

ISSN: 2348-1390

NEW MAN

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
MULTIDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

VOL. 2 ISSUE 3 MARCH 2015

A REFEREED AND INDEXED E-JOURNAL

INTERNATIONAL IMPACT FACTOR: 0.889 (IIFS)

Editor in Chief

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NEW MAN PUBLICATION
PARBHANI (MAHARASHTRA)

Contact: +91 9420079975 +91 9730721393 nmpublication@gmail.com

VOL. 2 ISSUE 3 MARCH 2015

www.newmanpublication.com

Full Journal Title:	NEW MAN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY STUDIES
FREQUENCY:	MONTHLY
Language:	ENGLISH, HINDI, MARATHI
Journal Country/Territory:	INDIA
Publisher:	NEW MAN PUBLICATION
Subject Categories:	LANGUAGES, LITERATURE, HUMANITIES , SCIENCE, SOCIAL SCIENCES & OTHER RELATED SUBJECTS
Start Year:	2014
Online ISSN:	2348-1390
International Impact Factor:	0.889 (IIFS)
Indexing:	Currently the journal is indexed in: Directory of Research Journal Indexing (DRJI), International Impact Factor Services (IIFS) Google Scholar

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Editorial

It gives us immense pleasure to present the March 2015 issue of *New Man International Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*. This journal has always aimed to serve as a meaningful academic space where ideas from different disciplines come together, interact, and enrich our understanding of society, culture, and knowledge. The present issue continues this tradition by bringing together a diverse range of research contributions that reflect both intellectual depth and contemporary relevance.

This volume opens with Dr. Vibha Doorwar's thoughtful engagement with Mahatma Gandhi's perspective on women, where his ideas on gender equality and empowerment are revisited in today's context. In a similar spirit of literary exploration, Goutam Karmakar offers a sensitive and insightful re-reading of Arun Kolatkar, highlighting the subtle beauty and layered meanings in his poetry. Moving towards political thought, Neerav Dwivedi's paper introduces us to complex yet significant concepts like "bare life" and the "state of exception," encouraging readers to reflect on their implications in contemporary governance and society.

The issue further engages with questions of marginality and representation through Kabita Chiring's analysis of Mahasweta Devi's well-known story, where the voice of the marginalized challenges dominant narratives. Ranjeet Singh's study of the popular *Chacha Choudhary* comics is particularly interesting as it brings attention to how everyday cultural texts reflect deeper realities of caste and middle-class identity in India. Pamposh Ganjoo's discussion of patriarchy in George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss* reminds us of the continuing relevance of gender issues across time and cultures.

Themes of identity, love, and belonging are further explored in Maisnam Arnabal's reading of E. M. Forster's *Maurice*, where the tension between individual desire and social norms is presented with sensitivity. Likewise, Dr. Bishakha Mandal's interpretation of Jhumpa Lahiri's *Mrs. Sen's* beautifully captures the emotional and cultural complexities of diasporic life.

What adds a unique dimension to this issue is its inclusion of interdisciplinary perspectives. Dr. Upendra Singh's paper on nanomaterials introduces readers to developments in modern physics, showing how scientific research continues to shape our

understanding of the material world. Alongside this, the Hindi articles enrich the journal by addressing important educational and cultural concerns. Dr. Vijaya Lakshmi Gupta emphasizes the growing need for moral education in higher studies, a topic that is becoming increasingly relevant in present times. Prof. Dr. Jayant Bobade reflects on the position of Hindi in the age of globalization, while Dr. Arvind Kumar Upadhyay's work on Agyeya highlights the depth of individual consciousness and historical awareness in modern Hindi poetry.

Overall, this issue presents a harmonious blend of literature, social thought, education, and science. Each contribution, in its own way, invites the reader to think, question, and engage more deeply with the world around us. It is this spirit of inquiry and dialogue that we strive to nurture through this journal.

We express our sincere gratitude to all the contributors for their valuable work and to our readers for their continued trust and support. We hope that this issue will not only inform but also inspire further academic reflection and meaningful discussion.

Dr. Kalyan Gangarde
Editor-in-Chief

New Man International Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies

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GANDHI AND THE IDEA OF A WOMAN

Dr. Vibha Doorwar

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In the 21st century, there is much talk about women empowerment, especially in Third World countries. Every leader of every political hue, from left to right talks about empowering women. In the modern world of economic and social equality, gender consciousness has gained ground and it has become even fashionable to talk about gender equality, gender neutrality and women empowerment. It is considered political capital since women are half of the electorate. Influencing them and their sensibilities is considered imperative. Women are taking up their gender identity consciously and developing a narrative, free of men.

