope.

Speaking of *The Mango Season*, Priya Rao felt that there were two people living inside her: "Indian Priya and American Priya. Ma's Priya and Nick's Priya. I wondered who the real Priya was" (65) because she does not want to break her

parent's feeling and Nick's feeling. She wanted them to accept her decision on marriage proposal with Nick. She had hoped for that. She cannot take the steps easily. She has to balance her parent, who raised her for twenty years and also the seven years of American life where she lived with her fiancé, Nick and also got engaged with her love.

Priya came to India with a hope that her parent would accept her decision. With the slight hope and firm decision Priya came to India and waited for the right time to open, according to the situation, but she fails and was scared, that the family will abandon her or not. She needs both her family and Nick. She does not want to hurt each other's feelings. She is struggling at the middle of the ladder and is confused whether to choose whom. If she leaves her parent she cannot fully have hope on Nick. If she leaves Nick she cannot marry other man, the love inside her will turn into hatred. And the loveless life will be a lifelong burden.

Priya knew she couldn't speak her mind in front of them. When everyone plans for her wedding, Priya's blood roared in her ears so she rose out her voice: "I can't marry Adharsh... Or anyone else you want me to marry... I came to India at this time to tell you all that I'm in love with an American and I plan to marry him. We're engaged" (155). These words broke her father's heart and others who were present at that scene. Except two, Sowmya and Anand, who are the partners in crime, to whom she shares openly. She grew up with them. They are also in the same age of Priya, and can act to the current generation system. They accept her decision and that is her life. Natrajan, her brother, also supports his sister's. He too hopes that his sister can live according to her decision, that she's still not a five-year-old kid, who can be controlled like a puppet.

The theme hope takes place in *A House for Happy Mothers* when Priya took Asha's son with her and Mona, wife of Vikas. Mona runs an organisation and also participated in many social activities took Manoj with her, when Priya told about the surrogate mother and her family's situation and how they face financial crisis and couldn't give a hopeful future to their son. Priya took Manoj with Mona to a special school to test his ability and IQ. Priya gave a hopeful gesture to Asha by taking care of Manoj. So she sets her faith in Priya and lets Manoj to go with them. On one side Asha felt bad but on other side she felt thankful to Priya. Mona is far different from her family background. She took initiative in this and found a suitable school for Manoj on her own. Priya admires her and says:

> Priya had not expected Mona to have much to offer beneath the surface. She looked like someone whose idea of exerting herself was getting to her facials, pedicures, manicures, and haircuts on time. Apparently there was merit to the statement "Don't judge a book by its cover." Priya was impressed. (263)

Asha felt uncomfortable as she felt like giving her son's hand to a stranger. She did not have hope on Priya. She was annoyed with Priya as she looked completely fake. And that's why she never liked her. When she finds that Priya took much effort to build her son's future education by finding him a scholarship and a boarding school, the hope starts to bloom inside Asha. And on other hand, Priya was scared of letting other women to carry her child. The emptiness in her took away the hope when she heard about the foetus growing in Asha's womb. She thought about the past where she had three miscarriages. She finds hope when Asha took care of the child inside her belly carefully.

Thus the hope travels through these two novels. Without memories and hope there will be missing parts which cannot complete these novels. Anyone can achieve anything. The importance of positive thinking and hope helps each and everyone's life to reach their goal. Experience teaches something to everyone and experiences bring hope. Priya Rao from *The Mango Season* hopes for the light in her life, which can only be given by her parent and also the blessings for her future love life. Priyasha and Asha from *A House for Happy Mothers* find hope in each other and encourage each other by supporting their needs. This brought them a family. Their name meant "hope," they had given hope to each other, and this was what brought them together, closed that gap between them, and eliminated the social and class differences, made them sisters, mothers- made them equals. (301)

The longing to regain their lost home often culminates in the creation of a different version of home. It further tracks down the possibility and the impossibility of homecoming. It evokes different emotions. Home is not only the place or the building one lives. It is related with the members and the past memories, these makes a place home and a house a home. Home is not the same home when the same members are not there or the memory is not there. Other may return to find their roots. Every returning is not same but most of the time there is an urge of returning to the diasporas. Those who cannot return physically, they may return through memory by recalling it.

Chapter Five

Summation

Every beginning leads to a conclusion and the conclusion recalls the observation and analysis of the previous chapters in order to list out what went earlier so that a neat wrap-up could be given to the study. Literature is important to us because it is universal. Literature creates a bond between the author's mind and action, which is communicated through words to others. It makes us to think about ourselves and society. If one knows how to handle literature, he can feel the taste of goodness, the grammatical use, phrase, words that enrich literature. It enriches both the author and the reader with its delight and fruitfulness. Thus literature is the creation of another world.

There are many other literatures; among that one such literature is Indian literature. The Indian literature has many writing backgrounds with themes like diaspora, discrimination, subjugation, women empowerment, male chauvinistic, cultural studies, fragmented culture, and different types of culture, language, religion and many more. Indian diaspora is one among it. Many who have migrated to different countries due to higher studies, work and labour have faced many missing qualities of Indianness in them and they face issues related to adaptation.

The most reoccurring element in each of these Indian diasporic writings is the element of Indianness, due to which these writings often present to the readers a view of the Indian culture and its flavors. The bond with the homeland often takes the form of personal memories. They try to equalize them according to their new culture and tradition. It's like paralleling two different worlds, one is the mother country and the

other is the foreign country. Adapting to a whole new world seem like not to drop both the past and present culture.

Malladi, born as an Indian, has now settled in a foreign country. The rationale for choosing Malladi to work on the proposed study is that she is a writer and a good story teller who is blessed with two cultures, two prospects and two challenges pertaining to different aspects of life. And the depth of knowledge, emotions and outlook, is shown in her writings- the choice of plot, characters and narrative syntax. She has experienced many differentiation on adapting to another country. She expresses her thoughts and feelings through her works. Among her seven works *The Mango Season* and *A House for Happy Mothers* points out the diasporic theme. Each novel has different settings and story, but the characters bring the feelings of a diasporic person and the changes that happen within them.

Malladi's *The Mango Season* deals with generation gap or complexity in terms of the contrast between the traditional culture, caste and the best practices of the elders in an extended family set up in India and the foreign returned youngsters of the very same family. Being torn between family code of conduct and the personal code of choice and behaviour, the central character struggles to find a mid-way between tradition and modernity. The theme of the novel is as old as tradition, but the treatment is different.

The other novel *A House for Happy Mothers* deals with two women discovering their best and the worst that India's rising surrogacy industry has to offer, bridging continents and cultures to bring a new life into the world and renewed hope to each other. Priyasha from California and Asha from Hyderabad find a new hope in

each other and also brought out the major causes faced by people in India. The emotions were linked with hope.

In the novel *The Mango Season*, the mango symbolizes the happiness, the taste and the hot summer. During summer the mango ripens; from children of small age to family bighead, everyone loves the season and the taste of mango. More than taste it also brings the family to be reunited, the good old memories, the smell which not only get mixed with the taste of buds but also to the soul and replenishes our memories and drive us back as a child again. The female protagonist Priya thought that the season has brought many good old memories back to her but it seems odd now that she could not feel the happiness and it is still a question mark when she was asked to come back to her mother land, because she was now with a new change.

The old has gone and the new has come, is a good example in Priya's life. She changes herself to the western culture and she leans on that society's lifestyle. But the news in India welcomes her which made her startle. The smell, the taste, the colour of the mango brought happiness when she was a child but now the old, rotten and the smell of the leftover mangoes, which has got beaten or pressed down when it is carried in a truck, seems loathing. The seller and his look sitting in a dirty white dhoti and kurta and his mouth filled with betel leaves spat out in similar intervals, and the road she walked was crooked and crowded, everything looks unpleasant to her.

Priya finds difficulty in communicating with her elders. As they belong to older generation, finds western culture as odd and inappropriate for an Indian to follow foreign land's culture and adapting to that. As a typical Indian girl will follow the rules and be obedient to their parent's decision. They don't have rights to object it. But when we adapt to a new culture which is different from motherland, everything

gets changed. So there occurs chaos among the elder and the younger generations. On one hand they tends to pursue their passion and on the other hand they have to accept the parent's desire. Despite all the hurdles she faces and overcomes, she also brings out her point sternly and the change in the stereotypical followings.

In the other novel, *A House for Happy Mothers*, the house is a baby farm where a childless couple can rent the womb of another woman. Having a child always brings happiness to the house. It comes in a baby-sized package into the world. 'The house' represents a house for women who are in need of that happiness. Priyasha and Asha are two female protagonists, who were destined to meet in this house. Priyasha and Madhu are the couple from California and the other couple, Asha and Pratap, from Hyderabad. The former couple comes to India after hearing about the surrogacy method through social meeting with her colleagues. That was a surprising and promising method compared to other treatments like IVF and it can also save a boy's future education by giving them a lump of amount which is the most important need. That way, the two families can be benefited with their needs.

Priyasha and Asha starts their relationship as strangers. They came to know each other in the clinic, Happy Mothers House through Doctor Swati. The life of both begins at this stage. On helps to give birth to a childless mother. And other helps by finding a good education and money for better future. Both finds their need in each. The thoughts they have on each other and the some unhappiness comes in middle, both smiled unevenly. Despite their comfortless they had slightest hope in each other which cannot be expressed but could be felt as a women. Though women has the emotional attachments than men in the corner of their heart which will be expressed often.

The two novels are different from each with the story, background and themes. The Introduction chapter deals with the growth and development of Indian novel in English and Indian Diaspora with special reference to Malladi. In the Introduction, the thesis statement and the hypothesis have been indicated. The various critical approaches such as cultural, social, diasporic and narratology are made use of in the explication of themes, characters and style. Among plots that are based on past events, on journeys, on discoveries and on the workings of society, Malladi gives importance to plots that deal with characters growing towards understanding the nature of life. And how the central character triumphs between these favourable and unfavourable climates at the familial and the social level has formed the tag line of *The Mango Season* and *A House for Happy Mothers*. It is said that themes like desire, love, hope, education, alienation, recrimination, honour, courage, women empowerment, relationship, exploitation, marginalization, togetherness, familial structures, cultural clash, problems of the immigrants, failed relationship and destiny are hard to explain except by example.

The second chapter deals with the Fragmented roots and Cultural Clashes between the motherland and the foreign land. The female protagonist has to go through both and has to choose the life she wants. She forgets her twenty years living style and followings of Indian culture, and adapts herself to the five year living style of western culture. Although she doesn't fully forgets her past, she wants a change in her upcoming future life according to her wish, she wants to live with the one she loves and not the one who chosen by her family.

In India it's hard for girl child to raise her voice against the elders about their likes or dislikes. They have to nod their head according to their elder's decision and are not allowed to discuss too. But the female protagonist, Priya, finds that, western

culture teaches everyone to be equalized and can open their thoughts to others so that they can live their wishful life. Thus the culture clashes here between the two countries and the root which has been rooted over twenty years, was fragmented.

Even though, the living style in India and in America clashes, Priya wants her family to accept her and doesn't want to fight or leave her twenty years of living memories in mother country. She wants both. And she fights for both to be in her part of life. She wishes that her desires are fulfilled. Her opinion is important and it's her life and she wants the right to choose her partner. Thus, to prove her thoughts and decisions she has to raise her voice of her likes and dislikes to her parent.

When raising our voice out something against the living method which is followed for thousands of years with new changes, it may clash but by accepting and changing our changes can break out many barriers which couldn't be understood with simple talk. In that way Priya outshines by accepting and following both changes in her and also not leaving her desires, which proves her courage and strong hope in herself and in her family.

The Mango Season explores the subject of the gap between cultures and between generations. The gap has been filled with cultural displacement. Malladi shows how India slowly moves in to modernity, and the cultural displacement and problems arise between generations. Cultural displacement is the reason for Priya's social changes and her intellectual changes which make her to argue with her family. As Priya is Americanized in her view, her father's compassion and her grandfather's manipulation are the sights, sounds and smell of India, the India that is foreign, yet familiar to Priya.

The third chapter deals with Presence and Absence of Child. The other novel *A House for Happy Mothers* proves that two cannot make a complete family. Only a child can fulfil the emptiness to make a whole and complete family. This chapter teaches us the importance of presence and absence of a child in a family. The presence of child can bring back our childhood memories and also creates new memories. Their scribbling, the sweet talk of the child, their expressions can bring happiness which cannot be explained. But the absence of child can disturb the mentality of the parent and will provoke the emptiness within them and will also drive them to the edge of mental sickness. So to avoid such sickness and emptiness surrogacy method is very useful to bring back the hollow living into a fulfilling life.

Once the child is born, the child's promising future is directly dependent on the parent's income. Therefore, the importance of education and the Indian education system are also mentioned in this chapter. The child's parents choose surrogacy as a source of income by renting the womb, but on the other hand the mother who rents the womb for the unknown couple undergoes the most terrible feeling a woman ever has to undergo. Yes, it seems very incomprehensible, and it cannot be understood by the father or any man in general, only a mother could comprehend how she regrets having to rent her womb to an unknown couple but ends up doing it for her own child's education and trouble free life whilst subduing her own regrets.

In *A House for Happy Mothers* it almost feels as though Malladi has given more thought and heart to Asha due to her class status and financial situation, perhaps, making her more human by getting angry with the rich Americans, her uneducated husband and her lot in life. For Priya, it feels as if Malladi wanted to create an over-privileged character that, despite her personal tribulations, can have what she desires because she is an American. Perhaps this is Malladi's way of highlighting the

vast difference between the haves and have-nots that money can buy almost everything, even a baby. The language Malladi uses is simple. She stays away from surrogacy jargon, which helps readers who are not female.

The fourth chapter is about the Memories and Hope. Both novels represent the theme of memory and hope. Hope is the only solution which helps us to overcome any situation. Memories bring back the good old moments and hope acts as the thread to link between the old and upcoming moments. The memory and hope connects as a link to our heart and mind and replenishes our soul every moment whenever one thinks about it. In the novel *The Mango Season* Priya longs for both the memories and hope to be the part of her life. The memories of twenty years living with her family in her mother country and the hope for her new life with an American to start in foreign country, plays a major role.

In the other novel *A House for Happy Mothers*, the memory of being a child, brought Priyasha the memories for her parents. This created an yearning to give birth to a child as she wants to create memories with them but it is not possible in her life due to three miscarriages and three failed IVF treatment. So the only hope for her is to lean on the hope of a surrogate mother only. And on the other side Asha, another female protagonist, has two children and she has many memories with her two children and husband, but she hopes for her son's education to be a good one with promising future.

There are many ways but being a surrogate she can bring happiness to her family and also to other couple who are childless. First she was not aware of it and was scared about renting her womb for unknown people. But by thinking about her children's education she accepts this and agrees to rent her womb. The other side

Priyasha helps Asha by finding a good school with scholarship and best education for Asha's child. The hope on Asha for Priyasha and Priyasha for Asha has filled their happiness. Thus, memories and hope are the two most important things in everyone's life which imposes on this chapter.

Without memories and hope there will be missing parts which cannot complete these novels. Priya Rao from *The Mango Season* hopes for the light in her life, which can only be given by her parent and also the blessings for her future love life. Priyasha and Asha from *A House for Happy Mothers* find that hope in each other and encourage each other by supporting their needs. This brought them a family.

A family is made with happiness, memories, sadness, chaos, small fights, gatherings, sharing, and many more. It is build up with many connection related to memories. Everyone deserves a home and the home is the only place that anyone could find hope. The happiness comes from one when they share their affection and care for someone in their family. The home breaks when someone moves out of homeland and settles for job in foreign land. They adapt to that culture and gradually they accept the change in their lifestyle and will follow that when returning to their homeland. Thus the fragmentation of bond starts when they change themselves according to a new culture and forgetting their past with homeland, where they are brought up. Diasporic literature has its roots in the sense of loss and alienation, which emerged as a result of migration and expatriation. It deals with alienation, displacement, existential rootlessness, nostalgia, quest of identity. It reflects the immigrants experience that comes out of the settlement in the foreign land.

The changing designation of home and accompanying nervousness about homelessness and unfeasibility of going back are current themes in diasporic literature.

The immigrants away from their families fluctuate between crisis and reconstruction. Also the immigrants who have settled in far away land have the sense of loss in culture and mother tongue which has been spoken for many years. There is little Indianness in them when they experience their past memories. They are thrice alienated from the native land they left behind, from their new host country and their children.

The longing to regain their lost home often culminates in the creation of a different version of home. It further tracks down the possibility and the impossibility of homecoming. It evokes different emotions. Home is not only the place or the building one lives. It is related with the members and the past memories, these makes a place home and a house a home. Home is not the same home when the same members are not there or the memory is not there. Other may return to find their roots.

Every returning is not same but most of the time there is an urge of returning to the diasporas. Those who cannot return physically, they may return through memory by recalling it. The home, memories, sense of loss, alienation, displacement and rootlessness appear again and again as central themes in the writings of Indian Diasporic writers. Diasporic experience often comes from memory and a memory of loss, of leaving home, of not having any soul-connection with the host country. Thus Diasporic literature always acts as a kind of bridge between two different cultures.

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ANNEXURE

INFOKARA

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Victim of Discrimination and Continuous Existence of ThirdSex in Living Smile Vidya's *I am Vidya*: *A Transgender's Journey*

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Abstract

The society persist their impression on third sex, which causes discrimination and unbearable pain to them. There are many questions on gender roles rises in society. The society know that gender roles plays a vital role, but when they talk about the third sex what comes to the mind, the discrimination starts here. They did not find a solution and it is unsolved yet. Talking about relationship, our mind jumps up to the relationship between male and female and they are meant to be the one to live a normal life, obviously in this society. What about the life of third sex, they are called to play rituals for marriage ceremonies and other kinds of occasions, but are not ready to welcome into our family. There are lot of questions without answer and no one is ready to bring a change. Thus, the plight of a transgender, Vidya, shared the vision of her life in this society through this novel. Will it be resolved or still will it be a big question mark.

Keywords: Discrimination, exclusion, identity, third-sex, trauma.

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"Exclusion is derived from fear, ignorance, and power, whilst inclusion is derived from love, compassion, and respect." -Michelle Emson.

Living Smile Vidya, or Smiley, is an Indian Trans woman actor, assistant director, writer and a transgender activist. She comes out with her own traumatic experience and chaos of her family and the society, who finds out her behaviour as girl, outwardly in a man's body. The same judgment starts when they tend to work as part of society. They suffer under a pressurized circumstance due to the living style and rights. They are killed with looks; harassed with words; kicked out from our society. How pathetic life they are living. Smiley, or Living Smile Vidya, in this novel *I am Vidya: A Transgender's Journey* has broken the typical talk about transgenders and rise out as a shooting star with her thirst on living with pride, finding a job like other human than to be a beggar or sex worker. Her memoir is shared, being a boy he finds out that he is no more a boy, but a girl trapped in masculine body and she escapes or releases herself from that identity to a complete Vidya.

Living Smile Vidya, or Smiley, was born as the sixth child to Ramaswami and Veeramma on 25th March 1982. She was born after many years of prayers for a boy. First child was stillborn, following four girls Radha, Manju, Vembu and Vellachi. Vembu and Vellachi died due to some disease and the other two survived. There is a belief that giving birth to boy can bring wealth and he will work to take care of the family. So the birth of boy after five children as sixth gave them joy and they named him Saravanan, after vowing to Vayalur Murugan temple. He was brought up under privileged living among the daughters who should do all other household chores. He enjoyed the concession.

Saravanan was grown as mama's boy and his two sisters took care of him. They did not know about the boy's behaviour is changing little by little. He considered himself as a princess, wearing his sister's dress and tying his hair under a towel as his imaginary long hair. He felt comfortable in girls garb than boys. But these feminine traits were noticed by his family members and neighbourhood. He was thrashed to floor by Appa. The trapped life tries to come out often but was shattered due to fear and discrimination. But he controls it and opens it out in secrecy and enjoys it privately. So he grew under two lives in one body. When

he met a friend, Senthil, he felt free to converse with him. He realized soon that Senthil was also like Saravanan. They shared their thoughts and often met each other. They addressed themselves as 'dee' only when they meet personally.

After graduating she remembers about her dream to become an actor or pursue linguistics than fulfilling her father's dream as IAS or into engineering college. But a different world was waiting for her to welcome. When she met a group of Kothis a Non-governmental organization, her inwardly thirst appears when she saw some wore women's clothes and looked feminine and some of whom had gone sex change operation, was referred as tirunangais. Leaving the entire past and future dreams of becoming an actor or to find a job, she ran towards her thinking of becoming a woman completely. She went to Pune and Mumbai which is known as the land of freedom for tirunangais.

There she lived as 'kothi' to earn money for the sex change operation. This operation known as nirvana is done to show off that she completely transforms into a woman. So that she will be recognized as 'tirunangai'. She was humiliated by many, was thrown out of the train due to begging, and was questioned by elderly woman to live by earning through some other jobs other than begging in a healthy body. So she started her new idea of selling whole sale products of keychains, small torch lights, pouches, etcetera with her group. But that too did not give her joy for living. The problem was that the same people who gave coins when she was begging were not ready to get the products she sold. They did not see the product but the person who was selling those. For her, life was like a pendulum moving to and fro. The society which says them to stop begging and to indulge in works or other jobs is not ready to encourage when they come out with their pride to earn money by selling products.

The idea was not hopeful for earning. The dream of becoming an actor again pops out. She left the community and joins with her fellow college mates. She pursued help from Nehru, Mu Ra, Murugabhupathi, Selvam, and Viji, all of them on a job hunt. Luckily she got a job at Coimbatore corporate office. The happiness which bound her could not be measured and was finally released from a captive for ages. In the working place, she was considered as part of God's creation, never a destitute or sinner or tirunangai. She runs a blog, sharing her views and experiences.

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The expectations of hijras are simple. They wanted to live a normal life like us. They should be considered one among us. They need equal opportunities to work and earn a livelihood. They wanted the government to legally run hospitals for their surgeries and also the rights to change their names. Children from young age should be taught about them and to respect them, not to spare or humiliate them.

Transgender women require understanding and support of the government, health care professionals, general public as well as their family members. Thus the society needs to understand and accept that humans are diverse. People have the right to be what they are and what they want to be. For transgender people, the same holds true.

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that ~~Dr./Mr.~~/Ms. A. Puriya Narayani, M.Phil,
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Survival: Juvenile trauma to experiencing the triumph of forgiving in Jeannette Walls' *"The Glass Castle"*

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Abstract:

Jeannette Walls' "*The Glass Castle*" is a memoir, who shares about horrific experience of her childhood. As we all grew up and experienced the childhood in different situations, social background, society, etc. But Jeannette's was something different. She was the second oldest of four children. Her parents been selfish and manipulative and raised them in poverty. But the siblings were always there for each other showering unconditional love, when their parents left them in a dysfunctional situation. A family is a group of people who sticks to each other when there is any problem. Here in this novel, the glass castle (family bond which is fragile) was broken into pieces, which cannot be fixed again. As a reader I could feel the way how Jeannette has been gone through such traumatic situations and got psychologically affected. Thus, the novel runs through a gothic misfortune of the four children's life and ends up in forgiving their parents, who regrets about their treatments to their children and realizes about it.

Keywords: Dysfunctional, Poverty, Juvenile trauma, Resilience, Gothic misfortune, Psyche and Forgiveness.

Jeannette Walls was born on April 21, 1960, in Phoenix, Arizona, to Rex Walls and Rose Mary Walls. Walls' has two sisters, Lori and Maureen, and one brother, Brian. Walls' family life was rootless, with the family shuttling from Phoenix to California (including a brief stay in the Tenderloin district of San Francisco), to Battle Mountain, Nevada, and to

Welch, West Virginia, with periods of homelessness. When they finally landed in Rex's Appalachian hometown of Welch the family lived in a three-room house without plumbing or heat, infested with snakes and rats.

Early in her career Walls interned at a Brooklyn newspaper called The Phoenix and eventually became a full-time reporter there. From 1987 to 1993 she wrote the Intelligencer column for a New York magazine. She then wrote a gossip column for Esquire, from 1993 to 1998, and then contributed regularly to the gossip column "Scoop" at MSNBC.com (Microsoft/ National Broadcasting Company) from 1998 until her departure to write full time in 2007. In 2005, Walls published the best-selling memoir, *The Glass Castle*, which details the joys and struggles of her childhood. It offers a look into her life and that of her dysfunctional family. *The Glass Castle* was well received by critics and the public. It has sold over 2.7 million copies and has been translated into 22 languages. It received the Christopher Award, the American Library Association's Alex Award (2006), and the Books for Better Living Award.

"The Glass Castle" is a compelling character drama about family. The story of a very unusual family plays on two time frames, with the emphasis on the past for quite a while. The script is incredibly well-written; telling parallel stories in the past and present that are both engaging and enhance each other, creating suspense and intrigue.

"But God shows his love for us that, While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8) "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory." (Rom. 3:23) God has a long history of working through people who come from dysfunctional families. After all, a dysfunctional family is any family with more than one person in it. And every human is a sinner. So when two or more sinful people form a family, it is not uncommon for the family to be dysfunctional on more than one level. And out of that chaos, comes God's story.

There is another title *Dessert*, resembles their life dryness and emptiness. But the real worst was seen when there is the entry of their grandma, Erma. If Jeannette's parents are cruel, her grandma Erma, dad's mom, was the worst part in their life. Erma is a humourless, racist child molester or in the word's infinite delusion "She's just an old woman who's had a tough life". (132)

Throughout life, these kids witnessed and have been prepare to face the adverse situations in their day to day life or victims many different cases involving rape and molestation. Jeannette was molested by a boy of her age when she was around seven to eight years old, later she was molested by her uncle, and witnessed her grandma molesting Brian. There have been countless other times the kids have been subject to molestation and possible rape, but their family helped them get over it. They helped them believe that it was simply something they had to forgive the molester for.

