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Meridian
Biannual Multidisciplinary Journal

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Editorial

It is our pleasure to publish this volume of Meridian, the multidisciplinary biannual journal for the academic community. As we know, there has been a growing emphasis on diverse voices and perspectives in literature. There is a wider push for inclusivity and representation from various ethnicities and backgrounds. Contemporary literature often blurs traditional genre boundaries. Combining several genres opens up more creative and dynamic fields of study. Global themes such as social justice, human rights, and climate change are being explored in literature more and more. With the rapid advancement of technology, literature is reflecting the profound effects of these changes on society. Experimental and multi-narratives are also attaining growing significance.

At this juncture, the PG & Research Department of English, MES Asmabi College, P Vemballur, Kodungallur in association with Kerala State Higher Education Council, Thiruvananthapuram organized a two day National Seminar “Current Literary Trends in English” on 19th and 20th December 2023.

Dr. Kalyani Vallath, Managing Director, Vallath Educational Private Limited, Thiruvananthapuram, inaugurated the seminar and lead the first plenary session; “English Literature is us: How the Contemporary English Studies Takes Over the World.” Dr Merin Simi Raj, Associate Professor of English, IIT Madras, lead the second plenary session on “Interdisciplinary Possibilities in Memory Studies and Digital Humanities.” Dr Liss Marie Das, St. Xavier’s College, Aluva, lead the third plenary session on “The Fluidity and Evolution of English Studies.” 92 papers were presented by teachers, research scholars and post-graduate students of various colleges and universities. Articles in this volume are the compilation of the thirteen selected papers of the Seminar. The ideas proposed by the writers are their own and the editors do not endorse them. We, the editors would like to express the sincere support and goodwill shown by the publisher in this regard. A word of acknowledgement for the moral support by the colleagues, the academic fraternity at large and the college librarian Ms Saliha P I for doing plagiarism check is also showered.

Dr. Reena Mohamed P.M.

Dr. Amitha P. Mani

Dr. Dhanya P.R.

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OBJECTS AS QUASI-HUMANS: NAVIGATING THE WORLD OF OBJECTS

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the conceptual framework of viewing objects as quasi- humans, examining the intricate relationships and interactions that unfold within the realm of Object Studies. Delving into the intersections of anthropology and literature, the paper investigates how attributing human-like qualities to objects shapes our perception of the world. By unravelling the nuanced dynamics between humans and objects, this study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the intricate tapestry woven into our daily lives, where the boundaries between the animate and inanimate become increasingly blurred.

Keywords: material culture, object studies, subjectivity, objects, things, quasi-human.

1. INTRODUCTION

It is not just that we live in a time of pronounced growth in the sheer number of things, or that we, as

humans, have recently come to delegate our lives to non-humans far beyond anything imagined by our ancestors (Fowles 11)

Our lives are meaningless without the interactions we have with our surroundings, which in turn are moulded by countless objects. In the intricacies of contemporary society, the relationship between humans and objects has transcended conventional notions of utility, evolving into a phenomenon where objects assume quasi- human characteristics. This paper delves into the conceptual framework of viewing

objects as quasi-humans, aiming to unravel the intricate tapestry woven within the realm of material culture. It explores the world they create and the myriads of stories they want to convey. As we navigate the intersections of anthropology, philosophy, and design, our exploration seeks to understand how the attribution of human- like qualities to objects significantly influences our perception of the world. Throughout human history, objects have held profound significance beyond their practical utility. From ancient artifacts to modern consumer products, humans have invested meaning in objects, making them integral to cultural practices, rituals, and identity formation. Even though these attributes vary based on monetary and social values, each and every object holds importance in clenching the world together. This historical perspective sets the stage for our inquiry, prompting an examination of how these age-old relationships have evolved and adapted to the complexities of the contemporary world. The significance of this study lies in its exploration of a nuanced aspect of human-object interaction that goes beyond the conventional understanding of material culture. By acknowledging and scrutinizing the quasi- human attributes bestowed upon objects, we gain insights into the intricate web of relationships that define our daily lives. This investigation is crucial in a world where the boundaries between animate and inanimate are becoming increasingly blurred, urging us to reconsider the nature of our connections with the material world.

2. OBJECT TURNED SUBJECT: AND ANTHROPOLOGY

Anthropology, as the study of humans and human societies, provides a rich lens

through which we can unravel the intricate tapestry of object-human relationships. Objects have been integral to human existence since time immemorial, serving not only as tools for survival but also as vessels for cultural expression and identity. Anthropological evidence across diverse cultures reveals a deep interweaving of objects into daily life, highlighting their symbolic, ritualistic, and social significance. From prehistoric artifacts to ancient religious relics, the historical context of object-human relationships unveils the evolving ways in which humans have attributed meaning to the inanimate. But, when and how did anthropologists turn toward objects to understand the human world? American anthropologist Severin Fowles in his essay titled *The Perfect Subject* (Postcolonial Object Studies) explores the beginning of learning object artifacts in light of anthropology.

To put it bluntly: as it became more and more difficult for Western scholars to make authoritative claims about other people, as colonized or otherwise disempowered communities throughout the world challenged the right of anthropologists to study them, and as critical scholarship continued to pick and scrape at the imperial legacies bound up in the ethnographic project itself – in other words, as human subjects increasingly protested against being treated like objects – anthropologists began to explore the advantages of treating (non-human) objects like (quasi-human) subjects. Things have the advantage of being safer to study than people, and my argument is that they have been increasingly embraced, at least in part, for this very reason. (Fowles 12) American anthropologists of twentieth century turned towards objects when they could no longer study

the non-western subjects. Their gaze turned towards the objects, turning them in quasi humans, objects turned subjects, since it was easier and safer to study than live human subjects.

One of the central facets of anthropological perspectives on objects lies in the realm of rituals and symbolism. Objects often become conduits for cultural practices, embodying sacred meanings and participating in rituals that bind communities together. Whether through totemic artifacts, ceremonial objects, or everyday items infused with symbolic value, the anthropological exploration of rituals unveils the profound role objects play in shaping communal identity and belief systems. Material culture studies

offer a comprehensive framework for analysing the significance of objects within societies. This interdisciplinary approach delves into the tangible artifacts, from the mundane to the extraordinary, to decipher the layers of meaning embedded within material objects. By examining how objects are produced, exchanged, and consumed, material culture studies provide insights into the socio-economic, political, and cultural dynamics that influence the creation and interpretation of objects. Anthropological perspectives come alive through case studies that illuminate the diverse ways in which different cultures engage with objects. The study of ancestral artifacts among indigenous communities unveils a deep connection to heritage and ancestral spirits. Similarly, the examination of religious artifacts in historical civilizations reveals the intricate relationships between the divine and the material. These case studies serve as windows into the anthropological exploration of object-human relationships, showcasing the nuanced interplay between culture, symbolism, and daily life. While anthropological perspectives provide valuable insights, they also present challenges. Cultural biases, ethnocentrism, and the

limitations of interpreting past societies pose hurdles in fully grasping the complexities of object-human relationships. However, these challenges open opportunities for reflexivity and critical engagement, encouraging anthropologists to navigate cultural nuances with sensitivity and acknowledge the evolving nature of these relationships over time. The anthropological exploration of object-human relationships contributes significantly to our understanding of the human experience. By unravelling historical contexts, decoding symbolic meanings, and examining material culture, anthropological perspectives provide a holistic framework for comprehending how objects shape and reflect human societies. This knowledge is crucial not only for academic inquiry but also for fostering cultural understanding and preserving the rich tapestry of human heritage. Transforming and accepting objects as quasi-humans enabled the anthropologist to study real humankind. From the ritualistic practices that bind communities to the symbolic richness embedded in everyday objects, anthropology provides a lens through which we can appreciate the intricate connections between humans and the inanimate. As we delve deeper into the anthropological exploration, we gain not only a historical understanding but also a nuanced comprehension of the diverse ways in which cultures have engaged with and attributed significance to the objects that populate their worlds. Thus turning objects into quasi-humans, archaeologists developed a new discourse of analysing the world of men. A world living understood and studied through the inanimate. Like Severin Fowles stated; Objects emerged, in other words, as anthropology's perfect subjects because, as subjects, they can so easily be objectified. And as objects-turned- subjects-turned-objects we can continue to save, enslave, represent, delegate, denigrate and emancipate them as it suits us.

3. QUASI-HUMAN OBJECTS AND LITERATURE

Literature has long been a mirror reflecting the intricacies of human existence. One intriguing theme that often emerges in literary works is the anthropomorphization of inanimate objects, giving them quasi- human qualities and characteristics. Through the lens of anthropomorphism, authors transform ordinary objects into characters with emotions, desires, and agency, offering readers a fresh way to engage with the world around them. Objects as quasi-humans often serve as powerful symbols and metaphors in literature. They can represent complex emotions, societal issues, or philosophical concepts. The anthropomorphization of objects allows authors to explore and critique human nature uniquely and indirectly. By endowing objects with human-like qualities, writers can comment on society, morality, and the human condition. Objects as quasi-humans also raise profound existential questions about identity and consciousness. The literary exploration of objects as quasi-humans adds a layer of complexity and depth to storytelling, offering readers a fresh perspective on the human experience. Through the lens of anthropomorphism, authors bring the inanimate to life, inviting readers to reflect on the blurred boundaries between the animate and the inanimate. Whether serving as symbols, metaphors, or mirrors of human nature, these quasi- human objects offer a deep world of meaning and interpretation.

4. CONCLUSION

Objects as quasi-human beings blur the traditional boundaries between the inanimate and the animate, challenging our existing beliefs. In this context, the term "quasi-human" suggests a quality of resembling or imitating human characteristics, granting objects a semblance of

life and intentionality. This discourse of understanding and studying objects as human like beings explores areas that have been left untrodden in the past.

In the new era of posthumanism, the discourse of Quasi-human objects holds more weight than ever. Advancements in robotics and AI have propelled objects beyond being mere tools, transforming

them into entities capable of interaction and adaptation. Smart devices, with their learning algorithms and responsive interfaces, exhibit a level of quasi-human intelligence. They anticipate our needs, learn from patterns, and engage in dynamic exchanges, mirroring some aspects of human behaviour. Moreover, the integration of anthropomorphic design elements into everyday objects contributes to the perception of quasi-human qualities. From humanoid robots to virtual assistants with personalized voices, these creations tap into our innate tendency to anthropomorphize, fostering a sense of connection and relatability.

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ANTHROPOMORPHISM IN MORAL EDUCATION: CHILDREN'S LESSONS, ADULT APATHY

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ABSTRACT

The society has been moulded over many morals and values. Literature has always been a mirror to this society, to reflect upon the same. Aesop's Fables, the timeless tales of children's literature, using animals and nature as characters to impart moral lessons, have long been revered for their efficacy in educating the young. The dichotomy in the reception of moral teachings is conveyed through anthropomorphism in Aesop's Fables, specifically focusing on the contrasting impact on children and adults. However, a critical observation emerges: while these fables significantly influence children, the same cannot be said for adults. This paper intends to dissect the nature of anthropomorphism in these tales, elucidating its profound role in facilitating moral education for children, as well as to confront a pivotal paradox: the efficacy of anthropomorphism in shaping youthful moral compasses juxtaposed with its apparent inability to incite change or reflection in adults resulting in a moral dilemma. Analysing the potential flaws in the application of anthropomorphism, this paper also intends to bridge the gap of dichotomic reception.

Keywords: Anthropomorphism, Aesop's Fables, Children's Literature, Moral Dilemma, Dichotomic Reception

INTRODUCTION

Anthropomorphic animals, when taken out of narrative into actual visibility, always turn into buffoonery or nightmare.

- C. S. Lewis

Animals that talk can let us in on another world which we may not be able to see without their help... We find measure of escapism in the non-controversial constancy of animal behaviour.

- Sheila Burnford. The fundamental ideals that underpin an entire community or the cultural conduct, relationships, and sense of shared conscience are its societal morals and values. These shared beliefs shape the norms and expectations within a society, influencing an individual's choice, ethical judgements and social interactions. Literature, whether in the form of novels, poems, or plays, encapsulates the collective consciousness of a society, offering insights into the human condition and the complexities of interpersonal relationships. Literature stands as an invaluable repository of societal reflections, capturing the essence of different epochs and preserving the evolving narratives of humanity. Animals have always had a place in literature. Primitive story-tellers used animals as antagonists to dramatize man's ceaseless struggle against the forces of nature. Animals were also used in didactic stories such as the fables of Aesop, and had roles in medieval literature as "questing beasts and dreamland dragons" (Magee, 221). Society's moral concepts are woven in with the values and principles that guide human behaviour and interactions. These morals and values are often instilled in individuals from a young age and continue to shape their perspectives and actions throughout their lives. Literature has long been

recognized as a mirror that reflects the beliefs, norms, and moral codes of a society. Through storytelling, societies have passed down their moral teachings from one generation to the next, using narratives to convey important lessons and insights. This paper aims to delve deeper into the use of anthropomorphism in Aesop's Fables, exploring how the attribution of human characteristics to animals serves as a vehicle for conveying moral messages. By contrasting the impact of *Aesop's Fables* on children and adults, this study seeks to understand why these timeless tales tend to resonate more profoundly with young audiences, while often failing to elicit a comparable impact on adult readers. The paper will also identify and analyse the moral dilemma inherent in the reception of *Aesop's Fables* by adults, seeking to uncover the factors that contribute to a potential sense of apathy or disconnection from the moral teachings embedded in these classic stories. Understanding why Aesop's Fables tend to resonate more with children than adults can inform educators and parents about the most effective ways to impart moral education. It can help in the development of age-appropriate teaching methods and materials that are better tailored to the psychological and cognitive differences between children and adults. By examining the psychological and developmental factors that shape the reception of anthropomorphic stories, the study can provide valuable insights into cognitive processes, moral reasoning, and emotional engagement across different stages of human development. The findings of the study may have practical applications in fields such as children's literature, media, and entertainment, where the effective communication of moral messages to diverse age groups is a key consideration.

3 ANTHROPOMORPHISM IN AESOP'S FABLES

The Greek animal fables, traditionally attributed to a former slave, Aesop, who lived during the sixth century BCE had been a part of childhood and still continues to be a part of children's literature. As a genre, the *Aesopic fables*, or the Aesopica, has had a significant impact on the Western fable tradition and modern Western children's literature. The Aesopica owes much to the Mesopotamian fables and has parallels in other Near Eastern cultures. The fables typically portray animals with human virtues, the most known literary technique of anthropomorphism. For instance, the story of The Tortoise and the Hare, are embedded in our minds since childhood. The story ends with a moral that 'Slow and steady wins the race', this moral helps young minds to be confident with their own pace of learning or developing. Without even knowing the literary complexities, the young minds take these stories as something they can look up to. This method of boosting morale continued to be in literature either in visible or invisible forms. This aided in creating a psychological impact on the readers, also provided them with a chance to look back to the stories they grew up listening to.

Children identify with these personified animals' experiences, which often mirror their own social interactions and challenges. The simplicity and clarity of these tales, dressed in everyday situations, enable children to discern the fundamentals of right and wrong. The young ones perceive these fables as something they can relate to, but the problem arises when adults on the other hand see them as mere stories, which revoke their childhood memory. Consider the fable *The Boy Who Cried Wolf*, whereby the

young shepherd's lies are represented through the complex consequence of his relationship with the village locals. When the boy raises false alarms, leading the villagers to believe a wolf is attacking his flock, he is teaching the lesson of credibility and the value of honesty. Another fable, *The Tortoise and the Hare*, the tortoise embodies perseverance while the hare symbolizes arrogance and complacency. The final outcome illustrates that slow and steady efforts triumph over hasty and self-assured neglect. The hare's defeat and the tortoise's victory communicate the moral lesson that overconfidence can be one's downfall, and determination leads to success.

Indifference in adults is caused due to the impracticality and simplicity of the fables. When in a dilemma, they do not find solace with the morals at the end of each fable, be it 'slow and steady wins the race', no one believes a liar even when he tells the truth 'And so on. They need something concrete and rigid to believe which also aligns with the parallel corporate enterprise. The roots of this issue can be traced back when initially the *Panchatantra Stories* were made for adults and how this ended up in the genre of children's literature. To prove this argument further, The book is intended for the adult mind, though children will love it if helped; it contains a fountain of India's philosophical wisdom - a fountain of nectar. (Chandiramani,5)

FLAWS IN AESOP S FABLES

The dichotomy in reception of *Aesop Fables*-moral tales in children and adults varies mainly on two major grounds, namely psychological and cultural. The former one deals with the development of brain structure and associated cognitive abilities. Children's open mindedness and formative cognitive stages render them particularly receptive to the teachings conveyed

through anthropomorphic storytelling. With fewer established preconceptions than adults, children are more likely to embrace and emulate the virtues portrayed by the characters they come to admire. On the other hand, the same anthropomorphic stories tend to invoke a different reaction in adults, whose moral and ethical frameworks are generally more solidified. The receptivity to the lessons in these tales often leaves little imprint on adults, whose life experiences have already shaped their moral compasses. Adults may appreciate the wit and wisdom of the narratives, but these tales seldom incite fundamental changes in their principles or behaviour.