However, very few of the modern leaders are truly working for women, as claimed. In India, one of the first modern leaders to speak and work upon the issue of gender neutrality and gender equality was none other than Gandhi. His 'idea of a woman' was different from others. Unlike the modern feminists he did not advocate towing extremist line and imbibing a reactionary culture, but he also did not agree completely with the traditional Indian view of a woman.

In general he believed that there has been suppression of women as the laws and customs have been made by a patriarchal society which did not much care about the sensibilities of women. Instead, he believed that rules of social conduct must be created with mutual co-operation and mutual consultation. He thought that women should realize their true power and should contribute to the rise of India. ⁱ Talking about the dignity of women, he says:

“If you women would only realize your dignity and privilege, and make full use of it for mankind, you will make it much better than it is. But man has delighted in enslaving you and you have proved willing slaves till the slaves and the slave-holders have become one in the crime of degrading humanity. My special function from childhood, you might say, has been to make women realize her dignity. I was once a slave-holder myself but Ba proved an unwilling slave and thus opened my eyes to my mission. Her task was finished. Now I am in search of a woman who would realize her mission. Are you that woman, will you be one?”ⁱⁱ

It was Gandhi who vociferously advocated the education of women. He said that it was good for the moral health of the nation. In the budding stage that modern India was then, it was imperative that women study and contribute to the development and progress of the nation. Gandhi thought that this would bring women on an equal pedestal with men.

He particularly thought that women are perfect for satyagraha. Keeping in with the traditional Indian view of a perfect woman, he thought that a woman had natural virtues of tolerance, faith, humility, service, sacrifice and common sense. They had a higher threshold when it came to mental pain and even in some cases physical pain. They could endure a lot more suffering than men could. He felt that these virtues would be great assets in the fight for the independence of the country.

“There was a marked departure of Gandhi's perception of women from that of other reformers. The stance taken by other social reformers and leaders, prior to Gandhi created a helpless image of the Indian women. With the emergence of Gandhi, a new conception of women gradually gained currency. For Gandhi, women were not mere toys in the hands of men, neither their competitors. Men and women are essentially endowed with the same spirit and therefore have similar problems. Women are at par with men, one complementing the other. According to Gandhi, education for women was the need of the time that would ensure their moral development and make them capable of occupying the same platform as that of men. In Gandhi's views, women can never be considered to be the weaker sex.”ⁱⁱⁱ

Some of his favourite examples of women from Indian history and mythology, whom every other woman should follow, were Draupadi, Savitri, Sita and Damayanti. They were traditional Indian women in Hindu mythology who played out their roles, as given in the Shastras, to the extreme and carved out a place for themselves in Indian memory with sheer perseverance and endurance. However, some critics feel negatively towards Gandhi's admiration of these women. “Legislation has been mostly done by men and has not been always fair. The blemishes represented in our Shastras should be removed by women. Women of firm, pure and self-controlled character like Sita, Damayanti and Draupadi should be produced and they will be able to remove these blemishes from our Smritis. Gandhi considers these women of pure, firm and self-controlled character. Yes they were firm and self-controlled but one can always debate about the purity aspect of a character, particularly women, because purity is generally related to sexual purity. The question is therefore, whether sexual purity is a virtue or an ideal criterion to measure the character of a person. Or for that matter, is sexual purity the only criterion to measure the character of a woman? These women suffered the domination of men in the society, they suffered an oppressive social system and succumbed to it. For instance, Sita rejected this world of men and their laws and vanished in the parted earth. Draupadi married to Arjuna in the Swayamwar and accepted his four brothers as co-husbands against her desire (a rare case of fraternal polyandry amongst the ruling classes). Damayanti fought for her beloved Nala and succeeded. But none of these women fought against the oppressive social system created by Manu and his ilk. Could these women be considered as role models for the modern woman?”^{iv}

Though, Gandhi may have some traditional views on women, he had revolutionary ideas for them when it came to satyagraha and the emancipation of India from foreign hands. He believed that their powers and virtues of tolerance, endurance and a sense of justice would make them effective weapons against the British. In the Western society, women had been oppressed during the Middle Ages. They were labelled as witches and burnt alive on pyres. Even in the age of

Gandhi, in the pre-independence era, not many Christian nations allowed women to vote. Gandhi thought that Indian resistance based on women's strength would leave the British clueless.