"Life's too short to care about what other people think. Besides, they should accept us as who we are" (157). It's clear that as sophisticated as Jeannette has grown, in her pantsuits and pearls, she's never quite left her upbringing behind, boxing up leftovers at fancy restaurants and keeping her belongings in moving boxes. And as she prepares to get married, she must reconcile with her past both the good parts and the bad.

Apart from these there were many social issues in the Glass Castle. It deals with the family, perseverance, wealth, society and class, coming of age, identity, freedom and confinement, forgiveness, hunger and unconditional love. The family adapts a nomadic lifestyle. The author proves over and over again how she holds no bad feelings towards her parents and the horrendous childhood days that she endured because of their neglect. No matter how many times her parents betray, frustrate, belittle, or scare her half to death, Walls

finds some way of turning their action into deeds of love. She never points fingers at her parents, blaming them for their neglect.

No matter how many times her parents betray, frustrate, belittle, or scare her half to death, Walls finds some way of turning their action into deeds of love. She never points fingers at her parents, blaming them for their neglect. Even though she sometimes would like to tell them what she honestly thinks of them, she holds these thoughts to herself and continues to nod her head in their favour. Her mother and father both squander money on themselves, often leaving their children with no food or warm clothes. And still, Walls does not wallow in self-pity. She sees who her parents are and moves on, finding solutions for her problems through pure determination to survive.

Hunger floats through this memoir, sometimes so desperately that readers begin to feel as if they too were starving. The children seldom have enough food to eat. But it is not just the hunger of the body that is expressed in this memoir. There is also the hunger for affection; the hunger for friends and acceptance; and the hunger for warmth and clean clothes.

In conclusion, Jeanette's parents may have had a ton of flaws and shortcomings, but when it boiled down to how the Walls children were brought up, they learned to be tough, resilient, independent and educated. It was their parents' genuine love combined with absurd neglect, which empowered the Walls children with the psychological strength to overcome the obstacle of their upbringing. It is because they knew they were loved, that the Walls children, together, strove hard, transformed their stumbling blocks, formed by their parent's dysfunctionality into stepping stones, and succeeded in their lives.

Throughout Walls and her family were constantly on the go, most likely escaping from one of their many problems. Walls simply could not escape her childhood. The novel

continuously demonstrates dysfunctional communication, and shows no signs of nurturing. As the dysfunctionality runs over the Walls family, her sister and her brother Brian escalated to fend for themselves, supporting one another as they whether their parents' betrayals and, finally, found the resource to leave home. Jeannette Walls is not just that she had the guts and tenacity and intelligence to get out, but that she describes her parents with such deep affection and generosity. This is a story of triumph against all odds, but also a tender, moving tale of unconditional love in a family that despite its profound flaws gave the fiery determination to carve out a successful life on its own terms.

RANI ANNA GOVERNMENT COLLEGE FOR WOMEN

Tirunelveli - 8.

(Re-Accredited with 'A' Grade by NAAC)

RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CONTEMPORARY THEORETICAL POSITIONS IN LITERATURE

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This is to certify that Mr./Ms./Dr. A. SURIYA NARAYANI, M.Phil, ST. MARY'S COLLEGE *has participated / presented a paper entitled* Survival: Juvinile Trauma to experiencing the triumph of forgiving in "The Glass Castle". *at the One - Day National Conference on* ***Contemporary Theoretical Positions in Literature*** *organised by the Research Department of English, Rani Anna Government College for Women, Tirunelveli, held on 7th* ***September 2019.***

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Vestiges of Paraphilia: Bret Easton Ellis's *American Psycho* as a Postmodern Gothic Narrative

A project submitted to

St. Mary's College (Autonomous)

Thoothukudi

affiliated to

MANOMANIAM SUNDARANAR UNIVERSITY

in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the award of the Degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN ENGLISH

by

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SEPTEMBER 2020

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled **Vestiges of Paraphilia: Bret Easton Ellis's *American Psycho* as a Postmodern Gothic Narrative** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is my original work and that, it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

SEPTEMBER 2020 **VINOBINI SAMPRASITTA ABILA B.**

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **Vestiges of Paraphilia: Bret Easton Ellis's *American Psycho* as a Postmodern Gothic Narrative** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Literature is a work done by Vinobini Samprasitta Abila B. during the year 2019-2020, and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

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PREFACE

The dissertation entitled **Vestiges of Paraphilia: Bret Easton Ellis's *American Psycho* as a Postmodern Gothic Narrative** discusses the satirical, the transgressive, and the eccentric alterity present in the novel through the novelist's use of the Gothic Narratology. Bret Easton Ellis describes the modern yuppie culture of the 1980s Americans. Its impact on literary, musical and visual culture has been extensive. The novel satirises the extreme political systems that are based on opposing models of the incorrigibility of humanity. The inhabitants of the novel are barely fully human, much less quasi-magical; rather, they are much closer to Agamben's "bare life". *American Psycho* is narrated through a first person point of view by its main character, the serial killer Patrick Bateman, who is a young, rich, businessman working at his family-owned company.

The thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter **Introduction** throws light on the biographical details of Bret Easton Ellis with reference to the general aspects of his works and his predominant place in American Literature.

The second chapter highlights **Mythic Tradition of Homelessness,** the importance of body and it also emphasises on the homelessness and the hunger of the people in the American Society in 1980s.

In the third chapter, **The Postmodern Gothic Narrative** deals with the characteristics of the gothic novel in general and it also describes how *American Psycho* is considered as a gothic novel.

The fourth chapter **Autodiegetic Alterity** focuses on the character of the protagonist. It says about the four fold characteristics of the protagonist. The protagonist is a psychopath, a serial killer, a rapist and a robber.

The fifth chapter **Summation** sums up all the significant aspects dealt in the preceding chapters.

The researcher has consistently referred to and recorded in the parenthesis prescribed by MLA Handbook 7th Edition for the preparation of the thesis.

Chapter One

Introduction

Life is manifested in the form of literature. Without literature, life ceases to exist. It is an embodiment of words based on human tragedies, desires and feelings. It records the passions of humanity, appreciates life's wonders, cultivates right perceptions about life, and inspires a teeming generation. Even though it is dynamic, endless and multi-dimensional literature contributes significant purpose to the world we live in.

Literature is present during the era of the ancient world. Even without the invention of words and language, literature was already manifested in the earliest human civilisations. Carvings and paintings on walls inside the caves of stone give evidence of the lives of pre-historic people. They explain their way of life.

Literature in the present generation still exists as an expression of art, a source of knowledge and an instrument of entertainment. Books are being read seriously by readers who crave for information and for recreation by those who are passionate in exploring their imagination. Literature kindles new ideas. It gives voice to the people who want to express their opinions about certain things in life – whether it be politics, health, religion and the like.

Literature is the heart of songs, rhythmic and harmonious pieces that give message and inspiration to people. Films are visual representation of literature give life and action to the words written on a page. Magazines, newspapers, television, the radio and even the internet contain literature. It is found everywhere and anywhere. The power of literature affects all of us. It is complex, intergenerational and long-lasting.

Literature is found in the beginning of all things. It continues to live throughout the ages. It connects human beings and mirrors reality in an artistic way, in a profound way. As long as our world lives, literature flourishes.

Literature has the power to change the world. It consciously and unconsciously surrounds human beings. Definitions of literature change because they describe and clarify a reality, they do not create the reality they describe. Literature is something that reflects society, makes the readers think about themselves and their society, lets them to enjoy language and beauty, it can be didactic, and it reflects on the human condition.

The three main ways of approaching a definition of literature are relativism, subjectivism and agnosticism. With relativism, there are no value distinctions in literature, anything may be called good literature. Subjectivism, as the term implies, means that all theories of literary value are subjective, and that literature evaluation is a purely personal matter. Agnosticism follows from subjectivism, it argues that, though there may be real distinctions in literary value, our subjective value systems prevent from knowing anything about the real values.

American literature is literature written or produced in the United States of America and its preceding colonies. Like other national literatures, American literature was shaped by the history of the country that produced it, the literature produced in that part of America did not begin as an independent literature. American literature is a branch of English literature, as truly as English books written in Scotland or South Africa. American literature is unique in the number of voices and cultures it conveys, giving it the power to transform opinions and challenge stereotypes in both obvious and subtle ways.

For almost a century and a half, America was merely a group of colonies scattered along the eastern seaboard of the North American continent. After a successful rebellion against the motherland, America became the United States, a nation. By the end of the 19th century this nation extended southward to the Gulf of Mexico, Northward to the 49th parallel, and Westward to the pacific. By the end of the 19th century USA had taken its place among the powers of the world. Its fortunes are so interrelated with those of other nations that inevitably became involved in two world wars and, following these conflicts, with the problems of Europe and East Asia. Meanwhile, the rise of science and industry, as well as changes in ways of thinking and feeling, created many modifications in people's lives, all these factors in the development of the United States moulded the literature of the country.

American literature reflects beliefs and traditions that come from the nation's frontier days. The pioneer ideals of self – reliance and independence appear again and again in American writings. American authors have great respect for the value and importance of the individual. They tend to reject authority and to emphasise democracy and the equality of people. They often celebrate nature and a sense of boundless space. American writers have always had a strong tendency to break with literary tradition and to strike out their awn directions. Writers of other countries seem to absorb their national literary traditions. But many American authors have rejected the old in order to create something new. A lively streak of humour runs through American literature from the earliest times to the present. It reflects the people's ability to laugh at themselves even during the most difficult times.

The history of American literature begins with the arrival of the English-speaking Europeans in what would become the United States. At first American

literature was naturally a colonial literature, by authors who were Englishmen and who thought and wrote as such John Smith, a soldier of fortune who is credited with initiating American literature. His leading books are *A True Relation of Virginia* (1608) and *The General History of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles* (1624).

American literature, as a whole, depicts the diverse and revolutionary forthcoming of a nation to what is today. The history of America is gifted with making itself from nothing, building on new and radical expectations, and rivalling the rest of the world for respect and independence. At one time, this ability to completely remake a country was viewed as a burden and the constant hardship and suffering it took to create this country is everything that American literature is now known for across the globe. The ruthlessness and raw portrayal of the narratives, poems, and stories constitute all that America is, was, and will be.

To define American literature is to recognise how harsh, detached, and insensitive it stands, and that it cannot even be defined fully. American writing consists of a physical abuse, a lack of love, and a morbid character, all across the board from the Native Americans to the colonists, revolutionaries, explores the civil war, the American renaissance, and beyond. Throughout American literature, each writer, poet, and author, not only sets a higher standard for the next, but adds to the mosaic it has originated from and exemplifies a distinctly unsympathetic and unforgiving theme.

A cruel and inhumane perspective were not only lived, but vividly illustrated in early writings of the 15th century and continue until the 19th century. Arrival at the New World is not nearly as spick-and-span and ideal as history constructs it to be. It

is only the beginning of the physical destruction and devastating wipe out of the Native American populations. The most lethal weapon to the Hispaniola's people is the disease, the epidemics they were not equipped to fight against. Early American writers, like Thomas Harriot, fortified ignorance for the decimation of the Native populations. He believes that they are dying off because of "invisible bullets." It was in God's will for the natives to be slaughtered. He is unfeeling towards them and his obliviousness to the reality of what is happening is sickening.

The insensibility to another human life is the starting point of American literature. Michael De Cuneo, who referred to the Native American people as "cannibals," casually describes the rape of a woman. The vivid detail and nonchalant attitude at which he relives the scene is enough to appal. The physical abuse illustrated in American literature does not end there and this unloving nature and numbness America puts up is a powerful force to try to reckon with. There is no need for love or romantic interest in American literature.

Two centuries later, the same unrefined depictions of human objectification continue. In *Letters from an American Farmer,* Michel-Guillaume Jean de Crevecoeur comes across an African American slave in the woods. He "recollects the bird has picked out his eyes, his cheeks bones were bare, hollows sockets.... Humanity herself would have recoiled back with horror" (Crevecoeur 156). This is not only American literature, but American history in the making. This is what defines America's past and its writing. The events that cannot be forgotten, the people that are not talked about, and the topics that are avoided is what American literature is. The literature calls out for the lack of love, the aversion, and the loathing for the other group of people and is still existing today.

Postmodernism broadly refers to a socio-cultural and literary theory, and a shift in perspective that has manifested in a variety of disciplines including the social sciences, art, architecture, literature, fashion, communications, and technology. It is generally agreed that the postmodern shift in perception began sometime back in the late 1950s, and is probably still continuing. Postmodernism can be associated with the power shifts and dehumanisation of the Post Second World War era and the onslaught of consumer capitalism.

The very term Postmodernism implies a relation to Modernism. Modernism was an earlier aesthetic movement which was in vogue in the early decades of the twentieth century. It has often been said that Postmodernism is at once a continuation of and a break away from the modernist stance. Postmodernism shares many of the features of Modernism. Both schools reject the rigid boundaries between high and low art. Postmodernism even goes a step further and deliberately mixes low art with high art, the past with the future, or one genre with another. Such mixing of different, incongruous elements illustrates Postmodernism's use of light-hearted parody, which was also used by Modernism. In short, Modernism and Postmodernism give voice to the insecurities, disorientation and fragmentation of the 20th century western world. Modernism projects the fragmentation and decent redness of contemporary world as tragic. It laments the loss of the unity and centre of life and suggests that works of art can provide the unity, coherence, continuity and meaning that are lost in modern life.

Postmodernism understands that grand narratives hide, silence and negate contradictions, instabilities and differences inherent in any social system. Postmodernism favours "mini-narratives," stories that explain small practices and local events, without pretending universality and finality. Postmodernism realises that

history, politics and culture are grand narratives of power-wielders, which comprise falsehoods and incomplete truths.

Postmodernism, in its denial of an objective truth or reality, forcefully advocates the theory of constructivism-the anti-essentialist argument that everything is ideologically constructed. Postmodernism finds the media to be a great deal responsible for "constructing" our identities and everyday realities. Indeed, Postmodernism developed as a response to the contemporary barrack, in electronics and communications technologies and it revolutionise the world order.

The French philosopher, Jean Baudrillard, defines the Postmodern in terms of 'a post-orgy world', spent and sleepy, a kind of cultural refractory period, luxuriating in the obscenity of total availability. His version of the Postmodern is a world where nothing is censored, repressed or taboo, a world in which moral values have been wholly superseded by commercial concerns. For Baudrillard, the "American miracle is that of the obscene," marked by unprecedented wealth, instantaneous gratification, an almost unbearable profusion of consumer choices.

Americans are a long way beyond the Freudian drama of repression, that seemingly eternal struggle between individual desire and social prohibition. For Freud, the instinctual drives of mankind- sexual, violent, anti-social – are perpetually at war with the basics of civilisation- civic duty, social responsibility, and moral order. At times (and this is, of course, one of the central themes of early Modernism) the lid is screwed down too tightly, and society inflicts wounds upon the individual psyche in the form of neuroses. Behaviour is strictly regulated. Specific bodily functions are deemed inappropriate and controlled via guilt and shame. Sexuality is constrained by a tight corset of injunctions and inhibitions. But, Freud argues, one

should not romanticise these libidinal forces, which are profoundly selfish, amoral and destructive. If unchecked, if one were permitted to follow one's natural inclination toward rape and murder then barbarism would result. Civilisation is built upon the sublimation of these energies, channelling such forces into socially acceptable manifestations: ambition, progress, art and science. Nudity is turned into art; unlicensed sexuality is always a threat to the social order. For this reason, pornographic images are taboo, promiscuity is frowned upon, the libidinal is the essential basis of the obscene. No matter how painful this renunciation of desire may be, repression is the price one must pay for civilisation.

But what if Freud is wrong? After all, the restrictions, hypocrisies and prohibitions of turn of the nineteenth century Vienna appear very distant – even quaint – from our twenty – first century viewpoint. Indeed, one might argue that the current vogue for nineteenth-century novels, literary adaptions, and heritage cinema is a kind of paradoxical nostalgia for repression.

Contemporary culture seems to suggest that libidinal forces and a capitalist economy can quite happily co-exist after all. In place of Freud's old-fashioned notion of sublimation – the imprisonment and forced redirection of the sexual instinct – it now seems as if the pornographic is everywhere. Desire still exists, but in a curiously attenuated and free- floating form. People still want things but in turn, they seem instantly available. In order to keep on wanting, one never feels wholly satisfied or gratified – a strange, libidinal twist on the idea of built – in obsolescence – one always wants the next thing. In the world of late capitalism, whatever one wants one can buy- but there are always too many things out there finally to state one's appetite. Instant

gratification is always accompanied by a queasy sense of emptiness. Desire is no longer about forbidden areas of life, but rather having the space to put things.

One might therefore argue that sexuality is even more severely harnessed to the system in late capitalism, but it is neither suppressed nor sublimated – rather the mechanics of desire seem incorporated within the very nexus of commodity culture. Commodified sexuality is no longer a threat; it provides an extremely lucrative source of income. Is there anything still taboo in our society? Why, yes: the uncommercial, the undesirable, the dull – everything else is grist to the mill, including, of course, the idea of rebellion itself. Modern art caused scandals, riots, arrests, convulsive social repercussions.

Novelty, controversy and sexuality sell; surrealist imagery is now the stuff of advertising campaigns and rock album covers; subversion and an aura of rebelliousness simply add to its market value. Thus, huge corporate conglomerates will quite happily sell the sex pistols. Everything is incorporated – and the more extreme the better. This seems to leave us only with the position of being neo-conservatives, which is, of course, uncomfortable; we'd like to be bohemians, subversives, upsetting the prudish and scandalising the bourgeoisie, but instead we find ourselves calling for some kind of order, restraint, condemning the morally blank cultural scene. But even this position – with its implied sense of critical distance and moral objectivity – seems somehow unavailable to us.

Satirists condemn their age, because they can still imagine something better, some kind of moral norm with which to contrast the current depravity; it is kind of moral norm with which to contrast the current depravity; it is this idea of distance, of being outside of things, which no longer seems tenable to us today. Nobody illustrates

this better than Bret Easton Ellis; "THIS IS NOT AN EXIT" (384) he writes at the end of *American Psycho* and this motto could be seen as emblematic of the Postmodern dilemma; there's simply no way out of the mall. Bret Easton Ellis's the most popular novel, *American Psycho,* is today considered one of the best examples of postmodern literature and has become the subject of study in many literary courses in the academia.

Bret Easton Ellis was born on March 7, 1964. He is an American author, screenwriter, short-story writer, and director. Ellis was first regarded as one of the so-called literary Brat Pack, which also included Tama Janowitz and Jay McInerney. He is a self-proclaimed satirist whose trademark technique, as a writer, is the expression of extreme acts and opinions in an affectless style. His novels commonly share recurring characters.

When Ellis was 21, his first novel, the controversial bestseller *Less Than Zero* was published in 1985 by Simon and Schuster. His third novel, *American Psycho* was his most successful novel which was published in 1991. Upon its release, the literary establishment widely condemned it as overly violent and misogynistic. As there were many petitions to ban the book, Ellis's book was dropped by Simon and Schuster. The resounding controversy convinced Alfred A. Knopf to release it as a paperback later that year. Ellis's novels have become increasingly metafictional.

Four of Ellis's works have been made into films. *Less Than Zero* was adapted in 1987 as a film of the same name, but the film bore little resemblance to the novel. Mary Harron's adaption of *American Psycho* was released to generally positive reviews in 2000. *The Rules of Attraction* made modest box office returns. *The*

Informers, based on Ellis's collection of short stories, was critically panned. Ellis also wrote the screenplay for the critically derided 2013 film *The Canyons*.

In 2010 Ellis released *Imperial Bedrooms*, the sequel to his debut novel. Ellis wrote it following his return to Los Angeles and fictionalises his work on the film adaption of *The Formers*, from the perspective of Clay. *Publishers Weekly* gave the book a positive review, saying, "Ellis fans will delight in the characters and Ellis's easy hand in manipulating their fates, and though the novel's synchronicity with *Zero* is sublime, this also works as a stellar stand alone" (8).

Ellis's first novel, *Less Than Zero*, is a tale of disaffected, rich teenagers of Los Angeles written and re-written over a five-year period from Ellis's second year in high school, earlier drafts being more autobiographical and read like teen diaries or journal entries-lots of stuff about the bands he liked, the beach, the galleria, clubs, driving around, doing drugs, partying during his period. The novel was praised by critics and sold well. He moved back to New York city in 1987 for the publication of his second novel, *The Rules of Attraction*- described by Ellis as an attempt to write the kind of college novel I had always wanted to read and could never find which follows a group of sexually promiscuous college students.

Ellis's collection of short stories *The Informers* was published in 1994. It contains vignettes of wayward Los Angeles characters ranging from rock stars to vampires, mostly written while Ellis was in college, and so has more in common with the style of *Less Than Zero*. Ellis has obligation after discovering that it would take far longer to complete his next novel than he had intended.

After years of struggling with *The Informers*, he released his fourth novel, *Glamorama*, in 1998. *Glamorama* is set in the world of high fashion, following a

male model who becomes entangled in a bizarre terrorist organization composed entirely of other models. The book plays with themes of media, celebrity, and political violence, and like its predecessor *American Psycho* it uses surrealism to convey a sense of postmodern dread. Although reactions to the novel were mixed, Ellis holds it in high esteem among his own works. He has also told that it is probably the best novel he has written and the one that means the most to him. And when he says "best" – the wrong word, he supposes, but he is not sure what else to replace it with- he means that he will never have that energy again, that kind of focus sustained for eight years on a single project. He has also said that he will never spend that amount of time crafting a book that means that much to him. And he also thinks that people who have read all of his works and are fans understand about *Glamorama*- it's the one book out of seven he has published that matters the most.

Ellis's novel *Lunar Park* which was published in 2005 uses the form of a celebrity memoir to tell a ghost story about the novelist Bret Easton Ellis and his chilling experiences in the apparently haunted home he shares with his wife and son. In keeping with his usual style, Ellis mixes absurd comedy with a bleak and violent vision.

In 2010, Ellis released a follow-up to *Less Than Zero, Imperial Bedrooms.* Taking place 25 years after the events of *Less Than Zero.* It combines that book's world-weariness with the postmodernism of *Lunar Park.* It met with disappointing sales.

For his original screenplay for the Paul Schrader directed film *The Canyons,* Ellis won Best screenplay at the 14th Melbourne Underground Film Festival, with the film also winning award for the categories of Best Foreign Film, Best Foreign

Director and Best Female Actor, for Lindsay Lohan. In 2019, Ellis released his first piece of non-fiction, *White*, a collection of essays on contemporary political culture.

Ellis often uses recurring characters and settings. Major characters in one novel may become minor ones in the next, or vice versa. Camden College, a fictional New England liberal arts college, is frequently referenced. It is based on Bennington College, which Ellis attended, and where he met future novelist Jonathan Lethem and befriended fellow writers Donna Tartt and Jill Eisenstadt. In Tartt's *The Secret History (1992),* her version of Bennington is "Hampden College" although there are oblique connections between it and Ellis's *The Rules of Attraction.*

Camden is introduced in *Less Than Zero,* which mentions that both the protagonist Clay and the minor character Daniel attend it. In *The Rules of Attraction,* set at Camden, Clay is a minor character who narrates one chapter; ironically, he longs for the California beach, while in Ellis's previous novel he had longed for a return to college. On "the guy from Los Angels' door someone wrote "Rest in Peace Called"; R.I.P; or Rip, is Clay's dealer in *Less Than Zero;* Clay also says that Blair from *Less Than Zero* sent him a letter stating that she thinks Rip was murdered. Main character Sean Bateman's older brother Patrick narrates one chapter of the novel; he is the infamous central character of Ellis's next novel, *American Psycho.* Ellis includes a reference to Tartt's forthcoming secret *History* in the form of a passing mention of "that weird Classics group probably roaming the countryside sacrificing farmers and performing pagan rituals" (Tartt 2001, 65). There is also an allusion to the main character from Eisenstaedt's *From Rockaway.*

In *American Psycho,* Patrick's brother Sean appears briefly. Paul Denton and Victor Johnson from *The Rules of Attraction* are both mentioned; on seeing Paul,

Patrick wonders "maybe he was on that cruise a long time ago, one night last March. If that's the case, I'm thinking, I should get his telephone number or, better yet, his address" (86). Camden is both Sean's college and the college a minor character named Vanden is going to. Vanden was referred to in both *Less Than Zero* and *The Rules of Attraction.* Passages from *"Less Than Zero"* reappear almost verbatim here, with Patrick replacing Clay as narrator. Patrick also makes repeated references to Jami Gertz, the actress who portrays Blair in the 1987 film adaption of Less *Than Zero. The Informers* features a much younger Timothy Price, one of Patrick's co-workers in *American Psycho,* who narrates one chapter. One of the central characters, Graham, buys concert tickets from *Less Than Zero's* Julian, and his sister Susan goes on to say that Julian sells heroin and is a male prostitute. Alana and Blair from *Less Than* Zero are also friends of Susan's. Letters to Sean Bateman from a Camden College girl named Anne visiting grandparents in Los Angeles comprise the eighth chapter.