This difference in reception between children and adults underscores a paradox within moral education through literature: the same narrative that forms the basis of character in the young becomes a mere echo of already established beliefs in the grown up. For adults, the fables act more as reminders of the moral codes they have already chosen to accept or ignore. Anthropomorphism in *Aesop s fables* presents a unique and powerful avenue for developing the moral values in children while often merely reaffirming the established values in adults. The acceptance of these stories by children showcases their role as educators in virtues and consequences, sculpting the ethical frameworks that will carry them into adulthood. The divergence in impact between the two age groups elicits profound contemplation on the capacity for change at different stages of life and the effectiveness of storytelling in moral education. The *Aesop s Fables*, therefore, claim a dual function: laying the moral groundwork for the young while serving as a touchstone for self- examination in the older, their wisdom resonating through the ages with both simple truths and complex human insights.

BRIDGING THE GAP IN DICHOTOMIC RECEPTION

In order to bridge this gap, there should be value added education or a holistic approach to education, for young adults and more literature of the same context for adults. This can boost confidence and morale in human minds. Often people end up in situations where they are forced to exhibit a particular type of response to a recurring problem. This may be due to their cultural, political and philosophical backgrounds they grew up from. Also, another reason may be the psychological impact they have to respond in this particular manner. Even after becoming an adult, one can always learn, relearn and unlearn certain things in their lives. The moral values once we upheld to ourselves, are being compromised either forcefully or wilfully to meet the ends of everyday life, this can be rectified with proper guidance, like the self-help genre in literature. In the contemporary context, the integration of anthropomorphism in literature continues to inspire fresh avenues for moral education, ensuring that the universal themes of virtue, wisdom, and compassion are conveyed in a manner that resonates with both the innocence of childhood and the contemplative spirit of adulthood. Through the prism of anthropomorphism, literature becomes an ever-potent vessel for instilling timeless moral principles, fostering empathy, and nurturing ethical consciousness. Other ways to provide a continuum to this moral education can happen, by adding technological advancements to the equation. Simple exercises for example, interactive workshops, intergenerational storytelling, collaborative learning platforms, all these can help an adult to relearn certain moral values and resolve their ethical dilemma.

CONCLUSION

The *Aesop's Fables* and *Panchathantra Stories*, comes under the umbrella of literature which imparts values and morals to children through fables. The former pays tribute to the West and the latter to the East, both serving the same purpose. This genre is now popular among children's literature, which was initially meant for adults to improve their social

skills. Anthropomorphism is common in these fables, where the moral education is imparted in a simpler method to the children, where eventually this simplification becomes the problem in adult apathy towards the fables.

To address this issue in perception, the limitations in moral education must be recognised and should be supplemented with other empathy building exercises and real-world applications of ethical and moral principles. As long as human beings rule the planet, there is always scope for humanity backed by moral and ethical values. Individualistic differences in our reception may be caused due to the different social and political backgrounds we belong to, nevertheless, the core values we are imbibed to remain as our solid base, where our psyche acts upon. To conclude, the moral dilemma which we face in our day-to-day life can be resolved if we create a continuum of moral education from childhood to adulthood. By fostering a holistic approach to moral education, we can change adult apathy. If we incorporate technology into this equation, the outcome will be more positive.

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INTERSECTIONS OF MARGINALIZED IDENTITIES; EXPLORING AESTHETICS IN A POSTCOLONIAL CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT:

Race has been a multifaceted and contentious aspect of human society, wielding significant influence on social, economic, and political structures. This paper delves into the intricate realm of Race Studies, aiming to explore the historical, cultural, and scientific dimensions that construct and shape racial identities. The study critically evaluates the social construction of race, elucidating its impact on power structures, systemic inequalities, and identity formation within diverse societies. Furthermore, it scrutinizes the intersectionality of race with gender, class, and ethnicity, highlighting the complex interplay of these factors in shaping individual experiences and societal paradigms. Embracing a multidisciplinary approach, this paper synthesizes insights from sociology, anthropology, history, and critical race theory, providing a nuanced understanding of the complexities surrounding race. By examining historical legacies, contemporary discourses, and potential pathways for progress, this study advocates for inclusive dialogues and policies that foster equity, justice, and a more profound appreciation of human diversity.

Keywords: Intersectionality, diversity ethnicity, multidisciplinary approach

INTRODUCTION

Towards an Aesthetic of Dalit Literature: History, Controversies, and Considerations by Sharankumar Limbale. This work by Limbale

is a significant contribution to understanding Dalit literature's aesthetics, its historical context, controversies, and its connection to wider socio-political issues, including race studies. Sharankumar Limbale's work offers a crucial examination of Dalit literature's aesthetics, providing insights into how the literary form of Dalit writing intersects with larger social and political contexts. His exploration helps readers understand the nuances of Dalit literary expression, its cultural significance, and its role in challenging entrenched hierarchies.

Moreover, by connecting the aesthetics of Dalit literature with race studies, Limbale likely draws parallels between the experiences of Dalits in India and marginalized communities facing racial discrimination elsewhere. This comparative analysis broadens the scope of understanding oppression, resilience, and resistance across different socio-cultural landscapes.

Limbale's book serves as a valuable resource for scholars, students, and anyone interested in exploring the connections between Dalit literature and broader discourses on social justice, identity, and representation, thereby enriching the conversation around race studies and marginalized communities worldwide.

Bhabha's work in *The Location of Culture* offers insights into postcolonial theory, cultural hybridity, and the complexities of identity formation in the context of colonialism

and cultural encounters. This book examines how cultural practices, representations, and identities are shaped within colonial and postcolonial frameworks.

METHODOLOGY

Analysing it with Limbale's exploration of Dalit literature's aesthetics, Bhabha's ideas on cultural identity, hybridity, and the impact of colonialism can help draw parallels between the experiences of Dalits in India and the broader discourse on race, colonialism, and cultural hegemony.

Bhabha's work serves as a bridge between the theories of cultural representation, identity, and power dynamics discussed in race studies and the exploration of aesthetics, representation, and resistance in Dalit literature, thereby enriching the understanding of how marginalized identities are constructed and negotiated in different social and historical contexts.

Limbale's book focuses on the aesthetics of Dalit literature, exploring the literary expressions, cultural significance, and socio-political context of writings by Dalit authors in India. While it primarily examines the specific experiences of Dalits within the caste system in India, it intersects with race studies by discussing forms of oppression, marginalization, and struggles against societal hierarchies, offering insights into the broader spectrum of marginalized communities' experiences and resistance. On the other hand, Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* contributes to race studies by exploring postcolonial theory, cultural identity, and the impact of colonialism on cultural representation. It examines how cultures interact, transform, and negotiate their identities in the context of colonization and its aftermath.

While Bhabha's work doesn't specifically focus on Dalit literature, it is relevant to race studies due to its examination of power dynamics, hybridity, and identity formation in colonial and postcolonial settings, which are integral to understanding racial and cultural discourses.

The Location of Culture by Homi Bhabha is deeply connected to discussions surrounding racism and Dalit studies, offering critical insights into the complexities of power, identity, and cultural hierarchies.

Bhabha's work on cultural identity and hybridity intersects significantly with the discourse on racism. He critiques the essentialist views that perpetuate racial hierarchies and argues that identities are not fixed or predetermined but are constructed through complex interactions. His concept of the *Third Space* challenges the binary divisions of colonizer and colonized, suggesting that cultural identities are formed through a process of negotiation and hybridization rather than being solely defined by oppressive power structures.

In the context of racism, Bhabha's notion of mimicry is particularly relevant. He discusses how colonized individuals imitate the cultural practices of the colonizer, but this mimicry is not a mere replication; it contains elements of subversion and resistance. This process of mimicry disrupts the assumed superiority of the dominant culture, exposing the contradictions within colonial power dynamics.

Regarding Dalit studies, while Bhabha's work does not explicitly focus on this specific aspect, his theories on cultural identity and the dynamics of power have relevance in understanding the struggles of marginalized communities, including Dalits.

Bhabha's emphasis on the hybridity of culture and the contested spaces of identity formation sheds light on how Dalit identities are not monolithic but are shaped by interactions, negotiations, and resistances within the broader societal framework.

Moreover, Bhabha's exploration of the politics of representation is significant in the context of Dalit studies. He questions the authority of dominant narratives and challenges the homogenizing tendencies in representations of culture and identity. This perspective aligns with efforts in Dalit studies to critically analyze and deconstruct prevalent narratives that often marginalize or misrepresent Dalit experiences.

While *The Location of Culture* may not directly delve into Dalit studies, its theoretical frameworks provide a valuable lens through which one can analyze and understand the complexities of identity, power, and cultural hegemony that are pertinent to discussions surrounding racism and the struggles of marginalized communities, including the Dalits. Bhabha's work encourages critical engagement with the multifaceted nature of cultural identities and the need to challenge and deconstruct oppressive structures that perpetuate hierarchies based on race and caste.

CONCLUSION

In exploring the intersections of marginalized identities within aesthetics in a postcolonial

context, the convergence of Dalit aesthetics and race studies offers a profound lens through which to understand the intricacies of subjugation, resistance, and cultural reclamation. Both contexts underscore the enduring impact of colonialism on indigenous cultures and the persistent struggle for recognition and autonomy. The intersection of Dalit aesthetics and race studies within a postcolonial framework illuminates the profound resilience and creativity inherent in marginalized communities. It calls for a continued exploration and celebration of diverse aesthetics, acknowledging their power to challenge oppressive structures and affirm the richness of cultural diversity in a global context. Embracing these intersections fosters a more inclusive understanding of aesthetics and paves the way for a more equitable and respectful appreciation of marginalized identities worldwide.

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THE BARD AND THE BRAND: A CLOSE ANALYSIS ON THE LEGACY OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE AND THE IPHONE'S MARKET DOMINANCE

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ABSTRACT

In the contemporary landscape of cultural and technological dominance, this research paper takes up on a compelling exploration, juxtaposing the indelible legacy of William Shakespeare in English literature with the unprecedented market supremacy of the iPhone over the past few years. The study scrutinizes the striking parallels between these seemingly disparate entities, analyzing their respective dominance, societal acceptance despite inherent flaws, showcase of upper-class politics and luxury, evolution of establishment, and pivotal moments of market disruption. The paper delves into Shakespeare's enduring literary reign, elucidating the universal acceptance and timeless relevance of his works despite controversies and imperfections pointed out by numerous critics. Similarly, it dissects the iPhone's meteoric rise to market prominence, dissecting the factors contributing to its unrivaled success amid acknowledged limitations. Drawing connections between Shakespeare's portrayal of politics and luxury in his era with the iPhone's status as a contemporary symbol of affluence, this research scrutinizes their roles as cultural icons. Furthermore, it examines how both entities challenged established norms, tracing the evolution of their establishments and analyzing market takeovers—highlighting the iPhone's impact akin to Shakespeare's transformative

influence on literature. This comparative analysis offers insights into the entwined narrative of artistic legacy and technological dominance, revealing intriguing parallels that transcend epochs and domains.

Keywords: Dominance, Luxury, Acceptance, Parallels

INTRODUCTION

When it comes to the realm of literature, there are some outstanding figures who have revolutionized the whole domain of writing. Some have been known for their immaculate writing style, while some for their thematic content brilliance. From a global outlook, there would be less scope for a debate if someone from any discipline says that William Shakespeare is one of their favourite or well-known writer. The famous quote about Shakespeare by Ben Jonson in his poem *the Memory of My Beloved, the Author Mr William Shakespeare*, rightly suggests so; *He was not of an age, but for all time*. Researchers have come up with many reasons for which Shakespeare is timeless and became the *Bard of Avon*. Even after four centuries, William Shakespeare keeps on inspiring the writers of every age, irrespective of the societal conditions and literary trends. Now, if the focus is slightly shifted towards another discipline, of technology and innovation, the smartphone is obviously

top tier innovation of the twenty first century and speaking of which one brand stands out among the rest, i.e.; The Apple Inc.'s iPhone. Since it's initial launch in 2007, their series of phones have completely over took the market of smartphones. Their phones are so popular these days that they have set the standards of an ideal smartphone. Many companies, including their close competitors in the market are forcefully adopting to the tech industry the apple way'. This paper titled *The Bard and the Brand: A Close Analysis on the Legacy of William Shakespeare and the iPhone's Market Dominance*, tries to analyse their similarities of success in the respective fields. At its core, this research seeks to draw parallels between Shakespeare's unparalleled influence as a literary giant and the iPhone's indisputable market position as a symbol of technological supremacy. It endeavors to illuminate the uncanny resemblances between these seemingly distinct entities—both hailed as icons in their respective realms. Through such a study the shared traits between Shakespeare's lasting legacy and the iPhone's market ascendancy, exploring themes of dominance, societal acceptance despite acknowledged flaws, evolution of establishment, and pivotal moments of market disruption can be understood.

UNMATCHED DOMINANCE OF SHAKESPEARE AND IPHONES

The modern world is considered to be one of the most competitive period in the history of mankind. Everyone is engaged in one race or another to achieve different goals in their life. The field of English literature as well as the market of smartphone industry, which put together does not make much sense, is taken for analysis. Both of them being different disciplines might instantly make an individual think about

why such an analysis should exist. The reason, being the two dominant, better to say the most dominant entities of their respective fields, makes the parallels of such an analysis relevant.

William Shakespeare stands as an eternal colossus in the realm of literature, his influence transcending epochs and borders. His literary dominance is evidenced by the sheer universality and timeless appeal of his works. For instance, in *Hamlet*, 'the soliloquy To be, or not to be' encapsulates the existential struggles of humanity, resonating across cultures and generations. Similarly, the tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet* remains a quintessential narrative exploring love, conflict, and fate, retaining its relevance in contemporary adaptations and discourse. Shakespeare's impact extends beyond his celebrated plays. His sonnets, notably Sonnet 18 (*Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?*), encapsulate the essence of beauty and immortality, exemplifying his unmatched command over language and emotion. In his blog, *What Makes Shakespeare Great*, Philip Yancey has mentioned that As I reviewed the 38 plays recently, I realized anew why Shakespeare is regarded as the greatest writer in English. He stuck to the universals. As a result, his works have been translated into every major language, and have inspired thousands of paintings and some 20,000 pieces of music.

In the realm of technology and innovation, the iPhone, since its introduction in 2007 by Steve Jobs, has reigned supreme, revolutionizing the landscape of smartphones. Its dominance is exemplified by its consistent market performance and unparalleled consumer demand. For instance, the introduction of the iPhone 3G in 2008 not only brought 3G connectivity but also solidified Apple's position in the market, spurring global adoption. The iPhone's influence

has been marked by its iterative advancements. The introduction of Touch ID in the iPhone 5s and Face ID in subsequent models redefined smartphone security standards. Moreover, the iPhone's App Store, offering a vast ecosystem of applications, amplified its allure, contributing significantly to its market dominance.

The iPhone's consistent hold on market dominance, evident in its yearly release cycles and consumer anticipation, mirrors Shakespeare's timeless dominance in literature. Just as Shakespeare's works continue to be celebrated and studied, the iPhone's successive models sustain consumer enthusiasm, solidifying its position at the forefront of the smartphone industry. This parallel between Shakespeare's enduring literary dominance

and the iPhone's unyielding market supremacy underscores the profound impact both entities have wielded in their respective realms, shaping cultural narratives and technological advancements alike.

THE IMITATION CONUNDRUM: FAILED ATTEMPTS TO REPLICATE SUCCESS

In the pursuit of greatness, emulation often emerges as a strategy for competitors to replicate the success of iconic figures. Some might apply the same winning mantra of a successful person in their life and find it helpful but some may still not be able to achieve heights with it. The two entities being discussed in this paper are arguably the best examples for this. The competitors tried hard to copy everything that went well for the other, but still fell short in the competition. Some competitors were at times better than them, but still could not catch the lime light.