“Mahatma Gandhi believed that satyagraha was the most powerful weapon in a nonviolent struggle. Satyagraha involves defiance. It involves the willful, peaceful, breaking of laws that are unjust. It means picketing, protesting, squatting, obstructing, challenging and publicly resisting wrongs. Since women were the most nonviolent and ardent lovers of peace, it could be sharpened and extended as a weapon in women's struggles for justice and equality. To him the ultimate ahimsa and satyagraha was when women, in vast numbers, rose up to put an end to the destructive aspects of male dominance in society.”^v

The great contribution of Gandhi to the emancipation of women and the debate of gender equality is that he brought them out of their houses, their kitchens and their bedrooms and brought them out in the open: on the roads, in the markets, in the battlefields of satyagraha, against the oppressive enemy – the British. Though, Indian history had known brave Indian women who had taken up arms against oppressive enemies, but it was for the first time that the women were coming together, not for a violent fight against the enemy, but for a peaceful, non-violent *satyagraha* against a violent enemy.

Earlier there were examples of a royal woman taking up the fight against oppression, or a single woman of poor origins making it to the walk of fame of Hindu mythology. But for the first time, women were coming *en masse* against a common enemy. For the first time, they were consciously taking part in a movement, being aware of their collective power. For the first time since long, women were finding an independent identity of their own in a formerly male dominated world.

Hitherto women were made to think that their sphere of action was homes and kitchens. Some women did qualify outside these zones, but they were always the exceptions that proved the rule. With Gandhi's exhortation to women's power to rise against the British, Indian women found out that they too can claim their fair share in the annals of power. They found out for the first time, that they can also play kingmakers and soldiers, fighters and diplomats. Despite many of traditional views of Gandhi on women, it was his idea that women should collectively come out of their houses for satyagraha against injustice that really made a new start in the story of emancipation of women in India. It was his 'idea of a woman', then led her on the forward path.

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ⁱⁱⁱ Barot, Hiralkumar. “Women Empowerment and Gandhi.” IEJTE. Volume 1. Issue 1.

^{iv} Krishnan, Nandela. “Gandhi on Women's Empowerment”. <www.mkgandhi.org>

^v Jaitly, Jaya. “Gandhi on Women”. <www.mkgandhi.org>

RE-READING ARUN KOLATKAR: A STUDY IN ORNATENESS

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INTRODUCTION:

Arun Kolatkar is somehow different from other Indian English poets both in terms of images and music in his poetry. As a believer of objective co-relative, a theory of T.S.Eliot, he also co-relates his images with feelings and emotions that he finds in them. His images are not fully ornamental like Tennyson but those are conceptual. His images and his use of rhetoric like alliteration suggest a journey towards the ultimate truth that he wants to explore. His images are not natural but concrete and abstract. It is also true that his use of imagery and sometimes different sound and musical elements are unique and in this case he is noteworthy for his contribution to Indian English poetry.

Before starting the discussion of Arun Kolatkar's use of imagery in his poems, a short definition is needed about imagery. Actually imagery is nothing but pictures which are made from words and sometimes simile, metaphor and other phrases are needed to convey images. C.D.Lewis aptly says, "An epithet, a metaphor, a simile may create an image; or an image may be presented to us in a phrase or a passage on the face of it purely descriptive, but conveying to our imagination something more than the accurate reflection of an external reality." (Lewis, 4). It is also necessary to quote what The Imagist poets say about imagery. They lay down six rules or characteristics, "six principles for themselves to practice- (1) to use the language of common speech, but to employ always the exact word, not the nearly exact, not merely the decorative word; (2) to create new rhythm- as the expressions of new moods and not to copy old rhythms, which merely echo old moods, insisting on the use of free verse for the sake of liberty and individuality; (3) to allow absolute freedom in the choice of subject; (4) to present an image in order to avoid vague generalities; (5) to produce poetry that is hard and clear, never blurred nor indefinite and (6) to believe the concentration in the very essence of poetry." (Louis Untermeyer, 305). Arun Kolatkar too some extent follows these in his poetry and his imagery confirms his place among immortal Indian English Poets.