Patrick Bateman appears briefly in *Glamorama; Glamorama's* main character Victor Ward and Lauren Hynde were first introduced in *The Rules of Attraction.* As an in-joke reference to Bateman being portrayed by Christian Bale in the then-in-production 2000 film adaption, Bale briefly appears as a background character. The book also includes a spy named Russell who is physically identical to Bale, and at one point in the novel impersonates him. Jaime Fields, who has a major role in the book, was first briefly mentioned by Victor in *The Rules of Attraction.* Bertrand, Sean and Mitchell, all from *The Rules of Attraction,* appear in Camden flashbacks and several other rules character are referenced.

There is a couple of issues that make *American Psycho* a problematic title, while in the same time assuring its place in the Western Canon. One of these issues is related to the genre of the novel, which can be argued to be anything from horror, Gothic, Comedy, to transgressive.

All of Ellis's previous works are heavily referenced, in keeping with the book-within-a-book structure. Donald Kimball from *American Psycho* questions Ellis on a series of *American Psycho* inspired murders, Mitchell Allen from *Rules* lives next door to and went to college with Ellis and he recalls a tempestuous relationship with Blair from Zero.

In an interview with Jamie Clarke, Ellis admitted that Patrick Bateman was based partly on 'guys he met in Wall Street, partly himself, and partly his father'. He went on to explain that the book was, at some level, 'a criticism of the way his father lived his life, because he did slip into that void. He was the ultimate consumer. He was the sort of person who was completely obsessed with status and about wearing the right suits and owning a certain position with a kind of car and staying at certain hotels and eating in a certain kind of restaurant regardless of whether these things gave him pleasure or not.... And they were values that his father passed on to him and he still can't say he have completely shaken them off.'

The admittance that *American Psycho* is the 'the most autobiographical of his novels', the product of a 'severe depression and black period' has, of course, been seized on by Ellis's many critics. Interviews in which Ellis appears every bit as obsessed and au fait with designer labels and conspicuous consumerism as his characters, vaguely sinister descriptions of his black, minimalist apartment, and apparently unguarded expressions of masochistic despair regarding his vacuous,

materialistic lifestyle, have all fed a dangerously naïve synthesis between Ellis's public persona and the figure of Patrick Bateman.

One of the fundamental debates regarding the novel is whether, given the unreliability of the text's narrator and the number of inaccuracies, contradictions and impossibilities involved, Bateman has actually committed the acts in the novel or simply fantasised about doing so; but this kind of debate brings us back to the vaguely unwholesome image of Ellis scribbling away in his notebooks, working out his sadistic scenarios in a fog of drugs, self-abuse and self-loathing. Certainly the novel plays with this collision between surface 'realism' and self-conscious fiction.

American Psycho came out of a place of severe alienation and loneliness and self-loathing. Ellis was pursuing a life—one could call it the *Gentleman's Quarterly* was of living—that he knew it was a bullshit, and yet he couldn't seem to help it. *American Psycho* is a book about becoming the man one feels that they have to be, the man who is cool, slick, handsome, effortlessly moving through the world, modelling suits in *Esquire* having babes in his arm. It is about lifestyle being sold as life, a lifestyle that never seemed to include passion, creativity, curiosity, romance, pain. Everything meaningful wiped away in favour of surfaces, in favour of looking good, having money, having six-pack abs, dating the hottest porn star, and going to the hottest clubs.

On the surface, like Patrick Bateman, Ellis had everything a young man could possibly want to be "happy" and yet he wasn't. He thought *Fight Club* is about this, too-this idea that men are sold a bill of goods about what they have to be in order to feel good about themselves, or feel important. No one can really live up to these ideals, so there is an immense amount of dissatisfaction roiling through the collective

male psyche. Patrick Bateman is the extreme embodiment of that dissatisfaction. Nothing fulfils him. The more he acquires, the emptier he feels. On a certain level, Ellis was that man too.

When Ellis had to go out and promote a book and *American Psycho* would come up to his mind, he would say something defensive about being a satirist. He would say that *American Psycho* is a "moral indictment" of a certain type of shallow, narcissistic, American male but it is not really the overriding motive behind *American Psycho*. Ellis was also writing about his life and how empty it was. Maybe he was too hard on himself. Maybe he should have just relaxed, chilled out, and enjoyed his good fortune. It wasn't like he was curled up in a foetal position, sucking his thumb for three years. But his own demons got in the way of taking total pleasure in just about anything. And so in a sense there is a kind of moral criticism, but for the most part it's directed at Ellis.

Months before the book was published, a few pages of the manuscript were leaked to the media, and these were the pages in which Patrick Bateman kills women, or fantasises about killing women. The critics who read these pages naturally assumed that they were representatives of the whole book, and so a lot of outraged reviews and editorials started appearing in *The New York Times*- an essay in the book review attacking Ellis. These were "well-meaning" liberals, primarily feminists. Ellis wasn't a misogynist when he wrote the book, but the unearned feminist hysteria briefly turned him into one.

In January 2012 Ellis got a call from his agent. She said, and he has paraphrased it, "you have been getting death threats, and we need to show them to you. Legal has talked it over. If we don't show them to you, and you are not aware of

them, then if something happens to you, we are liable, and your parents can sue us. So we're going to send you a packet of these death threats, and you can look through them, and verify that you have seen them" (386). That was a very interesting afternoon for Ellis.

Some of those threats included drawings of Ellis's body, and people describing how they were going to torture him, and what they were going to do his corpse. They were going to do the same things to him that they thought he had done to the women in the book they hadn't even read. But when the book came out a few months later, the controversy stopped. The complaints, the protests, the screaming about what a monster Bret Easton Ellis supposedly was, it all stopped. People finally read the book, and they found out that it wasn't four hundred pages of torture and mutilation and advocating the death of women.

American Psycho is narrated through a first person point of view by its main character, the serial killer Patrick Bateman, who is a young, rich, businessman working at his family-owned company. The novel follows Bateman's everyday life in New York, where he leads an extravagant lifestyle filled almost exclusively with eating at luxurious restaurants, making expensive purchases, having several loveless relationships, and torturing and killing people. The novel often uses contrasts, having one chapter dedicated to the most vividly depicted tortures and subsequent murders. Even though towards the end of the novel Bateman is seen by the police killing a homeless person and chased in Manhattan, a chase during which he kills several more people and later calls his lawyer confessing his murders, he is not caught and punished for his acts. His lawyer thinks his confession is a joke and mistakes him for someone else. Therefore, the novel does not end with Bateman being brought to

Mythic Tradition of Homelessness

In Manhattan during the Wall Street boom of the late 1980s, Bret Easton Ellis's *American Psycho* follows the life of a wealthy young investment banker Patrick Bateman. Bateman, in his mid-20s when the story begins, narrates his everyday activities, from his recreational life among the Wall Street elite of New York to his forays into murder by night. Through present tense stream-of-consciousness narrative, Bateman describes his daily life, ranging from a series of Friday nights spent at nightclubs with his colleagues-where they snort cocaine, critique fellow club-goers' clothing, trade fashion advice, and question one another on proper etiquette—to his loveless engagement to fellow yuppie Evelyn and his contentious relationship with his brother and senile mother. Bateman's stream of consciousness is occasionally broken up by chapters in which he directly addresses the reader in order to critique the work of 1980s pop music artists. The novel maintains a high level of ambiguity through mistaken identity and contradictions that introduce the possibility that Bateman is an unreliable narrator. Characters are consistently introduced as people other than themselves, and people argue over the identities of others they can see in restaurants or at parties. Deeply concerned with his personal appearance, Bateman gives extensive descriptions of his daily aesthetics regimen.

After killing Paul Owen, one of his colleagues, Bateman appropriates his apartment as a place to host and kill more victims. Bateman's control over his violent urges deteriorates. His murders become increasingly sadistic and complex, progressing from simple stabbings to drawn-out sequences

of rape, torture, mutilation, cannibalism, and necrophilia, and his grasp on sanity begins to slip. He introduces stories about serial killers into casual conversations and on several occasions openly confesses his murderous activities to his co-workers, who never take him seriously, do not hear what he says, or misunderstand him completely—for example, hearing the words "murders and executions" as mergers and acquisitions. These incidents culminate in a shooting spree during which he kills several people at random in the street, resulting in a SWAT team being dispatched in a helicopter. This narrative episode sees the first-person perspective shift to third-person and the subsequent events are, although not for the first time in the novel, described in terms pertaining to cinematic portrayal. Bateman flees on foot and hides in his office, where he calls his attorney, Harold Carnes, and confesses all his crimes to an answering machine.

Later, Bateman revisits Paul Owen's apartment, where he had earlier killed and mutilated two prostitutes, carrying a surgical mask in anticipation of the decomposing bodies he expects to encounter. He enters the perfectly clean, refurbished apartment, however, filled with strong-smelling flowers meant, perhaps, to conceal a bad odour. The real estate agent, who sees his surgical mask, fools him into stating he was attending the apartment viewing because he "saw an ad in the *Times*" (when in fact there was no such advertisement). He tells him to leave and never return.

Bateman's mental state continues to deteriorate and he begins to experience bizarre hallucinations such as seeing a Cheerio interviewed on a talk show, being stalked by an anthropomorphic park bench and finding a bone in his Dove Bar. At the end of the story, Bateman confronts Carnes about the message he left on his machine, only to find the attorney amused at what he considers a hilarious joke.

Mistaking Bateman for another colleague, Carnes claims that the Patrick Bateman he knows is too much of a coward to have committed such acts. In the dialogue-laden climax, Carnes stands up to a defiant Bateman and tells him his claim of having murdered Owen is impossible, because he had dinner with him twice in London just a few days prior.

The book ends as it began, with Bateman and his colleagues at a new club on a Friday night, engaging in banal conversation. The sign seen at the end of the book simply reads "This is not an exit" (386).

Two persistent themes trouble the readings of *American Psycho* as a novel preoccupied with "surfaces" or else with simulation, consumerism and commodification. These are, first, hunger—in its specifically embodied sense as the desire to consume food, which is throughout the novel accompanied by forms of eating that are disordered or confused—and, second, the presence of the bodies most afflicted by hunger, those of New York City's homeless population. Reading Ellis's novel against the grain, one could perceive that the conjunction of hunger and homelessness indicates a preoccupation with *porous bodies*: bodies wrenched open, constantly admitting external matter in dysfunctional and unsavoury ways. In the same way that the novel's preoccupation with surfaces is used to find the allegory for capitalism that disavows all but surface, the sustained porosity of the characters' bodies suggests a *porous capitalism*—a set of practices of power filled with gaps, cracks or holes—and will explore the utility of the Deleuzoguattarian notion of *holey space* in understanding this topology.

To begin, to understand the meanings of homelessness in *American Psycho* we can turn to another, older tradition of representing homeless people in literature and

culture. Rainer Maria Rilke's novel *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge* (1910) is an early example of a distinctive attitude towards the problem of urban homelessness and the persistent presence of homeless bodies. Rilke's diarist narrator, a minor Danish aristocrat living in Paris, is struck by "outcasts ... human trash, husks of men" (40), who seem to understand that he, in some less material sense, shares their condition. Malte beseeches: "Who are these people? What do they want of me? How do they recognize me?" (39–40). When an old woman, having "crawled out of some hole," accompanies Malte as he walks, he knows that the pencil she shows him is "a sign, a sign for the initiated, a sign only outcasts could recognize" (40), and he cannot escape the sense that there must exist "some kind of secret language which this sign belonged to" (41). It is significant that Malte insists on seeing the pencil as *a sign*—as though the homeless woman and by extension the multitude of "husks" have some information to which he, if he could decode it, could be privy. Eric Santner connects these encounters and their significance to Malte's suspicion "that the whole history of the world has been misunderstood ... that the past is false," because of the perspectives it includes and those it excludes (23). In Santner's reading Malte "contemplates the possibility that it might be just such 'husks of men' who could provide a radically new perspective—a new and unheard of archive—for the writing of human history" (xvii).

What is common to each of these texts is the refusal to recognise homelessness as a socioeconomic problem to be solved, and the commitment instead to an association of homelessness with the mystical, mythical or inexplicable. While remaining alert to the contentious and ideological character of this trope, it may be a productive beginning to an inquiry into the meaning of homelessness in *American Psycho*. Homeless people are everywhere in the novel: in the first chapter, as Patrick

Bateman and Timothy Price move through the city in a cab, Price intermittently counts the homeless people he sees (there are 30 in all) as he complains "about the trash, the garbage, the disease, about how filthy this city really is" (4). Toward the end of the novel Patrick observes that "Beggars and homeless seemed to have multiplied" (278). In each of these instances homeless people are a homogeneous mass to be counted; stripped of subjectivity, they appear as a single omnipresent organism, growing or dwindling in size (but mostly growing). Ellis's novel does not appear at first glance to reproduce the trope of the secret knowledge of homeless people: its "bums" have no wisdom to offer; as John Conley suggests, they are barely fully human, much less quasi-magical; rather, they are much closer to Agamben's "bare life". Yet, what secret knowledge might be found in the novel's homeless people, if we look for it? The starting point for such an inquiry must be in the association of homelessness with hunger. Homeless people, far from signifying nothing, are constantly conveying messages to passers-by, most often in the form of signs. These signs read:

> I AM HUNGRY AND HOMELESS PLEASE HELP ME (38)
>
> I'VE LOST MY JOB I AM HUNGRY I HAVE NO MONEY PLEASE HELP (109)
>
> I AM HUNGRY AND HOMELESS PLEASE HELP ME (123)
>
> VIETNAM VET BLINDED IN VIETNAM. PLEASE HELP ME. WE ARE HUNGRY AND HOMELESS (370)

Homeless people also speak about their hunger: when Patrick and his date arrive at a nightclub they encounter "a bum who sits by a Dumpster, writhing in pain, moaning for change or food" (78). Before Patrick kills Al, a homeless man whose murder is the

first witnessed by the reader, he says five times he is hungry, "like a broken record" (130). Finally, homeless people *perform* their hunger: for example, after Patrick kills a Chinese delivery boy, he takes a fortune cookie which he gives to a homeless man who "stuffs it, fortune and all, into his mouth, nodding thanks" (181). Ellis's novel appears as a continuation of the mythic tradition of homelessness: as in the examples glossed above, the homeless people who are an omnipresent feature of the urban landscape are always *saying something*, whether through signs, speech or actions; the difference is that the reader sees them filtered through the eyes of Patrick Bateman, who is entirely unwilling to *hear* them. What we learn from homeless people in *American Psycho* is accordingly more prosaic than the wisdom offered by Malte's interlocutors in Rilke, Toth's in *The Mole People* or God in *Bruce Almighty*: we discover, over and over again, simply that they are hungry.

Yet the persistence of troubled or disordered eating in the novel suggests that the hunger of the novel's homeless people is a more general condition. Read in this light, their insistent hunger is not entirely insignificant; rather, like Malte's fear that he is joining the "husks," their hunger may signify a commonality between the "bums" who litter the streets of Manhattan and the yuppies who make up the novel's cast of characters. Patrick and his friends are constantly eating, but seldom in ways that sate hunger; indeed, hunger in the novel is almost exclusively a property of homeless people, who are seldom seen eating. Most social interactions in the novel take place over meals comprising unlikely combinations of ingredients: "the potpie a yellow hexagon, strips of smoked salmon circling it, squiggles of pea-green tomatillo sauce artfully surrounding the dish" (49), "blackened yellowtail sashimi with ginger ... surrounded by tiny dots of wasabi, which is circled by a miniscule amount of hijiki" (335), "something called eagle carpaccio, mesquite-grilled mahi-mahi, endive

with chevre and chocolate-covered almonds, this weird kind of gazpacho with raw chicken in it, dry beer" (364). Looking down at this last dish, Patrick concludes: "there is really nothing edible on my plate, [and] what there is tastes like plaster" (364). The omnipresence of eating as a feature of all social occasions suggests that these characters, who are shallow and closed-off in their emotional lives and interpersonal relationships, are defined in their corporeal selves by *porosity*—their bodies are not sealed surfaces but open, constantly admitting the outside in the form of (often inedible) food. Porosity is closely related to the phenomenon Deleuze identifies when he observes that "Matter ... offers an infinitely porous, spongy, or cavernous texture without emptiness, caverns endlessly contained in other caverns: no matter how small, each body contains a world pierced with irregular passages". This quality of being pierced with irregular passages guides the understanding of porous bodies: bodies in *American Psycho* are riven with holes, gaps or interstices which are not smooth channels but rather blocked, convoluted or circuitous.

Food is also a frequent source of neurosis, even crisis, among Patrick and his friends. Evelyn, in the first chapter, is on the verge of tears when the sushi she has made fails to meet her expectations; later, at her Christmas party the Waldorf salad is the object of her worries. When a dish strikes Patrick as insufficiently intricate or exotic, he finds it incomprehensible and discomfiting:

> "... the cheesecake, what flavour? Was it heated?" I say.
>
> "Ricotta cheesecake?
>
> Goat cheese? Were there flowers or cilantro in it?"
>
> "It was just ... regular," he says, and then, "Patrick, you're sweating."
>
> (107)

> Patrick's inability to obtain a reservation for himself and his date at Dorsia, the restaurant which above all signifies exclusivity and prestige, leaves him "Stunned, feverish, feeling empty," experiencing "almost overwhelming panic" (73). When Patrick finds that Sean, his brother, has made a reservation for them both there he reports: My mind is a mess. I don't know what to think or how to feel; urinating while waiting for Sean, he stares into a crack over the urinal and ponders what it would mean for him to disappear into it. No other commodity or group of commodities in the novel has the power over the characters' minds that food enjoys; nor, in fact, the capacity to produce bodily symptoms (sweating and feverishness). This is because food, which enters into and passes through the body, relates to the most corporeal sense of consumption—it is engaged in the most intimate relation to the body. Jennifer Brown suggests that these meals are farcical, superficial, and ultimately ... lacking in any meaning—that what makes food a source of anxiety is its irreducible non-preferentiality, its refusal to either sate bodily hunger, leaving one as physically and spiritually empty as ever. When Patrick thinks "Lunch is alternately a burden, a puzzle that needs to be solved, and an obstacle" (228) he is notionally referring to the social interactions required by a specific meal, but the statement suggests something broader: lunch, or the eating of food more generally, is a burden on one's psyche, a puzzle that cannot be solved, and an obstacle to the development of a coherent self.

Unsatisfying or dysfunctional practices of eating go beyond insubstantial or maddening restaurant meals. Throughout the novel Patrick is preoccupied with practices that uncannily resemble eating but depart from it in important respects: feeding things that are not mouths, and placing things that are not food in or near mouths. This pattern asserts itself most clearly in passages where Patrick is torturing and murdering women: one instance has him smearing cheese on and inside a

woman's vagina in an attempt to coax a rat, which he has starved, to crawl inside her body (327–9). Later he reverses the logic of this passage by eating the woman's intestine—after placing food in an orifice that is not a mouth, he places human flesh, which is not food, in his own mouth (344). Cannibalism, for Patrick, becomes doubly dysfunctional when making meat loaf out of one woman's flesh turns out to be "too frustrating a task" (345) and he is forced to admit that he may not be "cooking any of this correctly, because ... I have never really cooked anything before" (346). In an especially farcical scene, disordered eating again collides with homelessness: Patrick uncharacteristically takes pity on a young homeless woman whose "face seems too young and fresh and tan for a homeless person's; it makes her plight all the more heartbreaking"; he drops a dollar into her styrofoam cup, then notices "the Columbia book bag by her side and finally the tan-colored coffee in the cup and my dollar bill floating in it" (86) and rushes away, cringing. The logic of this scene, in which the inedible dollar bill is dropped unthinkingly in the coffee, is mirrored when Patrick coats a urinal cake in chocolate sauce, places it in a Godiva branded box, and feeds it to Evelyn who, disgusted, eats it rather than questioning the brand or Patrick's intentions (336–7). Brown has interpreted the power of this scene in terms of Julia Kristeva's account of abjection in order to argue that "the repulsion the reader feels is really based on the deception and the possibility of being fooled so easily into eating such a gross non-food" (184–5). Put differently, this passage is especially horrifying because it is so much closer to our own everyday experience—so much more plausible—than the various instances of torture or murder in the novel, which are beyond the realm of easy believability. Finally, Patrick, in the grip of a series of hallucinations in the novel's final chapter, imagines his automated teller machine is issuing the instruction "Feed me a Stray Cat" (395). This passage is played out in the

2000 film version of *American Psycho*, in which Patrick sees the instruction on the screen and immediately, unquestioningly, picks up a cat and begins to carry out the machine's order.

Here, as the novel reaches its non-conclusion, dysfunctional eating and the porosity of bodies are thrown into relief as Patrick finds himself desperately, deliriously feeding in resignation at the impossibility of properly eating. This dysfunctionality or disorder is crucial to the meaning of porous bodies in the novel: though these characters are in the corporeal or biological sense consuming, the fact that they only ever do so in ways that serve no purpose or do no good suggests that porosity is a long way from consumerism. In fact, rather than a smooth relationship between consumer and commodity what we have is consumption against consumerism; consumption that suggests other possibilities.

Rather than, or in addition to, understanding these passages as suggesting dysfunctional or disordered eating, we might employ Agamben's account of inoperativity. In Jewish theology, inoperativity (*menuchah*) is the condition for which one must strive on the Sabbath, and is ultimately the essence of the religious feast day: one must refrain from "the entire sphere of labour and productive activity", leaving only *inoperative* festive practices of "destruction and squandering". "The spirit of *menuchah,*" "finds a particular expression in the consumption of meals—an activity to which, as with any feast day, give a very special attention and care" (105). This inoperative eating is distinguished from eating which is done to sate a hunger. Inoperative eating is a useful analytic category for our purposes insofar as it transcends work: "If one eats, it is not done for the sake of being fed; if one gets dressed, it is not done for the sake of being covered up or taking shelter from the cold;

> if one wakes up, it is not done for the sake of working; if one walks, it is not done for the sake of going someplace; if one speaks, it is not done for the sake of communicating information; if one exchanges objects, it is not done for the sake of selling or buying" (111). To transpose Agamben's theological argument into the realm of contemporary political economy, inoperativity is a space outside of economic logic, the logic of the transaction, which in neoliberalism pervades into every sphere of life. To the extent that inoperativity involves expending energy (on eating, dressing or moving) it is not in anticipation of a reward (one does not—in fact, must not—expect to satisfying one's hunger, to ward off cold, or to arrive at a destination); in this sense inoperativity is always antagonistic to economic relationships of exchange. Crucially, menuchah is a prohibition on work and the establishment of a space outside of the wage relation. If the characters in *American Psycho* are involved in inoperative eating—including both their unsatisfying meals made of pretentious ingredients and their entanglement in forms of eating that are in fact anything but—their porous bodies point toward spaces of life which we can call, in Agamben's terms, the festive where alternatives to capitalism and market values can be envisioned and practised. These spaces suggest that capitalism is not totalising nor omnipotent, nor able to incorporate and incapacitate every instance of resistance, but rather a porous, unstable edifice.

Before further delineating the category of porous bodies, it is worth returning to the theme of homelessness and demonstrating in more detail the close interrelation between homelessness and eating in the text. Not only are homeless people insistently hungry beings, their hunger is contagious—at least insofar as it spreads to Patrick. Homeless people's hunger and Patrick's hunger are often directly juxtaposed in the text: when Patrick kills Al he immediately realises that he is "ravenous," "starving"

and "decides to go somewhere Al would go, the McDonald's in Union Square" (127). After he considers killing a homeless woman, but concludes "she's too easy a target to be truly satisfying," (156) he quickly finds himself at D'Agostino's, experiencing "an almost overwhelming urge to ... fill my basket with bottles of balsamic vinegar and sea salt, roam through the vegetable and produce stands ... deciding what flavour, what shape of gingerbread cookie to buy" (157). When he gives the fortune cookie to the homeless man, his narration abruptly shifts to the details of Evelyn's party, where "A long folding table ... is jammed with pans and plates and bowls of roasted hazelnuts and lobster and oyster bisques and celery root soup with apples and Beluga caviar on toast points" (174) and so on in an interminable run-on sentence. In each of these cases, after encountering a hungry homeless man or woman, Patrick is suddenly overcome by an irrational hunger, desire to buy food, or to catalogue it in exhaustive detail. Patrick here is compulsively eating to convince himself, as Rilke's Malte tries in vain to convince himself, that he is not one of them—that, as he frames the issue elsewhere, "I am rich—millions are not" (377). Yet the fact that this is necessary suggests that Patrick, like Malte, risks "falling through the cracks," or being recognised as belonging among the "husks." Patrick also suggests this when he asks Al why he lost his job: "Were you drinking? ... Insider trading?" (125) Rather than (merely) mocking Al by feigning to judge him according to Wall Street standards, Patrick gives voice to an unspeakable fear that destitution might await anybody, even Wall Street traders, if they make certain mistakes. Again, a gap opens up in the edifice of capitalism, which threatens to swallow Patrick up; or, to frame it differently, the bodies of homeless people emit a contagion which threatens to infect Patrick—not just hunger but poverty itself. Homeless people are not outside of capitalism (rather,

> they are produced by it), but capitalism nonetheless appears as a porous system, ridden with breaches into which one might fall—or burrow.
>
> If, in developing an account of porous bodies, focus should be on inoperative eating rather than on the porosity entailed by torture and murder, this is because the latter fits neatly into the logic of consumerism, which the former constantly troubles. As Jennifer Brown has argued: The question of serial killing ... cannot be separated from the general forms of collection and counting conspicuous in consumer society. The question of repeated murder also cannot be separated from the commodity form and the process by which it is produced, in which varied forms of living labour are reduced to inert matter and exchange-value. In the same way as his clothes are made from the dead labour of workers he will never meet, the act of murder renders inert the lives of people who are similarly distant and incomprehensible to him. Patrick's first meeting with Christie, a sex worker, in the meatpacking district, where the letters "M E A T" are spread out behind her "in four-foot-tall red block letters," makes this especially clear: sex and violence, for Patrick, are ultimately articulations of "a confused consumerism that has run out of control and exceeded all boundaries" (ix). If a reading of the porous bodies of *American Psycho* suggests the spectre of spaces of non-capitalism, this is not true of Patrick's murders; the porosity of inoperative eating offers ways out which these violent permeations of the body simultaneously foreclose.