If they were to follow him successfully, they would have to think and feel as he did, and with

the same intensity; and that was too much of an imitator. (Sutherland,23) Imitating Shakespeare was/is never an easy task, as the imitator will have to check many boxes. They admired his character drawing, his treatment of the passions, his rough majestic force, but rarely his language (Sutherland,24) Shakespeare's characters and subject are universal which is indeed hard to copy. His treatment of the subjects were often known as the 'Shakespearean treatment' as well. Thomas Dekker and John Fletcher collaborated on plays such as „*The Honest Whore* series attempting to capture Shakespeare's versatility in writing both tragedies and comedies. While their works showcased elements of dramatic skill, they couldn't match the profound impact or enduring popularity of Shakespeare's plays in the theatrical landscape. Even some writers of the eighteenth century like Nicholas Rowe had openly admitted to imitate Shakespeare after his work „*The Tragedy of Jane Shore. Written in Imitation of William Shakespeare's Style*. After talking about one imitator admitting his failure to imitate, Theobald says that I know, Your Lordship's Discernment will easily perceive that my imitation is very Superficial; extending only to the borrowing of some of his Words without being able to follow him in the Position of them, his Style, or his Elegance. All sorts of imitators, let it be in case of poetry or drama, struggled to replicate Shakespeare's unparalleled command over language, intricate characterization, and profound understanding of human nature. The failures of these attempts to imitate Shakespeare serve as a testament to the singular brilliance and irreplaceability of his contributions to English literature.

The smartphone market has been witness to a myriad of attempts by competitors to emulate the unparalleled success of the iPhone. Companies like Samsung, HTC, BlackBerry

Xiaomi, and Realme, among others, have endeavored to replicate the design aesthetics, features, and marketing strategies that contributed to Apple's dominance. However, these attempts often faced challenges in truly capturing the essence of what made the iPhone iconic. Companies like Xiaomi and Realme, known for their budget-friendly yet feature-rich smartphones, ventured into designs reminiscent of Apple's sleek aesthetics. Xiaomi, for instance, introduced models like the Mi 8, featuring a notched display very similar to the iPhone X. Realme, with its Realme 1 and subsequent models, emphasized minimalist designs echoing iPhone-like aesthetics in the mid-range market. Despite these efforts, the distinctiveness and premium feel associated with Apple's design ethos often remained elusive for these competitors. Apple's bold decision to remove the headphone jack and charging brick from the iPhone packaging was a strategic move that influenced the smartphone industry. This decision, aimed at driving wireless technology adoption and reducing environmental impact, set a trend. However, when competitors like Xiaomi and Samsung attempted similar strategies, removing the headphone jack or omitting charging bricks from their smartphone packages, the reception was mixed. While some consumers embraced the change, others criticized these moves as following Apple without introducing significant innovation of their own. The endeavors of companies like Xiaomi, Realme, and Samsung to replicate the iPhone's design or marketing strategies highlight the influential position Apple holds in the smartphone industry. Despite attempts to emulate certain features or design elements, these competitors have faced hurdles in achieving the same level of consumer loyalty, innovation, and ecosystem integration

that characterize Apple's market dominance. This further emphasizes the challenges of mere replication in a market driven by innovation, user experience, and brand identity.

The failures in imitating Shakespeare's literary genius or the iPhone's market dominance offer valuable insights. They underscore the essence of authenticity, innovation, and the irreplaceable nature of genuine brilliance. These unsuccessful endeavors to replicate success serve as cautionary tales, emphasizing the significance of carving one's path rather than pursuing mere replication.

ACCEPTANCE AMIDST IMPERFECTIONS: SOCIETAL PERCEPTIONS OF UPPER- CLASS POLITICS AND LUXURY

As Stephen Hawking said Nothing is Perfect , this implies to everything around us. People may often get critical about it, but here, our established entities surpasses those critics. Acceptance amid acknowledged flaws and the portrayal of upper-class politics and luxury play pivotal roles in shaping societal perceptions. Shakespeare's plays are not without controversy or imperfections. Criticisms of historical inaccuracies, cultural insensitivity, or gender representations exist within his works. For instance, the portrayal of Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice* raises debates about anti-Semitic tropes. However, despite these flaws, Shakespeare's plays are widely accepted and celebrated for their timeless exploration of human nature, intricate characterizations, and universal themes that resonate across cultures and eras. By 1700 Shakespeare's language was already beginning to look uncouth; sometimes, indeed, it was quite unintelligible. (Sutherland,23) even after famous

researchers found out that Shakespeare had some imperfections, people blindly believed that there is no one better than him. Shakespeare's plays often delved into the politics of the upper class, offering insightful commentary on power dynamics, political maneuvering, and societal hierarchies. Works like *Richard III* or *Macbeth* vividly illustrate the manipulation and consequences of power struggles within the aristocracy. Moreover, the depiction of opulence and extravagance in plays such as *King Lear* or *Twelfth Night* presents a commentary on the allure and perils of luxury in the creamy layer of society.

Similar to Shakespeare's works, the iPhone, despite its technological advancements, has faced criticisms and acknowledged flaws. Issues like battery performance, software limitations, removal of power brick, or the removal of features like the headphone jack have been points of contention among consumers. The iPhones started to get packed without a charger since 2020 starting from the iPhone 12 series. The brands claim for such a decision, as mentioned above, was to protect the environment by reducing carbon footprint and all. In reality, they started to sell their chargers separately which again increased their revenue. The problem is that buying chargers or headphones separately could mean more packaging waste and emissions from separate deliveries. Some of that might add to Apple's carbon footprint, and some of it might get tacked on to different companies' carbon footprints if consumers decide to buy the accessories from other vendors. That doesn't necessarily reduce emissions overall; it just spreads the greenhouse gasses around between different companies. (Calma) Just because it is an Apple iPhone, people are willing to pay the extra for a separate charger. However, akin to Shakespeare's

enduring popularity, the iPhone continues to be widely accepted and sought after, symbolizing technological sophistication and status. The iPhone has become a symbol of status and luxury in contemporary society, mirroring Shakespeare's portrayal of opulence in the upper class. Apple's marketing strategies, premium pricing, and sleek designs contribute to its association with affluence. The exclusivity and desirability of owning an iPhone parallel the allure of luxury depicted in Shakespearean dramas, reflecting societal perceptions of prestige and wealth. The societal acceptance of Shakespeare's flawed yet revered works and the iPhone's embraced imperfections while symbolizing luxury draw attention to broader societal interpretations. They reflect how society embraces nuances, forgives imperfections in revered entities, and associates luxury and status with certain brands or cultural artifacts.

CONCLUSION

Various aspects of literature and technology work together to keep Shakespeare and iPhone on the top of their lists respectively. They have grown to an extent where their rivals have no scope to compete. The competition for the iPhone are the android smartphones from the companies like Samsung, Huawei, Xiaomi, Oppo, Vivo etc. and the sales of their recent best flagship phones have always fallen short of the iPhones from each of the recent years. Likewise, the repetition of such a similar outcome can be seen in the case of Shakespeare too. He stands as a giant literary figure compared to his past contemporaries, and even the later generations to come. It is evident that they have created some sort of monopoly in their respective fields, the key difference in this continuing dominance is that Shakespeare is not alive and the Apple Inc. is an active company.

The thought of attempting such a paper began from asking two simple questions to some of my friends, who were from different academic disciplines; Who is your favourite English Writer(s)? Which is your favourite/dream smartphone? . The answers were quite similar and the responses were William Shakespeare and iPhone respectively. The follow-up question to them was then Why? . They had no perfect answers to defend their choice other than just saying that both are very popular and that is where this paper gives a proper answer to the Why? . The similar factors for their dominance include luxury, acceptance beyond their flaws, unmatched potentials etc. There will never be an objection in considering William Shakespeare as a great writer, nor there will be any dispute regarding the qualities of the iPhone. A fair competition is needed everywhere but it is this monopoly in their respective areas that pulls back their rivals. Otherwise, there would have been enough appreciations for many writers and smartphones as well. Even though it is difficult to choose a perfect rival for both, the emphasis of this paper was to bring into account that the two entities, William Shakespeare and iPhone, are indeed not perfect and the notion that people follow them blindly needs to change.

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THE ELUCIDATION OF MYTHOLOGY IN THE CONTEMPORARY MILIEU: A POSTMODERNIST READING OF AMISH TRIPATHI'S *THE IMMORTALS OF MELUHA*

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ABSTRACT

Mythology is the expression of the various facets of a culture and civilization passed on from generation to generation, orally in its original sense, which sustains the essence of an indigenous group of people and indicates their specific identity. With the advent of industrialization which led subsequently to the growth of capitalism and modernism, the nature of society marked a shift characterized by an alteration in conventional patterns of behavior, values and organization. The coming of the postmodern age stressed on subjectivism, skepticism, individual experience and resisted absolute definitions. There is no doubt then that mythology, in its bid for survival, was bound to undergo adaptations and modifications in its nature and politics arising from the myriad of changes in the socio-political setup.

This paper will look into the change in the nature of transmission, reception, interpretation and consumption of mythology in the postmodern era and will examine its seepage into the popular culture. The narrative knowledge generated by this circulation of information in the popular culture brings into suspicion the classical notions and has a key role to play in the power relations of the society. Further, the motivation for the consumption of tradition in the postmodern culture also transforms to one of a very personal nature, rather than a communal one directed at strengthening solidarity.

This paper will examine how with the infusion of technology, mythology finds its way to the market and is commodified in the age of repetition and pastiche, leaving us with only copies which do not refer to any material reality in a temporal frame. It will also study Amish Tripathi's Shiva Trilogy in this postmodern context and will attempt to establish it as product of its time.

KEYWORDS: myth, postmodern, *The Immortals of Meluha*, Amish Tripathi

INTRODUCTION

Ancient human knowledge is beset with mythical narratives passed on from generation to generation, orally in its original sense, which sustains the essence of an indigenous group of people and indicates their specific identity. These myths are profoundly entrenched inside religion and form the expression of the various facets of a culture and civilization. Mythology is molded and sculpted out of a collective memory of a group of people. Even though its origin lies in the distant past and can be traced sometimes to the beginning of civilization, the relevance of mythology to the ever-changing times has been constant. The reason for the same lies in the spirit and substance of the narratives, tales, art and culture which draw upon themes of human predicament and life. This allows for its

adaptation to varying circumstances, enabling it to survive across decades and centuries. Due to this dynamic nature of mythology, it persists and reappears, in similar but not totally alike form, in diverse places and situations. Talking about this recurrence, Philip Johnson states that, Recurrent patterns of

mythic motifs include nostalgia for a lost paradise, yearnings for a utopia, and the universal hero slaying monsters (64).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Mythology transmitted across generations in the form of storytelling serves the integral function of identity consolidation. Storytelling has been an ancient art-form, and according to Laura J. Kaighn, fulfills a deep need for us to define ourselves through our stories (4). These stories help us to place ourselves in a temporal frame while identifying our ancestry, developing an understanding of our history and drawing linkages to our past through tales. Kaighn in her work *Modern Storytelling: The Power of Myth Revisited* draws attention to a statement by Fred Craddock, storyteller and preacher, Anybody who can't remember any further back than his or her own birth is an orphan

(12). The function of storytelling being not just limited to that, stories have been narrated over the years to young children to fulfil an instructive purpose. This is in line with the popular belief that humans learn most effectively when they enjoy themselves, and therefore didactic tales have been used as medium of instruction for young developing minds since time immemorial. While also encouraging the virtue of listening, when we recount the experience of another, underlining their ideality, we set an example for ourselves and for others, and strive to play a part,

however small, in constructing the utopia of our tales. With the advent of industrialization which led subsequently to the growth of capitalism and modernism, the nature of society marked a shift characterized by an alteration in conventional patterns of behavior, values and organization. The modernization of society entailed a change in the thought process which was characterized by suspicion, cynicism and loss of faith in traditional and cultural beliefs. Along with this came the loss of an order and an intense need to find the meaning of life and existence. The famous French philosopher Albert Camus, much associated with the existential school of thought, denied life of any meaning and stressed upon the impossibility of finding one. The commercialization of tradition as a response to the rising capitalism raised questions of authenticity and brought into suspicion the project of cultural continuity. These changes in the socio-political setup marked a change in the outlook and perception of mythology, especially brought about by the skeptical disposition of the period. Walter Benjamin's definition of modernity as new in connection to that which has already been there perfectly reasserts this idea.

The coming of the postmodern age stressed on subjectivism, skepticism,

individual experience and resisted absolute definitions. The advent of the postmodern age replaced the ontological doubt with an epistemological crisis. Hermann Bausinger in his *Folk Culture in a World of Technology* underlines the problems faced by folklorists with the coming of the modern age. The presentation of information of the past was no longer limited to a single sense. The mass culture and commercialization brought before the viewer the

objects of the past which contributed to loss of the aura associated with it. The easy availability and reproduction of history and historical material brought tradition into the marketplace (Tokovsky 330). Common people had easy access to it now and they interpreted and analyzed it in their own manner, thus obliterating the hierarchy which existed between the masses and the folklorists. In the words of Hermann Bausinger, The infusion of technology into our lives creates not only a new world of objects but also new social and spiritual realities. This process blurs the old horizons within which the traditional goods of folk culture found their validity. Goods and images from distant places become available to the individual consumer, disrupting existing perceptions of the spatial world (32). Individuals now become consumers and tradition and mythology are their objects of consumption, which they consume now, in the postmodern age, only to achieve a sense of self fulfillment. Jean Baudrillard underlines the idea of competition in the postmodern world which, he believes, gives way to a philosophy of self-fulfillment as individuals actualize themselves in consumption (Warshaver 223). With tradition becoming an object of consumption, the interpretation of mythology begins to differ for each consumer. The world of technology and media facilitate in the creation of a realm where history and mythology assume different meanings for diverse participants.

Looking at the Indian publication fad of late, a recent trend amongst Indian writers has been to exploit mythology and history to weave stories in a modern scenario, connecting the contemporary world with the historical and mythological domain. Devdutt Pattanaik, Ashwin Sanghi and Amish Tripathi are some prominent writers traversing this domain.

For his book, *The Immortals of Meluha*, Amish reimagines the life of the great leader Shiva and fuses his imagination with fantasy. Shiva, in his books, is not the Destroyer Lord, but is an ordinary young man, a refugee, who is lifted to the pedestal of a Lord through his deeds. The idea that Amish tries to bring home to the reader is that only the deeds of a man can decide his fate in life and can either elevate him or

deprecate him. The very concept is quite contemporary and blends well with the modern emphasis on rationality as it rejects unexplained providence for a judicious and logical outlook.

The character of the protagonist, Shiva, is not in line with the God that we worship today or in fact, have been worshipping from generations. In fact, it would not be wrong to say that he is quite anti-heroic at times. He is portrayed as an ordinary individual, unsure of himself and his potential. The responsibilities forced upon him make him reluctant and anxious. Like an ordinary young man, his insecurities and weaknesses are laid bare to the reader. It is important to note that Shiva is introduced in the first chapter of the book as a man who prefers to escape from his native land instead of fighting against the Pakratish. He is also depicted as being prone to manipulation as Daksha exploits him for his own good. In the words of Abhirami Nair, Amish succeeds in presenting the protagonist with all the baser instincts of a man which puts him apart from the heroic deeds, wars and life of Lord Shiva (460).

The representation of Amish's protagonist is therefore, not in accordance with the conventional or the long-standing idea of heroism but his choices, beliefs and actions definitely render him worthy of the title of The Neelkanth conferred upon him. He elevates himself in the eyes of the reader not by virtue of his birth or

status, but only by means of his righteous principles, his love for people irrespective of their rank or position, his ability to empathize and the courage to pioneer a change, wherever he deems fit, in the way of life of the Meluhans. Indeed, to identify a flaw in a society which is universally recognized as ideal is not only quite analytical but also extremely prudent and judicious. Protagonist Shiva, time and again, stands up for what he believes in, commencing various transformations, revolutionizing the societies he comes in contact with. Further, he also stresses upon the ability of each one to recognize the God within themselves which allows one to draw a link with the individualized form of religiosity (6), a significant aspect of the secularization following modernism, which John W. Morehead discusses in his paper *The Truth is Out There: Postmodern Myth and Archetypes, Extra-terrestrial Salvation, and Mythic Apologetics*. The disenchantment, a product of the modern age, altered the way in which people connected with their religiosity, as a result of which the institutionalised forms of religion now gave way to a more secular and spiritual standing. This is more often referred to, in common words, as a preference for spirituality over religion. There could hardly be a better way to

realize this than by becoming conscious of a divine presence within oneself and a belief in one's ability to do the right.