Arun Kolatkar uses a lot of images in his poetry and they all are used for specific purpose. One can agree totally what L.S.Deshpande says about him and his use of imagery, "says "Arun Kolatkar's 'Jejuri' is a poem remarkable in many ways; it is complex in terms of theme, characterization and imagery. Its structure is as much symbolic as and mythological and naturalistic. Its most striking qualities are ambiguity and multi violence, the relating to its tone

and the other to its meaning. But what impress one, at the very outset, is its miraculous. The poem lore tends to be special, but is not actually so. It is neither theistic nor atheistic in tone as unfolded at times in our study of its diction also, style, and imagery.” (Deshpande, 25)

‘The Bus’, the opening poem of Jejuri provides many images. Here his use of imagery is concrete and mixture of living and non living elements. The bus is heading towards Jejuri and the bus is full of passengers. Some of them are pilgrims. They are going to that temple to offer worship. While some are going only to visit the place with a mind divided between tradition and modernism. There two passengers sit opposite, an old man and the narrator. The narrator sees his own reflection in the old man’s glasses of spectacles. Even natural elements are seen in this poem. So a close reading shows that here Kolatkar employs so many images like cold wind, passengers, old man, the sun, spectacles, the bus and many more. Here are some lines which show this:

“A cold wind keeps whipping
and slapping a corner of the tarpaulin
... Your own divided face in a pair of glasses
on an old man’s nose
... outside, the sun has risen quietly
... The bus seems to change direction.” (The Bus)

His ‘A Scratch’ gives us the image of a murdered wife of Khandoba. The big rock in the poem is actually the wife of Khandoba as Khandoba kills her in a fit of anger. The rock is compared with the bedroom for its shape. So many images like stone, murdered wife, bedrooms are found here along with the image of god and corn:

“there is no crop
other than god
... that giant hunk of rock
the size of a bedroom
is Khandoba’s wife turned to stone.” (A Scratch)

Images of god is seen in his ‘A Low Temple’, ‘Makarand’, ‘The Temple Rat’ and many other poems. In his ‘A Low Temple’, the temple is low without a high ceiling. As a result, the pilgrims are not able to see the various bronze and stone images of god. Kolatkar further describes the stone and bronze image. Apart from this imagery of light can be seen from the light emerging from the match which is lighted in order to see the statues of gods. Here the poet shows us:

“A low temple keeps its gods in the dark
you lend a matchbox to the priest
one by one the gods come to light
amused bronze. Smiling stone. Unsurprised.” (A Low Temple)

Not only this, Kolatkar also shows the images of human beings in his poems. In his 'Woman' he gives us the picture of woman and her doings. The poem is half serious and half mocking in tone. Here are some lines from the poem:

“a woman may collect cats read thrillers
...a woman may name her cats
...a woman may shave her legs regularly
a woman may take up landscapes painting
a woman may poison
twenty three cockroaches.” (Woman)

An image of old woman is found in his 'An Old Woman'. Here he shows the poor condition of woman and her ultimate efforts to earn something from the pilgrims. Here the narrator describes her face with the help of images also. These lines from the poems show:

“An old woman grabs
...And as you look on,
the cracks that begin around her eyes
spread beyond her skin.”

In his 'The Priest's Son', he uses the images of five hills, demons, the priest's son and the butterfly in a very beautiful way. Here when the boy is asked about his own belief about the story that he tells, he looks uncomfortable and wants to divert the narrator's attention by seeing him a butterfly. All the images are shown here in these lines:

“these five hills
are five demons
that Khandoba killed
says the priest's son
a young boy
who comes along as your guide
as the schools have vacations
do you really believe that story
you ask him
...look
there is a butterfly
there.” (The Priest's Son)

His 'The Railway Station' is such a poem where he provides the images of station, tea stall, indicator, station dog, railway clerk and the setting sun. The indicator is a concrete image. Here the indicator is not in a position to work properly. So it is quite tough for the passenger to know the train time table. He gives the images of the station dog which is affected from skin disease and doing penance. He also gives other images like a stall boy who throws away water on

passengers' face, images of introvert booking clerk and the sun which looks like a big wheel when it sets. Here are some lines from the poem which shows all these:

“the indicator
has turned inward
...the spirit of the place
lives inside the mangy body
of a station dog
...the young novice at the tea stall
...he exorcises you
by sprinkling dishwater in your face
...the setting sun
large as a wheel.” (The Railway Station)

Apart from these images, he uses images of animals and insects in ‘The Blue Horse’, ‘The Heart of Ruin’, ‘The Butterfly’, ‘The Pattern’ and other poems. His poems show a very beautiful reflection of animal power and importance. He shows the rampant, wild aspects of nature with the images of animals and it also helps him to discover the ultimate truth. In his ‘The Heart of Ruin’, he gives more importance to dog and it is the backward of god. So he says that the ruined temple is now the place of dog, not god. And he shows this with beautiful imagery:

“A mongrel bitch has found a place
for herself and her puppies...
The pariah puppies tumble over her.
May be they like a temple better this way.” (The Heart of Ruin)