Porous bodies, then, are bodies through which matter passes in ways that do not serve any purpose. They are bodies that are constantly eating in dysfunctional or disordered ways, or approximating eating but not quite achieving it; guided by minds driven to near-madness by acts of eating and the unstable system of social value that attaches to them. Other structures in the novel are rendered porous too: not only

capitalism by inoperativity, but also the narrative itself. Chapters in the novel never begin at the point where the previous chapter ended; discernible, disorienting gaps are always left. At no point does Patrick begin one chapter in the same place he was in at the end of the preceding chapter; the reader accesses his life not as a coherent narrative, nor even as an uninterrupted sequence of events, but as a series of discrete events and encounters that are more often than not forgotten as soon as they are over. Leigh Claire La Berge has suggested that this sectioning of a text with no overall narrative coherence into moments of discrete meaning is a pastiche of financial autobiographies such as *The Art of the Deal*, by Patrick's idol Donald Trump, in which narrative is sacrificed to a series of episodic chapters, each of which document a "deal" in isolation. La Berge's reading would re-centre the totalising power of finance in the novel—it would suggest that its very narrative structure is saturated with the financial world and its economic logic ("the deal")—but turning the attention to the gaps between these episodes reveals a different picture. While the chapters replicate the logic of texts like Trump's, the reader is also confronted with the spaces between the chapters—the undocumented parts of Patrick's life—and so with a novel that is itself a porous space. Porous bodies, the spaces carved out by inoperative eating, the blanks and gaps in the novel's form.

American Psycho is sometimes read as a novel about "surfaces": Thomas Heise, for example, has argued that Patrick "is less flesh and blood than he is a discursively produced matrix of verbal utterances ... more a corpus of words than corporeal.... *American Psycho* is nothing more than a pastiche of discourses spoken without affect," a collage of advertisements, music reviews, pornography and policy (151). Patrick offers basically the same reading of his own life: "God is not alive. Love cannot be trusted. Surface, surface, surface was all that anyone found meaning

in" (375). Likewise, in Ellis's *Glamorama* (1998) the refrain "We'll slide down the surface of things..." (from U2's "Even Better than the Real Thing") recurs, as a sort of mantra, throughout. The novel is certainly in some sense about surfaces, but foregrounding this aspect of the text begs the question of what these surfaces conceal—and what threatens to shatter them.

If we were to take these readings further we would conclude that through this "blank" form Ellis reproduces, allegorises or satirises a capitalism that is similarly "all surface"—a capitalism in which brands dominate use-values, discourses intermingle at the expense of clarity or coherence, and consumers are screened off from the violence and exploitation underpinning production. Yet if *American Psycho* is not a novel of smooth surfaces but rather one of porous bodies, which circulate in a capitalism marked by cracks and gaps, it is that porous capitalism which comes to the fore: rather than a totalising depthless capitalism, the novel allegorises a political-economic edifice shot through with spaces in which non-capitalism persists, and in which resistance is possible.

One productive way of theorising porous capitalism is through Deleuze and Guattari's notion of holey space. Holey space is the space of ambulant artisans or itinerants, those who "follow the flow of matter." These are metallurgists or smiths who engage not with plants or animals but with minerals—not the soil but the subsoil. Though holey space is neither nomadic smooth space nor sedentary striated space, it is in close connection with both: in its relation to smooth space it is a rhizome, whereas in its relation to striated space it is made to cohere and becomes arborescent. Deleuze and Guattari remind us that smooth space is constantly being translated, transversed into a striated space; striated space is constantly being reversed, returned

to a smooth space. Holey space is the space outside of these processes of flux, or, better still, beneath them. Holey space undercuts and threatens the striated spaces of capitalism the factory, the nation-state and its smooth spaces the global market and fictitious capital flows in which Patrick Bateman works. Holey space becomes especially important when the repurposing of smooth space by states is taken into account. Max Hantel has argued: "While the state apparatus perhaps worked initially primarily in the mode of striating space, the neoliberal war machine that reigns today has just as much interest in smooth space, in terms of swamping militarism, the global gaze of surveillance technology, and frictionless capital flows" (Hantel, 78). Holey space is that which circumvents such operations by cutting through the ground beneath the war machine's feet. Similarly, Helene Frichot has identified in holey space the capacity to offer lines of flight to the refugee, who is corporeally stricken by both the smooth and striated spaces of the state and its migration apparatus.

Holey space, for Bonta and Protevi, is the space of insurgents and oppositional forces, from Marxist guerrillas in Latin America to Islamist terrorist networks. One ought to be wary of ascribing to holey space a purely liberatory or oppositional quality. Stephen Graham, whose study of the subterranean city can usefully be read as a guide to contemporary holey spaces, has shown that the holey space of the mine is inextricably tied to the smooth space of the global market for primary resources; capitalism has long relied on the subsurface spaces of coal mines and oil wells, and corporate investment in uranium, diamond and metals mining increased more than fivefold between 1995 and 2008. Yet holey space is also the space of those who resist capitalism in ways that emphasise freedom and creativity, and "hollowing out" capitalism from the inside is the method they propose. For example, the holey space of tunnel networks dug out by anti-road protestors in Britain in the 1990s captured the

public imagination and baffled authorities in their attempt to circumvent the smoothing effects of new motorways. Subsurface spaces are always associated with threat and with the uncanny: Graham identifies Christopher Smith's horror film *Creep* (2004), about a deformed killer in the London Underground network, and Douglas Cheek's *C.H.U.D.* (1984), about cannibals in the New York sewers, as exemplary depictions of urban subterranean as "uncontrollable and unknowable"; we might also consider Neil Gaiman's novel and television series *Never where* (both 1996), which depict a magical, though feudalistic and violent, world beneath London. These texts return to figure out the magical homeless person discussed above, who is in Toth's account firmly embedded in the holey space in the Manhattan subsoil—beneath and against the striated space of the street grid and the smooth space of Wall Street finance. This is not to paint homeless people as unknowing insurgents or anti-capitalists in waiting. It is, however, to situate them as irreducibly outside of capitalism, part of a wholly different world. As Patrick tells Al as his reason for killing him: "It's just that ... I don't know. I don't have anything in common with you" (131). Their persistent presence in the novel is indicative of a capitalism which is always troubled by this alterity. To the extent that Patrick, like Malte, appears to fear "falling through the cracks" and becoming one of them, it is not only the threat of poverty, ridicule, and susceptibility to violence and death against which he acts, but also the threat of becoming part of that mass that troubles capitalism.

Chapter Three

The Postmodern Gothic Narrative

One of the problems that appears in any analysis of *American Psycho* is the difficult task of stating which genre the novel belongs to. Various scholars see it as being part of a variety of genres. *American Psycho* seems to defy any attempt to be categorised into one singular genre; however, the most popular views regarding this issue seem to place the novel within the genre of horror, Gothic, the transgressive fiction, or satire.

The fact that *American Psycho* can be considered as part of the horror genre does not, perhaps, come as a surprise. Its many graphic depictions of the murders and tortures that Patrick Bateman enjoys doing in the novel are at the very core of the novel's strongest negative critique. In the novel, Bateman is depicted killing and torturing three dogs, a homeless man, a homosexual man, a Chinese man, his ex-girlfriend, six women, and a child. The tortures and subsequent murders of these characters are graphically and explicitly depicted, so that the novel can easily pass as one of the subgenres of the horror fiction: splatterpunk. The subgenre of splatterpunk is characterized by the frequent and graphic description of grisly violence, bloody deaths, and extreme sexual situations. In his diploma thesis "Satirical and Transgressive Elements in Bret Easton Ellis *American Psycho,*" Jarslov Matula also notes that between many other genres that the novel can be considered to pertain to, the splatterpunk is one of them.

Ruth Hyler explains in her article "Parodied to Death: The Postmodern Gothic of American Psycho" how the novel can be accepted as Gothic fiction. From the beginning Hyler calls the gothic genre as a unique combination of the repulsive and

the compulsive, continuing to illustrate elements of the gothic that are present in *American Psycho*. According to Fred Botting, the gothic genre warns the reader of the dangers of transgressing social rules; this is reflected in Patrick Bateman's character who acts, therefore, act as a warning of what is to be avoided in the society. Another element of the gothic in this novel is the fact that characters are generally stereotypes: Bateman is the serial killer, the rich young man, and the troubled aristocrat. Above all, he is the romantic character that tends to populate the gothic genre, characterised by his good looks and success. The gothic genre also makes use of a combination of the horror and humour. Although the horror is evident, as previously illustrated, the humour lays in Bateman's own black humour and the comical situations that he often witnesses. As Heyler notes, He is articulate and clever, with a talent for summarizing a situation, or a character, in an amusing and apt manner, and in much the same way as the traditional Gothic's attention to detail is also found in Bateman's obsessive tendency to explain his cosmetic routine, describe every person's attire, or give detailed background to his favorite musicians. The darkness characteristic to the gothic genre is replaced in the novel with a cold setting of New York where graffiti as "abandon all hope ye who enter here" are adding to the gloom feeling of the place. Heyler marks an important difference in the postmodern gothic present in *American Psycho,* i.e. the ability to graphically display the violent episodes which in the previous classic Gothic tradition were only hinted at, and acknowledges that trying to classify the novel as one single genre is a difficult task, as it is restrictive.

The gothic genre is unique combination of the repulsive and the compulsive. Its ability to provoke both fear and fascination ensures that it generates media and scholarly attention and considerable wealth for commercial worlds of publishing and entertainment. Seventeen centuries ago the word "Gothic" was used to describe tribes

living in Northern Europe whose behaviour caused their name to become associated with anything deemed brutish, offensive, or repulsive. By the fifteenth century, Renaissance critics felt justified in using the word to describe the vast gloominess typical of the architecture of the time. Consequently, the term developed connotations of medieval gloom, decaying properties and untamed landscapes. As any description necessitates some "other" against which a comparison may be which was capable of satisfying the widely accepted social norms relating to common sense and ethics. The inference is clear that classical styles are considered to be safer and therefore more acceptable. Appearances and activities diversifying from this accepted course are suspicious, and potentially dangerous; they should always be viewed and handled with a high degree of caution. Fred Botting views:

> Gothic novels frequently adopt this cautionary strategy, warning of dangers of social and moral transgression by presenting them in their darkest and most threatening form tortuous tales of vice, corruption and depravity are sensational examples of what happens when the rules of social behavior are neglected. (Botting 1975, 25)

Classic examples of gothic literature deal with characters' fears of the forbidden and their repression of unauthorised urges. They warn against extremes of pleasure and stimulation, which are seen to dull the moral laws. Archetypes of "civilized" society are used in the narrative to justify the condemnation of unacceptable acts, and likewise to feed into our conception of reality. Literature termed as "Gothic" began to appear in the late eighteenth century, such as Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otrano* and Ann Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho*. These were followed by countless others, including stories by Edgar Allan Poe and the Bronte

Sisters. The darkness of the mental realities presented within these founding texts is usually illustrated by the physical location of the action, which tends to be remote and deserted and takes place in castles, churches, and mansions. It is not only the dim and creepy interiors of such buildings that unsettle the reader, but the secret passages, cellars, and attics. The narratives frequently linger over bleak industrial cityscapes, complete with dark back alleys and swirling smog, as in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr Jekyll & Mr Hyde*. Doors creak and staircases wind out of sight, creating an air of mystery around what the surface aesthetics of setting and characters are hiding, and more crucially, what can be construed as their inner capacities.

The creepy surroundings, paradoxically unknown, yet familiar from what the genre represents, provide the backdrop for the narrative's transgressive characters. Typically, they are dark, brooding, and silent aristocrats, with guilty secrets and unpleasant habits. These mad or evil people, occasionally the monstrous undead, present us with "doubles," the other side to the traits respectable society has chosen to uphold. Instead of development, honesty, and credibility they represent regression, deceit, and untrustworthiness. The gothic genre offers a narrative form in opposition to the inflexible modern middle classes. On a more personal level this translates as an iconography capable of giving expression to the repressed desires of the unconscious.

Many theorists of gothic conventions, such as Allan Lloyd Smith, have commented on the "striking parallels between the features identified in discourses concerning postmodernism and those which are focused on in the Gothic tradition." Both have certainly thrived amid "industrialization, urbanization, shifts in sexual and domestic organization, and scientific discovery." Furthermore, as both discourses are vague and difficult to define, they encourage the use of the imagination, and become

associated with an incoherence that, because it is at the whim of individual interpretation, is sometimes shunned by intellectual schools of thought. However, the very nature of Gothic narratives relies on an emotional response rather than an intellectual one.

The emotionalism in the parallel between texts in the gothic tradition and postmodern texts is evident in Botting's citation of a critical review of Matthew Lewis's *The Monk*. The eighteenth – century critic could be describing in the feelings aroused by Bret Easton Ellis's 1991 novel, *American Psycho:* "Lust, Murder, incest, and every atrocity that can disgrace human nature, brought together, without the apology of probability, or even possibility for their very introduction" (Lewis 1996, 26).

Like *The Monk, American Psycho* is well written and undeniably entertaining, yet Patrick Bateman's behaviour, his submission to bestial urges, is viewed as abhorrent, the exact model of what is to be avoided. However, the very acknowledgement that he has apparently succumbed to these urges, not invented them, makes the unpleasant suggestion that they are lying dormant in all human and the only difference between normal human and Patrick is that he has indulged them. As the above review implies, some things are best ignored in the hope that they will disappear. This exploration of human psyche is the reflection of the gothic genre's gradual, but discernible, move away from cliches such as ghosts and its increasingly sophisticated targeting of internalised fears. In a fragmented postmodern world of isolated individuals beset by guilt, anxiety, and despair, internalising fear produces narratives which centre on psychological disturbance, narratives which are dominated by fantasy, hallucination and madness. This destabilising of the "boundaries between

psyche and reality" has an incisive effect on the audience, as it exacerbates unease about boundaries generally, and uncertainties about "difference." Classic Gothic fiction is claimed to act as a catalyst for the readers unconscious desires repressed energies and antisocial fantasies. This use of psychoanalytical language places Patrick Bateman, psychotic serial killer, within a well-established literary tradition.

Gothic characters are typically highly stereotyped and Patrick is no exception, teetering precariously between categories the reader can easily recognise. He is a psychotic serial killer, but also a rich and eligible young man whose family is said to own "half of wall street." He does not need to work and represents perfectly the rich, yet troubled aristocrat of the eighteenth century gothic novels. Patrick is bored, heartless, and fabulously wealthy: he can idle his life away spending his inherited money, being pampered, and being seen in the "right" places. He is, physically, every inch the romantic hero: handsome, with a fit, toned body and impeccable taste. The predictable nature of his appearance is underlined by the frequent questions of others as to whether he is a model or actor. Such stock characters as the "tall, dark, and handsome" leading man are lifted directly from traditional writing, along with the stereotypical homosexual whom Patrick attacks:

> Coming slowly up the street is an old queer wearing a cashmere turtleneck, a paisley wool ascot and felt hat pudgy, with obscenely healthy-looking pink skin, no wrinkles, all this topped off with a ridiculous mustache that accentuates his feminine features. (157)

He describes them as "flat faced" and "wild eyed," their voices "jabbering" and "yipping." In a racist attempt to make them understand him he begins to add "-ee" to the end of words: "bleach-ee" and "bitch-ee." His ignorant and violent attitude

towards the Chinese, combined with his insulting descriptions, succeeds in reducing them to one-dimensional "types" rather than real people. The use of such typical "types," in both older and more modern gothic texts, underlines the tension between old fashioned and modern societal values and definitions, for example, the dividing line between what is barbaric and what is civilised. Although Patrick is portrayed as very much a barbarian in a civilised society, the further the plot unfolds the more questionable moral standards of the so-called civilised society become. This moral ambivalence is characteristic of gothic texts.

When Patrick goes to Paul Owen's apartment, a venue he has used slaughter two prostitutes, he finds the real estate agent there, intent on covering up the carnage, for the sake of reletting the property. In contemporary society, fast-moving and acquisitive, monetary loss is held above loss of life. Patrick feels no remorse when he revisits the scene of his crime. Pathetically jealous of Paul Owen's business acumen when he was alive, he is now intrigued by how much his dead colleague's apartment is worth. The real estate agent makes it clear that she is suspicious about his identity, but makes no attempt to bring him to justice, contenting herself with the bland instructions: "Don't make any trouble. Don't come back" (60). The revelation that others too are corrupted by their own agenda unnerves Patrick:

> All frontiers, if there had ever been any, seem suddenly detachable and have been removed, a feeling that others are creating my fate will not leave me for the rest of the day. This.....is...not...a...game, I want to shout, but I can't catch my breath. I turn my face away. I need a rest. I don't know what to say. (355)

Patrick is disconcerted by the capacity of the "other" to be as cold, ruthless, and determined as he is. If he cannot identify himself against the likes of the real estate agent, then his boundaries become detached and free-floating, leaving him to imitate the self he wants to perpetuate. He comes away from Owen's flat knowing that he must increasingly imitate himself. Such self-parody is symptomatic of boundary fluctuation and a direct link to the re-appropriation of the gothic medium, with its reliance on the emotions aroused by the threat of the unknown, the alien, the unfamiliar, causing the reader to look back and attempt to "know" these threats through association. Although a gothic, this collaboration of the past, present, and future, in a never-ending circle of reciprocal imitation, is also characteristically postmodern.

This circularity continues between subject matter and genre. *American Psycho* may be viewed as a cutting indictment on our materialistic contemporary lifestyle, yet it is also part of this consumer frenzy, as a hugely popular book. The gothic genre itself is a massive financial institution, with books like Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* still being published in new editions. While the darkness of *Northanger Abbey* is largely "tongue in cheek," it provides, much like *American Psycho,* a sharp social commentary on consumer-driven priorities. The urges to devour, consume, use up, and own are ever willing to assert themselves. In Patrick's world, for example, the weapons have designer labels: "I would lie around, fantasizing about killing someone with an Allsop Racer ski pole" (281). Due to the recognisable nature of the gothic, it was inevitable that the commercial world would adopt its characteristics for further profit. A sub-culture calling itself the "Goths" began to attract media attention during the 1970s. This group of people were easily identifiable as they dressed in black clothes, wore heavy white face make-up, dyed their hair black, and listened to musical

bands with a dark persona, such as Bauhaus and The Cure. The goths still exist and have a yearly festival week in Whitby, North Yorkshire, a favourite location of theirs due to it being immortalised by Bram Stoker in his gothic tale *Dracula*. The cult also comprises an easy niche market. For example, the famous Whitby "Lucky Ducks," available all year in various multitudinous colours, are only produced in black during goth week. If a movement is consumer oriented, no matter how bizarre, seem capable of embracing it. The Goths, like the Gothic genre in general, are easily mimicked due to their strong distinguishing features. Therefore, it doesn't take a great deal for them to slip over into the comical, enforcing the ambiguous nature of the Gothic, simultaneously amusing ad frightening, attractive and repellent.

Gothic's treading of the fine line between horror and humour directly connects it to the postmodern terror of *American Psycho*. Although it is hard to resist Patrick's razor-sharp wit, are still stomach-churningly appalled by his penchant for carving people up. He is articulate and clever, with a talent for summarizing a situation, or a character, in an amusing and apt manner, and in much the same way as the traditional Gothic tales, his frightening side is so excessive it can border on the comical. He seems to "act up" to his psychotic tag at every opportunity. At one point, having just finished murdering a passer-by and eviscerating his dog, he lets out his ecstatic "high" by streaming through the streets in his costly black leather designer trench coat, thinking, "I'm running down Broadway, then up Broadway, then down again, screaming like a banshee, my coat open, flying out behind me like some kind of cape" (160).

He is self-consciously frightening, and feels incredibly powerful, even invincible, due to his ability to distance himself from the action, yet still enjoy

partaking of it, as a result of parodying himself. His larger-than-life capacities are emphasised again when he attacks Bethany: "effortlessly I'm leaping in front of her, blocking her escape, knocking her unconscious with four blows to the head from the nail gun" (235). When he describes how evil and dangerous he is feeling, his blatant honesty is taken by the conditioned reader as melodrama:

> I felt lethal, on the verge of frenzy. My nighty bloodlust overflowed into my days and I had to leave the city. My mask of sanity was a victim of impending slippage. This was the bone season for me and I needed a vacation. I needed to go to Hamptons. (268)

He disrupts our "correct" response even further by suggesting that perhaps a holiday in the up-market resort "The Hamptons" will cure him, when it seems deliberately clear to us that nothing short of intensive psychiatric care can help him. He connects his geographic location, the city, with his state of mind. However, his flippant presumption that his murderous behaviour is not a problem, and the priority is to make himself feel better, is wryly typical of the self-centred attitude of our wealthy society. The grotesque comedy becomes reminiscent of burlesque as he tries to tempt a rat out of his toile with pizza, brie, and a side salad, and later feeds his girlfriend a used urinal cake covered in cheap chocolate sauce but masquerading as a tempting delicacy in a Godiva box:

> She looks like a big black ant—a big black ant in an original Christian Lacroix eating a urinal cake and I almost start laughing, but I also want to keep her at her ease. I don't want her to get second thoughts about finishing the urinal cake. But she can't eat anymore and with only two bites taken, pretending to be full, she pushes the tainted plate away,

> and at that moment I start feeling strange. Even though I marveled at her eating the thing, it also makes me sad and suddenly I'm reminded that no matter how satisfying it was to see Evelyn eating something that I, and countless others, had pissed on, in the end the displeasure it caused her was at my expense—it's an anticlimax, a futile excuse to put up with her for three hours. (324)

Our rapidly changing world requires that the heroines of postmodern Gothic are exposed to new experiences. Although we flinch, the absurdity of the situation provokes laughter, and Patrick himself comments on the strangely mixed and contradictory feelings the prank causes him. He is similarly caught between horror and hysteria when he tries to force his way into the exclusive and maddeningly elusive restaurant, Dorsia, for dinner with his secretary, Jean. Never able to obtain a reservation, he turns up frustrated, yet determined, and desperately claims to be the first name he can see on the reservations list, Mr. Schrawtz. Inevitably the farce ends in him being asked to leave, but while this is a major humiliation for Patrick, Jean thinks the whole episode hilarious, and claims his sense of humour wonderfully "spontaneous."

It is among similar confusion, when Luis Carruthers mistakes Patrick's murderous grip for a sexual advance, that the comedy manifests itself once more, making the scene in a restaurant washroom resemble theatrical farce:

> I've seen you looking at me," he says panting. "I've noticed your"—he gulps—"hot body." He tries to kiss me on the lips but I back away, into the stall door, accidentally closing it. I drop my hands from Lusi's neck and he takes them and immediately places them back. I drop them once

> again and stand there contemplating my next move, but I'm immobile. "don't be .... shy," he says. I take a deep breath, close my eyes, count to ten, open them and make a helpless attempt to lift my arms back up to strange Luis, but they feel weighed down and lifting them becomes an impossible task. (153)

The comedy nears slapstick standards when 'the maitre d' in Pastels keeps sending over more free drinks, and replacements for those they have rejected. "The maitre d' stops by to say hello to McDermott, then notices we don't have our complimentary Bellinis, and runs off before any of us can stop him" (42). The humour is strangely visual, in keeping with the brutally graphic scenes of torture, and eventual death, where the killing is reduced to images.

The extremely explicit nature of Patrick's narrative removes many unknown elements and defuses much of the mystery of violent death. We are capable of becoming accustomed to anything if it can be described, and hence imagined, in recognisable terms. Patrick replaces the Gothic dark passages and castle rooms with female internal organs and genitalia, "the psychological" is meeting the "actual" in a situation rapidly approaching overload.

Due to the increasingly technological nature of our society and the consequences this has on modern media techniques, it is all too easy to achieve a state of saturation with regard to what will offend. The close attention of television news to wars and carnage inevitably hardens the viewers to blood and gore. Therefore, although it seems that it need an increasingly large dose of horror to shock and offend us, a glut of images can create apathy. Early Gothic could be seen as an attempt to resolve an imbalance, to find a state of calm between excess and apathy. As part of

this method Gothic tales resist "telling all," and although very revelatory of blood and gore, *American Psycho* does follow this pattern by remaining silent about Patrick's history and his true motivations. The nearest he comes to explaining his actions is claiming that an irresistible urge has come over him, usually triggered by something as banal as an owl in the zoo appearing to look at him, or the sight of a woman breast-feeding her child. Although such incidents are obviously open to interpretation, and are still vague enough for us to feel we are dealing with an unknown entity. This "unknowing," when combined with the technicolour versions of his attacks that the audience are subjected to, creates an atmosphere of discomfort that is not easy to dispel.

The reasoning behind the action is similarly hidden in Ellis's 1998 novel, *Glamorama,* where the most spectacular pain is displayed, but even the correct order of the book's chapters remains a mystery. When such disturbing physical displays are laid before the readers, without the benefit of a cognitive explanation, the people become frightened and begin to ask questions. This issue here is how long the people are willing to "go with the flow" of the violence before people question it. Greatly increased technological ability also presents us with the opportunity to reproduce, alter, or even conceal altogether representations that should immediately provoke our response. Sophisticated technology is sometimes used simply to fulfil urges, enabling humans to act out their inner fantasies, no matter how dark. Patrick's grim fascination with the human body and its internal organs leads him to fantasise about using medical technology to fulfil his urges. He longs to

> wear a big yellow smiley-face mask and then put on the cd version of Bobby McFerrin's 'Don't Worry, Be Happy' and then take a girl and a

> dog—a collie, a chow, a sharpie, it doesn't really matter—and then hook up this transfusion pump, this IV set, and switch their blood, you know, pump the dog's blood into the hard body and vice versa (111).