Tripathi's novel concerns itself with the definition and understanding of good and evil in society. He juxtaposes the society of the Chandravanshis with the ideal state of the Suryavanshis, which stand respectively for dystopia and utopia. He creates binaries to set them against each other but as the tale progresses, the reader comes to the realization that these binaries are created just to have them

dissolved as one cognizes the complexity of the idea and the fallacy of drawing absolutes in a multi-faceted epoch. The post-modern standing of the dissolution of absolutes and the impossibility of drawing one is thoroughly consistent with this notion.

Jean-Francois Lyotard in his classic text *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, coined the term 'grand-narrative' and the rejection of the same in the postmodern era. A grand-narrative is a conceptual idea that claims to be an all-inclusive elucidation of historical events and knowledge. These narratives not only clarified, but also legitimized this knowledge. Critiquing all knowledge as narrative knowledge, Lyotard contended that in the post-modern world which is characterized by fragmentation, grand-narratives have no credibility as they are formed by excluding other narratives and are thus viewed as oppressive. In the post-modern world, grand narratives give way to anecdotes and other fragmentary tales, thus annihilating the presence of one absolute truth and allowing multiple standpoints.

Analyzing Tripathi's novel in this light, one can argue that Amish endeavors to do the same in his work. By incorporating fantastical elements in his work, not consistent with the narrative knowledge of generations, he rejects the oppressive chronicling of the past and allows for fragmentation and an alternate outlook. In post modernism, the rejection of a grand-narrative lays down the origin of various micro-narratives which take its place. These micro-narratives are alternate perceptions, new interpretations, tales which take into account the marginalized, etc. – all of which did not find a space in the oppressive dominant narrative of the years gone by. Ananya Roy Pratihari in her paper, *Folktale and Fiction: Transformation of*

„*Once Upon a Time* Formulas in Indian Popular Narratives argues that Amish's Shiva trilogy can be viewed as a micro-narrative of the Indian mythology, and believes that his modern viewpoint is based on historical, linguistic, cultural study (9) along with fantasy. Tripathi brings to the reader alternate explanations of various mythological phenomenon and strives to explain with rationality concepts like the

Shiva's blue throat, somras, Sati's death by fire, the elephant-head of Ganesh, etc.

This rewriting of the myth which is a product of the reinterpretation of the long-established set of codes also facilitates to uncover the truth from a cobweb of lies (Pratihari 9). Of course, it is impossible to distinguish lucidly facts from fabrication; but by allowing an unconventional interpretation to prevail, we keep the analytical wheels of the society running. These powerful encounter(s) with alterity (84), as David Gross chooses to term it, enable us to perceive our everyday in a new light.

The disenchantment with religion and folklore in the modern age was followed by a re-enchantment brought into force by the dynamism of globalization and pluralism in the post-modern age. In this context, Adam Possamai discusses the consumer culture which gives birth to hyper-real religions'. An important aspect of the modern, or more appropriately the post-modern mystical quest is the practice of building and preserving a sense of spiritual or religious identity through the activity of consumption. This is exactly what seems to be taking shape in the country today. Religion and mythology are being consumed in the popular cultural via a retelling giving rise to hyper-real religions. By hyper-real religion Possamai refers to a simulacrum of a religion partly created out of popular culture which provides inspiration for

believers/consumers at a metaphorical level (Morehead 7). Through this digression into popular culture, it is important to not overlook the fact that the concepts represented in the popular culture are essentially a product of the diverse mythic archetypes that are continuously drawn within the minds of people. This remains true for *Immortals of Meluha* as it incorporates allusions to several mythological figures and iterates the fundamental human predicaments.

The persisting presence of intertextuality in Tripathi's novel further underlines the postmodernist tendencies of the novel. The Meluhan empire bears reference to the ancient Indus Valley civilization of ancient India as the Naga characters in the text can be linked to the significant Hindu serpent deity Nagaraj. Additionally, the text consists of several names and terminologies from Indian mythological and historical sources which serve to draw a relation with the wider cultural framework, for example the character of Sati is a reference to the revered Hindu Goddess who is also the consort of Shiva, the vital Somras is a reference to the Soma which is considered a holy ceremonial drink related to immortality, Mount Kailash is an allusion to the mythical abode of the Lord and his

loyal companion Nandi shares his name with the bull that serves as Shiva's mount. Furthermore, the text features a fragmented non-linear narrative as it integrates shifts in time and flashbacks into the main storyline. It is recounted from multiple perspectives and with several parallel plotlines it has a dismembered structure. In addition to incorporating a very powerful social and cultural critique, Tripathi, very significantly, blurs the line between the real and the imagined and contests the customary conventions so as to generate a narrative that harbors the sentiments of the age.

CONCLUSION

In an age marked by globalization and cultural pluralism, Tripathi explicates the enduring relevance of mythology and contests our perception of tradition, mythology and identity. His work underscores the ability of mythology to irradiate the human condition and fashions a dynamic and developing relation between tradition and modernization. Tripathi's reinterpretation of mythology presents a compelling specimen of how postmodernism guides our comprehension of ancient narratives. By challenging conventional interpretations and presenting modern/postmodern ideals, Tripathi's novel not only bids readers to examine new standpoints on mythology but also reveals the continuing evolution of mythological and cultural narratives in a rapidly transforming world. Additionally, his reinterpretation of the popular Hindu God, focus on rationality, preference of spirituality over religions and the dissolving of absolutes aligns with the postmodern values and reveals the postmodern sentiment of the novel. It succeeds in demythologizing the lives and obliterating the supernatural for the common Indian reader. In doing so, at times, it does away with the nuances and compromises the vitality of the legends, but does acquaint us with a more personalized version of the most multi-faceted God.

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THROWING LIGHT ON 'SEX' AND 'GENDER' WITH REFERENCE TO PREETHI SHENOY'S *THE RULE BREAKERS*

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ABSTRACT:

Sex is biological whereas Gender is socially constructed. This paper is an attempt to analyse the Queerness, Identity clash and Trans experiences. Queer theory emphasizes that social constructs shape the understanding of sexual behaviours and identities. It challenges the idea of fixed categories and explores how they create social meanings. Queer theory is one of the branches of Gender studies which has set the current trend in the field of study of English Literature. Only binary categorization is in practice and the other people are „Othered . Generally, the understanding of gender is influenced by the perspectives of social constructs.

Preethi Shenoy, in her novel, voices out the struggles faced by (others) people who identify themselves other than the assigned gender at the time of birth. The societal framework that restricts people from expressing the biological changes from within causes disturbances in the natural order and creates a total lack of systematic organization in many lives. Shenoy tries to bring these issues in light in order to seek solution for this never-ending crisis.

KEYWORDS: Gender, Queerness, Trans, social Construct

1. INTRODUCTION

Queer Theory analyses how certain rules have

been institutionalised and made legal for practice and how the expressions of sexuality and gender other than regulated forms are stigmatized. Queer theory was after Gay and Lesbian studies has been popularized in the academics which is now broadly called as LGBT or Queer theory. The theory examines and questions inflexible identity categories, gender and sexual norms and the treatment that these hegemonic standards legitimize.

Queer theory, which is often times referred to as the deconstruction of LGBT studies, undermines sexual and gender identities in order to let and promote many unrestricted explanations and analysis of cultural circumstances. It makes the assumption that gender expressions and sexual activities, as well as any notions that connect them to prescribed identities and classify them as normal and deviant sexualities or genders, are socially produced and provide the fundamental social meaning by rejecting the idea that gender and sexuality are prerequisite criteria defined by biology; therefore amenable to scientific evaluation. In accordance with predetermined ideas of morality and truth, Queer theory thus builds upon and follows feminist theory by rooting its analysis (Introduction to Queer theory).

The Rule Breakers, by Preethi Shenoy discusses the social standards that women in the 19th century had to adhere to, the challenges encountered by various characters pertaining to different spheres

of the society, child education, the operation of Non-Governmental Organizations, friendships, love and slightly but effectively touching upon Gay relationship addressing the difficulties faced by the character who is set to break the stereotype of societal norms and define sexuality and gender in accordance with Queer theory.

The protagonist Veda is given as an example of the „rule follower and her husband Bhuvan makes a sharp contrast as the rule breaker by breaking one of the most uncompromising rules marking his sexuality as Gay. Shenoy illustrates the struggles faced by Bhuvan because of his homosexual identity. He conceals his sexuality on purpose and he stays in sexual relationship with his friend Vikky even after getting married to Veda. Bhuvan's sexual identity is put to question by Veda when she finds out his secret affair.

The binary gender structure plays a major role in the lives of the female characters as well as those of the characters of the opposite sex in Shenoy's novel *The Rule Breakers*. In a similar vein, homosexuality's normative tendency or cultural framework limits the lives of gay and lesbian people and breeds dejection and despair. In this novel, Shenoy explores Veda's experiences of both freedom and subjugation, as well as the anguish of Veda's homosexual husband. It also looks into Veda's feminist viewpoint and her husband's struggles related to his sexual orientation. In addition to discussing the distinctions between heterosexuality and homosexuality, this particular work of literature also discusses the pre-existing norms by which the „deviant people are looked down and left to tolerate the sexual bigotry prevailing.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Many critics and writers like Simon de Beauvoir,

Judith Butler, Virginia Woolf and others have spoken out against the cultural paradigm concerning gender and sexuality. Discussing gender as an argument, there are pre-existing set of roles assigned and it is noted that not only people who choose their identity by sexual preferences are considered „deviant but also people who carries out activities or perform roles out of the rulebook as in deviating from the constituted gender roles are identifies as deviants as well.

The protagonist Veda undergoes mistreatment based on gender roles even with her parents. She is not allowed to study further intending a woman doesn't have to go to work it's only a man's responsibility to provide for the family. Veda comes out against this tyranny and declares that she would complete her education after getting married. Throughout the novel, Veda manages to continue studying despite the fact that things are becoming more and more difficult for her. She at one point of time questions herself doubting her self-worth, Is this all there is to a girl's existence, she wonders to herself? Get married and move out of the house you've lived in your whole life? What was she getting herself into? Why hadn't she paid attention to what Suraj had to say and spoken up? Why didn't she have the guts to speak up for herself and say what it was that she wanted? . (54). In an article it is mentioned as Women were expected to do just one thing and that was to stay at home and take care of their children. If a woman did choose to work outside of her home, there were few jobs to choose from. Most women worked as clerks, nurses, school teachers and other traditionally female activities. Women began to grow frustrated and they realized that something had to change (Seybold Report 30).

Kanika is such a woman that wants to bring

about a change in the lives of every woman that silently battles her life with domestic problems. Her forward thinking with modern views, she stands out from the crowd of Kailash Mandir Colony. Veda sees Kanika as an inspiration and tries to develop the attitude and confidence by imitating her. Veda was chosen as the bride in order to be duly serving the in laws, taking care of the households and importantly to be meek and obedient in listening to the orders paying the gender roles of a woman, especially a married woman. When she wanted to go to Sankalp along with Kanika to teach the children, she was considered the deviant or the rule breaker in Shenoy's words.

3. METHODOLOGY:

Gender identity and Sexual orientations are one of the Current Literary trends and books like Simon de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, and Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* address contemporary gender issues related to it. Woolf stresses the terrain of the feminine world, paying special attention to a woman's demands and expectations whereas, de Beauvoir states society imposes manners, attitudes, activities and language that are congruent with the biological sexual identity of a baby. Answer in the form of the queen of the game, an an an a, in a moment, and in a moment (18). He and „She are mere words that encapsulate the mindset surrounding attributes that are seen feminine and masculine. The roles, attitudes, skills, and speech patterns that are acceptable in society are in fact influenced by a person's biological identity as man or woman. Homosexuality people's lives are hindered by conventional heterosexuality, much like gender discrimination. The binary notion of male and female is an offspring of the concept of man and woman sexual attraction and

connection. Bhuvan advances his relationship with his friend Vikky and it is later disclosed a homosexual relationship. His attraction and closeness to the same sex person will not be accepted and certainly will be termed unorthodox, knowing this very well, he kept his relationship concealed and to avoid his mother's nagging, he involuntarily marries Veda only to worsen the situation. If it had been otherwise if his mother had forward thought and broad frame of mind to accept homosexuality, Bhuvan and Veda would have been saved from all struggles and troubles.

CONCLUSION:

Sex and Gender are not pre-determined or at least it cannot be pre-determined.

Biological sex assigned at birth need not be gender that a person evolves into as they grow. There should be a room for the people of all sex as well. Preeti Shenoy marks her support to create a harmonious environment including every people despite all the differences and tries to bring about a change in the society she reflects the crisis in her novels by depicting the struggles faced by the other people as a mirror portrayal of the real life happening. Sexuality as mentioned earlier, is not entirely based on the binary structure of male and female and the sexual attraction between a male-female relationship. Shenoy throws light on this unaddressed issue asking the readers, critics and common people to come out of their misconceptions and to gladly receive people of other sex and to make them feel included.

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BLOOMING OF PHOOL AND PUSHA RANI/JAYA: SELF-ACTUALIZATION IN *Laapataa Ladies*

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ABSTRACT

Bollywood occasionally touches on the themes of feminism and women empowerment. But when it does, the film's societal commentary and compelling plot makes it an absolute gem. *Laapataa Ladies* (2024), directed by Kiran Rao, though not a blockbuster in theatres, received accolades from critics and audience with its OTT release. The swapped identities of two newly wedded brides and the ensuing chaos deftly weave the plot of the story, navigating the complexities of gender roles and social conformations. The epiphany of the female characters to flee from the labyrinth of patriarchal paradox can be interpreted through the lens of Self-Actualization Theory propounded by Abraham Maslow, the American psychologist. This Humanist Theory, explores the five different steps involved on realising one's complete potential to actualise themselves for the personal growth. The female protagonists and their self-realisation in *Laapataa Ladies* unwind the societal and cultural pressure to fit in.

Keywords: Laapata Ladies, Gender roles, Humanist Psychology, Abraham Maslow, Self-Actualisation Theory.

INTRODUCTION

Laapataa Ladies, an adaptation of Biplab Goswami's story 'Two Brides', is directed by Kiran Rao under Aamir Khan Productions. It deviates itself from the conventional mainstream

Bollywood flicks with its gripping story line and exemplary casting. Set in the rural village of Soorajmukhi, the movie revolves around two female characters, Phool and Jay/Pushpa Rani who have been mistakenly swapped places by their husbands on a local train. The patriarchal prohibition to unveil bride's face and calling out husband's name exacerbate the scene. Phool is lost in a station where she befriends Manju Ma who provides her shelter and food. Jay deliberately masks her identity under the name of Pusha Rani with a wrong residential address. Her existence at Phool's husband Pankaj's home is shrouded in mystery until it is discovered that she conceals her identity in order to pursue her goal of becoming an expert in organic farming. Though the ladies are missing (*Laapataa*), the voyage aids them to recognise their potential for personal growth. Abraham Maslow's Theory of Self Actualization can be applied to explore the psyche of the female characters to substantiate the way in which they assert themselves. Abraham Maslow, the American Psychologist, in *A Theory of Human Motivation* postulates five conditions for a person to grow and actualize themselves. Arranged in a hierarchical pyramid, these conditions include physiological need, safety needs, the love needs, the esteem needs and the need for self-actualisation. The characters delve into each hierarchical need to reach the pinnacle of their self-discovery.

OBJECTIVES

- * To analyse the role of patriarchal ideologies in putting women in a tug-of-war between conformity and self-autonomy.
- * To inquire the cultural pressure in inculcating gender biases.
- * To explore the psyche of female characters evolving and developing in each step of Abraham Maslow's Self-Actualization Theory so as to demonstrate the women empowerment through the lens of Humanist Psychology.
- * To assert the importance of film as a cultural medium to question the patriarchal practices, the emblematic obstructions to the betterment of female existence.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Laapataa Ladies movie review by Baradwaj Rangan in the channel Galatta Plus, delves deep into the technical and thematic discussion on the film. The video appreciates the adept and subtle portrayal of the sensitive themes of Indian womanhood, the perfect cast and excellent cinematography.

B. Geetha's article, *(Un)concealing the Comedy: The Cinematic Aesthetics of Veiling in Laapataa Ladies*, explores the satirical undertones of portraying gendered proscriptions, patriarchal rigidity and identity politics. She inquires the symbolism of veiling and unveiling, the dynamics of truth and deception. The veil, whether red or black, moves beyond the mere symbolism of oppression. *A Theory of Human Motivation*, published by Abraham Maslow, explicates the five level needs required for the

personal growth of human beings. Starting from the basic physiological needs, humans climb the further levels of emotional needs and safety needs to achieve the apex of self-actualization. This school of psychology believes in the goodness of human beings and their inmost ability to reach the self-accomplishment.