In his ‘The Butterfly’, he shows the beauty of nature and insect. The butterfly has no future and no past. Further it does not belong to any god or myth or legend. It lives in the present and it shows the eternal life force. It shows the vivacity and vitality of life. Here Kolatkar uses imagery as:

“It’s a little yellow butterfly
It has taken these wretched hills
under its wings.” (The Butterfly)

Sometimes he uses images of animals in human being to make a comparison between them and also to satire human beings. In his ‘The Priest’, he uses cat imagery and employs it to show the actual character and motive of the priest. Like a cat, he is ready to grab his prey, the pilgrims. Here he shows:

“a catgrin on its face
and a live, ready to eat pilgrim
held between its teeth.” (The Priest)

The discussion regarding the ornateness in Arun Kolatkar will be incomplete without the discussion of musical elements in his poetry. And he creates a fine sound and music in his poems with the use of alliteration. It means same sounding words or letters are found in his poetry. Some of those lines are:

“A cold wind keeps whipping” (TB-13)
and under his lazy lizard stone”. (TP-14-15)
a brass mouse with a broken neck”. (WS-18)
“He is free to play a flute all day”. (A&T-36)
San stroked thighs or sand stone”. (H-29)
“Sand blasted shoulders bladed with shale
“A demon a demigod
And certain ceremonies connected
The parallels of a prophecy” (TRS-56-62)
“The pariah pappies tumble over her”. (HOR -16)
“Shoots straight up
“fleeing from flint”. (HS-23)

Apart from Jejuri in his Boatribe, One can easily find his use of alliteration. Here are the lines:

“The briny brunt
hurl its hunk
a gull hitched on hump
the long trial toils on.” (The Boatribe)

Actually like all other postmodern poet, he uses it with purpose and it serves for different purpose in different poems. His ample use of alliteration shows his command over the language and rhetoric and it also gives his poems a musical flow and swift rhythm. In his ‘The Butterfly’, the ‘p’ sound is found four times the two lines from second stanza:

“It is pinned down to no past
it’s a pun on the present.” (The Butterfly)

CONCLUSION:

In a nutshell, it can be said that Arun Kolatkar’s poetic craftsmanship rests on his use of imagery and sound rhythm. He uses different images freely and deliberately and his use of imagery aptly fits with his poems. He does not use those like others only to enrich the poem but to give the poem a deeper meaning and thought. Apart from imagery, he uses alliteration in his poetry to give the poems swift flow and rhythm. He is really a poet par excellence as he does all these very successfully and also these give his poem depth in thought and meaning.

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POLITICS OF THE THRESHOLD: AN ANALYSIS OF BARE LIFE AND THE STATE OF EXCEPTION

Neerav Dwivedi

“If today, there is no longer any clear figure of the sacred man, it is perhaps because we are all virtually
homines sacri .”
— Giorgio Agamben

This paper attempts an examination of some of the key concepts stated by the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben in his book *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. This enterprise involves looking at the modes of functioning of politics in the modern era, constituted as it is by biopower, and its relation to the state of exception. The exception, now, is to be seen as the ruling paradigm, the effects of which can be seen at large in the “camps”. In *Homo Sacer*, Agamben seeks to unearth the “unitary center”, what he considers a “blindspot” and “vanishing point” in Foucault’s work – the point where the “juridico-institutional and biopolitical modes of power come together”.¹ Agamben also traces the “originary nucleus” of sovereign power to the inclusion of “bare life” in the political realm. Bare life is the “focal lens” through which one can see how life and politics come to be inextricably interlaced with each other.

Agamben sets out to “correct” and “complete” Foucault’s thesis regarding modern power. Foucault in his works marks a transition from the earlier power of “deduction” and “seizure” to what he calls “Biopower”— one that is concerned with a “generation of forces” and that aims to administer, optimize and multiply life.² Agamben asserts that the domain of natural life (*zoe*) was originally kept distinct from the polis and at the margins, as seen in Aristotle’s distinction between “simple fact of living” and “politically qualified life”. According to Agamben, the domain of *zoe* is to be seen as entering into a zone of “irreducible indistinction” such that the line separating *zoe* and polis gets blurred. Agamben sees in modern power the prevalence of bare life in politics whereby the “state of exception” becomes the dominant paradigm and the norm. In the light of this “secret tie” between power and bare life, the mode of Western politics is characterized by an inclusion of bare life in the polis, which at the same time is also its exclusion.³

¹ Agamben attempts to elaborate the point at which the techniques of the modern state – of “subjective individualization” and “objective totalization”— converge – “the point at which the voluntary servitude of individuals comes into contact with objective power.” (Agamben *Homo Sacer* 6).