The effect that modern technological capabilities have on fantasies illustrates that, rather than abating as time passes, the Gothic intensifies. Computer-aided graphics, as chillingly shown in *Gla*morama, are now used to invent and re-invent images: "He enhances colors, adjusts tones, sharpens or softens images. Lips are digitally thickened, freckles removed, an ax is placed in someone's outstretched hand, a BMW becomes a Jaguar which becomes a Mercedes which becomes a broom. He's adding graininess, he's erasing people, he's inventing a new world, seamlessly" (328). The new world being "invented" is capable of altering the past and the future, providing evidence for the present of events that haven't actually taken place. Patrick watches the same videos dozens of times, allowing the past to revisit the present, and tapes and collects scores of television programs and masturbates to Calvin Klein advertisements. Such behaviour helps him effectively blur the boundaries between fiction, fantasy, and reality. Patrick uses the latest video camera to record himself raping and torturing his victims. He also says that, "With Torri and Tiffany I use minor LX ultra-miniature camera that takes 9.5mm film, has a 15mm f/3.5 lens, an exposure meter and a built-in neutral density filter and sits on a tripod" (292).

Although he claims to film the girls in order to understand them better, he is able to participate even more fully as the "Gothic double" by watching himself perform, over and over again, almost as if through a mirror.

Patrick's reliance on mirrors extends to his insistence that his mother's hospital room must be fitted with one. He continues to admire and identify himself

while visiting her: "I've spent the last hour studying my hair in the mirror I've insisted the hospital keep in my mother's room" (365). His appearance is far more important to him than his mother's quality of life. She is a permanent resident in a psychiatric hospital for reasons that are left unexplained. Heavily sedated, she wears sunglasses at all times, expensive sunglasses bought for her by Patrick in his firm belief that money can resolve anything. The secrecy surrounding his family is classically Gothic as are his mother's mysterious infirmities. Her permanently shaded eyes symbolically represent her failure to see what her son is doing. Interestingly enough, the hospital room also provides us with our only information regarding Patrick's father, and he too is said to have malfunctioning eyes:

> ...he's wearing a six-button double-breasted black sport coat, a white spread-collar cotton shirt, a tie, pocket square, shoes all by Brooks Brothers. He's standing next to one of the topiary animals a long time ago on his father's estate in connection and there's something the matter with his eyes. (366)

Patrick only seems capable of identifying people in terms of their surface appearance and their preferred designer labels. The description of his father, when combined with the fact that it is a photographic image in close proximity to a mirror and another person with defective eyes, suggests a lack of any authentic view.

Patrick is obsessed by his personal appearance. He dresses impeccably in extortionately priced designer clothing and routinely exercises; he performs cosmetic rituals on his face and body in his exquisitely furnished luxury apartment. As first person narrator Patrick tells the reader of the minutiae of his home, clothes, diet, shopping, and indeed, of his killings:

> I change into Ralph Lauren monogrammed boxer shorts and a fair Isle sweater and slide into polka-dot Enrico Hidolin slippers I tie a plastic ice-pack around my face and commence with the morning's stretching exercises. Then I inspect my hands and use a nail-brush. I take the ice-pack off and use a deep-pore cleanser lotion, then an herb-mint facial masque which I leave on for ten minutes while I check my toenails. Then I use the probright tooth polisher, and next the Interplak tooth polisher. (25)

This description continues, for a further three pages, revealing that the over-ornamentation so characteristic of earlier Gothic writing is being revisited by Patrick's obsessive attention to detail. Several points are raised by this: first, it is only Patrick's financial security that allows him the time and equipment to embark on such an elaborate, and time-consuming, "beauty" routine, and second, it seems an incredibly "feminine" pastime, especially as we learn of the multiple creams and potions he uses. Even his shampoo is chosen for its purported ability to make him look younger. His fear of aging is all encompassing to the point of delirium, where he simply uses every new product that is launched, and styles his hair three different ways before simply slicking it straight back. He is confused, rather than liberated, by modern technology. Commodity culture's pressure to stay in shape physically has become entwined with his feelings of tension regarding his sexuality and urge to kill. Nothing ever seems extreme enough, his excesses simply grow:

> I worked out heavily at the gym after leaving the office today but the tension has returned, so I do ninety abdominal crunches, a hundred and fifty push-ups, and then I run in place for twenty minutes whilst

> listening to the new Huey Lewis and the News CD. I take a hot shower and afterwards use a new facial scrub. (73)

Each time Patrick describes his exercising, the number of repetitions increases. The growing repetitions, just like his obsessive replaying of the same record on his jukebox and the same videotape, can be viewed as an attempt to retain control. Routines and rituals, like many aspects of the formulaic Gothic genre, are indicative of a human urge to keep within certain bounds. Patrick wants it all ways, determined to behave exactly as he pleases by ignoring accepted societal constructs or any suggestion of justification, yet he is equally determined that those following these constructs should immediately be able to discern his superiority. As his feelings of dissatisfaction become more and more difficult to "subdue," as he puts it, so his visits to the gym become more intense:

> My arm muscles burn, my stomach is as taut as possible, my chest steel, pectorals granite hard, my eyes white as ice. In my locker in the locker room at Xclusive lie three vaginas I recently sliced out of various women I've attacked in the past week. Two are washed off, one isn't. there's a barrette clipped to one of them, a blue ribbon from Hermes tied around my favorite. (370)

The Gothic suggestion to fear what is hidden behind locked doors is more apparent than ever in this scene, and the ever-present proximity of such threats is emphasised by the ignorance of those holding adjoining lockers, the ease with which he decapitates Evelyn's neighbor, and the casual way he can come upon Tom Cruise in an elevator. The message seems to be that nobody is safe.

Patrick's obsession with his appearance extends to the aesthetics of his mediated surroundings. Rather than the traditional Gothic settings of ruined castles and Abbeys, modern-day villain Patrick "works" in the city, in a magnificent office crammed with every conceivable convenience and entertainment gadget. His office environment far outstrips the majority of the population's living quarters. When not dabbling in the world of high finance he haunts fashionable restaurants, where he orders over-garnished and over-priced food. His personal apartment sets the standard that others must follow.

The understated luxury doesn't stop there but mounts to an almost nauseating level. Patrick's possessions are chosen for their rarity, their price tag, and their "hip"ness. He never claims to like any of the valuable items he surrounds himself with; in fact, they put an unbearable pressure on him. This is due to the circularity of the need these items create—the more he acquires, the more he depends upon, material goods—and the more difficult it becomes to break away from the allure of surface veneer. Traditionally Gothic styles move away from classical lines, favouring embellishment to the point off distortion. Bearing this in mind, a surface examination of Patrick's deceptively simple and elegant apartment would distance it from the genre. However, the rampant excess of his psychosis must erupt somewhere, and before it manifests itself, with such devastating effects, on the flesh of others, it erupts in his painful one-upmanship. He insists on establishing himself as being not only the owner of tasteful and expensive items, but also the ultimate purchaser of state-of-the art designer goods and collector's items, be they hi-fi's, rugs, or first editions. He valorises scarcity and originality, and has little time or patience for anything ordinary or easily obtainable.

In stark contrast to the interior of Patrick's exclusive apartment, New York is represented as a desolate and dirty urban backdrop, inhabited by penniless beggars, showing the other side of the obscene wealth of the yuppie traders. The streets seem alienating and full of menace, yet ironically it is Patrick who is a threat, not the street dwellers. He delights in taunting the homeless and never gives them any money. His wealthy companions share his values and priorities, commenting facetiously that one beggar badly needs a facial. While they think nothing of spending five hundred dollar on a metal, they would never give a beggar a single dollar. In a world of Gothic doubles, the poor and dirty must be kept in their place. If they were helped back into mainstream society then not only would ownership of property come under scrutiny, but Patrick would be denied the extremes that he is so keen to identify himself against. He wants to feel they are securely rooted on the far side of a gaping abyss and has no intention of doing anything that may draw him any closer to the dividing boundary. He has no humanitarian feelings, sure that if the beggars thrive—then he will not.

Patrick's fear of otherness is a psychological fear. He is not afraid of the physicality of the streets; indeed, he takes to them regularly when he wants to kill or maim somebody, and harmless beggars, street performers, and food deliverers number among his victims. Along with his luxury home he also has a utility apartment in Hell's Kitchen, a base he uses to get rid of male corpses in a bath of lime. This is a desperate bid to keep the male and female bodies separate, again underlining his determination to maintain boundaries. Along with his fear of poverty and dirt, he is horrified by the threat of feminization. The men he kills are almost incidental. Paul Owen's business acumen irritates him, but he merely eliminates this irritation; he doesn't torture or eviscerate Owen. However, the multiple female victims die

horrendously, amid a nightmare of blood and body parts, in an impossible attempt to satisfy his hunger for knowledge about their internal organs and striving for originality in his mutilation of their bodies. He admits that he is running out of ideas for mutilations; nothing is excessive enough, and as soon as it's done, it's a disappointment: "I can already tell that it's going to be a characteristically useless, senseless death, but then I'm used to the horror" (316). Whatever diversity the carnage takes; it almost always begins with sex:

> All I can think about is blood and what their blood will look like and though Torri knows what to do..... It doesn't subdue me. She starts squealing, trying to pull away, and finally she screams as my teeth rip into her flesh. Torri thinks Tiffany is coming and grinds her own cunt harder onto Tiffany's mouth, smothering her screams, but when I look up at Torri, blood covering my face, meat and pubic hair hanging from my mouth, blood pumping from Tiffany's torn cunt onto the comforter, I can feel her sudden rush of horror. I use mace to blind both of them momentarily and then knock them unconscious with the butt of the nail gun. (291-292)

Yet while Patrick complains about running out of ideas for how to kill his victims, he paradoxically enjoys the security and predictability of watching the killings on video over and over, using them as part of his effort to establish a definitive version, origins on which he can rely, like his extensive repetitions in the gym. However, as his enormous personal spending on designer originals suggests, the over-abundance of his frenzied imagination encourages him to believe in his potential to keep inventing and pushing back boundaries, despite his fear of what he might find.

While he vainly hopes that expensive "originals" will help to establish his pedigree, he increasingly faces the fact that the actuality of life is much more diverse and fragmentary than "originals" would allow.

This realization of the fractured and delicate nature of his own identity makes Patrick feel intensely threatened by anybody displaying any difference: beggars, the homeless, women, and those with less, be it less money, worse taste, or fewer connections. Yet people see him plunging, both physically and metaphorically, into dirt, dark, and disorder. He faces the ultimate threats to his boundaries by becoming covered in other people's blood, inserting his into every conceivable orifice, and actually eating the flesh of other human beings, both raw and cooked. He challenges the unknown in an attempt to render it harmless. If blood is the supreme contaminator, then the urge is to keep it locked in veins—contained. It seems contradictory that everybody has blood, until people symbolically compare it to Patrick's violent urges and unpleasant truth that perhaps everybody is equally capable of them, but as with their blood, containment is necessary.

Although Patrick is afraid of difference, his own doubling is apparent. Classic Gothic doubles, such as Jekyll and Hyde, the side of vampire that comes out at night, the monster that the brilliant, but "odd," scientist creates, continues in the postmodern Gothic, showing Patrick to be, at the same tie, both wealthy executive and brutal killer, seemingly "charming" date and sexual partner from Hell, one of the boys and rampant homophobic. But perhaps most interestingly, he is a frequently misrecognised person.

Repeatedly throughout the narrative he is called by incorrect names, to which he usually calmly responds as if he were that person. This results in an unnerving,

multifaceted identity. He turns the misrecognitions to his advantage for the purpose of gaining alibis, finding out information, and confusing investigators. The failure of others to recognise him for what he is, despite his frequent confessions, assists him in creating his own version of reality, an apocalyptic reality that validates his priorities and perspective, one that questions the generally accepted version of "normal":

> I'm coming back from central Park where, near the children's Zoo, close to the spot I murdered the McCaffrey boy, I fed portions of Ursula's brain to passing dogs. Walking down Fifth Avenue round four o'clock in the afternoon, everyone on the street looks sad, the air is full of decay, bodies lie on the cold pavement. Miles of it, some are moving, most are not. History is sinking and only a few seem dimly aware that things are getting bad. (370)

Patrick's statement that he has his own reality, along with the narrative's suggestion that humans have many sides, points towards a definition of the Gothic genre as a hybrid, a self-conscious and parodic mixing of multiple genres and strands. Patrick's favorite television programme, *The Patty Winter's Show,* seems to be the perfect example of this, offering a mixture of genres guaranteed to indulge our worst instincts by creating the opportunity to be consecutively voyeuristic and judgmental. At its best the viewing would be termed human intersect freak show.

American Psycho similarly leaks into differing categories, demonstrating characteristics of comedy, autobiography, spoof horror, bleak social commentary, conventional horror, and pornography. When Patrick carelessly shoots a street musician, the action accelerates into a "cops and robbers" type chase, complete with tires screeching, bullets ricocheting, and innocent people dying. Patricks' self-parody

is complete as he finally begins to discuss his brutal actions in the third person, referring to himself as "Patrick," "Bateman," and "he" when throughout the previous narrative he has been "I," the potential for characters within modern Gothic narratives to parody not only the genre, but themselves suggests that the title is no longer a convenient genre "label," evoking affected eighteenth-century novels, but a new and modern representation, or rather a fissure between representations, through which the people can look back, to multiple scenes. Patrick encourages this by constantly filming everything, including himself.

Quentin Tarantino's film *from Dusk till Dawn* shows a similar irreverent mixing of seemingly established genres, suggesting that their "established" status in under threat. This text alludes to the western, the thriller, the black comedy, romance, the horror/vampire movie, the road movie, the buddy movie, and other film genres. Like *American Psycho,* Tarantino's film attempts to portray the violent excesses of criminality and its ruthless and perverted desires. Actor George Clooney, despite his matinee idol looks and his fame as a star in a hugely popular television show, makes a parody of his role as "hero" by robbing banks and killing people. The quality of camera shots of his breathtakingly handsome face are at times quite stunning, again undercutting our ability, or inclination, to view him critically. The glorious use of colour and clarity remind us of Patrick's insistence on graphic, visual description. Within the narrative the brother of Clooney's character refuses to die, and in keeping with the postmodern Gothic demonstrates a "coming back," a "re-visiting." Like *American Psycho, from Dusk till Dawn* exposes contemporary culture as a mix of violence and "apparent" reality. Patrick's vision of this society, which he frequently identifies as "my reality," encompasses a desolate world with a bleak future increasingly mediated by technologically altered images:

> Blood pouring from automated tellers, women giving birth through their assholes, embryos frozen or scrambled, nuclear warheads, billions of dollars, the total destruction of the world, someone gets beaten up, someone else dies, sometimes bloodlessly, more often mostly by rifle shot, assassinations, comas, played out as a sitcom, a blank canvas that reconfigures itself into a soap opera. It's an isolation ward that serves only to expose my own severely impaired capacity to feel. (343)

Patrick refers to isolation wards in relation to death, injuries and sickness. Hospitals, illness, and threatening figures, such as scientists, psychopaths, and aliens, are prevalent in Gothic fiction. Earlier in the novel one of Patrick's colleagues sets the scene for the narrative's focus on the fear of diseases, their contagion real or perceived:

> ...there's this theory out now that if you can catch the AIDS virus through having sex with someone who is infected then you can also dystrophy, hemophilia, leukemia, anorexia, diabetes, cancer, multiple sclerosis, cystic fibrosis, cerebral palsy, dyslexia, for Christ sake—you can get dyslexia from pussy. (5)

The significance of sex, with its penetrative qualities, and females, with their threatening difference, is made clear; breaching of boundaries and contact with darkness can only result in disaster, potentially death. Yet, for Patrick at least, the thrill of pushing out these boundaries justifies the risk. He feels hugely powerful, beyond infinity and comprehension, to a sublime level, and like the sublime his experiences are linked to excessive emotion. The more Patrick gives free reign to selfish ambitions and sexual desires beyond the prescriptions of law or familial duty,

the more often he reports to the reader of his irrationality sad or hyperactive moments. He weeps for no reason and complains of panic attacks and migraines, becoming more and more reliant on large quantities of drugs and alcohol: "some kind of existential chasm opens up before me while I'm browsing in Bloomingdale's and causes me to first locate a phone and check my messages, then, near to tears, after taking three Halcion" (172). What Patrick's idea of "total madness" would be is unclear. His insinuation that there is a "total madness" posits a set of criteria that can be followed to reach an original blueprint for a "grand narrative" of sanity. He knows what the vast majority of people think "madness" is, and that he cannot forever sustain the rigid boundaries this requires if he is to retain his public "front":

> My appearances at the office the last month or so have been sporadic to say the least. All I seem to want to do now is work out, lifting weights, mostly and secure reservations at new restaurants, I've already been to, then cancel them. My apartment reeks of rotten fruit, though actually the smell is caused by what I scooped out of Christie's head and poured into a Marco glass bowl that sits on the counter near the entranceway. The Head itself lies covered with brain pulp, hollow and eyeless, in the corner of the living room beneath the piano and I plan to use it as a jack-o'-lantern on Halloween. (289)

Christie, the girl whose brains he is keeping in a designer bowl, was a young, blonde prostitute he had picked up several times from the meat-packing district. From the beginning she has doubts about Patrick, only getting in his limousine for large amounts of money. When he first takes her home he bathes her in expensive products, dresses her in designer clothes, and feeds her exclusive chocolates and wine in a

travesty of the fantasy that a rich, handsome, and kind man will come along and save a young, pretty prostitute from the streets. Patrick has spent months cruising this sleazy area in rented limousines, looking for a young, blonde, trashy girl, who must be slim with white skin: "behind her, in four-foot-tall red block letters painted on the side of an abandoned warehouse, is the word M E A T and the way the letters are spaced awakens something in me and above the building like a backdrop is a moonless sky" (161). The word "backdrop" gives the scene a theatrical feel, which adds to this feeling of Patrick making his own re-make of a film. It seems false and created, perpetuating the inference that he can do whatever he wants to, it's only acting. This raises questions about the difference between "acting" badly and actually "being" bad, and similarly, the difference between murdering someone and just watching or reading about it. It would seem that one perpetuates the other. Patrick endlessly reads books about famous serial killers, enjoying, hence validating what they have done. He quotes them to his friends to demonstrate his admiration for their thoughts and actions: "when I see a pretty girl walk down the street I think two things. One part of me wants to take her out and talk to her and be real nice and sweet and treat her right what her head would look like on a stick" (113).

The Gothic novel celebrates unacceptable behaviour, the violent, the self-promoting, and those who indulge their cravings, in *American Psycho* Patrick demonstrates all of these traits in a jarring kaleidoscopic montage. The narrative slips from murder and mutilation to the most mundane discussion of middle-of-the-road pop music with little transition. Yet, good depends upon evil, light upon dark, reason upon irrationality, in order that the people may define limits. Both gothic and postmodern narratives demonstrate the impossibility of being one or the other and try to present characters who ambivalently demonstrate both binary oppositions. The

difference with postmodern narratives is their prosperity to display the blood and havoc previously only hinted at.

As Patrick reads the story of Ted Bundy, so the people read the story of Patrick Bateman, both dark and Gothic tales of horrendous slaughter, captured in that most postmodern of all vehicles—the book. As an author writes he predicts his audience and has therefore experienced that particular future, in anticipation. Teleology is challenged in that the future is pulled into the past, as a perceived audience affects something that is in the making. Gothic and postmodern narratives of the enlightenment. Life cannot be easily contained, nor explained, and attempting as much will result in a "bursting out." Patrick gives us a daunting example of this as he bursts out of the restrictions of his class, his sexuality, and his society's moral codes.

Chapter Four

Autodiegetic Alterity

The postmodern rejection of teleology can also be found in the prose of *American Psycho*. The idea that a question, when it is asked, inevitably demands an answer just does not apply to the logic of pluralised realities. By not expressing an elaborate, ornamented, and dense language, the novel's narration follows this very concept. Diving into deeper layers in order to deconstruct a convention does not ensure an answer in postmodern narratives. The reality that has just been deconstructed will not give birth to another, for a reality is not substituted; it is rather multiplied. Bateman's prose openly avoids deep layers. His utterance is superficial, depthless, blank. For this matter, critics have called the novel a blank fiction.

The term "Postmodernism" was coined by Elizabeth Young and Graham Caveney in 1992, and then James Annesley used it some years while analysing writers whose subject matters dealt "with contemporary urban life and violence, indulgence, crime, sexual excess media overloaded, decadence, drugs, consumerism and commerce." In his book, Annesley lists depthless, blank. For this matter, critics have called the novel a blank fiction.

The themes in these narratives may result from: an "apocalypse culture," consequence of a society whose worldview is disenchanted; a culture overrun by a "generation X," in which nihilism, individualism, and indifference are depicted in the texts; some kind of deliberate eagerness for radical aesthetics, which explains extreme and marginal subjects; and a connection to postmodern culture. Annesley stands for postmodernism as the most coherent support for the existence of these fictions. In his opinion, the critical power of Linda Hutcheson's historiographic metafiction and

Fredric Jameson's articulations of late capitalism concentrate on "the ways in which contemporary narratives articulate anxieties about subjectivity, representation, and the relationship between text and context." Reference to specific time and space, as in *American Psycho*, requires an analytical interplay between form and content. The blankness, violence, pornography and consumerism form the background. But horrific performances occasionally give some room for ludicrous moments.

In blank fiction, themes are controversial, but the narrative is emotionlessly descriptive for the most part. Writers commonly make use of first person narrators who just tell a story they hardly ever pronounce any judgement against the actions. This is possibly the genre's most censured characteristic for example the description from Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, a novel with affinities to *American Psycho* for its socioeconomic matters. As Nick Carraway is invited to Gatsby's party, he observes the guests around, and then reports their looks, behaviour and reactions.

The narrator describes what he is wearing, how he feels among people he barely knows, and his surprise at the young men with voices, just like Daisy Buchanan's, "full of money." His observation allows him to go further as to conclude at last that those men are sellers who acknowledge that Jay Gatsby's premises offer an opportunity to do business. Nick's descriptive account is sharp and overall, moving from superficial layers to deeper ones. It includes not only what he can see, but also what he learns from the scene.

Bateman spends many lines listing articles of clothing and brands, wondering about buying cocaine, and depreciating the girls at the table. He moreover contradicts himself as he says he and his friends want and do not want to have sex with the girls. The narrator is never certain about what he describes. The readers thus must be

always wary of his narrative. Bateman is at the table, near Taylor, but again he has doubts about it. In the end what the people learn from this excerpt is that Bateman, just like the three girls about whom he complains, has nothing to say.

As a blank fiction, *American Psycho* copes with very controversial matters, such as pornography, violence and eccentricity. It also portrays a serial killer, paraphilic and cannibal who offers a graphically depthless narrative.

The protagonist's behaviour underlines his monstrosity. In two different moments in the narrative, Bateman uses the word "monster." He is at the restaurant "Pastels" with his friends when he perceives that the waitress stands by his table looking down at him. Bateman then says that she gazes at him with a scary countenance:

> A hard body waitress stands looking down at me with this strange, glazed expression. I wipe a hand over my face, genially smiling up at her. She stands there looking at me as if I were some kind of monster—she actually looks scared. (45)

The second moment he uses the word, Bateman is in Paul Owen's apartment torturing Torri and Tiffany, the two escort girls he hires, and narrates that "Tiffany is tied up with six pairs of Paul's suspenders on the other side of the bed, moaning wit fear, totally immobilized by the monster of reality" (292). The monstrous figure the girls see is the wealthy, handsome, Wall Street man.

Jeffrey Jerome Cohen argues that monsters incorporate alterity and personify differences: "Any kind of alterity can be inscribed across the monstrous body, but for the most part monstrous difference tends to be cultural, political, racial, economic and sexual" (7). One could observe, that eccentric alterities are inevitably confined within

this notion. Philosopher Noel Carroll, in turn, defines horrible monsters according to lethality and repugnance. As exceptional entities, monsters are extraordinary characters in an ordinary world. Thus, as they breach norms and standards, they are unnatural. Moreover, the emotional response of the characters before the presence of a monster, Carroll adds, suggests a similar emotional response of the audience of a horror movie or a reader of a horror book. That is, the audience, or the reader, is expected to be scared if the character reacts scarily before the monstrous creature on the screen, or on the pages. Finally, novelist Stephen King, in an attempt to provide examples of monsters and monstrosities, makes a long list of extraordinary personages, abnormal creatures, and people who rupture the physical parameters of what is allegedly normal: The Sandman, Dr Doom, Dr Octopus, dwarves, midgets, the bearded lady, the fat lady, the human skeleton, obese people, and even "someone with a really bad case of acne" (King 39).

Even though King's listing is too ample, his instances, aided by Caroll's and Cohen's definitions, lead to conclude that monstrosities are necessarily determined by an exceptional physical feature. A monster, as it "refers to any being not believed to exist now according to contemporary science" (Caroll 27), ought to carry a corporal mark, a physical blemish, to be classified as such. This conclusion, therefore, effaces any possibility of Bateman falling under this rubric once he has no exceptional physical feature to label him as a monster.