Psychological Bases of Education by Dr. N. K. Arjun is a comprehensive book on Educational Psychology. Under the umbrella term of motivation, the author discusses the Hierarchy of Motives discussed by Maslow in a lucid way. The graphical representation of the motive ladder in the book provides a coherent understanding of the Self-Actualization Theory of Abraham Maslow.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The proposed paper has been proceeded with an analytical inquiry to explore the tenets of Maslow's Self Actualization Theory in the movie *Laapataa Ladies*. The odyssey of the female protagonists through each stratum of self-fulfilment is scrutinised through the theoretical lens of the Hierarchy of Motives. Phool and Pushpa Rani/Jaya achieve the zenith of self-actualization by

gradually proceeding from the basics of physiological needs. Besides the textual analysis of the primary text, i.e., *Laapataa Ladies*, supplementary information are procured from the secondary resources of articles and YouTube videos.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Phool and Jaya masked under the name Pushpa Rani, traverse through the rungs of hierarchy of needs propounded by Abraham Maslow. Both have realised their true potential only after their basic needs have been met. The actualized self of the protagonists in the climax can be

interpreted in the light of Maslow's theory.

1. Physiological Needs

As Dr. A. K. Arjunan puts, physiological needs include need for oxygen, water, food, sleep rest and sex

(464). Here in case of Phool, she is left alone in an unknown station at night as her identity has been swapped by Jaya cladded in same red saree and face veil. She spends the night at the ladies' toilet without food and water even after a long exhausting train journey. When she is provided with a bread pakoda, she eats it ravenously to mitigate her physiological hunger drive (*Laapataa Ladies* 00:35:39-00:35:49). She is also provided shelter to repose by Chotu, later by Manju Mai. The perplexity of being caught in such a chaos is slowly relieved by meeting the basic physiological need of Phool. Though being a stranger to the Deepak family, Jaya is also given food and board, alleviating the initial bafflement.

2. Safety Needs

According to Maslow, If the physiological needs are relatively well gratified, there then emerges a new set of needs, which we may categorize roughly as the safety needs (376). The absence of danger is quintessential need to move further towards the personal growth. Phool begins to experience a safety environment at Manju Mai's residence, as Jaya safely finds her shelter in Deepak's home from her callous husband.

3. Belongingness and Love Need

This includes needs to have friends, to loved and accepted by other people, need for affiliation and to belong to a network of social relation (Arjunan 464). Phool makes her bond strong with Manju Mai, Chotu and Abdul. She feels to

be loved and stars to belong. While, Jaya also begins to be accepted by Deepak family when she befriends his mother, Babhi Poonam and his friend Gunjan. Jaya's sister solidarity with Poonam and blossomed silent romance with Gunjan gratify the third need proposed by Maslow.

4. The Esteem Needs

By firmly based self-esteem, we mean the which is soundly based upon real capacity achievement and respect from others (Maslow 381). It includes attention, recognition and appreciation from others. Phool receives accolades from Manju Mai for preparing the sweet *Kalakand* and making it a big hit in the stall. Even the customers eulogise the sweet first class (*Laapataa Ladies* 1:03:32). Manju Mai even rewards her with some amount saying mehnat ka paisa he (it's the money for your hardwork (*Laapataa Ladies*, my trans. 1:28:40). Phool's need for high self esteem is gratified while Jaya receives acknowledgement from Poonam and Gunjan for her profound expertise in organic farming. Though she does not want to unveil her identity as Pushpa Rani, the appreciations could have re-kindled the desire within her to pursue her studies.

5. The Need for Self-Actualization

Here, the individuals actualize themselves and recognise their true potential for personal growth. What a man can be, he must be (382), says Maslow. Phool's assertion to find a work in her conjugal life, her removal of face veil and calling her husband by name contrary to the traditional patriarchal strictures account for her self-actualization. Though knuckles under the authority of fate in-between, Jaya finds the conducive soil for the gratification of self

actualization and boards tarin to Dehradun to continue her studies.

CONCLUSION

Self-Actualization is an unveiling process of hidden potentials buried deep within the innermost recesses of human psyche. By dismantling the traditional custom of unveiling the face before public, the female protagonists of the movie, *Laapataa Ladies*, uncover their hidden potentials and reaches the apex of self-actualization. Their journeys run in a parallel track, showcasing the myriad steps involved in reaching the pinnacle of self- discovery. Abraham Maslow's theory of Self-Actualization substantiates their reel- life story, making the movie an ever-best portrayal of empowered womanhood.

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Exploring Environmental and Ecological crisis in Charlotte McConaghy's novel *Migrations*.

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Abstract:

Charlotte McConaghy's novel *Migrations*, which can be considered as a cli-fi novel, unfolds against a backdrop of climate change and environmental crisis, offering a poignant exploration of humanity's impact on the natural world. This seminar paper delves into the novel's environmental themes, employing ecocriticism as a lens to understand the intricate relationship between characters and their surroundings.

Franny Stone, the main character, sets off on a voyage filled with both environmental and emotional turmoil. We examine Franny's attempt to trace the last Arctic tern migration from an ecocritical point of view. Her voyage serves as a metaphor for a larger human struggle with ecological responsibility, and the book makes us consider our own responsibilities in light of today's environmental issues.

McConaghy weaves an intricate tapestry of human-nature connections, portraying characters as intertwined with the ecosystems they inhabit. This analysis employs ecocriticism to dissect how the author navigates themes of loss, resilience, and the consequences of environmental degradation. Franny's commitment to the terns becomes a metaphor for our collective responsibility toward endangered species and threatened environments.

The novel *Migrations* offers a compelling narrative that goes beyond the traditional bounds of storytelling. By applying ecocriticism, we gain insight into the novel's profound environmental commentary. McConaghy's work challenges readers to confront the urgency of environmental issues as well as ecological imbalances making *Migrations* a powerful literary contribution to the ongoing discourse on our relationship with nature.

Key words: Cli-Fi, Ecocriticism, endangered biodiversity.

1. INTRODUCTION

Charlotte McConaghy's novel *Migrations* serves as a powerful examination of environmental destruction and human accountability through an ecocritical perspective. The story centers on Franny Stone who embarks on a mission to follow the final migration of Arctic terns in a world experiencing widespread extinction. This journey underscores the severe consequences of climate change while exploring the deep connection between nature and humanity. Analyzing the novel from an ecocritical point of view reveals the intricate relationship between ecological disasters and personal grief. McConaghy's vivid depiction of a deteriorating planet acts as a compelling call for immediate environmental action.

2. METHODOLOGY

The roots of eco-literature can be traced back to the early works of the American transcendentalists like Emerson and Thoreau. Their works paved the way for celebrating each and everything in Nature and advocated a spiritual aura to the Natural World. They believed that a deep connection with Nature will make our life richer and more meaningful. Their writings have initiated an eco-literary movement that continues to evolve today.

The emergence of modern Ecocriticism can be traced from late 20th century. This period marked a urgency for environmental concerns, the development of various ecological philosophies and a need for literature's engagement with growing ecological problems

3. CLIMATE FICTION

Climate fiction is a new branch of literature that deals with the effects of climate changes on human as well as non-human society. Authors use literature to explore implications of climate change, global warming and the resultant imbalances in ecosystem. This genre deals with rising temperatures, melting ice caps, floods, water pollutions, deforestation, soil erosion, extreme weather events etc. This type of stories help to invoke a clarion call for the humanity to think about the urgency of mitigating climate change and inspire a strong need for sustainable practices. Cli fi fiction also considers the serious subject of species extinction due to human interruption into their ecosystem. Due to this there is the loss of biodiversity. Authors also take into consideration the ecological imbalances, the importance of conserving the endangered species and moral dilemmas surrounding human interaction with wildlife.

4. MIGRATIONS

The very first line of the novel *Migrations* foretells what it is going to narrates to the readers. The animals are dying. Soon we will be alone here. (3) Charlotte MacConaghy's *Migrations* is a beautiful novel about a woman who is always running from her childhood, her mistakes in life and also from her memories. Now she is undertaking a migration from Greenland to Antarctica along with world's last flock of Arctic terns who is having their final migration.

At the outset of the novel , Franny Stone is ready to follow the last migration of arctic terns. She approaches the captain of the last boat who might take her onboard to follow the birds. She manages to persuade Ennis Marlone to let her join the crew of the boat named Saghani by telling him that she will show them where the fish are. The ocean's fish are like any other species on earth are disappearing or already gone. Just we have been steadily killing off the animals of the land and sky, the fishermen have fished the sea almost to extinction.(6). Franny's conversation with the fisher crew reveals more about the pathetic condition of the sea. She indicates that fishing is a dying trade. The ocean is nearly empty. You have taken and taken and now there is nothing left . (17) *Migrations* can be termed as a dystopian novel. Every so often we are reminded of how our planet has transformed. It gives us a vivid picture of how we will be left very soon with no animals on the world. It talks about how species after species being declared first endangered and then officially extinct. (24) There are no more monkeys in the wild, no chimps or apes or gorillas nor indeed any animals that once lived in rainforests. The big cats of savannahs haven't been seen in years, nor have any of the exotic

creatures we once went on safari to glimpse. There are no bears in the once- frozen north, or reptiles in the too hot south, and the last known wolf in the world died in captivity last winter. There is hardly anything wild left, and this is a fate we are, all of us, intimately aware of. (24) Franny describes about her view of a sea gull squaking and caterwauling in the sea , a scene that she watches for long time until it disappeared from her view as they have become a rare view now.

Through the words of Franney's husband, the ornithologist Niall Lynch, we get a terrifying picture of the present animal world which is gradually vanishing from the earth: With the burning of fossil fuels we changed the world, we have killed it. As the climate grew hotter and the sea levels rose, the Bermuda petrels were washed from their burrows and drowned.....polar bears are gone, thanks to that rise in temperature. Sea turtles have gone, the beaches where they once lay their eggs eroded by those rising seas. The ringtail possum which could not survive temperatures above thirty degree Celsius was decimated by a single heat wave. Lions perished in never ending droughts, rhinos were lost to poaching. And on it goes . (44) From the words of Niall it becomes so evident that the government is also indifferent towards the disastrous condition of our planet. Once there were glorious winged beasts that roamed in the sky- world, and now they are going.....they are being violently and indiscriminately slaughtered by our indifference. It has been decided by our leaders that economic growth is more important. That the extinction crisis is an acceptable trade for their gree. (167)

As the novel moves forth the reader gets more drastic pictures like the pollution of sea. As we draw close enough to see, I realize that it is an

enormous island of plastic and there are fish and seabirds and seals dead upon its shore. (1) The menace of wilderness haunts the north. When Franny visits Yellowstone she hears songs of birds. A world without wilderness is not only a practical problem to be solved, but a human tragedy. McConaghy has a keen sense of knowledge about the web of interconnectedness that the humans have created to support their own wellbeing and advancement.

As it demonstrates what is at risk and how the world will alter after the animals are gone. In elegant and evocative prose, *Migrations* is the best kind of environmental fiction. It is powerful and melancholic how these losses are interwoven more gradually throughout the novel and included as part of the main plot. A narrative of sadness, the fading away of the birds. The fading away of animals. How lonely it will be when it's just us. (62) Born in Australia with an Irish mother, Franny has always been a wanderer, driven by abandonment and loneliness as well as by the feeling that she doesn't belong. Franny Stone is at the same time fragile and tough. She can keep up with sailors, drink hard, dive in frigid water, and comply with the crew's strict requirements while pursuing her dreams. Along with being a prisoner of her past traumas and haunting memories, Franny's fascinating and frequently turbulent background is woven into the story as it follows the Sagle voyage south.

The novel is undoubtedly an eye opener to the depletion of fish population. It is overfishing which leads to the decrease in fish community. It has a drastic effect on the food chain. It also give way to the loss of keystone species that play a critical role in marine ecosystems which can result in certain species becoming

dominant and disturb the natural balance. This results in species extinction.

As an animal lover and a vegetarian Franney is not at ease to be on board in a fishing vessel. Am I really going to stand here and watch as these creatures are slaughtered? she asks herself when the harvest begins. How are they different from the birds, whose lives I might very well give my own to protect?(82)

The language of *Migrations* is beautiful and poetic, expressing a deep respect for nature. Franny is deeply affected by the loss of her contribution to the planet's devastation and its consequences. When one of the crew in the fishing vessel describes Franney's weariness she thinks in a very poignant way: It's not life I'm tired of, with its astonishing ocean currents and layers of ice and all the delicate feathers that make up a wing. It's myself. (101)

5. CONCLUSION

Migrations is a beautifully rendered story of a woman's journey through a world in which we've lost the animals we still, in the real world, have a chance to save. In her acknowledgments, McConaghy writes, I want to acknowledge the wild creatures of this earth and say that this book was written for them out of sadness and regret for those that have been wiped out and for love of those that remain. I truly,

deeply hope that the world without animals depicted in *Migrations* does not come to pass. (260)

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THE PANGS OF TRAUMA AND THREADS OF ATTACHMENT. ENVISAGING THROUGH THARUN MOORTHY'S SAUDI VELLAKKA' WITH JOHN BOWLBY'S ATTACHMENT THEORY

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"We all bear scars, Dorian. Mine just happen to be more visible than most" -Sarah J. Maas,
Throne of Glass

ABSTRACT:

The characteristics of wounds are that some just bleed a little and heal on their own, then there are others that can take quite a time to stop the pang and finally, there are the worst - that can never heal, that take with it the suffering body to end the throbbing pain. Going through the Malayalam movie 'Saudi Vellakka' (2022), directed by Tharun Moorthy that showcases the poignancy of wounded individuals, and was one of the best cinematic experiences that the post-covid Malayalam film industry has experienced. Displaying the delay in the legal proceedings and the people who are

trapped in the labyrinth of legalities, the film raises questions on crime, punishment, and repentance, portrayed through the prism of life. The paper aims to envisage primarily on the themes of trauma and attachment that pervade through the characters of the movie considering the following premises: -

- * How trauma is channeled by different characters.
- * How traumatic experiences mould people - strengthening some, thrashing and perishing others, confusing and exacting for a few.
- * How John Bowlby's concept of attachment finds its expression among the selected

characters of the movie.

- * How Bowlby's phases of mourning can be applied.

Keywords: Trauma, attachment, Saudi Vella Mourning, John Bowlby, Attachment theor

INTRODUCTION

Envisaging into the trauma and dilem experienced by a person or a group in real reel can be like throwing a boomerang and t watching certain art forms or movies can its be a traumatizing act. As evident from the ti the paper aims to indulge in the trauma a memory that permeates through the charact of the Malayalam movie, 'Saudi Vellakka' (2022), directed by Tharun Moorthy. poignant portrayal of the local flavor, 'Saudi Vellakka' deviates from most of the mainstrea movies, delving into the life of a local area call 'Saudi' located near Cochin. More often th not, life perils under those unsaid words th that of the outspoken truths. The entire mov that revolves around this fact, opens up with wholehearted public apology to those beautif performances that got trimmed in the final cu and to all those souls with whom they fought denied, hurt, and have forgotten in the course the movie making ('Saudi Vellakka'). The peop represented in the movie can be grouped und the aforementioned adjectives- the ones wh

struggle and compete with their lives, who get denied of their basic rights, who are hurt and carry the bleeding live sores, who are forgotten not just by others but by themselves while they smother their lives in their insecurities.

METHODOLOGY

The paper envisages into the textual analysis of the movie *Saudi Vellakka*, delving into the concept of the trauma experienced by the characters within the shade of Attachment theory and mourning stages. The foundation of Attachment Theory¹, one of the most celebrated child development theories, was set in the books of Edward John Mostyn Bowlby, the renowned British psychologist, psychiatrist, and psychoanalyst. Bowlby's theory of attachment revolves around the child and his/her relationship with his mother. Bowlby extends the theory to older ones and into relationships other than mother and child. In the final part of the paper, Bowlby's idea on mourning and bereavement concerning the loss of an individual's loved one is discussed on behalf of the character Nazi from the same movie.