² Thus there is now a move from the earlier right to “take life and let live” to one that aims to “foster life or disallow it to the point of death.” (Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, 1990. 138).

³ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign power and Bare life*, 1998. 3-6.

This “inclusive exclusion” of *zoe* in the polis is also talked about by Aristotle. As Agamben quotes Aristotle – “born with regard to life but existing essentially with regard to the good life.” (Agamben *Homo Sacer* 7).

Bare life is not to be seen as synonymous with natural life. Rather it is the result of the politicization of human life by abandoning it to an “unconditional power of death.”⁴ Here is an inclusion of natural life in the state of exception where in spite of being politicized it is excluded from the polis.⁵ Further, in referring to Aristotle, Agamben argues that while the inclusion of bare life in biopower’s mechanisms and calculations may be more conspicuous in the modern state, it has essentially existed since the beginning of sovereignty in the West.⁶ Thus against the succession from sovereignty to biopower that Foucault argues for, Agamben posits a “tight integration” between the sovereign and biopower. Modern politics, then, is not to be seen as instituting a break from classical sovereignty; it’s rather an “extension and generalization of the state of exception that founds sovereign power.”⁷ The only difference between the two is to be seen in how with modern biopower the state of exception tends to become the “rule”. Even though rooted in the “care” of biological life, modern politics continually produces bare life.⁸ This situation, as Agamben points out, is central to the “aporia” in modern democracy – “it wants to put the freedom and happiness of men into play in the very place – “bare life” that marked their subjection.”⁹

As rightly seen by Andrew Norris, “sacred” or bare life then is “life exposed to death”, as against “simple natural life”. It is “neither political bios nor natural *zoe*.” Rather it comprises “the zone of indistinction in which *zoe* and bios constitute each other in including and excluding each other.”¹⁰ In analyzing bare life Agamben alludes to the figure of the *homo sacer*. This figure according to the Roman grammarian Pompeius Festus refers to the “sacred man whom the people have judged on account of a crime. It is not permitted to sacrifice this man, yet he who kills him will not be condemned for homicide.” Thus, this man who can be killed with impunity but cannot be sacrificed results in his expulsion from both human and Divine law. This “double exclusion” is accompanied by a “double inclusion” (owing to the man’s capability for being killed and his “unsacrificability”). This indicates a parallelism between the “inclusive exclusion” of the bare life/*homo sacer* and the state of exception since each entails a simultaneous inclusion and exclusion from the law and hence a subjection to the sovereign decision.¹¹

According to Agamben, the paradox of sovereignty consists in the fact that the sovereign is both inside and outside the juridical order. He quotes Schmitt - “sovereign is he who decides on

⁴ Catherine Mills, *The Philosophy of Agamben*, 2008. 69.

⁵ Hence, bare life is “related and compared and evaluated, that is always in the terms and in the service of what it is not: political life.” Andrew Norris, “Giorgio Agamben and the Politics of the Living Dead”, 2000. 41.

⁶ Foucault describes, in *The History of Sexuality*, how life becomes the prime “stake” in politics in the modern era – “For millennia man remained what he was for Aristotle: a living animal with the additional capacity for political existence; modern man is an animal whose politics calls his existence as a living being into question” (Agamben *Homo Sacer* 3). Agamben on the other hand argues that life in a certain sense has always been the “definitive objective of politics”. (Norris, “Giorgio Agamben and the Politics of the Living Dead”, 2000. 39).

⁷ Mills, *The Philosophy of Agamben*, 2008. 65.

⁸ Ibid 75.

As Foucault correctly points out, the emergence of the possibilities of the social sciences makes it possible “both to protect life and to authorize a holocaust.” (Agamben *Homo Sacer* 3).

⁹ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign power and Bare life*, 9-10.

¹⁰ Andrew Norris, “Giorgio Agamben and the Politics of the Living Dead”, 45.