The monstrosity that scares Torri, Tiffany and the waitress stems from the protagonist's behaviour, not from a bodily trait. Bateman was compared to the alienated nameless narrator in Dostoevsky's novel. But, unlike that narrator, Bateman is an active businessman who goes to parties, restaurants, and clubs as much as

engages in tortures, killings, paraphilia and cannibalism. A monster must be markedly repellent insofar as characters, just by glancing at it, realise that there is something wrong, that there is an imminent danger. This perception, obviously, does not apply to Bateman, for his very presence does not arouse repugnance. His monstrosity is not physical, though. Adapting Carroll's definition, Patrick is an ordinary world. It is his hideous acts that determine his monstrosity. And it comes to the fore through comportment, through the story told and how the story is told.

Autodiegetic prose is one of the strategies to make the protagonist horrific. This technique joins together the performance and the performer. So, Bateman takes an action and narrates it, with no mediator, to the reader. In third person narrations, for instance, there is a distance between the narrator and the events: "in literature the world of the third-person narrator is completely separate from that of the characters in the story" (Fludernik 31). This heterodiegetic voice does not take part in the acts, so it never turns into a solid figure in the narrative. Differently, in first person narrations, there is not only a voice, but a whole body with gestures, feelings, and thoughts to tell a story. In *American Psycho,* this narrator is solid because he is Autodiegetic. One can picture his voice and body, and become familiar with the feelings and the thoughts he shares. Bateman is a narrator who can be entirely personified, for this his narrative becomes more penetrating. The autodiegesis pushes him closer to the readers, especially when he speaks of thoughts no one else is allowed to know:

> Fleetingly I imagine pulling out my knife, slicing a wrist, one of mine, aiming the spurting vein at Armstrong's head or better yet his suit, wondering if he would still continue to talk. I consider getting up without excusing myself, taking a cab to another restaurant,

> somewhere in SoHo, maybe farther uptown, having a drink, using the rest room, maybe even making a phone call to Evelyn, coming back to Duplex, and every molecule that makes up my body tells me that Armstrong would still be talking about not only his vacation but what seems like the world's vacation in the fucking Bahamas. (135)

Bateman gazes at Christopher Armstrong and emphasises his body gestures to underscore that he keeps with the conversation: "Armstrong: you are an.....asshole. "uh-huh." I nod.... fleetingly I imagine pulling out my knife" (135). But, apart from this, one also knows about his inner intention to stab at Armstrong's head with a knife.

The present tense is another strategy of the novel with a similar effect. Its main function is to pinpoint an event in the current time. Its usage enhances the impact of the narration, causing it to be more pungent while being read:

> "Scream, honey," I urge, "keep screaming," I lean down, even closer, brushing her hair back. "No one cares. No one will help you." She tries cry out against but she's losing consciousness and she's capable of only a weak moan. I take advantage of her helpless state and, removing my gloves, force her mouth open and with the scissors cut out her tongue, which I pull easily from her mouth and hold in the palm of my hand, warm and still bleeding, seeming so much smaller than in her mouth, and throw it against the wall, where it sticks for a moment, leaving a stain, before falling to the floor with a tiny wet slap (236).

While discussing some rules of the narrative's game, James Phelan highlights that Suzanne Fleischman posits that the present tense prose constitutes a violation of a

mimetic standard. For Fleischman, its very problem is that one cannot live and narrate at the same time. But this violation goes well along with a postmodern concept. This Autodiegetic simultaneous present, that is, a story being narrated as events are happening, unavoidably clashes with that heterogenic historical past – omniscient and authoritative. Easton Ellis does not only subvert a convention, but he also pushes Bateman's hideous performances towards readers, nearer our present time. The consequence is a disturbing intimacy that turns us into virtual accomplices of his assaults.

Since its publication, *American Psycho* has been issued with many different covers. While some of them display just a small amount of blood scantily mixed up with water, others display a handsome white man's face, with eyes looking at us. Other editions show a roughly- painted drawing of the novel's protagonist, dressed in a suit, with a bloody and frightening face with no eyes. The cover for the Brazilian edition presents a scene from the movie adaptation, with the actor holding a shining knife. One of the most recent covers, on the other hand, displays a figure of a man standing, whose outline is blurred and obscure, thus preventing the onlooker from seeing him clearly.

The recent cover portends an interesting aspect of the novel's narrative: a protagonist who offers plenty of unreliable statements. Patrick is surely an obscure character, not only for his lack of personal and family background, but mainly for his discourse. The moment the readers decide to confront his utterances; they are unable to affirm safely whether he is being true or only picturing the scenes he narrates. Some dialogues are themselves evidence of a narration that has been inconsonant all

along. The medicine he takes also contributes to the perception of a narrator whose mind is troubled.

The chapter "A Glimpse of a Thursday afternoon," for example, begins and ends in the middle of a sentence, causing the lines to be syntactically broken. The television programme *The Patty Winters Show* Bateman regularly watches becomes another source of narrative unreliability. Although the readers may take many of those bizarre topics broadcast daily as quite possible, it is hard to believe that "a Cheerio sat in a very small chair and was interviewed for close to an hour" (371).

These instances can be seen as signs of the protagonist's inconsistent narrative. At the very beginning of his story, Bateman appears to be true, but, in the long run, the readers notice that he is the narrator and that they might not trust all of his narration. The people cannot fully rely on the words he says or believe the scenes he describes. Patrick Bateman is, to a great extent, an unsteady character telling a one-sided story. As an Autodiegetic protagonist, he provides readers with a restricted point of view-there is no other narrator to come up against his statements. Suspicious as they are, his narration has a considerable impact on the way we interpret this protagonist.

The first theorist to label narrators "reliable" and "unreliable" was American literary theorist Wayne C. Booth is 1961. Discussing how authors use their rhetorical skills to effectively force the fictional worlds they create upon readers, Booth is interested in unravelling the writing technique of novelists. He is not oblivious, as he underscores in *The Rhetoric of Fiction,* that, by concentrating on technique alone, he is setting aside the social and psychological implications involved in the process of writing and reading. Nevertheless, by putting together a systematic set of ways of

"what good novelists have in fact done." Booth's purpose is to unchain both writers and readers from those vague and abstract rules about what novelists must do.

Even uneasy for lack of a better term, Booth adopts those adjectives to qualify the narrators' speech and behaviour according to their degree of consonance with what the author in the novel has set as norms to be followed. A reliable narrator would act under these norms whereas an unreliable would not. Booth claims that unreliability ought not to be measured by mere irony or lie because narrators may become deceptive for this matter. For him, narrators are often labelled unreliable not when they tell lies or are ironic, but when they unconsciously and unintentionally contradict themselves.

Strange may be one of the adjectives to describe Patrick Bateman's behaviour as well. At pains to elucidate the grotesque, Victor Hugo, Wolfgang Kayser, and Mikhail Bakhtin explain the phenomenon by using this word along with others, such as ugly, ambiguous, paradoxical, incongruous, horrific, repulsive, carnivalesque, comic, and laughable. Even though the term is currently considered to be an unstable one, many of these adjectives frequently bubble up in order to make its definition clearer. In *American Psycho,* a character who is apparently ordinary tends to behave grotesquely. So, some of those adjectives also apply for Bateman. When it is intended to purely scary, the devil is depicted as ominous, threatening and terrifying. Examples of such representation can be found in the Bible, in the *Divine Comedy* or in Milton's *Paradise Lost.* In *American Psycho,* Bono Vox, who introduces himself to Bateman as the devil, does not look purely scary – he is also ludicrous. The way the protagonist describes him, focusing on his clothing and body features, induces laughter at first:

> But when I sit down something strange on the stage catches my eye. Bono has now moved across the stage, following me to my seat, and he's staring into my eyes, kneeling at the edge of the stage, wearing black jeans, sandals, a leather vest with no shirt beneath it. His body is white, covered with sweat, and it's not worked out enough, there's no muscle tone and what definition there might be is covered beneath a paltry amount of chest hair. He has a cowboy hat on and his hair is pulled back into a ponytail and he's moaning some dirge – I catch the lyric "A hero is an insect in this world". (140-141)

Bateman's description of Bono Vox is similar to many others he provides all along the novel. In the concert, Bateman points out that the singer is staring at him, but, in addition, he describes the singer's clothing, and even tries to guess his jeans brand. Moreover, the protagonist observes that Bono's body is not as muscular as his while he comically underlines that the muscles, if there are any, must be under some chest hair. Only after he scrutinises Bono Vox, the way he always does when meeting somebody, does Bateman turn his attention to Bono's eyes and realises he is devil.

Comic and absurdity play chief parts as signals to direct us to the grotesque. Throughout the novel, comic elements, or rather ludicrous, suddenly emerge from silly comments, as though absurdity had already closed Bateman in:

> Then I met the models for drinks at the Trump Plaza. This was followed by a French movie that I completely did not understand, but it was fairly chic anyway, then dinner at a sushi restaurant called Vivids near Lincoln Center and a party at one of the models' ex-boyfriend's loft in Chelsea, where bad, fruity sangria was served. Last night I had

dreams that were lit like pornography and in them I fucked girls made of cardboards. The Patty Winters Show this morning was about Aerobic Exercise. (192)

Absurd conversations also hold grotesque aspects. Patrick brings Torri and Tiffany home and, while they are having drinks, he brags about graduating from Harvard. Torri thus says she once knew a man who had studied there. For taking for granted that prostitutes were not supposed to be acquainted with yuppies, Bateman is shocked and becomes silent, encouraging Torri to tell her weird story:

> "He had, like, this monkey. And I would have to watch this monkey in... his apartment. It would only watch. She sighs, then in a sudden rush admits, "The Oprah Winfrey Show and that's all it would watch. The guy had tapes and tapes of it and he had made all of them for this monkey. One time I tried to turn the channel, turn one of the tapes off. If I wanted to watch a soap instead or something" the monkey would s-s-s-screech at me and it would only calm down when Oprah was on." She swallows, clears her throat, looks like she's going to cry but doesn't. "And you know, you know, you try to turn the channel and that d-damn monkey would try to scratch you." (290)

From Torri's attitude, readers notice that she is sad. Some indications to this are textually provided: sighs, pauses, emotional reactions. For her, living together with a fierce ape addicted to a television programme is dreadful. On the other hand, readers may say that a monkey spending all day long watching the same tapes over again. Torri's account, conversely, turns out to be funny, laughable, and regarding

absurdity, ludicrous. By the time the monkey's behaviour resembles a human's, different domains mingle and the grotesque phenomenon may take place.

The protagonist appears to react grotesquely even in moments when he is notably vicious. Right after stabbing A1, the homeless man, Bateman tramples heavily on his dog, and by listening to the cracking sound of its bones being broken, he laughs, qualifying the event as amusing:

> Then I turn to the barking dog and when I get up, stomp on its front legs while it's crouched down ready to jump at me, its fangs bared, immediately shattering the bones in both its legs, and it falls on its side squealing in pain, front paws sticking up in the air at an obscene, satisfying angle I can't help but start laughing and I linger at the scene, amused by this tableau. When I spot an approaching taxi, I slowly walk away." (127)

This segment corroborates how paradoxical the grotesque can be. The dog is agonising because of its shattered legs, while Bateman is pleased for the pain he has inflicted to the animal. Two antagonistic elements, therefore, clash and merge. Enveloping horror and laughter at once, this scene highlights ambiguous reactions, both of them capable of being absorbed by the grotesque.

Bateman is a character who epitomises his present in all its excess, that is, the American 1980s. His narrative is filled up by the popular culture from that decade, ranging from David Onica to Huey Lewis and The News, from the thriller movies to MTV video clips. When he reviews the British band *Genesis,* he says he does not understand any of their albums from past decades. He declares he has been "a big genesis fan ever since the release of their 1980 album, *Duke"* (128). This album

serves as a borderline for time, making clear that anything which is placed out of the boundaries of the eighties is actually misplaced, and thus incomprehensible. The novel ends right before the beginning of the nineties, insisting upon its confinement to a specific period. Whereas the first line of the narrative tells us to enter and the very last warns that there is no way out: "and above one of the doors covered by red velvet drapes in Harry's is a sign in letters that match the drapes' color are the words THIS IS NOT AN EXIT" (384). This sentence locks Bateman, his friends, victims and actions inside a setting in which commodification has indeed reached its apex, a moment many would dub consumer society.

Bateman is not interested in the past. He could possibly be taken as a serial killer whose acts of violence are to be meaningless, as some hasty reviewers have denounced. Readers may get alarmed at Bateman's Autodiegetic account because it does not deliver any explanation for the bloodshed so graphically narrated throughout. The blank narrative he makes use of is, in reality, useless to move us into deeper layers.

The catastrophic news read out loud by Timothy Price in the first page of the novel also finds resonance with Fredric Jameson's concept of postmodernism. For him, the second half of the twentieth century was essentially a period of crisis – of Leninism, social democracy, welfare state. All of the positive, negative, expectations of future were swapped by a sense of ending – of ideology, art, social class. A pervasive disposition to crisis has deadened romantic and utopian thoughts to the point of apparent no return.

Bateman's description of his apartment, listing all of his belongings, is likened to descriptions he offers of characters. His consumerist ethos and materially-oriented

disposition do not allow him to break through the boundaries of the marketing appeal. Thus, he can only deliver endless lists of device, meals, apparel, shoes, cosmetic lotions, hairstyles, haircuts, and brands:

> The three of us, David Van Pattten, Criag McDermott and myself, are sitting in the dining room of the Yale Club at Lunch. Van Patten is wearing a glen-paid wool-crepe suit from Krizia Uomo, a Brooks Brother shirt, a tie from Adirondack and shoes by Cole-Haan. McDermott is wearing a lamb's wool and cashmere blazer, worsted wool flannel trousers by Ralph Lauren, a shirt and tie also Ralph Lauren and shoes from Brook Brothers. I am wearing a tick-weave wool suit with a windowpane overplaid, a cotton shirt by Luciano Barbera, a tie by Luciano Barbera, shoes from Cole-Haan and non-prescription glasses by Bausch & Lomb. (150)

All of these listings throughout the novel may affect the readers just the same as magazine ads, TV commercials and outdoors do. It is reported not only what is physical and external, but also what is internal, that is, their personal features. Juliette is qualified as "mature in character and mind," and it is also said that she had never thought over the cruelties which were about to come. Justine, in turn, is said to be "gloomy" and "melancholic by disposition." She is not as artful and "guile" as Juliette, but on the contrary ingenuous, candid, gentle and sensible. Justine's description is even finished by a doomed prediction of her fate: these dispositions will soon lead her to traps.

Those pieces of information are delivered by someone who knows much more than any reader would ever be able to. The narrator of *The Misfortunes of Virtue*

comments on what is in the characters' minds as well as foresees a ruinous destiny. As this narrator is capable of telling every single move characters make or thoughts they have, the entire story is under his/her control. Wayne Booth believes that an omniscient voice such as this is, somehow or other, the author's. The intrusive speech is the authority, or the reliable narrator, behind the tale breaking into the narrative to deliver things the readers should accept with no questioning. For Booth, this is the very moment when narrator and author match, and this is done so to guide readers to a certain direction through the story.

Direct guidance is useful make stories more reliable or to make readers sympathetic, or unsympathetic, to certain characters. For Booth, nonetheless, it is a technique hardly ever used by modern novelists. They have belittled it because they consider "showing" to be more artistic that "telling".

Although modern writers have generally kept direct guidance away from their accounts, there are still some novelists who make us of it in their works. Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Year of Solitude* and Jose Saramago's *The Gospel According to Jesus Christ* are just two examples of modern novels whose narrators, every so often, break into the tale to offer some privileged information. In reality, Booth states that this technique has never been completely abolished in fictional writings, but many authors have renounced the privileged of direct intervention, retreated to the wings and left characters to work out their own fates upon the stage.

This narrator who intrudes into the tale in order to inform something is named "implied author" by Wayne Booth. The critic believes that any kind of novel gives rise to an indirect image of its maker that stands behind the scenes, whether as stage manager, as puppeteer, or as an indifferent God, silently paring his fingernails. This

image is a version of the novel writer, or, in Boothian words, the author's second self. No storytelling comes to readers without meditation. Despite the impersonality some tales can display (Booth uses the short story "The Killers," by Hemingway, as an example), a narrator always indicates his/her presence somehow:

> The inexperienced reader may make the mistake of thinking of that the story comes to him unmediated. But no such mistake can be made from the moment that the author explicitly places a narrator into the tale, even if he is given no personal characteristics whatever. (152)

The notion of implied author is a bone of contention in narratology. More recently, David Herman has summarised the notion of the implied author by positing that it is a role assumed by an actual author. This role can be described as a set of norms and values of which actual writers make use to create their narratives. He goes on saying that a narrative interpretation based on a rhetorical approach takes into account this set of norms and values to expose, for instance, unreliable narrations. Theorist Brain Richardson, in turn, understands that an implied author should be conceptualised through a distinctive voice, or a set of distinctive traits. He objected it on grounds that the features Richardson claims to be the very ones to define the implied author similarly define the term "style." Linguistic devices which particularise a novelist or a poet, for example, are to be regarded as a writer's stylistic expression.

Although unsuccessfully, Booth tries to make explicit that the implied author and the real flesh-and-blood author are necessarily distinct entities. He compares the implied author to David Hume's description of an ideal reader, a reader who should be taken as a "man in general," momentarily oblivious of his "individual being" and

his "peculiar circumstances." Booth argues that there are two different personas when it comes to producing a work of fiction: (a) the person who holds a certain set of ideologies and principles; and (b) the person who has a set of ideologies and principles that might or might not be compatible with that of the former person's.

The implied author and the real flesh-and-blood author could be viewed distinctly in *American Psycho*. There are many textual signs to determine the protagonist's mental disorder, but, if taken isolatedly, they are not enough to determine his unreliability. One of them is Patrick's intermittent incapacity to pay attention to his peers. As emphasized, Bateman is a character totally restrained by the 1980s and its consumer yuppiedom. Throughout the novel, icons from this decade bubble up to set the scene, such as electronic devices, artists, bands, brands and songs. Furthermore, as Bateman compete for recognition, his narration consists of tediously materially-based lists. His sharp ability to foreground mass media icons and commodities, on the other hand, brings to the fore his inability to concentrate on conversations. In the chapter "Lunch," Bateman chats with Christopher Armstrong at a restaurant, but his narcissism shuts out any possibility of focusing on what it is being accounted by his workmate:

> Armstrong: you are an... asshole. "uh-huh." I nod. "Well..." Paisley ties, plaid suits, my aerobics class, returning videotapes, spices to pick up from Zabar's, beggars, white-chocolate truffles... The sickening scent of Drakkar Noir, which is what Christopher is wearing, floats over near my face, mingling with the scent of the marmalade and cilantro, the onions and the blackened chilies. "Uh-huh," I say, repeat.
>
> (135)

Bateman is having a conversation with Christopher Armstrong, or rather, Armstrong is talking but is not being listened. They are sitting at the same table, looking at each other, speaking, but there is no effective interaction between them. Bateman does not hear Armstrong because his friend brags about his own activity, that is, his trip to Bahamas. Bateman ignores the talk because what interests him is what is about him. So, he starts listing things closely related to his own routine: ties, suits, aerobics class, videotapes. Like Narcissus gazing at the pool, Bateman can only be attentive to his own body, his activities, and his belongings, boasting about them proudly whenever he has the chance to:

> …yourself…Armstrong, I'm thinking while staring out the window at the gridlock and pacing bums on Church Street. Appetizers arrive: sun-dried tomato brioche for Armstrong. Poblano chilies with an oniony orange-purple marmalade on the side for me. I hope Armstrong doesn't want to pay because I need to show the dim-witted bastard that I in fact do own a platinum American Express card. (134)

The chapter is sprinkled with ellipses, which signal the narrator's disorder as well as the moment he stops heeding Armstrong, cuts off his narration, and immediately changes the subject: "… It is frequently hotter north in…" and right after this ellipsis, Bateman goes on telling what was on *The Patty Winters Show* in the morning. Although he asks Armstrong questions, he does not care to pay attention to his colleague's words, so much so that he does not include them in the narrative.

The talk of them is dull and tiresome and is signalled not only through the ellipses, but also through the words used in the chapter, such as "uninterested," "disinterestedly," "fleetingly," "drone," "mournful." The protagonist openly tells us

that he does not care about Christopher Armstrong or his trip at all. But if so, why does he keep up with the conversation by asking his friend about his vacations?

This intermittent inability to pay attention to his peers leads the protagonist to an inability to recognise peers. The novel is full of moments in which characters mix up names and cannot say for sure who the person is. Bateman, Marcus, and so on. In this same chapter "Lunch," Bateman asks a question and Armstrong starts answering it by saying Bateman's name wrong:

> "So how were the Bahamas?" I ask after we order."you just got back, right?" "Well, Taylor," Armstrong begins, staring at a point somewhere behind me and slightly above my head – on the column that has been terra-cotta-ized or perhaps on the exposed pipe that runs the length of the ceiling. (132)

All along the novel, the protagonist spends many lines describing other characters. Every time he meets someone, he offers readers a long report on clothing, devices, body shape, and hairstyle. For his narcissistic behaviour, Bateman is unable to heed others. But this is not completely true. It is worth repeating that, as a yuppie, driven by consumerism, hedonism and ephemeral trends, the protagonist is only able to describe what comes externally. Unfortunately, he cannot go any further. Bateman's materialistic attitude blurs his evaluation and tugs him away from anything other than consumable goods. Thus, he is able to describe what he sees, but unable to go beneath the surface. The world Bateman lives in resembles a mass-production zone, where products and their corresponding brands are omnipresent. They never stop being produced, or, as in the novel, they never stop being listed by him. But, as these goods must be preferably fancy and expensive, his evaluation, consequently,

turns into valuation. The protagonist is actually setting up a rule for the social class he belongs to: only high-priced brands are allowed. By the end of the novel, Bateman comes to the conclusion, after asking himself many unconnected questions, that all of the assumptions underlying his learnings are twisted and meaningless:

> The smell of meat and blood clouds up the condo until I don't notice it anymore. And later my macabre joy sours and I am weeping for myself, unable to find solace in any of this, crying out, sobbing "I just want to be loved," cursing the earth and everything I have been taught: principles, distinctions, choices, morals, compromises, knowledge, unity, prayer – all of it was wrong, without any final purpose. All it comes down to was: die or adapt (332).

This conclusion has made Bateman adapt to a class crowded by self-absorbed members, whose worries lie totally in always having better assets – and it is worth saying, better that any others, members or not. To take part in such an exclusive group, Bateman has been dressing in overcoats by Giorgio Armani, ties by Valentino Couture, trousers by Hugo Boss, and shoes by Brook Brothers. He has been going to fancy restaurants and tolerating dull conversations with Christopher Armstrong as well. He has been buying costly clothes and devices, in order to look just like, or better than, his peers. As a result, all the yuppie characters end up having the same features, even though different descriptions are offered throughout: white skin, slicked- back hair, hard-shaped body, horn-rimmed glasses, and expensive garments. The members of Bateman's class can hardly be particularised. For this reason, Bateman and other characters frequently mistake one person for another: What?" Owen asks. "wait. Is that Conrad?"

> He points at some guy wearing a shawl-collar, single-breasted wool tuxedo, a cotton shirt with a bow tie, all by Pierre Cardin, who stands near the bar, directly beneath the chandelier, holding a glass of champagne, inspecting his nails. The Chandelier Room is packed and everyone looks familiar, everyone looks the same. (61)

A third textual sign to determine the protagonist's disorder is in the chapter entitled "Chase, Manhattan", for the narrative, which has hitherto been first-person, suddenly turns third person. Once again at a sophisticated restaurant for dinner with friends, Bateman cannot help admitting that his "life is a living hell" (333) – and again he is utterly ignored, as he himself observes. He admits his life has become hell because he can barely control his thoughts. He has just concluded that every single person, whoever that is, is a potential victim, or in his own words, "they are prey" (334). Such resolution forces him to leave the place and roam around the streets late at night.

In this chapter, every ending of a paragraph and beginning of another holds ellipsis. They are not being used, however, the way they were in the chapter "Lunch." In that one, they had been employed to spot the moment Bateman switched off, a move from Armstrong's answers to Bateman's thoughts. But in "Chase, Manhattan", the usage of ellipsis implies a brief period of blackout, signalling the moment the narrator loses his consciousness and then recovers it:

> At which point I use the rest room, do a line of cocaine, pick up my Giorgio Armani wool overcoat and the .357 magnum barely concealed within it from the coat check, strap on a holster and then I'm outside, but on *The Patty Winters Show* this morning there was an interview

with a man who set his daughter on fire while she was giving birth, at dinner we all had shark…

…in Tribeca it's misty out, sky on the verge of rain, the restaurants down here empty, after midnight the streets remote, unreal, the only sign of human life someone playing a saxophone on the corner of Duane street. (334)

The readers notice that there is still a link between the end of the sentence and the beginning of the other. The ellipses does not seem to omit much of what was supposed to be told. Bateman had already said he had excused himself from the table and left before dessert, and, in so doing, the readers expect that this next move is to go outdoors. Following from this, by the time the readers find him telling us he is on the streets, walking around Tribeca, we are not likely to doubt his narration. This conclusion, logically reached, still preserves his reliability.