ANALYSIS

I have a smack of Hamlet myself quotes Samuel Taylor Coleridge (Roberts xxvi). Hamlet's crisis reminds the dilemma and indecisiveness one has encountered at one point or the other, the revisiting of the existential, traumatic, procrastinating tragic hero who is all pervasive in part among every one of us. The trauma of the characters that infiltrates through the narrow prism of the movie gradually finds its way toward the audience and acts as the prime exchange. It is an assault from outside that breaks into the space one occupies as a person and damages the interior (Kai Erikson 455). The definition of trauma by Erickson throws light into the plight of the characters of the movies and its portrayal

of how trauma, befalls as a huge blow, quite unexpected in its approach, devastates the lives often beyond repair. To be effable about one's traumatic encounters itself can be painful in its course. It has taken years of hard work, considerable toil, and awareness from different sections of the world to break the shackles around the term trauma to emancipate it from a purely physical outlook. A bleeding hand receives more attention than an ailing heart. The tangibility, sight of the gore, and the often- accompanied painful whimpers of the victim make the former one a graver incident than the latter. On the contrary, the impalpable affliction and the lack of direct bloodshed along with the reluctance of the victim to speak out about their emotional and mental ailment on most occasions, endows mental trauma a less significant stature. Thus, it is imperative to come across individuals who share their personal stories of depression, bipolar disorder, and an array of emotional and mental unrest, which can often serve as a lighthouse for the vulnerable ones in their silent struggles.

THE SECURE BASE- AISHA AND SATHAAR

The idea of a secure base as put forward by Bowlby finds its place in the relation between children and their parents or caretakers. A secure base gives a person a foundation to explore the world and develop greater autonomy, growth, competence, eventually resulting in better self-regulation and psychological development (Simpson et al. 223). For Sathaar his mother Aisha is the secure base and anything that disrupts it is intolerable for him. When he bursts out, *Enik ningalu mathre ollu* (I have you only), (Saudi Vellakka, my trans.) to Aisha, the undertone is his attachment to her and his profound fear of losing her. Loss of a loved person is one of the most intensely painful

experiences any human being can suffer. And not only is it painful to experience but it is also painful to witness, if only because we are so impotent to loss help (Bowlby, Loss 15). Overhearing Nazi's taunts on Sathaar in his decision to support Aisha in the case, Aisha decides to move out of the house. Aisha's decision puts Sathaar in shock and helplessness as he fails to convince Aisha to revert her decision. Added to this was the accusation of Britto, Sathaar's bosom friend on the same. Sathaar simultaneously lost his secure base and had the gut feeling that he was solely responsible for it. The disappearance of Sathaar after the incident stands as an enigma, whether he absconds or takes his own life, is a choice left to the audience.

TRAVERSING THROUGH THE MOURNING PHASES- NAZI

Nazi is indeed the character who has embraced all the hatred initially only to reveal her vulnerability towards the end. The wife of Sathaar and daughter-in-law of Aisha, Nazi vehemently opposed Sathaar in helping Aisha with the court proceedings. Hailing from a family history of a prodigal brother who was involved in money laundering, Nazi has a clear picture of the legal labyrinth they are up to. However, the unexpected turn of events including Sathaar's disappearance devastated her.

According to Bowlby, the first phase of mourning is numbing which usually lasts from a few hours to a week after the incident and may be interrupted by outbursts of extremely intense distress and/or anger (Bowlby, Loss 70). Nazi's numbness is conspicuous as her character sharply contrasts from the first half of the movie after Sathaar's disappearance. The second phase starts with, yearning and searching for the lost figure,

which can indeed last from months to years (70). Nazi desperately comes to Aisha seeking help and accompanies Britto and her father to identify unidentified corpses, in her desperate attempt to find at least the mortal remains of Sathaar. As the movie progresses, Nazi is shown as highly disorganized' and in a state of utter despair which marks the third stage. However, the second and third stage often gets entangled in Nazi's life. She concomitantly searches for Sathaar while still in desperation. Nazi reacts bitterly in the police station when Britto and Nazi's father ask the Sub Inspector for Sathaar's death certificate. Her whimpering rambles then show that she was still hopeful and went to the police station with the expectation of an inquiry rather than having a closure with a death certificate. The fourth and final stage of mourning as proposed by Bowlby was a state of organization which, unfortunately, Nazi never attains while she keeps on pining away in grief.

CONCLUSION

Carrying trauma and living with it, isn't a walk in the park, the struggles and the perils that accompany it burn from inside out. Traveling with the characters of the movie enables the viewers to share a piece of their trauma, even though in a less intense manner. The study particularly focuses on Aisha, her son Sathaar and his wife Nazi from the movie, even though most of the characters of the movie suffer trauma at some point or the other. The paper employs John Bowlby's Attachment theory to analyze the underpinnings of the bond between Aisha and Sathaar and the theory of mourning to permeate over Nazi. Sathaar's case throws a conundrum directly and indirectly, influencing others around him. For Sathaar, his mother has been the secure base and her decision to leave him left him

perplexed. Analyzing the mother's role in Bowlby's attachment theory, Marga Vicedo argues that Bowlby considers family as a 'natural home group', and any breakdown of the group would result in a disastrous event (406). The sudden spur of emotion by Aisha resulted in the disintegration of their family beyond repair.

Nevertheless, the perseverance of Aisha is not to be belittled as she is the sole survivor and her journey was almost alone. The one who visibly perished in the struggles was Nazi, which is evident from her mourning stages. Struggling to reach the final morning stage Nazi secludes herself in the prison of the previous stages.

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SURVIVING CHILDHOOD TRAUMA AND ADULTHOOD OF NYNKA THROUGH LENS OF HER MOTHER ANYA, IN SUSAN SCHAEFFER S ANYA.

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ABSTRACT

Childhood is the most beautiful, adventurous and innocent time in a livelihood, on the stages of growth every being encourages for adulthood alike natural habitation. On this event a certain group of American writers came into discuss an American response to holocaust massacre, in this group Susan Schaeffer Fromberg writes aftermath of war in the lives of Poland natives and the survival of Anya for an independent life. The paper attempts to give some thoughts on Anya s daughter Nynka who witnessed the whole journey of survival, though as a child the graph of the event was not understood, but later which affected her identity on growing in an American world dwelling a serious impact through childhood events. In adult life the story is said from the perspective of Anya the mother letting an understanding of parenthood as a struggling single mother.

Keywords: *Childhood trauma, Holocaust, Parent s role, Adult trauma, Social*

1. INTRODUCTION

Susan Fromberg Schaeffer writes on American fiction, of 1970 s her fictions are wrote with elaborate detailing on the character structure and here expresses their emotions in the deeper level and follows historical connection to the writings and with accordance of each situation the rise and flow of every character is a journey to self a

search unsaid boundaries. Norma Rosen novel Anya (1974) covers the struggle family in the time of Holocaust; the Savkin had to live the time of war. Nynka, the spent her childhood in the time of darkness it affected her adult self in future.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The novel is set and said from the life decisions of Nynka s mother Anya in scarcity of happiness. An understanding of an individual has become a slave of circumstances by doubting her existence human being and most commonly be widowed. Although the traits of a woman more careful on handling her child emotion and physically can be interpreted as a struggle, As Prof. Bruis suggests, "Women either struggle with pre-existing mental problems or the birth of a child can trigger childhood traumas and experiences. (P. Fiona) thus the whole aspect of mother manipulates the young free spirited person does Anya.

The story is said from her early teenage of traditional strong mother who survived at the early stage of life. Anya as a mother influenced from her mother in adapting nature of motherhood responsibilities. Although the situations were different Anya had to her daughter at the time were children were unsafe in concentration camps and then of

unending search of finding Nynka.

...The quest for family was much more than a search for relatives. It often involved some traumatic soul searching for children to rediscover their true identity. Those who had been infants when they were placed into hiding had no recollection of their biological parents or knowledge of their Jewish origins. The only family that most had known was that of their rescuers. Consequently, when relatives or Jewish organizations discovered them, they were typically apprehensive and sometimes resistant to yet another change. (Authors, Holocaust Museum)

The question of concern is that when and what could lead to childhood trauma, at the age where everyone deserves to know new things and newer understandings like the birth stage. For the same reason each child is awakened to realization of reality only through the level of challenges they ought to face for where they belong and kind of opportunities, they get in realizing their adventure, as one would say individuals would go through three kinds of birth, the first at the birth stage and the second at the physical birth the stage that witness curious questions and answers, they understand the answers which are true in one side can be negative in another world, like the world of another child. In the same appetite of knowledge every child craves a new self formation. Susan Schaeffer in *Anya* highlights the post holocaust novel and shares experience of many in this human massacre, the main story travels through *Anya*, the protagonist in understanding her daughter and fails in the path of battling the motherhood *Anya* possesses.

While evaluating *Anya*'s childhood and *Nynka*'s childhood in comparison of analysis is needed; *Anya* on the path of explaining her story from a

rich family background and traditional beliefs. Her parents, siblings all of them lived together, being the eldest she was the favorite of her father and her keen interest in knowledge and concern about sisters and brothers. But the situation is not same in the case of *Nynka* who had live in the frontier of war, she has no connection to the father figure and her best part as a child was in someone others home being a foster child then taking another step by getting back with her mother again. On the troubling teens she had to go and take decisions on her own.

To bring up the story as of a comparison between mother and daughter was different traumatic description because of the familial influence, *Anya* in her childhood had to take things in the comfort zone of father love and the same concerns turned as a nightmare in the case of *Nynka* because her father was a revolutionist who got killed in the war. The absent father figure not only impacted in the early childhood, but in past when she was in her mother's womb.

The condition of trauma in adulthood is passed on the next generation, when the novel portrays *Anya*'s husband as a revolutionary spirit and who just vanished in the holocaust *Anya* who was carrying the child at the time in her womb had experienced severe depression, loneliness and that too seen at the episode of *Nynka*'s birth in the hospital. Thus all the instances leading to the understanding that *Anya* whose life can be categorized after and before being a mother and that took the turn becoming an individual especially in a patriarchal world of expectation, but staying with the same, excluding the happiness for that sake of sense generated from the accepted motherhood regime. The topic dwells the childhood of *Nynka* as an after affect of *Anya* or the parent whose decisions to be a mother but though the historical aspects it must not be alienated.

The novel sets the preliminary knowledge that war has impacted the lives in many paths, but the children of wars, especially new mothers of the time who went into dilemma of asking the question whether to keep the children with them or give them someone who will take care of them, at the time were nobody was believed, anything can happen for hunger, a community was hunted. To an extent the impact of religious beliefs stays a pointed view on bringing up the child, on the time humans were disgraced on the basis of community, hunted to death, it was the darkest of the time and religious existence were challenged.

The life cycle of Anya later then transferred completely in the light of Nynka, who in the new American identity had to be an American in core, on this imitation her mother's role just ended up being a spectator. The entire life of Anya has become a mirage. In analysis, trauma as an experience of living in the dark room, but also it is the light that foreshadowed from generations in a misconception of point of view. The life of Anya is set on the strong family tradition that co link between two cultures, the mother being a Russian migrated to Poland and her father who melt himself in the language of Polish culture. Although the family struggled in managing finance due to loss of her father's business and mother has to balance the daily lives of everyone in the family.

Towards Nynka, the third generation of the family grows as an intergenerational atmosphere on the outskirts of war, the impact of holocaust lights in each of these characters at their living stages on molding self. Identity issues are submerged with the historical trauma showing the impacts in managing relationships, although the cultural values has a strong limit in pertaining to any decision. In the case of the mother, she

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had to flee from own land to another world, the strong racial discrimination faced as Jew during the time which embarks a journey of becoming. But her true strands are laid to her daughters among which Anya is the eldest.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The meaning of the conducted research was on childhood trauma and its impact on a mother-daughter especially on a war survivor. The approach followed psychological approach that particular on dealing adulthood traumas and the research method is descriptive. The relevance of the topic is the struggle of human mind especially in dealing with relationships and mental maturity to accept other person's reality. Research method followed was qualitative and in the research process once the gap was found the idea of past trauma intervening the present especially in a mother-daughter relationship was an unavoidable subject.

CONCLUSION

Trauma acts an important role in every life, can challenge daily routines. As humans live in a civilized society everything was set in certain social rule and when this existing condition ignores the individual needs and always never pays attention to the happiness in patriarchal point of view. The idea is not indication of any gender specific objective to the mental health of an adult who was supposed to establish a relationship between mind and body is completely void.

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BEYOND WORDS: AMITAV GHOSH'S ECO-LITERARY TAPESTRY AND THE EMERGING LANDSCAPE OF CLIMATE FICTION

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Abstract

In the ever-evolving landscape of literature, a noteworthy trend has emerged—Climate Fiction or Cli-Fi—a genre that grapples with the ecological challenges of our time. Cli-Fi, acts as a captivating oracle, foretelling the tales of our planet's destiny and beckoning readers to heed the urgent whispers of a world grappling with environmental uncertainties. As our planet grapples with environmental challenges, authors are turning to storytelling as a powerful tool for fostering awareness and discourse. Amitav Ghosh, a luminary in contemporary English literature, has masterfully woven narratives that resonate with this pressing theme. His works, notably *The Hungry Tide* (2004) and *Gun Island* (2019), navigate the delicate

balance between human existence and the ecological crises unfolding globally. This research paper endeavors to delve into the nuances of Ghosh's contribution to climate fiction, shedding light on how his storytelling transcends mere entertainment, serving as a potent vehicle for environmental awareness. By examining the intricate interplay of human agency and environmental repercussions in Ghosh's novels, the paper aims to deepen our understanding of the evolving role of literature in addressing urgent global issues. In doing so, it contributes to the burgeoning field of environmental humanities, emphasizing the pivotal role of literature in shaping our perceptions and responses to the 2 multifaceted

challenges posed by climate change.

Keywords: Ecological Narrative
Environmental Humanities, Contemporary Literature, Climate Fiction

Introduction

Diving into the dynamic landscape of literature, a captivating trend surfaces—Climate Fiction, more commonly known as Cli-Fi—an innovative genre that wrestles with the intricate ecological challenges of our contemporary era. In this literary realm, authors confront the urgent whispers of our planet's destiny, employing storytelling as a potent tool to illuminate the interconnected threads of human existence and environmental fate. Naomi Klein's insights underscore the narrative power of climate fiction where the looming environmental crisis serves as a catalyst, propelling stories that delve into the consequences of inaction. We know that if we continue on our current path of allowing emissions to rise year after year, climate change will change everything about our world. Major cities will very likely drown, ancient cultures will be swallowed by the seas, and there is a very high chance that our children will spend a great deal of their lives fleeing and recovering from vicious storms and extreme droughts. And we don't have to do anything to bring about this future. All we must do is nothing. Just continue to do what we are doing now, whether it is counting on a techno-fix or tending to our

gardens or telling ourselves we're unfortunately too busy to deal with it (Klein, N., 2014, pp. 2).

In the context of Timothy Morton's ecological thought, Cli-Fi becomes a captivating oracle, foretelling the tales of our planet's destiny and urging readers to confront the urgent whispers of a world grappling with environmental uncertainties.

Morton's ecological thought, as outlined in his 2010 book *The Ecological Thought*, posits that recognizing the interconnectedness of all things unveils a profound understanding of our world, a perspective inherently echoed in the narratives of climate fiction.

He argues: The ecological crisis we face is so obvious that it becomes easy-for some, strangely or frighteningly easy-to join the dots and see that everything is interconnected. This is the ecological thought. And the more we consider it, the more our world opens up (Morton, 2010, pp. 1).

This seamless recognition of interconnectedness, as eloquently described by Morton, resonates with Ghosh's storytelling objectives. Ghosh's works emerge as a vivid representation of the ecological thought, encouraging readers to confront the interwoven tapestry of ecological challenges within our world. As this research paper scrutinizes Ghosh's portrayal of interconnectedness, it aligns seamlessly with Morton's contention that the ecological crisis is undeniably conspicuous. Highlighting how Ghosh's narratives make it 'strangely or frighteningly easy' for readers to comprehend these connections reinforces the notion that literature, especially within the realm of climate fiction, serves as a potent catalyst for cultivating environmental awareness. By scrutinizing the nuanced interplay of human agency and

environmental repercussions within Ghosh's novels, *The Hungry Tide* (2004) and *Gun Island* (2019), this paper aims to deepen our comprehension of literature's evolving role in addressing pressing environmental issues.