¹¹ Mills, *The Philosophy of Agamben*, 76-77.

the exception”.¹² He is both ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ in that although standing outside the normal juridical order, he nevertheless belongs to it since he is the one invested with the power to suspend the constitution in its entirety.¹³ Schmitt highlighted the “situational” aspect of all law and emphasized that a “normal situation” must be established for juridical order to make sense.¹⁴ Since there is a need to create, what Agamben calls, a “regular situation”, the importance of state sovereignty lies in its “monopoly to decide” – a ‘decision’ quite different from the juridical regulation in that it does not “need law to create law.”¹⁵ The exception in itself is such that, apart from confirming the ‘rule’, the “rule lives off the exception also.” The exception entails declaration of a state of emergency which becomes the means for the sovereign power to extend itself.¹⁶ This involves an exclusion of something from the general rule, which nevertheless “maintains itself in relation to the rule in the form of the rule’s suspension.”¹⁷ Thus, here the law maintains itself in relation to an exteriority – in order to constitute its internal order it needs to define itself against an external element. Hence what we have is a paradoxical threshold of indistinction where the “outside and inside, the normal situation and chaos, enter into those complex topological relations that make the validity of the juridical order possible.” It is the state of exception that helps in the inclusion of “chaos” in the juridical order and “in its archetypal form is therefore the principle of every juridical localization”.¹⁸ Agamben points out how in the modern era this state of exception, as foreseen by Benjamin, comes more and more to be the dominant paradigm and becomes very much the “rule.” Thus the exception and the norm become indistinguishable.

Agamben, in taking Jean-Luc Nancy’s suggestion, decides to call this state of exception “ban”- “the potentiality of the law...to apply in no longer applying”¹⁹, calling into play an abandonment by law –“exposed and threatened on the threshold in which life and law, outside and inside, become indistinguishable.”²⁰ Agamben seeks to elucidate the notion of ban through the threshold figure of the werewolf (*wargus*) which is originally “the figure of the man who has been banned from the city.” Yet the life of this “wolf-man”, like that of the *homo sacer*, is “not a

¹² The state of exception is not the chaos preceding order, it’s rather the result of its suspension and etymologically refers to what is “taken outside (*ex-capere*), and not simply excluded.” (Agamben *Homo Sacer* 18).

While Schmitt sees the sovereign as the single locus of power, a different view can be obtained by a reading of Thomas Blom Hansen. Hansen in his study of postcolonial India talks of fragmented, plural and competing sovereignties. Here the right and capacity to adjudicate, govern, kill or punish is distributed among a wide range of authorities and institutions. (Hansen, “Sovereigns Beyond The State”: On Legality And Public Authority In India”, *Religion, Violence and Political Mobilization in South Asia*, 2005).

¹³ Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology*, 1985.7.

Here one can see how the validity of law is guaranteed by the sovereign who is positioned “outside” it – thus the “constituting power” is outside the “constituted power”. (Richard Ek, “Giorgio Agamben and the Spatialities of the Camp: An Introduction”, 2006. 365).

¹⁴ Schmitt, *Political Theology*, 13.

¹⁵ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign power and Bare life*, 16.

¹⁶ Agamben cites Hitler’s 1933 “Decree for the Protection of the people and the State” which led to a suspension of the articles of the Weimar Constitution concerning personal liberties. Agamben claims from this that modern totalitarianism by making use of the state of exception proclaims a “legal civil war” that enables the “physical elimination not only of political adversaries but of entire categories of citizens who for some reason cannot be integrated into the political system.” It is the crystallization of this state of exception that results in the concentration camp. (Agamben, *State of Exception* 2).

¹⁷ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign power and Bare life*, 18.

¹⁸ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign power and Bare life*, 18-19.

¹⁹ Here, the case of Joseph K in Kafka’s *The Trial* can be particularly illuminating. His arrest is authorized by the law, yet when the arrest is in force the law withdraws itself. Thus the arrest here constitutes a legal suspension of law.

²⁰ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign power and Bare life*, 28.

piece of animal nature without any relation to the law and the city”, but is “rather a threshold of indistinction and of passage between animal and man, *physis* and *nomos*, exclusion and inclusion.”²¹ Commenting on the ambiguity of the relation of abandonment Agamben emphasizes the impossibility of deciding whether the one who is banned is inside or outside the juridical order. The ban maintains itself in relation to something presupposed as “non-relational.” That which has been banned is “delivered over to its own separateness and at the same time, consigned to the mercy of the one who abandons it – at once excluded and included, removed and at the same time captured.” With this simultaneous “attraction and repulsion”, the ban can signify both the “insignia of sovereignty” and the “expulsion from the community.”²²

Catherine Mills in ‘The Philosophy of Agamben’ further illuminates the indistinguishability between law and life that the exception institutes. She refers to how Agamben, drawing upon Benjamin and the Judaic scholar Gershom Scholem, describes the status of law in the state of exception as entailing a “being in force without significance.” As Mills puts it, this situation is characterized not by an absence of law; rather here law is devoid of all “positive content”. It’s not that the law ceases to apply as in a state of lawlessness, rather the law in applying fails to do so in any “concrete or immediate sense” having lost its “apparent meaning or intelligibility.” Thus “law without significance passes into life while life always subsists in relation to the law”.²³