Because his thoughts are getting harder to control. Bateman's narration becomes messy. Therefore, many unconnected topics are bunched together in a rather incoherent manner: morning routine, talk shows, pornographic movies, parties, dishes, tortures, brand names, killings, bloody scenes. In the previous excerpt, for instance, he called to mind what he and his friends ordered for dinner soon after he had commented on what wat on *The Patty Winters Show* – he joined common place activities together with gory pictures. A connection such as this corroborates how far his unbalance has gone. The ellipses are instances of a mind which has turned more and more deranged. The Xanax, Valium, Halcion and Nuprin Bateman constantly takes can no longer hold this anxiety and panic attacks back. The point worth highlighting here is that ellipses are not in the chapter's narrative to mark a voluntary

disregard. In reality, they signpost an involuntary attitude that is, the narrator's loss of consciousness. Moreover, he does not act as if he were aware of those mental gaps, though he can notice them coming. He foresees his blackouts some lines before the first ellipses, exactly at the moment he speaks: "and during dinner I almost become unglued, plummeting into a state pf near vertigo" (334). The words "unglued" and "vertigo," more specifically, must be taken into consideration because they can help the readers understand the reason why the narration changes into heterodiegetic. If the readers have been arguing that it is possible to determine Bateman's mental disorder textually, thus, the word "vertigo" works as a significance evidence. This symptom is defined as a sensation of dizziness or unnatural motion just as though one were feeling the surroundings spinning around, leading to a loss of balance and to a disoriented mind. Feeling he "cannot seem to control himself" (334), the protagonist, on the verge of falling down, picks up his overcoat and gun, and leaves. Nevertheless, readers should notice that, while he sitting, the vertigo could not be harmful. The moment he stands up and steps out of the restaurant, he loses his balance, his mind gets disoriented, and shuts down. This instant is depicted in the chapter by ellipses in the end of the paragraph.

Repeated ellipses, or rather, repeated blackouts come down to a moment where Bateman does not appear to recognize his own actions anymore. He says he has just shot the busker who was on the sidewalk playing his saxophone, but cannot recollect what happens afterwards. He gets more and more overwhelmed by these lapses to the point of being doubtful about what he has done:

> He stops playing, the tip of the saxophone still in his mouth, I pause too, then nod for him to go on. And, tentatively, he does, then I raise

> the gun to his face and in mid note pull the trigger, but the silencer doesn't work and in the same instant a huge crimson ring appears behind his head the booming sound of the gunshot deafens me, stunned, his eyes still alive, he falls to his knees, then onto his saxophone, I pop the clip and replace it with a full one, then something bad happens...because while doing this I've failed to notice the squad car that was traveling behind me – doing what? God only knows, handing out parking tickets? (334-335).

Such a lack of self-recognition produces a peculiar narrative outcome. Incapable of perceiving his actions the way he used to, the protagonist is detached from the first-person narrator, as if he has lost touch with his self. The gunshot is heard by police officers in a car, so Bateman tries to escape from them. He hails a taxicab, climbs into it, shoots the cabdriver dead, and drives away. The narration of the chasing resembles an action movie scene:

> And racing blindly down Greenwich I lose control entirely, the cab swerves into a Korean deli, next to a karaoke restaurant called Lotus Blossom I have been to with Japanese clients, the cab rolling over fruit stands, smashing through a wall of glass, the body of a cashier thudding across the hood, Patrick tries to put the cab in reverse but nothing happens, he staggers out of the cab, leaning against it, a nerve-racking silence follows, "nice going, Bateman", he mutters, limping out of the store, the body on the hood moaning in agony, Patrick with no idea where the cop running toward him across the street has come from (349).

The climax of his mental disorder matches the whole piece in which the third-person narration takes place, and it seems so as long as the readers recall the word "unglued." This word stands for detachment, division or separation as well as loss of emotional control or confused distress. In the beginning of the chapter "Chase, Manhattan," the readers are told by the narrator that he has lately been considering everyone everywhere a "whole host of victims and his life is extremely unpleasant." The readers can learn from this that Bateman is really searching for a way, even though temporarily, to cope with these troubles. As all of his attempts to keep his disorder down have failed, he tries a new alternative: he sets him and his self apart.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMATION

American literature is literature predominantly written or produced in English in the United States of America and its preceding colonies. Before the founding of the United states, British colonies on the eastern coast of the present-day United States were heavily influenced by English Literature. The American Literary tradition thus began as part of the broader tradition of English Literature. However, a small amount of literature exists in other immigrant languages and Native American tribes have a rich tradition of oral storytelling.

Like other national literatures, American Literature was shaped by the history of the country that produced it. For almost a century and a half, America was merely a group of colonies scattered along the eastern seaboard of the North American continent—colonies from which a few hardy souls tentatively ventured westward. After a successful rebellion against the motherland, America became the United States, a nation. By the end of the 19th century this nation extended southward to the Gulf of Mexico, northward to the parallel and westward to the Pacific. By the end of the 19th century, too, it had taken its fortunes so interrelated with those of other nations that inevitably it became involved in two world wars and following these conflicts, with the problems of Europe and east Asia. Meanwhile, the rise of science and industry, as well as changes in ways of thinking and feeling, wrought many modifications in people's lives. All these factors in the development of the United States moulded the literature of the country.

After the war of 1812, there was an increasing desire to produce a uniquely American literature and culture, and a number of literary figures emerged. Modern

American Literature includes twentieth and twenty-first century fiction, poetry, and drama. The period is marked by two significant aesthetic movements: modernism and post modernism. Modernism describes the Avant-grade styles of the early twentieth century, while postmodernism describes the period of art that evolved after World War II.

Postmodern Literature is a form of literature that is characterized by the use of metafiction, unreliable narration, self-reflexivity, intertextuality, and which often thematises both historical and political issues. This style of experimental literature emerged strongly in the United States in the 1960s through the writings of authors such as Kurt Vonnegut, Thomas Pynchon and John Barth. Post modernists often challenge authorities, which has been seen as a symptomatic of the fact that this style of literature first emerged in the context of political tendencies in the 1960s. this inspiration is, among other things, seen through how postmodern literature is highly self-reflexive about the political issues it speaks.

Sometimes the term "postmodernism" is used to discuss many different things ranging from architecture to historical theory to philosophy and film. Because of this fact, several people distinguish between several forms of postmodernism and thus suggest that there are three forms of postmodernism: postmodernity is understood as a historical period from the mid-1960s to the present, which is different from the theoretical postmodernism, which encompasses the theories developed by thinkers such as Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Bret Easton Ellis and others. The third category is the "cultural postmodernism," which includes film, literature, visual arts, etc. that feature postmodern elements. Postmodern literature is, in this sense, part of cultural postmodernism.

Bret Easton Ellis is an American author, screenwriter, short-story writer, and director. Ellis was first regarded as one of the so-called literary Brat Pack, which also included Tama Janowitz and Jay McInerney. He is a self-proclaimed satirist whose trademark technique, as a writer, is the expression of extreme acts and opinions in an affectless style. His novels commonly share recurring characters.

American Psycho is a novel by Bret Easton Ellis, published in 1991. The story is told in the first person by Patrick Bateman, a serial killer and Manhattan investment banker. Alison Kelly of *the Observer* notes that while "some countries so potentially disturbing that it can only be sold shrink-wrapped", "critics rave about it" and "academics revel in its transgressive and postmodern qualities".

Set in Manhattan during the Wall Street boom of the late 1980s, *American Psycho* follows the life of wealthy young investment banker Patrick Bateman. Bateman, in his mid-20s when the story begins, narrates his everyday activities, from his recreational life among the Wall Street elite of New York to his forays into murder by night. Through present tense stream-of-consciousness narrative, Bateman describes his daily life, ranging from a series of Friday night's spent at nightclubs with his colleagues—where they snort cocaine, critique fellow club-goers' clothing, trade fashion advice, and question one another on proper etiquette—to his loveless engagement to fellow yuppie Evelyn and his contentious relationship with his brother and senile mother. Bateman's stream of consciousness is occasionally broken up by chapters in which he directly addresses the reader in order to critique the work of 1980s pop music artists. The novel maintains a high level of ambiguity through mistaken identity and contradictions that introduce the possibility that Bateman is an unreliable narrator. Characters are consistently introduced as people other than

themselves, and people argue over the identities of others they can see in restaurants or at parties. Deeply concerned with his personal appearance, Bateman gives extensive descriptions of his daily aesthetics regimen.

After killing Paul Owen, one of his colleagues, Bateman appropriates his apartment as a place to host and kill more victims. Bateman's control over his violent urges deteriorates. His murders become increasingly sadistic and complex, progressing from simple stabbings to drawn-out sequences of rape, torture, mutilation, cannibalism, and necrophilia, and his grasp on sanity begins to slip. He introduces stories about serial killers into casual conversations and on several occasions openly confesses his murderous activities to his co-workers, who never take him seriously, do not hear what he says, or misunderstand him completely—for example, hearing the words "murders and executions" as "mergers and acquisitions." These incidents culminate in a shooting spree during which he kills several random people in the street, resulting in a SWAT team being dispatched in a helicopter. This narrative episode sees the first-person perspective shift to third-person and the subsequent events are, although not for the first time in the novel, described in terms pertaining to cinematic portrayal. Bateman flees on foot and hides in his office, where he phones his attorney, Harold Carnes, and confesses all his crimes to an answering machine.

Later, Bateman revisits Paul Owen's apartment, where he had earlier killed and mutilated two prostitutes, carrying a surgical mask in anticipation of the decomposing bodies he expects to encounter. He enters the perfectly clean, refurbished apartment, however, filled with strong-smelling flowers meant, perhaps, to conceal a bad odor. The real estate agent, who sees his surgical mask, fools him into stating he was attending the apartment viewing because he "saw an ad in

the *Times*" (when in fact there was no such advertisement). She tells him to leave and never return.

Bateman's mental state continues to deteriorate and he begins to experience bizarre hallucinations such as seeing a Cheerio interviewed on a talk show, being stalked by an anthropomorphic park bench, and finding a bone in his Dove Bar. At the end of the story, Bateman confronts Carnes about the message he left on his machine, only to find the attorney amused at what he considers a hilarious joke. Mistaking Bateman for another colleague, Carnes claims that the Patrick Bateman he knows is too much of a coward to have committed such acts. In the dialogue-laden climax, Carnes stands up to a defiant Bateman and tells him his claim of having murdered Owen is impossible, because he had dinner with him twice in London just a few days prior.

The book ends as it began, with Bateman and his colleagues at a new club on a Friday night, engaging in banal conversation. The sign seen at the end of the book simply reads "This is not an exit."

The politics of bodies, both male and female, thus remain deeply entrenched in the popular cultural mires of gendered and accepted perceptions about body images. In these adapted films, bodies, especially female bodies are treated by a discontent male gaze, which tears apart their subjectivity through, what Linda Bardley calls, 'fetishised' violence, carefully orchestrated trauma and punishments. The female body is peculiarly implicated in the performance and visualisation of violence. The audience targeted is quintessentially male, who are positioned in a choric space of 'narrative codes' that project their unconscious desires on passive female, or alternatively, de- masculinised male bodies – almost androgynous - in their

powerlessness. (Bradley 103) The female viewer, on the other hand, reconstructs the language of the gothic, a narrative particularly suited to voice the trauma, the guilt, the rage of the victim, creating a dual critique - one targeted at the male culture of generic horror and the other driven against the passivity of the prolific image of the female victim herself. In the end, we are constantly confronted with the implacable certainty of violence, because, ultimately, the transition from imagined to visually visible violence hinges upon a mimetic loop, an unavoidable repetition of the 'sameness' of dehumanisation.

American Psycho's ascension to a canonized literary work has been an interesting subject for many readers. The novel fascinates through its contrasts: at times extreme, bizarre, and grotesque, while other times humorous, mundane, and ironic. Ellis' novel entered a select list of works that were not received well by the literary critics at the time when they were first published but are now well established. Although *American Psycho* has been named a satire by several critics, this has mostly been looked into through the consumerism aspect, gender issues, or self-fashioning. Therefore, Pastiche and abjection become more appealing to investigate as they are "uncharted territory" and because of the interesting way through which they form satire.

Pastiche has been proven to be a useful concept to investigate through Ingeborg Hoestery's definitions and frameworks *American Psycho* makes use of a multitude of previous cultural products like Dante's Inferno, Sartre's *No Exit* play, "Les Miserable" musical, or Robert Bloch's *Psycho*. Ellis uses these cultural works ironically in *American Psycho* and through their contrasts with the novel's content develops a critique of the American Society, as it has been argued.

Abjection functions on two levels in the text. First, at the level of the reader who rejects the possibility of Bateman's existence in the real society as well as the possibility that if what would be the case, this certain type of individual would have the chance to be left unpunished. Second, at Bateman's level who rejects the very society whom he blames for his acts. In both cases, violence serves as the best element of abjection through which a satire can be constructed. Kristeva's own analysis of violence as abjection revolves around Celine's prose which is strongly reminiscent of *American Psycho* and therefore serving as a possible connection to pastiche.

In this respect, one might conclude that all of the protagonist's tortures, killings, paraphilia and cannibalism are *acte gratuit* and nothing else. The novel does not include details about Bateman's background or family bonds which could equip the readers to understand his behaviour as a product of traumatic experiences. Questions such as who he was, where he came from, and what he has done are left insufficiently answered. In the chapter "Birthday, Brothers", Patrick invites his brother Sean to a fancy restaurant, for he allegedly wants to talk about their mother. Nevertheless, Bateman says previously that the mother issue is a lame excuse.

Their mother is barely brought up as subject while they are having dinner. Their encounter is so pointless and their conversation so shallow that nothing relevant is ever said about family or personal matters. Bateman even reveals that he despises his brother "and that feeling is unambiguously reciprocated" (215), but his account does not go any further.

Likewise, in the chapter "Sandstone", the readers find out that Bateman's nameless mother is a permanent resident at a mental hospital. A picture of his father next to another one of Bateman and Sean together, on his mother's bedside table, is

perhaps the only moment the readers can perceive some familial bond. While sitting in the private room where she is hospitalized, Bateman says he is "not surprised at how much effort it takes to raise [his] head and look at her" (351). Based on this sentence, the reader might infer that there is a certain family trauma the protagonist may not cope well with. However, he does not unfold such a story. No traumatic occurrence is ever told to support our inference. The dialogue that follows between Bateman and his mother is as superficial as the one he has with his brother. Bateman points out that he has been looking at his reflection in the mirror and has been examining the blood he found beneath his thumbnail. But, apart from that, nothing else is offered by the narrative.

The silence on his background, on the other hand, uncovers a character whose interest is located exclusively in the present. This observation is also assured by the tense he choses to tell the story. The protagonist's violence does not stem from trauma. Such approach would certainly mislead the comprehension of the reasons why he inflicts so much pain on others, or why he narrates his murders so vividly. Rather, this silence allows us to read Bateman as a character who "respond[s] to the forces of the mass media and the free market" (ANNESLEY, 1998, p. 20). Strongly self-absorbed and intimately attached to his decade, Patrick Bateman turns into a barbaric metaphor for the consumeristic *ethos*.Although this paper's purpose was to analyse how pastiche and abjection form a satire in *American Psycho*, certain elements that could not find space in the current analysis, could prove to be worthy of more attention in the future. A better link between pastiche and abjection could be further outlined if this would make the primary subject of a future research, since the example of violence as pastiche of the style of Celine does not have to be an isolated case. Moreover, pastiche as a phenomenon in

literature would be an interesting topic, especially in relation to postmodern novels, as it is scarcely written about but increasingly present in literature. If *American Psycho* is a pastiche, then it would be interesting in analysing a novel that can be argued to, in turn, be a pastiche of Ellis novel.

Although sometimes blamed for showing the wrong which is present in the society but never clearly stating it, *American Psycho* has proven to be a rich source of elements of satire. Through its postmodernist character which allows it the flexibility to operate with a multitude of previous works as well as graphic content, *American Psycho's* critique of the American society is increasingly hard to ignore.

In *American Psycho,* characters become flesh and bone ads, as if they were permanently placed at store windows or supermarket shelves, ready to be purchased and consumed when one wishes. The long and descriptive lists provided by Bateman tragically highlight the new order in a consumer society: from now on, humans are commodities.

Strategies to offer commodities are plentiful and diverse. According to Bauman, within such strategies, what is implicitly offered is a fulfilment of happiness. In a society populated by eager consumers, being unhappy is not an option. Consumption then is believed to be the path towards a happy lifestyle. Nevertheless, this happiness which is expected to be fulfilled by the time a product is purchased is always short-lived.

A consumer society can be perpetuated if, and only if, it lets its inhabitants' desires only partially fulfilled. Hence, a product must have its value depreciated as soon as it is marketed, in order to be replaced by another. As an everlasting cycle, the product which promises to offer happiness will always be

the newest one. Such strategy strives to convince that any desire will only be granted as long as an up-to-date product is bought; the previous product must be forever rejected: "What starts as an effort to satisfy a need must end up as a compulsion or an addiction" (BAUMAN, 2007, p. 47). In a rush of consumption, the protagonist compulsively use up beggars, prostitutes, immigrants, a homosexual, a child, a dog and also a member of his own social class, Paul Owen. Bateman's serial killing has a close connection with mass culture.

Patrick Bateman could certainly be a Leonian, an inhabitant of that invisible city described by Marco Polo, in Italo Calvino's novel. The city Leonia is not known by what it produces. What makes the city notorious is what it casts away: "It is not so much by the things that each day are manufactured, sold, bought that you can measure Leonia's opulence, but rather by the things that each day are thrown out to make room for the new" (CALVINO, 1972, p. 114). In this city, residents' happiness is found in brand new clothes and devices which are to be placed in a trashcan the next day. Marco Polo's Leonia resembles numerous big cities full of litter being piled up time after time. It looks like *American Psycho*'s New York, full of inhabitants willing to get the newest brands ever marketed.

Although Leonians seem more pleased as they expel, discard, and cleanse themselves of a recurrent impurity than as they enjoy new and different things (CALVINO, 1972, p. 114), their interaction as consumers is not as deep as to require them to turn themselves into goods to be soon rejected. The crucial line that splits Bateman and Leonians apart is that the former consumes humans just like he consumes products.

This consumption of products and people is supported by a brutal scene in

a chapter named "Girls". While he has sex with Torri and Tiffany, Bateman bites Tiffany's vagina and tears some of its flesh off: "She starts squealing, trying to pull away, and finally she screams as my teeth rip into her flesh (292). As the torture unfolds, he decides to videotape his vicious act. While he describes detailedly all the pain that he inflicts upon the two girls, he also describes the camera and its features. These simultaneous descriptions objectify the women, turning them into commodities, just like the one described in this segment:

> As usual, in an attempt to understand these girls, I'm filming their deaths. With Torri and Tiffany I use a Minox LX ultra-miniature camera that takes 9.5mm film, has a 15mm f/3.5 lens, an exposure meter and a built-in neutral density filter and sits on a tripod. I've put a CD of the Traveling Wilbur's into a portable CD player that sits on the headboard above the bed, to mute any screams. (292)

The niceties of the torture which Bateman delivers is far similar to the listings of goods he brings out all over the novel. These scenes are sheer examples of a protagonist who is incapable of interacting with characters without commodifying them. As for that, he lists goods, stresses their brands and features, narrates murders, describes inflictions, and consumes his victims. In another scene, he drinks a victim's blood as he drinks some champagne at a restaurant:

> I want to drink this girl's blood as if it were champagne and I plunge my face deep into what's left of her stomach, scratching my chomping jaw on a broken rib.

> The huge new television set is on in one of the rooms, first blaring out *The Patty Winters Show*, whose topic today is Human Dairies, then a game show, *Wheel of Fortune*, and the applause coming from the studio audience sounds like static each time a new letter is turned. I'm loosening the tie I'm still wearing with a blood-soaked hand, breathing in deeply. This is my reality. Everything outside of this is like some movie I once saw. (p. 331-332)

By stating that the only reality possible is the one of which he is part, namely, a consumer reality, Bateman once again emphasizes that everything and everybody can be consumable. For the protagonist, there is no other way to act, no other path to find happiness, except through in a nonstop consumption: "My... my *need* to engage in... homicidal behavior on a massive scale cannot be, um, corrected," I tell her, measuring each word carefully. "But I... have no other way to express my blocked... needs." (325). The outcome is that, through Bateman's eyes, people acquire an expendable status. Therefore, he buys, uses, tortures, eats, kills, and discards them. He does so serially, in a cyclical violent movement. Bateman realizes that there is no way to escape from a hopeless New York, from his yuppie decade – that red-letter sign tells him that an exit is not available. Nonetheless, he does not want to opt out. In reality, what he wants is to "fit in" (228), to be part of an upper class, to have recognition. Bateman ultimately desires to escape from that Dantesque purgatory, where souls are worthless, are not admired, and for this reason they are rejected by heaven and hell.

The textual signs that have been highlighted so far turned out to be useful to determine the protagonist's mental disorder. Nevertheless, in order to trace his unreliability, one should not be so hermetic. Ellipses locating intentional and unintentional attitudes, specific words and phrases spotting a disoriented behavior, and a sudden change of narrative perspective ought not to be the only pieces of evidence to settle our assumptions because, although some readers may not believe what it is told, the tale can still be taken as true.

Even though Jonathan Culler did not bear unreliable narrators in mind, cognitive narratologists have exploited his idea of naturalization to claim that the readers' perception is to come into play when unreliability is involved. The term "naturalization" means "to bring a text into relation with a type of discourse or model which is already, in some sense, natural or legible" (CULLER, 1975, p. 162). This type of discourse, or model, Culler refers to is all of the social, psychological, literary knowledge, or what linguists call "cognitive frames", readers employ to naturalize texts in fictional narratives. So, when readers come across an utterance, description, new information or scene that does not match what it is expected to be, they use their knowledge to explain it. Ansgar Nünning argues that, to identify narrative unreliability, one should first "be based on the readers' empirical experience and criteria of verisimilitude [...] rather than on literary models" (NÜNNING, 1999, p. 67). Textual signs are important and obviously must be considered. But, in Nünning's view, they are ranked second place. The reading process to detect unreliability is, then, no longer a give-and-take between an implied author and a narrator, but a cognitive interplay between a narrator and a reader. Textual information needs to associate with reader's frames to make an analysis effective.

This cognitive turn in the interpretation of unreliable narrations has led Bruno Zerweck to conclude that this reader-oriented model serves more accurately as an approach than those common theories of the phenomenon. Based on Nünning, Zerweck provides a useful summary of the major frames readers apply to texts in order to naturalize them: (i) real-world frames, which includes general and historical world knowledge, shared cultural heritage, personality theories, models of psychological coherence, social, moral and linguistic norms, and the individual values of the reader; (ii) literary frames of reference, which entails general knowledge of literary conventions, knowledge of literary genres, of intertextual reference, of stereotypical models of character; and (iii) a frame located between the two previous ones, namely, the values and norms of a text which are schematized by the reader.

Apart from the summary of major reader's frames utilized by readers, Zerweck suggests a culturally and historically-based theory of narrative unreliability. In his article, the critic offers eight essential (or minimal, as he puts it) conditions to approach an unreliable narration. I would like, however, to concentrate on the second of them because, counting on it, Zerweck asserts that Patrick Bateman is an unreliable person, but not an unreliable narrator.

If this detective framework is taken as a central feature for determining narrative unreliability, Fludernik adds, texts which deliver inconspicuous contradictions are to be interpreted as displaying a limited first-person perspective. Thus, unreliability should apply only to those narrations whose inconsistency and disparity are salient in the narrative. Zerweck rejects Bateman's incongruous accounts because he identifies neither a detective

scenario nor unintentionality: "The narrator knows and openly tells of his deeds and motivations and makes no attempt to 'hide' his nature. There is no 'detective framework' involved and no unintentional self-incrimination takes place" (ZERWECK, 2001, p. 157). Unfortunately, the critic does not go any further on his examination of *American Psycho*. Patrick Bateman does not hide his criminal nature indeed, his descriptions are disgustingly detailed. But the readers can still apply that detective framework. The analysis that follows reinforces that those narrations of killings result from a deeply troubled mind.

In *American Psycho*, it is perceptible how inconsistent many dialogues are as the protagonist´s narrative unfolds, especially when Bateman refers to his vicious desires. In a conversation with his skin technician Helga, during a beauty treatment, he is interested in knowing whose men's loafers are those he sees outside the door of the a room. So, he asks Helga about it. But, after her answer, he starts talking about his intention to switch a girl's blood with a dog's:

> "Did I ever tell you that I want to wear a big yellow smiley-face mask and then put on the CD version of Bobby McFerrin´s 'Don´t Worry, Be Happy' and then take a girl and a dog – a collie, a chow, a sharpie, it doesn´t really matter – and then hook up this transfusion pump, this IV set, and switch their blood, you know, pump the dog´s blood into the hardbody and vice-versa, did I ever tell you this?" While I´m speaking I can hear the girl working on my feet humming one of the songs from *Les Misérables* to herself, and then Helga runs a moistered cotton ball across my nose, leaning close to the

> face, inspecting the pores. I laugh maniacally, then take a deep breath and touch my chest – expecting a heart to be thumping quickly, impatiently, but there's nothing there, not even a beat. (p. 111-112)

The two events, that is to say, the question about the pair of loafers and the fantasy about the blood transfusion, just do not match within the dialogue, making us suspicious of what has actually been said. On the other hand, once readers agree with the fact that Bateman's world is crowded with narcissistic characters who can barely pay attention to others, such segment, even if it sounds weird, may be taken as reliable. Readers end up concluding that the protagonist has really said that (he even uses the verb "speak").

After his comments about the transfusion, Bateman says that Helga makes that typical sound of someone requiring someone else to be quiet, to get relaxed. In addition, she asks him how old he is, and she seems to hear his answer. How can she be attentive to this dialogue and not to his raving comments on the blood transfusion? How can the skin technician and the protagonist have a conversation in which there is only a part, the oddest one, she does not pay attention to? The comment itself should make her alert, to say the least, but no reaction whatsoever is mentioned.