Traversing Ghosh's Literary Landscapes in *The Hungry Tide* and *Gun Island*

In the realm of literature, Ghosh emerges as a literary architect, fashioning a world where the intricate dance of human existence harmonizes with the pulsating cadence of ecological crises. With meticulous prose, he constructs narratives that transcend mere storytelling, intertwining the destinies of characters with the urgent whispers of environmental challenges. *The Hungry Tide* and *Gun Island* stand as testament to Ghosh's ability to weave intricate threads of human experience into the very fabric of our planet's uncertainties. Amitav Ghosh's deliberate choice of the Sundarbans as the setting for his narratives, particularly in the context of climate crisis, serves as a strategic and poignant literary decision. The Sundarbans, with its intricate web of rivers, islands, and mangrove forests, becomes more than a backdrop; it transforms into a dynamic character, a living testament to the interconnected relationship between human existence and environmental challenges. By situating his stories in this vulnerable and ecologically significant region, Ghosh amplifies the urgency of climate crisis, as the Sundarbans face the tangible impacts of rising sea levels and environmental instability.

In *The Hungry Tide*, Ghosh immerses readers in a literary voyage where the tides of human experience converge with the relentless forces of nature. Through the lens of this captivating narrative, Ghosh explores the intricate dance between characters navigating the unpredictable waters of the Sundarbans and the pulsating

rhythms of the environment they inhabit. As the characters grapple with their own destinies, the ebb and flow of their lives mirror the tidal forces shaping the ecological tapestry. The absence of distinct borders becomes a metaphorical reflection of the interconnectedness that permeates Ghosh's eco-literary landscape, a theme central to climate fiction.

There are no borders here to divide fresh water from salt, river from sea. The tides reach as far as three hundred kilometers inland and every day thousands of acres of forest disappear underwater, only to re-emerge hours later. The currents are so powerful as to reshape the islands almost daily—some days the water tears away entire promontories and peninsulas; at other times it throws up new shelves and sandbanks where there were none before (Ghosh, 2004, pp. 7). The daily disappearance and reappearance of thousands of acres of forest beneath the water's surface parallel the ever-present and shifting ecological uncertainties that thread through the fabric of climate fiction. Moreover, Ghosh's depiction of the currents reshaping the islands daily accentuates the dynamic and transformative nature of the environment. These powerful currents mirror the broader themes of adaptation and resilience, resonating with the evolving role of literature in addressing urgent global issues, particularly in the context of climate change. In Ghosh's portrayal of the Sundarbans, the fluid boundaries and transformative nature of the environment echo Timothy Morton's concept of interconnectedness and the fluidity of ecological systems. The tides, reshaping the landscape daily, become a living metaphor for Morton's 'hyperobjects'—entities distributed across time and space, like climate change itself. In the *Ecological Thought* I coined the term hyperobjects to refer to things that are massively distributed in time and space relative to humans

(Morton, 2013, pp. 1). Climate change is not confined to a specific location; it's a global phenomenon distributed across the entire planet. The impacts, such as rising temperatures and melting ice caps, unfold over extended periods making them difficult to grasp in a localized or immediate sense. By characterizing climate change as a hyperobject, we emphasize its vast and interconnected nature, highlighting that its effects extend far beyond individual experience or specific moments in time. Throughout history there has been a prevailing human perspective that nature exists solely to cater to our desires, leading to widespread exploitation. This mindset echoes in the actions of the inhabitants Morichjhapi portrayed in the novel. Ghosh subtly implies that the interference and intervention of human activities contribute to the heightened environmental vulnerabilities, as exemplified by the occurrence of two cyclones in *The Hungry Tide*. This resonates with the Bruno Latour concept of 'actants' which emphasizes the interconnectedness and agency of both human and non-human entities in shaping environmental outcomes. In the context of the novel, human interventions become active participants influencing the delicate balance of the Sundarbans. Amitav Ghosh's portrayal of dolphins and tigers serves as a poignant illustration of the looming threat of extinction for these species. Hadn't someone said that the intertidal forests should be named after crabs rather than mangroves since it was, they certainly not the crocodile or the tiger or the dolphin—who were the keystone species of the entire ecosystem? (Ghosh, 2004, pp. 142). In the cosmic narrative of environmental disequilibrium, the invasion of crabs unfolds as a manifestation of ecological disruption. Invasive alien species (IAS) are non-native species with a rapid spread potential that c

have negative ecological, environmental, and economic effects on the environments where they have been introduced (Masters and Norgrove 2010).

Aldo Leopold, a pioneering environmentalist, emphasized the importance of ethical and harmonious coexistence between humans and nature. Ghosh's portrayal aligns with Leopold's perspective, showcasing how human intervention can upset the delicate equilibrium of ecosystems. Leopold's concept of a 'land ethic' underscores the need for responsible and considerate human actions to maintain the balance of nature. In the novel *The Hungry Tide*, as human activities disrupt the delicate balance of the Sundarbans, Ghosh subtly engages with Leopold's ethical framework, prompting readers to reflect on the consequences of intervention and the imperative of cultivating a respectful relationship with the natural world. Once you learn to read the land, I have no fear of what you will do to it, or with it (Leopold, 1949). This connection underscores how the narratives penned by Ghosh become a vehicle for environmental education, aligning with Leopold's vision of cultivating a more ecologically informed and responsible society. The novel *Gun Island* weaves a narrative that intertwines myth, history, and contemporary environmental challenges. The protagonist, Deen Datta, finds himself

entangled in a story that spans continents and delves into the complexities of migration, climate change, and the interconnectedness of human lives with the natural world. As in *The Hungry Tide*, Ghosh invites readers to navigate the evolving landscapes of our planet, contemplating the profound implications of our actions in the face of a changing climate. Amitav Ghosh strategically directs readers' gaze toward the urgent issues of the ecological crisis, particularly

highlighting the stark realities of deforestation and species extinction within the Sundarbans. The islands of the Sundarbans are constantly being swallowed up by the sea; they're disappearing before our eyes (Ghosh, 2019, pp. 18) and temperatures are rising around the world because of global warming (Ghosh, 2019, pp. 214) causing sea-level to rise.

Deen Datta's transformative journey in *Gun Island*, marked by visits to the shrine in the Sunderbans, and later to Los Angeles and Venice, encapsulates a profound awakening. This pivotal moment, described as a kind of awakening, 'signifies a shift in Deen's perception, exposing him to dimensions of the world he had never fathomed. As he traverses diverse landscapes, Deen becomes a witness to the stark reality of a world teetering on the brink of increasing displacement and relentless transition. The juxtaposition of the Sundarbans, emblematic of ecological vulnerability, with bustling urban centers like Los Angeles and Venice, mirrors the interconnectedness of global challenges. Deen's newfound awareness reflects the novel's exploration of pressing issues such as climate change, migration, and the intricate threads that bind humanity to a shared destiny. This awakening not only transforms Deen's understanding of the world but also serves as a narrative device through which Amitav Ghosh prompts readers to confront the harsh realities of our era. It positions *Gun Island* as more than a tale of personal discovery; it is a reflection on the collective consciousness needed to address the urgent and interconnected challenges facing our rapidly changing planet.

Ghosh argues that the conventional notions of belonging and stability are disrupted in a world marked by climate change, environmental degradation, and global interconnectedness. We're in a new world. No one knows where

they belong any more, neither humans nor animals (Ghosh, 2019, pp. 97). Humans and animals alike find themselves navigating uncharted territories, facing the consequences of a rapidly transforming planet. Ghosh invites readers to contemplate the implications of these changes, emphasizing the interconnected fate of all living beings in this evolving world where traditional notions of belonging are being redefined by the complex forces of the Anthropocene. The idea that we are in a new world (97) aligns with Ghosh's assertion to his non-fiction work, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (2016). Here, Ghosh contends that the evolving climate reality has thrust us into uncharted territory, disrupting traditional notions of belonging and stability.

Just as both sides of a coin coexist, human activities and the environment are intertwined in a dynamic relationship. The picture on one side of the coin represents human actions, encompassing everything from industrial activities to lifestyle choices. The other side symbolizes the environment, encompassing ecosystems, climate, and the earth's resources. Any action or change on one side has a direct impact on the other. For instance, human activities contribute to environmental changes such as deforestation, pollution, and climate change, which, in turn, affect the well-being of ecosystems, wildlife, and the overall health of the planet. Conversely, natural events and shifts in the environment can significantly influence human societies, affecting agriculture, water resources, and even the habitability of certain regions. In *Gun Island*, Tipu explains to Deen clearly about greed and its effects: Hey, pops, I got news for you: greed's real, it's big. You got greed, I got greed, we all got greed..., it's not parasites we got inside of us, it's greed! If that's

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what a demon is, there's no way It's imaginary. Shit no! We're all demons... That's really bad news, because according to Hindu mythology when demons take over is when the world ends (Ghosh, 2019, pp. 113).

The metaphorical portrayal of greed as a force akin to a demon signifies its immense and potentially destructive power. The speaker suggests that greed is not an external parasite but an intrinsic quality residing within everyone. The reference to Hindu mythology adds depth to this exploration, introducing the notion that when demons take control, it marks the end of the world according to Hindu beliefs. This aligns with the idea that unchecked greed, symbolized here as a form of inner demon, has the potential to lead to catastrophic consequences for both individuals and the broader world. The depiction of greed as an intrinsic and potentially destructive force within humanity, as portrayed in the passage, resonates with Freudian thought. Emphasizing the pervasive nature of greed aligns with Freud's exploration of primal instincts within the human psyche, particularly within the id. The notion that 'everyone harbors greed within them' implies a collective responsibility for the impact of this trait on societal and environmental well-being. It prompts reflection on the potential destructive power of human actions, particularly when driven by unchecked desires, and draws attention to the urgent need for ethical considerations in our interactions with each other and the planet.

The vivid description of '...hundreds of miles of embankment had been swept away and the sea had invaded places where it had never entered before; vast tracts of once fertile land had been swamped by salt water, rendering the uncultivable or a generation, if not forever' (Ghosh, 2019, pp. 48). This evocative portrayal

suggests a profound disruption in the delicate balance between human activities and the natural environment. In interpreting this environmental crisis, one can draw upon Arne Naess's deep ecology, which emphasizes the intrinsic value of all living beings and ecosystems. Deep Ecology is a term devised by Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess in 1972 to refer to an environmentalism that believes fundamental changes in the way our species conceives our relation to nature are necessary before we are to find way out of the ecological crisis. The sweeping away of embankments and the intrusion of the sea into new territories underscore the interconnectedness of natural systems and the impact of human actions on the environment. From a deep ecological perspective, the land, sea, and embankments form an intricate web of life, and the disturbance caused by this environmental upheaval reflects a violation of the inherent integrity of the ecosystem. Naess would argue that such incidents demand a reevaluation of humanity's relationship with nature, urging a shift toward a more harmonious and respectful coexistence with the earth. The rendering of once fertile land uncultivable for a generation, if not forever,' aligns with Naess's call for a reconnection with the intrinsic value of nature beyond its instrumental utility to humans. This environmental catastrophe serves as a stark reminder of the importance of adopting an ecocentric perspective that prioritizes the well-being of the entire ecological community over short-term human interests.

Conclusion

In the boundless ocean of eco-literature, Amitav Ghosh's narratives emerge as daring vessels navigating the turbulent waters of environmental crises. As we dock at the conclusion of this exploration, the imprint of Ghosh's literary

craftsmanship reverberates through the intricate dance between humanity and nature. Ghosh's literary odyssey, encapsulated in *The Hungry Tide* and *Gun Island*, unfurls a narrative tapestry woven with the threads of interconnected destinies and ecological turmoil. The Sundarbans, a character, pulsates with life, echoing Timothy Morton's ecological thought on interconnectedness. The embankments' demise and fertile lands succumbing to saltwater become not just plot points but visceral encounters with the repercussions of environmental negligence. The impact of this literary voyage extends beyond Ghosh's prose, resonating with theorists who cast a critical eye on the intersection of humanity and the environment. Vandana Shiva's ecofeminist lens unveils the nuances of environmental injustice, emphasizing the disproportionate toll on marginalized communities. The submerged lands and disrupted ecosystems become vivid illustrations of Shiva's exploration of the interconnected vulnerabilities faced by women and disadvantaged groups. Robert D. Bullard's framework of environmental racism adds another layer to the narrative, exposing how systemic inequalities exacerbate the ecological burdens on already marginalized communities. The sweeping changes in the landscape become a metaphor for the broader injustices faced by communities of color, echoing Bullard's call for equitable environmental decision-making. Ghosh, the literary mariner, not only navigates the seas of climate fiction but also delves into the realms of myth, history, and contemporary challenges. Deen Datta embarks on a transformative journey that mirrors our collective awakening to the harsh realities of climate change. Ghosh's portrayal challenges conventional notions of stability, echoing the uncertainties depicted in our rapidly changing

world. In this odyssey, Ghosh dialogues with Aldo Leopold's 'Land Ethic,' inviting readers to reflect on the consequences of human intervention. The delicate equilibrium disrupted in *The Hungry Tide* serves as a cautionary tale, prompting contemplation on the ethical imperative of coexisting responsibly with the natural world. As we cast our gaze back at the literary wake left by Ghosh, we find not just narratives but vessels carrying profound messages. Ghosh becomes an environmental educator, aligning with Leopold's vision of a society informed and guided by ecological wisdom. The rising tides, the submerged lands, and the unforeseen consequences of human actions beckon readers to ponder their role in this intricate ecological drama. Ghosh's narratives transcend the boundaries of fiction, embodying the urgency of climate action. The echoes of Naomi Klein's warnings on the catastrophic consequences of inaction resonate in the crashing waves of Ghosh's prose. Through the lens of various theorists, Ghosh becomes a harbinger of change, challenging us to confront the interconnected challenges of our planet's destiny. In the grand finale of this literary expedition, we find ourselves not on the shores of resolution but at the horizon of possibilities. Ghosh's narratives are not conclusions but invitations—to engage, to reflect, and to set sail into the uncharted waters of environmental responsibility. As we bid farewell to this literary voyage, may we carry the tales of Ghosh with us, navigating the currents of climate change with newfound wisdom and a commitment to a more sustainable and interconnected future.

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TRAUMA NARRATIVES AND THE REMAKING OF POLITICAL COMMUNITY IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH: CONFLICT AND IDENTITY IN CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE'S *HALF OF A YELLOW SUN* AND FARAH BASHIR'S *RUMOURS OF SPRING: A GIRLHOOD IN KASHMIR*

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ABSTRACT

The paper critically engages with Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006) and Farah Bashir's *Rumours of Spring: A Girlhood in Kashmir* (2021), set in the context of the Biafran War (1967-1970) and the 1990 Kashmir Insurgency, respectively, within the framework of trauma theory, postcoloniality and neocolonialism. The selected works reflect how trauma disrupts and defamiliarizes the ordinary and the regular and invades the most intimate spaces. A traumatic event affects individuals emotionally, physically and mentally and causes a rupture in identity. It further redefines the self with the memory of the past trauma. In the case of a social event, the post traumatic social order produces new subjects. The paper engages with this dual nature of trauma in its impact on collective identity. It works in alliance with Micheal Rothberg's argument that trauma is collective, spatial, and material (instead of individual, temporal and linguistic). Through the reading of the texts, the paper critiques the applicability of the traditional (Western) trauma model to the postcolonial context on two fronts, both indebted to Freudian psychoanalysis: one, its emphasis on belatedness, and two, its position that collective trauma undermines collective cohesion. It posits that collective trauma produces active political community rather than

subjects suspended in traumatic afterward. It further argues that the narratives from the Global South presents an alternate paradigm to trauma theory by reorienting the field towards recuperation, resilience and subversion.

Key Words: Trauma, identity, postcoloniality, neocolonialism, Global South.

1. INTRODUCTION

The field of trauma studies emerged in the early 1990s, addressing human suffering and its representation in cultural texts.

Initially centred on Holocaust literature, trauma theory aimed to bear witness to traumatic histories and foster cross- cultural solidarity. However, postcolonial critics have highlighted its Eurocentric bias and neglect of non-Western and minority cultural traumas. This paper examines the transformation of trauma studies focusing on the representation of trauma in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* and Farah Bashir's *Rumours of Spring: A Girlhood in Kashmir*.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A comprehensive understanding of trauma in cultural trauma theory requires an examination of its origin in Freudian psychoanalysis. While the DSM's (the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, published by the

American Psychiatric Association) third edition in 1980 shifted towards a neuro- biological model, marginalising Freud, scholars agree that Freudian psychoanalysis remains the explicit foundation of trauma theory. This poses challenges for the dialogue between trauma theory and postcolonial studies, involving core concepts such as belatedness, collective traumatisation, and melancholia.

Freud's early work on hysteria explored trauma as repressed, painful experiences resurfacing in symptoms. Psychoanalysis aimed to help patients integrate these traumatic experiences. Initially focusing on repressed memories of actual traumatic events, Freud later emphasised the repression of infantile sexual experiences or fantasies, retrospectively becoming traumatic during adolescence. Belatedness, or *Nachträglichkeit*, became a central concept, describing trauma as the painful remembering of an experience. Cathy Caruth, a key figure in cultural trauma studies, posits two paradoxes of trauma based on Freud's *Nachträglichkeit*: an unusual temporality where trauma is fully evident only in connection with another place and time, and the literal yet latent nature of traumatic experiences.

It's crucial to note that Freud's theory emphasises internal, abstract causation over historically concrete factors, challenging postcolonialism's focus on historical and socio-political factors. While cultural trauma theory highlights temporality and history, differences exist in their representation in parallel, opposing currents of thought. The concept of the inaccessibility or unspeakability of trauma, widely accepted in trauma studies, faces an opposing yet equally influential perspective associated with Judith Herman's work. In *Trauma and Recovery* (1994), Herman argues that narrative serves as a therapeutic tool, facilitating the integration of

traumatic experiences and aiding in healing and recovery. This contrast, termed the "flat contradiction" in trauma theory, raises questions about the nature of trauma narrative—whether it leads to increased indeterminacy or therapeutic resolution (Luckhurst 82).

While the aporetic notion, emphasising trauma's resistance to narrative, remains a core concept in cultural trauma theory, Herman's therapeutic view has found resonance, particularly in literary criticism. Herman's theory acknowledges the recuperative and empowering qualities of narrative, contrasting with Caruth's perspective that narrativisation represents a loss of incomprehensibility.

The call for a decolonised trauma theory originated with the 2008 special issue of *Studies in the Novel*, which explored the intersection of trauma theory and postcolonial literary studies (Craps 1).

Prior to this, trauma theory, as conceptualised in the 1990s by scholars like Cathy Caruth, had faced criticism for its controversies and limitations. Roger Luckhurst's 2008 work, *The Trauma Question*, highlighted the theory's inconsistencies and its failure to address atrocity, genocide, and war, particularly in the context of postcolonial studies. The special issue of *Studies in the Novel* identified depoliticising tendencies in trauma theory as a major obstacle to its integration with postcolonial literary studies.

In response to the challenges identified, Michael Rothberg, in the same issue of *Studies in the Novel*, raised questions about whether trauma theory, as then conceptualised, provided the best framework for understanding violence in the colonised/postcolonial world (226). Rothberg emphasised the need to move beyond Euro-American frameworks and called for the development of tools to confront racial and

colonial violence, coining the term decolonizing trauma studies (226). The ongoing discourse has focused on critiquing trauma theory's Eurocentrism, its event-based conception of trauma, its narrow reliance on Freudian psychoanalysis, and its deconstructionist approach.

Post-2008, scholars recognised the need for a new model to understand trauma in culturally and historically specific ways. Critics like Craps argued for accounting for social and historic relations in trauma studies, situating traumatic histories against dominant group histories (55). Over time, postcolonial scholarship has discarded the Eurocentric, event-based model of the original trauma theory, making the field more comprehensive and culturally specific. This shift has also allowed a departure from the Freudian foundation of classic trauma theory, challenging Caruth's reliance on Freudian psychoanalysis and poststructuralist deconstruction (Rothberg 230).

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a comparative literary analysis of Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* and Bashir's *Rumours of Spring*. It examines how each work portrays trauma, resilience, and the socio-political contexts of Nigeria and Kashmir, respectively. By analysing character development, narrative structure, and thematic elements, this study aims to elucidate how these texts contribute to the decolonisation of trauma theory.

4. ANALYSIS

Half of a Yellow Sun by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is a tour de force that captures the wrenching realities of the Nigerian Civil War. Through rich prose and deeply human characters, Adichie paints a vivid picture of the war-torn

landscape, exploring the complexities of love, resilience, and the devastating impact of conflict on individuals and communities. Set against the backdrop of Nigeria's struggle for Biafran independence in the late 1960s, the novel follows the lives of a diverse cast of characters whose paths intertwine in unexpected ways. The reader is drawn into the world of Ugwu, a young and impressionable houseboy; Olanna, a woman from a privileged background navigating love and loss; and Richard, a British writer enthralled by Igbo art and culture.

Adichie's storytelling prowess shines as she expertly weaves together the personal and the political, providing an intimate portrayal of how war disrupts lives and fractures societies. The novel's title, derived from the symbol on the Biafran flag, serves as a poignant metaphor for the fractured hopes and aspirations of a nation torn apart by conflict. Through this masterpiece, Adichie confronts themes of identity, loyalty, and the resilience of the human spirit amidst the chaos of war. Her poignant prose and profound insights into the human condition makes the novel a compelling and unforgettable exploration of love and loss in the face of unimaginable adversity.

The novel is deeply rooted in the social and historical context of Nigeria during the 1960s, particularly focusing on the Nigerian Civil War, also known as the Biafran War, which took place from 1967 to 1970. The novel vividly captures the sociopolitical landscape and the complexities of ethnic tensions that led to the conflict. One crucial aspect is the backdrop of Nigeria gaining independence from British colonial rule in 1960. The post-colonial era was marked by power struggles, ethnic divisions, and political instability as different ethnic groups vied for control in a newly formed nation. The book

reflects the societal divisions among Nigeria's major ethnic groups – the Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani – and the subsequent secession of the Igbo-dominated southeastern region, leading to the formation of the Republic of Biafra and the ensuing civil war.

In the novel, the lingering aspects of neo-colonialism are palpable as the characters navigate post-independence Nigeria, grappling with the remnants of colonial influence amidst the turmoil of the Nigerian Civil War. Adichie intricately weaves historical events into the lives of her characters, providing a human perspective on the war's impact. The novel delves into the experiences of individuals and families caught in the turmoil,

highlighting the struggles, suffering, and resilience of ordinary people amidst the chaos of conflict. It portrays how political decisions and ethnic tensions have profound, personal repercussions, disrupting lives and tearing apart the fabric of communities.

Furthermore, Adichie addresses broader social issues prevalent in Nigeria at that time, such as class disparities, gender roles, and the influence of Western culture. The characters' diverse backgrounds and experiences allow Adichie to explore the multifaceted nature of Nigerian society and the complexities of navigating personal identities in a country undergoing significant transformation. By embedding the narrative within this historical context, the novel becomes a powerful testament to the human cost of war and a poignant exploration of the intersection between personal lives and larger historical events.

In *Half of a Yellow Sun*, writing serves as a powerful tool that contributes positively to various aspects of the characters' lives amidst the chaos and devastation of the Nigerian Civil

War. Firstly, writing becomes a means of documentation and expression for characters like Richard, the British expatriate. He uses his writing to document the events unfolding around him, capturing the stories and experiences of the people affected by the war. His desire to document the Igbo culture and history through his writing reflects a sense of preserving a heritage threatened by conflict. Secondly, for Ugwu, the young houseboy, learning how to read and write under the tutelage of his employer, Odenigbo, marks a significant transformation. It empowers Ugwu, providing him with a sense of agency and opening up new opportunities for personal growth and self-expression. Writing becomes a means for Ugwu to navigate the complexities of the world around him and to articulate his thoughts and experiences. Additionally, Olanna, through her letters to her sister Kainene, finds solace and a means of connection in the midst of separation and turmoil. Her letters become a way to maintain a semblance of normalcy, fostering a sense of emotional support and solidarity despite the distance imposed by the war. Writing also acts as a form of resistance against the erasure of history and culture during times of conflict. By preserving stories and memories through writing, the characters reclaim their narratives and attempt to counter the destructive forces of war that threaten to obliterate their identities and heritage. *Rumours of Spring: A Girlhood in Kashmir* is a poignant memoir penned by Farah Bashir. The book offers a deeply personal account of the author's experiences growing up in the tumultuous region of Kashmir. Bashir vividly recounts her childhood against the backdrop of political turmoil, social upheaval, and conflict in Kashmir.

Through vivid storytelling, the memoir delves into the complexities of daily life in a region

marred by conflict, capturing the nuances of family, community, and identity amidst the challenges and uncertainties brought about by political unrest. Bashir's narrative sheds light on the impact of the conflict on ordinary lives, particularly on the lives of women and children, offering a unique perspective on the human dimensions of conflict in Kashmir. The memoir invites readers into a world where personal stories intersect with broader socio-political realities, providing a heartfelt and illuminating glimpse into the experiences of growing up in a region marked by unrest and the resilience required to navigate such turbulent circumstances.

The Rumours of Spring unfolds against the backdrop of the troubled history, rich cultural heritage, and complex social fabric of Kashmir. The memoir captures the tumultuous period of the late 20th and early 21st centuries when Kashmir experienced significant political upheaval, including the insurgency and conflict between India and Pakistan over territorial claims. The memoir poignantly captures the ongoing struggles of Kashmir amidst neo-colonial dynamics, portraying the region's complexities as it contends with political unrest and external influences long after the era of direct colonial rule.

The memoir explores the impact of the conflict on the lives of individuals and communities in Kashmir. It sheds light on the struggles, challenges, and resilience of the people, particularly women and children, who often bear the brunt of conflicts. Issues such as displacement, loss, identity, and the struggle for normalcy amidst the unrest might be central themes in understanding the social context portrayed in the book. *Rumours of Spring* provides an intimate portrayal of the historical,

cultural, and social dimensions of Kashmir, offering a deeply personal perspective on growing up in a region plagued by conflict while celebrating the resilience and spirit of its people and their heritage.

Trauma is a significant theme woven through the narrative. The memoir delves into the enduring impacts of neo-colonialism and subsequent political conflicts on the lives of individuals and communities in Kashmir. Kashmir's history includes a colonial past, with the region being a princely state before India's independence in 1947. The aftermath of colonisation, coupled with the political complexities arising from India and Pakistan's territorial disputes, has resulted in prolonged conflict and instability in Kashmir. The memoir explores the psychological, emotional, and societal traumas inflicted by political unrest and conflict. It delves into the lived experiences of the author and the people of Kashmir, highlighting the profound and long-lasting effects of violence, displacement, loss, and uncertainty.

The trauma portrayed in the book extends beyond physical violence, touching on the psychological scars left by decades of unrest. It discusses the collective trauma experienced by a generation growing up amidst conflict, dealing with disrupted education, limited opportunities, and the constant spectre of violence shaping their formative years. The memoir offers a deeply personal account of how trauma manifests in everyday life—how it affects familial relationships, shapes identities, and influences perceptions of the world. Through the author's lens, readers gain insight into the complexities of healing, resilience, and the struggle to reclaim a sense of normalcy and dignity in the face of enduring turmoil.

Writing serves as a positive and empowering tool amidst the turmoil and challenges faced by the author and the people of Kashmir. For Farah Bashir, the act of writing becomes a means of reclaiming agency and voicing her experiences. Through the memoir, she uses writing as a form of self-expression and documentation, allowing her to preserve her memories, emotions, and reflections.

In doing so, she transcends the limitations imposed by the conflict and asserts control over her narrative, offering a powerful outlet for self-discovery and healing.

Additionally, writing becomes a medium of connection and empathy. Bashir's memoir allows readers to empathise with the struggles faced by the people of Kashmir, fostering understanding and solidarity across cultural and geographical boundaries. By sharing her story through writing, she bridges gaps and raises awareness about the human dimensions of conflict, encouraging dialogue and empathy.

Moreover, in the context of Kashmir's rich literary heritage, writing holds a special significance. The act of storytelling, particularly in a region with a strong oral tradition, becomes a way to preserve Kashmiri culture, traditions, and history. Bashir's memoir contributes to this legacy by documenting her personal experiences, cultural nuances, and the social fabric of Kashmir, ensuring that these stories endure beyond the immediate challenges of the conflict. Ultimately, writing in *Rumours of Spring* emerges as a positive force—a means of empowerment, connection, and preservation. It enables the author to reclaim her narrative, share her experiences with the world, and contribute to the collective storytelling heritage of Kashmir, offering a ray of hope and resilience amidst the adversities faced by the region.

Scholars, including contributors to *Studies in the Novel (StiN)*, criticise Cathy Caruth's Freudian trauma model for its emphasis on melancholia and fragility, arguing it limits the understanding of post-traumatic experiences. Both the works under discussion work against such a model in their focus on resilience and resistance. These works look forward to the future instead of dwelling in a traumatic aftermath, a departure from the narrative emphasised by the traditional trauma theory model. Postcolonial scholars call for reconceiving trauma theory to encompass life-affirming and activist processes, challenging the hegemony of Caruth's perspective. Since 2008, there is a consensus that the injunction to focus on weakness and melancholia in postcolonial trauma fiction has been overcome, marking a crucial step in decolonising trauma theory. Despite disagreements, Caruth's notion of enduring and unknowable trauma is acknowledged, allowing for a nuanced understanding that includes resilience and growth in post-traumatic narratives.

In the decolonising project, the debate over early trauma theory's deconstructionist narrative approach has been a key concern, questioning the value of narrative in trauma understanding. Cathy Caruth's aporetic stance, emphasising indeterminacy and denying resolution, contrasts with psychiatrist Judith Herman's therapeutic view, considering narratives crucial for healing and recovery.

Postcolonial literature supports the notion that trauma necessitates narrative for coming to terms with colonial wounds. Adichie's and Bashir's works add to this tradition.

In the trajectory of decolonising trauma theory, there is a need for a more respectful acknowledgment of culturally specific spiritual and religious perspectives. The dominant influence of secular rational thinking, rooted in

Western postmodern culture, often obstructs engagement with spirituality, ritual, and ceremony in postcolonial trauma narratives. The postmodern tendency to regard the world as thoroughly and satisfactorily secularised limits the ability to understand and appreciate indigenous rituals and cultural practices that situate trauma in a broader context.

Decolonising trauma theory should involve a shift away from the dismissiveness of materialism in its approach to spirituality while maintaining rigor in analysis. Research in social studies supports the idea that spirituality can be a pathway to resilience and recovery from trauma, emphasising the importance of a respectful approach to religious and spiritual issues in therapeutic processes. A turn towards engaging with spirituality may enhance the critical work in postcolonial trauma studies, providing a more comprehensive understanding of human experience. Farah Bashir's illumination of faith in her narrative assumes the role of a recuperating mechanism. Faith, in her narrative, cannot be dissociated from the conflict they experience.

The critical questioning of trauma theory's central tenets becomes crucial for the postcolonialisation of trauma studies, particularly in its application to culturally specific frameworks for understanding historically induced traumas of colonisation, neo-colonisation and decolonisation. Trauma theory must be expanded to accommodate inquiries into the complex dynamics of trauma during colonisation and the processes of self-construction during decolonisation. This involves addressing issues of complicity, guilt, and agency, which are central in postcolonial contexts. Moreover, a postcolonial trauma theory should engage critically with the Eurocentric

focus of trauma theory, especially regarding the concept of collective trauma. The current Freudian model, which suggests that trauma weakens collective cohesion, is questioned by contributors to the StiN project. They resist the notion that trauma necessarily damages social bonds, advocating for a more culturally sensitive formulation of collective trauma. The chosen works from two distinct regions in the global south, addressing trauma, illustrate how collective trauma fosters an engaged political community that resists oppression. Both the narratives reflect the way in which conflict and trauma interrupt and reshape individual and collective identity, giving rise to new political subjects.

5. CONCLUSION

The prevailing emphasis in trauma theory on the debilitating effects of trauma, often centred around PTSD and its symptoms, has implications for the interpretation of postcolonial literature. Some argue that this emphasis may perpetuate frozen or suspended post-traumatic conditions, limiting interpretations to themes of victimisation and melancholia while obscuring themes of recuperation and resilience. This perspective may not align with the diverse and vibrant visions of cultural recuperations present in postcolonial literature.

The resistance to framing postcolonial conditions as chronically weakened or socially divided is rooted in a rejection of Eurocentric Orientalist notions.

Postcolonial literary critics assert that reducing postcolonial identities to melancholic, weakened states contradicts the vigorous and imaginative impact of postcolonial literature. They emphasise the need to resist such reductions, maintaining a focus on political contextualisation and the

ongoing struggles against colonial legacies and contemporary neo-imperial globalization.

In considering the intersection of trauma theory and postcolonial studies, the aesthetics of trauma theory would need to be reconceived to theorise not only melancholia and stasis but also processes inducing resilience. This reconceptualization aligns with postcolonialism's emphasis on a commitment to the continuation of life, and it may involve incorporating agency and empowerment as modes of theorising trauma's aftermath. The conclusion suggests a need for the reconstruction of trauma theory to respond to postcolonial ways of understanding history, memory, and trauma. This reconstruction might involve reorienting towards forward-looking narratives that aim for the subversion of traumatic experiences rather than their containment in melancholia.

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