There are also scenes in the novel that, when confronted, may make readers doubtful. After having dinner with Paul Owen, Bateman says Owen is so drunk that he could be easily convinced to pay the bill, induced to "admit what a dumb son-of-a-bitch he really is" (ELLIS, 2011, p. 207), and could be easily brought over to Bateman's apartment. The protagonist asserts Owen is killed, and

offers a vivid and detailed description of the murder:

> The axe hits him midsentence, straight in the face, its thick blade chopping sideways into his open mouth, shutting him up. Paul's eyes look up at me, and suddenly his hands are trying to grab at the handle, but the shock of the blow has sapped his strength. There's no blood at first, no sound either except for the newspapers under Paul's kicking feet, rustling, tearing. [...] This is accompanied by a horrible momentary hissing noise actually coming from the wounds in Paul's skull, places where bone and flesh no longer connect, and this is followed by a rude farting noise caused by a section of his brain [...] I scream at him only once: "Fucking stupid bastard. Fucking bastard." (p. 208-9)

A graphically descriptive scene such as this may lead us to take it as a scene that really happened. The narrator particularizes every minute of the killing. He gives accounts of the direction Owen's eyes looks at and his attempt to clench the ax. He even describes the sound that comes out of the wounds. But even if he does so, readers can still spot signs of unreliability.

The first sign comes up when Bateman records a message on the answering machine saying Owen has moved to London. We readers wonder if he is able to fake Owen's voice. The protagonist answers us right away by affirming his "voice sounds similar to Owen's and to someone hearing it over the phone probably identical" (p. 209). He thinks this statement is enough to convince us.

On the contrary, some of us may find this hard to be possible, as it is too coincidental, and still remain suspicious.

A second sign takes place when the protagonist goes back to his apartment from Owen's, puts the corpse into a sleeping bag and utters:

> [...] I zip up then drag easily into the elevator, then through the lobby, past the night doorman, down the block, where briefly I run into Arthur Crystal and Kitty Martin [...] so they don't linger, even though Crystal – the rude bastard – asks me what the general rules of wearing a white dinner jacket are. After answering him curtly I hail a taxi, effortlessly manage to swing the sleeping bag into the backseat, hop in and give the driver the address in Hell's Kitchen. (ELLIS, 2011, p. 210).

Bateman describes himself as a brawny man. For this reason, the moment he states he can easily drag a corpse probably as heavy as he is all the way out, the readers do not suspect him. The suspicion lies in the fact that he walks past three people and, surprisingly, none of them questions what he is doing or what is in the sleeping bag. Furthermore, he places the corpse on the backseat of the cab, and again no reaction from the driver is reported. On the one hand, believing Bateman brings a man over his apartment and kills him when there is no one else around does not seem hard to do. On the other, accepting wholeheartedly he can "easily" and "effortlessly" get rid of the corpse the way he does is more unlikely.

Finally, the third sign of the protagonist's unreliability is provided by Harold Carnes in the chapter "New Club", in the latter part of the novel. Bateman is

sure he has murdered Paul Owen and the escort women, but this certainty shatters altogether when he meets his lawyer. While Bateman insists on confessing he has committed dozens of murders, Carnes takes it as a joke: "Bateman killing Owen and the escort girls?" He keeps chuckling. "Oh that's bloody marvelous. Really key, as they say at the Groucho Club. Really key." [...] (p. 372). The lawyer does so because he is convinced that Bateman cannot have murdered Owen.

Bateman's narration furnishes readers with numerous signs of unreliability. Some of them were pointed out here to illustrate this. In Bateman's narrative, some scenes appear to be reality, others appear to be formed mentally. To reach a satisfactory conclusion on the matter, the latter is to be as important as the former. The analysis supported textually all along might be as mistaken as the one based only on the reader's perceptions. In *American Psycho*, both approaches must be practiced; otherwise many pieces of evidence to determine the protagonist's unreliability will be overlooked.

These adjectives are joined together here to make a point, or rather, to recollect a point made in the introduction of this dissertation. The protagonist displays a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde personality, and, as a result, it could be noticed that he is more inclined to be the image of the latter than of the former. To put it differently, as his narcissism blinds him altogether, it is true to say that "Patrick Bateman is also a Dr. Jekyll who turns into Mr. Hyde in order to get what he wants". The adjectives used in my analysis have revealed that Bateman lacks those characteristics that might lead us to be sympathetic to him. But a character who is not likeable does not necessarily make his story worthless. As a work of fiction whose plot is intimately attached to competition, yuppiedom, and consumerism, *American Psycho* brings forth some interesting literary

interpretations.

Bateman is placed within a hopelessly commodified setting. Atrocities seem to envelope the novel's New York at the end of the eighties just like the headlines on Price's newspaper have shown. To begin with, those words from Dante's *Inferno* in the first line of the novel foreshadow a pervasive disenchantment, a continuous sense of things falling apart, ironically expressed by the Talking Heads lyrics. How can one be protected from harm in a world where dreadful issues, that is, seemingly insurmountable social chasms, are ubiquitous? Christopher Lasch's new narcissism was the key answer.

Bateman sees past and future as useless, so he locks himself inside a specific time and space. Referentiality plays therefore an essential role in *American Psycho*. Brand names, music reviews, and songs work as benchmarks, as reference points to determine the setting. Based on it, the readers tried to open out some of the mechanisms Bret Easton Ellis has chosen to depict a materialistic character, especially when the protagonist describes himself and his peers. Through his commodified narration, it becomes clear that Patrick Bateman expresses the relationship which is summed up by the Jamesonian notion of postmodernism (or late capitalism): commodities and aesthetics merge to sprout a new cultural logic. In this sense, the serial killer as a protagonist compounds the worst-case scenario. His figure can be understood as the final organism of a food chain, the apex of a consumer society. In the novel, consuming entails performing each and every meaning of the act. So, the most terrible definition of "consumption" is the one synonymous with "annihilation". Bateman is the predatory consumer who disregards differences between people and objects because he consumes both indistinctly.

Bateman also runs after recognition. Being referred to as "the boy next door" reminds him that he is still in the purgatory, aiming at heaven while trying the keep himself away from hell. The protagonist is a yuppie. Although he belongs to the upper class, he still needs to compete, to fight to be recognized as valuable, as an asset. Under these circumstances, good looks overrun ugliness. In other words, appearance subjugates any other qualities not in accordance with the characteristics of his yuppiedom. This helped us understand how important likeness in appearance is for Bateman and his urban professional friends.

We could also notice that because he and his peers look alike (from an exclusively materially-oriented viewpoint), the protagonist frequently mistakes a person for another and, in turn, is also mistaken for somebody else. Likeness, thus, has produced an unusual effect in the novel once we never know who the characters really are. Bateman says their names, has conversations with many of them, but he realizes that one person looks just like another. The pop song Bateman mentions, sung by Bon Jovi, is quite appropriate in this context: "[...] and turn up the Walkman just as Bon Jovi cries: "It's all the same, only the names have changed...". A protagonist who can speak through no language other than commodities, trademarks, and mass media epitomizes the excesses of a consumer society.

American Psycho denounces this excessive behavior by giving voice to a killer competitor. Henceforth, Lasch's new narcissism could no longer support all of my arguments. since the protagonist fears dependence on people whereas he depends on them to be admired, he is paradoxical. In addition, also sided with the fact that, since he notices that there are commodities he is not yet able to have, he is notably less confident. But in Lasch's concept of narcissism, there is a

third aspect that does not apply to Bateman. The new narcissist avoids competition for conceiving of it as an urge to annihilation. Bateman, on the contrary, competes, destroys, and annihilates. There is no compassion or cooperation in his attitudes. As seen, the narration of tortures and assassinations is emotionless, blank, as catalogue-like as the listings of designer clothing he delivers. Eagerness to climb ever up led him to kill Paul Owen. Fear of falling down the social ladder led him to kill homeless people, immigrants, homosexuals, and prostitutes.

It is worth recalling as well that the protagonist and his blank narrative walk on divergent tracks. Bateman's behavior perpetuates dichotomous standards. Some of them, such as white/black, rich/poor, heterosexual/homosexual, and men/women. Nevertheless, by approaching the tale from a postmodern view, the readers noticed that dichotomies are called into question. First, the three epigraphs of the novel not only foreshadow what is about to come in the story, but also subvert the division between high art/low art. Secondly, pornography is used to put aesthetic conventions at stake as well. In the novel, scenes of sexual intercourse are not suggested or hidden, they are explicitly narrated. Taken as a discourse one is for or against, pornographic texts are oftentimes considered to be instruments of mere sexual stimulation. The descriptions of those scenes, nonetheless, turned out to be useful to corroborate Bateman's tendency for images and appearances – in one word, for the simulacrum. Finally, the detective Donald Kimball, the character who could reveal the crime and the criminal through logical deduction, comes into the story to dishearten rationality. Kimball asks questions and takes notes, but he does not provide any final answer. In the end, he becomes another disposable presence of

the consumer society. The outcome of his investigation has no relevance, so it is not disclosed.

I also argued that, albeit not a monster, the protagonist is monstrous. Unlike those creatures which emerge from the pages of a horror book or from the screen of a horror movie, Patrick has no physical blemish to determine his monstrosity. Lacking an abnormal appearance, he must be seen as having Jekyll's semblance while performing Hyde's actions. Autodiegesis, present tense and detailed descriptions have contributed to this horror figure as these strategies pull us closer to the narrative, almost forcing us to be part of it. The fact that the protagonist has secretly shared his killer acts with us before he confesses them to his lawyer underscores this closeness. By acting like a monster and not looking like one, Bateman collapses expectations. For the most part, it is not the monster alone which is horrifying, but rather the lack of order it symbolizes. And yet those horrible moments have given some prominence to the grotesque. In *American Psycho*, some passages possess horrific and ludicrous characteristics, which allowed me to spot some grotesque elements in Bateman's story. The narrative has offered absurd scenes which may provoke reactions as incongruous as laughing out of horror.

All of these accounts appeared to me being narrated by a protagonist with a deranged mind, who shields himself from any other interest but his own. Unable to heed what other characters say or to even distinguish one from another, Bateman can be only attentive to the appeals of commodities. Since he cannot be away from his reified standpoint, he never delivers what is beyond surface. His narration is affectless, his comprehension is shallow, and his story is noncommittal. This is the reason why *American Psycho* has been called blank

fiction. Almost entirely, what we find is external events replacing those inner occurrences of psychological novels. This superficiality ultimately makes Bateman oblivious of his stupid decisions. That is, he keeps trying hard to fit in a class that is inherently excludable, and, sadly enough, an exclusion Bateman himself maintains. Nobody pays attention to his miserable condition. Those medicine pills he takes do not prevent him from derangement. The climax of his disturbed mental state takes place the moment his narration turns into third-person.

Bateman is not only mentally-ill, but unreliable as well. Based on inconsistent dialogues and scenes, the readers examined his narrative to point out signs of unreliability. The adjective "psycho", the very word that compounds the title of the novel, disclosed therefore two interpretive directions: (1) Bateman is a psychopath, if we believe that all of the assassinations have actually happened; (2) Bateman is psychotic, if we consider the murders to be visual products of a deranged mind.

Before concluding, in brief, the reception of the novel in light of unreliability. *American Psycho* was severely rebuked even before its publication, being considered no more than a "how-to-manual on the torture and dismemberment of women"and a "pornographic piece of writing", as some critics have reported. Much of the commotion fostered by the novel is said to have stemmed from readers' and critics' inability to set Bret Easton Ellis and Patrick Bateman apart, regarding the protagonist as part of the murderous tendencies of the writer. Besides, the mingling of actual violence and representations of violence also contributed to that fuss.

When the portrayal of morality is considered, a trend emerges- modernist literature tends to offer hope while post-modernist literature offers very little hope. While Bret Easton Ellis, *American Psycho* generally has a post-modern form and structure, there is a still a supreme hope which suggests that human behavior has a supposedly higher moral goal making it slightly 'modernist'. This is seen as Bateman's immature actions transcend into mature and reasoned decisions. Thus, to say that all post-modern literature is completely pessimistic about human behavior and its immorality is not entirely correct. While literary texts of the mid twentieth century seem to share inter-medium similarities by rejecting the modernist quest for improvement in human behavior, some writers tended to create their own criteria and limitations by which 'good' and 'evil' can be judged. Thus, not all novels, whether modernist or post-modernist, seem to offer a 'black and white' view. For Ellis, it is moral choice which is above all; if choice is present then human behavior has a definite capability to achieve morality or moral stability. It is the option and the "freedom to choose" that is important. There are no other criteria that need to be met.

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Need of the Hour : Present Indian Scenario in Chetan Bhagat's "*What Young India Wants*"

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Abstract

Chetan Bhagat's "*What Young India Wants*" depicts, how young generation should put their back on something or buckle down on the idea of making India awesome and democratic. He pragmatically represents the complete replica of contemporary Indian society through his novels and his non-fiction. He urges the youth of today's society to be sensible and know more about the current situation of India. Contemporary Indian society deals with its current issues, sufferings and problems which are not spoken but could be sensible. This paper aims at dealing with the corruption of political leaders and also focuses on the sufferings of the minorities.

Key Words: **Corruption, Indian society, minorities, politics and scams.**

Chetan Bhagat is an Indian author, columnist, screen writer and motivational speaker, known for his Indian-English novels about young middle class Indians. The primary centre of Chetan's writing is the youth. He is referred to as the role model of the today's youth. Chetan's books give readers hope and trust.

Bhagat has written many novels and only one non – fiction "*What Young India Wants*". The non-fictional book is divided into three parts. The first part is about the society, the second part deals with politics and the third about the youth of India.

In the second part of the book Bhagat says about the political system of India. Indian politics is always a hard nut to break and it will continue to be so. At the very beginning of the second part he says, "If you want to change things in a democracy, you cannot stay away from politics (55)".

Bhagat emphasizes about the struggles faced by the minority community. The people of the majority community do not understand the problems faced by the minorities. They also have no qualification to say about the struggling minorities since they have not experienced such kind of struggles.

If India wants to become a better country then better leaders should be elected. He also suggests that something should be worked together for a better election. The voting system of India should be proper and systematic. The people of India should learn to vote for a good candidate. Politicians fool the people of India by the voting system. Bhagat commands the minorities to think and insists them to vote for the correct leader. The vote should be loyal and it should not be sold for money. Even, if a student wants admission in a good college he is not given placement unless and until he gets a recommendation from any higher authority. The current scenario continues when a patient is not given treatment properly in a hospital, all these are based only on recommendation and not according to their pathetic situation.

Somehow or the other minorities face oppressions in the society. Each and every citizen of India should be over minded and then make India better democratic nation. He says that, "Vote bank politics and hating the other's religion should be branded un-Indian. After all, our religions have stood the test of time. It is our Nation, yours and mine, that has to be great now (60)".

Bhagat then points out to the wrong deeds of the people in electing their leaders. The people of India have prejudice during election time. The people more commonly elect the candidate who belong to their caste. To a certain extent voting is based on caste then it is sure that a corrupted party is elected for generation. People of India are well known for their emotional state and so they do not leave any new budding young generations to bloom. It has become a custom to elect a member from the same family generation after generation. This is one of the major mistakes that Indian people do.

There are also some educational institutions to train young politicians, Bhagat opines, "We create great engineers and doctors but we don't take our liberal arts courses seriously (67)". Bhagat calls all the Indians to build a robust political system by electing good leaders and take India to another level. "If we do pay attention to these issues, we can make the beginning towards building a robust political system that elects strong leaders who can take India to the next level (68)".

In the meanwhile, Bhagat also takes much care about the financial status of India. For this he gives some examples like a place in Delhi were thousand acres of land have been occupied by bungalows of MPs, various offices and quasi government entities, which cost more than hundred crores. Instead if they build those government buildings in slum areas, that place would also develop and the cost of buying the land will also be reduced to some crores. Bhagat

says with that amount they can pay the interest for debt. He cites Delhi as an example but if this system is followed all over the country then a huge amount of money could be saved.

The most important and interesting fact is about the scams. The 2G scam which was highlighted in media was to emphasize the corrupt politicians of congress. Scams have become the entertainment for all the people on the TV channels. People did not even believe any accused leader to be innocent. They took it as a fun while the accused people defended themselves with several reasons. The longer they denied the longer their cases were prolonged. The 2G scams did not bring about a good judgement but only increased the TRPs of TV channel.

Then the accused politicians were asked to resign their position but this was not the just punishment for their crime. Bhagat draws a beautiful example to explain this situation, "A murderer shoots a man. When caught, he offers to surrender the gun. Or rather, he offers to give the gun to his best friend. Now isn't that how Indian politicians are punished? To give another example, a man batters his wife. When caught, he offers to leave the room. Is this how he will reform? (70)".

Previously corrupt ministers were asked to resign their position in order to pacify the public, off late situations have changed. Today's young generation know what is lip service and real punishment. Severe punishment should be given. As a terrorist has no religion, a corrupt politician has no political party, the corrupt politicians should not be given any position in any political party.

If all the political parties, the media and citizens play their role in a right manner then India will be a clean country without any corruption. The future India will be better for the upcoming generation. It is the duty of every Indian to ensure that he plays his role perfectly

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well. He has the right to question the government if anything goes wrong. Through "*What Young India Wants*" Bhagat induces the young mind to take active part in politics.

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The Confinement of Female voice in Sylvia Plath's The *Bell Jar.*

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Abstract

The research article is about the American literature with special emphasis on Feminism in *The Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath. This article focuses on an American female's sense of enclosure in the novel "Bell Jar". The research highlights on the female degradation through male dominance and double sexual standards of the American society during 1950s. The women's struggle against confinement was scanned through three layers of "Bell Jar" around the protagonist Esther. The author portrays female characters who struggle with the normative gender identity. This study analysis some of the external constraints or norms and aims to prove that the female character collide with some norms. The resistance to adapt to gender conventions help Esther Greenwood to form a stronger identity, but it is an identity that remains profoundly and negatively by the Patriarchal norms of their societies.

Key Words

Feminist revolt, social entrapment, Identity crisis, self-discovery, death and resurrection.

American literature aims to explore human relationships and psychological dilemmas of modern man. In this novel "Bell Jar", Sylvia pictures about an American women who is struggling against the stereotypical roles assigned by a conservative society and her spirit of breaking out the social confinements. It also focuses on the struggles of Esther and also makes Esther as an epitome of womanhood.

The name of novel "Bell Jar" is being allegorical to three images. They are the society of America in 1950's; the vacuum between the self and society; and the vacuum between the soul and body. The main theme of the novel is male hypocrisy and double sexual standards which was also the major issues prevailing in America in 1950's. All these things helped the women to outburst for their freedom.

Sylvia Plath is an eminent writer after the World War II. The subject of her literary works have always been the innermost feelings and thoughts of her own life. She uses powerful images to explore the themes of depression, suicide and death with the hope of resurrection.

On February in 1963 Sylvia committed suicide in her flat in London. She had two children and a divorced husband, many poems and a novel "Bell Jar". Bell Jar was the only novel by Sylvia Plath. Bell Jar was first published under the Pseudonym, Victoria Lucas in the year 1963. Poetry of Sylvia was not that much success and so she was afraid about her novel "Bell Jar", whether it would be a success or not. In this novel Sylvia portrays about the conservative America in 1950's.

Esther, the protagonist of the novel is a bright unmarried women who represents the women of 1950's. She is expected to be a virgin before marriage or destined to marriage where the husband dominates the wife or to choose her career as a secretary and more likely all the above. These confinements have made her to feel depressed.

Esther is being the epitome of the womanhood. Esther's childhood friend Buddy Willard, is the epitome of manhood. The double sexual standards of America says that men can have the privilege of pre-marital sex. While the women should maintain their virginity.so these double standard sex made the women feel depressed and frustrated.

On a contemporary women's view Buddy is viewed as a fine clean boy, as a model and so intelligent person. But however he is an awful epitome of manhood who acts like a virgin but has an affair with a hotel waitress. "What I couldn't stand was Buddy's pretending I was so sexy and he was so pure, when all the time he'd been having an affair with that tarty waitress and must have felt like laughing in my face" (75).

Esther feels suffocated by these limitations of double standards and sexual hypocrisy imposed on women. Once when her mother sends her the *Readers Digest* entitled "In Defence of Chastity" she wonders about the idea of cultural hypocritical divisions in terms of gender roles presented in the article. In the article it was said that the emotions of man is different from the emotions of women. It was also said that the both the emotional world can be only brought together through marriage. Esther was not able to accept the notion of having a different world for man and for women. So she said the following line: "I couldn't stand the idea of a woman's having to have a single pure life and a man being able to have a double life, one pure and one not" (86).

Another double standard in the 1950s America was set within the female community. Women were judged as being good or bad in terms of being ,pure or impure—"Madonna's or whores" (Bundtzen, 121). "Nice" girl should remain pure and virgin before marriage according to Buddy and Esther's mother. But all these conditions are only for women and not for women.

"When I was nineteen, pureness was the great issue. Instead of the world being divided into Catholics and Protestants or Republicans and Democrats or white men and black men or even men and women, I saw the world divided into people who had slept with somebody and people who hadn't" (86).

The idea if double standard has paved way to another debate of the novel that is the male dominance society of America in 1950s. Mrs Willard's words are perfect example of male dominance. "What a man is, is an arrow into the future and what a woman is, is the place the arrow shoots of from" (75). The only fair way of woman to be equal with man only in marriage. But however for man it gave them a definite power and supremacy. Mrs Willard says that in marriage "what a man wants is a mate and what a woman wants is infinite security" (75). The contradiction of these two conventional views lies in the fact that a woman being "the place the arrow shoots of from" is herself a source of security and protection for the man, "the arrow", and not vice-versa.

Esther believes that marriage for women is an obstacle for her creativity by giving her authority to man. She also says that Buddy has once said that after marriage Esther will stop writing poetry and will feel differently. "I began to think…that when you were married and had children it was like being brainwashed, and afterwards you went about numb as a slave in some private totalitarian state" (90).

Mrs Willard was the perfect example of American wife of 1950s. She was acting as a slave in some private totalitarian state and she was also feeling happy about it. Once when Esther visited Mrs Willard home she saw Mrs Willard was making a rug out of Mr Willard's old suit and she made it as a doormat for kitchen. This doormat thus personifies the women of the society that represents their marital status and male dominance.

> "And I knew that in spite of all the roses and kisses and restaurant dinners as a man showered on a woman before he married her, what he secretly wanted when the wedding service ended was for her to flatten out underneath his feet like Mrs Willard's kitchen mat" (89).

Esther also views child birth also as a masculine power. Esther once saw a child birth at a hospital and she got the idea of man's power over women. "Buddy told me that the woman was on a drug that would make her forget she had any pain…I thought It sounded just like the sort of drug a man would invent" (69). "To Esther's mind, they (men) have deprived the woman of both the pain and pleasure of birth and used her body for their own purposes; their own ends. The woman and baby are their opus, their engineering feat" (Bundtzen 124). A constant sense of living in an airless environment of a jar-like society results in her desire

for freedom that she earlier seeks in death and finally attains through a feminist revolt by shattering the walls of this social bell jar.

Sylvia Plath's personal revolt against the male-hypocrisy and social bigotry is reflected in her rebellious protagonist who rises up with a vindictive spirit against the male members of society and "at the end of the novel seems intent on exploiting and punishing men, out-smarting them to prove she's not inferior" (Bundtzen 114). The conflict between purity and impurity, virginity and prostitution experienced by Esther, makes her take up the challenge to lose her purity while not becoming impure at the same time. In other words, she wants to lose her virginity without losing dignity because for her it is merely a measure of feminist rebellion against the double sexual standards for men and women in society. Her repeated attempts to lose virginity are not targeted on developing a sexual relationship but to attain that level of freedom which the male members of society enjoy freely—to challenge the social hypocrisy and conventions. The episode where Marco rapes her into the mud and calls her a "slut" she fists her "fingers together and smashed them at his nose" (116) because she can't compromise on the loss of her dignity.

The idea of life in the jar itself denotes a sense of entrapment, suffocation and vacuity. Esther, being trapped in a "Bell Jar", remains aloof from the outside world. Her inability to be really connected to outside roles, or groups, is clearly seen in her relationship with her family and friends, and also in the scenes set in the mental institution. "I kept feeling the visitors measuring my fat and stringy hair against what I had been and what they wanted me to be". The unlimited expectations of society and Esther's failure in their fulfilment drives her to the state of utter depression and disillusionment. Consequently, she produces a vacuum around her in order to live at a distance from the outside world.

Her time in New York provides her with an exposure to the world's reality that she is unable to absorb. The city of New York, a dreamland of thousands, turns out to be an airless jar for Esther. She cannot associate with the people around her and feels so lonely among the peanut smelling mouth of every subway and the fake country-wet freshness", of that world. "I was supposed to be the envy of thousands of other college girls...everybody would think I must be having a real whirl" but what depresses Esther more is that she "felt very still and very empty, the way the eye of a tornado must feel, moving dully along in the middle of the surrounding hullabaloo" (2-3).

The research on Sylvia Plath's novel "The Bell Jar"— Esther's journey from innocence to experience, from girlhood to womanhood and from confinement to liberation, shows avenues for change in life. It also highlights the fact that the solution lies very much

within the claustrophobic Bell Jar; it is only how one constantly makes an effort to rise above it. Moreover, the realization of the fact that man has been bestowed the ability to fight the battle of life, turn the black into white and break the "jar" to be free.

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