Hence the bringing of *zoe* into the domain of law is made possible in the very “zone” of bare life which also lays the foundation for the sovereign power. An attempt to fix this “unlocalizable zone of indistinction” resulted in establishment of the “exemplary place in modern biopolitics” – the concentration camp governed by the state of siege and martial law.²⁴

Foucault talks of biopolitics and the incorporation of “man’s natural life in the mechanisms and calculations of power.” Yet Foucault, according to Agamben, is somewhat oblivious of the politics of the great totalitarian states of the twentieth century and also fails to analyze the concentration camps. Karl Lowith refers to the “politicization of life” as a central characteristic of totalitarian states and emphasizes the “contiguity between democracy and totalitarianism” in that both poach on bare life in erecting their sovereign power. Thus the very rights and liberties granted to the individual by the state power become in a totalitarian state the very means for the subjugation of the individual and form the criteria and basis for the sovereign’s decision.²⁵

Therefore, one can see how with the emergence of bare life as the central protagonist, we have a zone of indistinction where the traditional political distinctions – private/public, liberalism/totalitarianism- lose their clarity and usher in new forms of Fascism in Europe.

²¹ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign power and Bare life*, 63.

²² *Ibid.* 65-66.

²³ Mills, *The Philosophy of Agamben*, 68.

²⁴ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign power and Bare life*, 20.

The camp is to be seen as distinct from the prison in that the camp is located outside the “normal order”, while the prison, with its penal law and its prison time-table, is very much inside it.

²⁵ Hence, with biopolitics assuming the “care, control and use” of bare life, we have the rapid transition in the twentieth century from parliamentary democracies into totalitarian states. (Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign power and Bare life* 120-122).

In observing life which is precariously poised on the threshold, like that of the refugees or people in concentration camps, one can look at the case of the VPs (*Versuchpersonen*, human guinea pigs) – those who had been sentenced to death or were prisoners in camps. In both cases there was a “definitive exclusion” from the political community.²⁶ An analysis of a “purely bare life, entirely controlled by man and his technology” is further illuminated by looking at the state of the “neomort, the overcomatose person and the *faux vivant*.” Here then we have an “extreme embodiment of *homo sacer*” in that here is a life that may be killed without the act being seen as homicide.²⁷

In the state of exception the “decision on life” and “the decision on death” are no longer a clear distinction and the transition from biopolitics to “thanatopolitics”²⁸ becomes fuzzy. The line dividing these otherwise clearly separate domains now becomes unclear and can be “seen as gradually moving into areas other than that of political life...in which the sovereign is entering into an even more intimate symbiosis not only with the jurist but also with the doctor, the scientist, the expert and the priest.” Here, in talking about the state of exception Agamben brings in what he calls the “hidden paradigm of modernity”— the camp, and highlights a shift from the earlier emphasis on rights and statutes to a new focus on the *corpus* which is janus-like — “the bearer both of subjection to sovereign power and of individual liberties.”²⁹

Hannah Arendt in her book *The Decline of the Nation State and the End of the Rights of Man* focuses on the plight of the refugees and the stateless people and the distinction between “active rights”— given to people by virtue of their being citizens and “passive rights” by virtue of their being human. Here Arendt emphasizes the failure in sustaining and defending the latter. According to Agamben, in the context of the modern state, the “declaration of rights” is not to be seen as “proclamations of eternal, metajudicial values”. Rather it has to be recognized as “the originary figure of the inscription of natural life in the juridico-political order.” So the *zoe*, in this case, can be seen as getting entrenched in the state’s structure. Now the metamorphosis of the “subjects” into “citizens” becomes the means for the establishment of sovereignty.³⁰

With the advent of the French Revolution the notion of citizenship takes on a new political significance. It is in this context of the declaration of rights and an increasing emphasis on who is or is not a citizen, that Nazism and Fascism with their “redefinitions of the relations between man and citizen” are located. The differentiation and categorization of people constitutes what Foucault calls *racism* – a division of people into “who must live” and “who must die.” Thus

²⁶ In describing the VPs Agamben writes how “precisely because they were lacking almost all the rights and expectations that we customarily attribute to human existence, and yet were still biologically alive, they came to be situated in a limit zone between life and death, inside and outside, in which they were no longer anything but bare life.” (Agamben *Homo Sacer* 91).

²⁷ *Ibid.* 94.

²⁸ Achille Mbembe refers to this “power of death” as “necropolitics”. In his essay “Necropolitics”, Mbembe sees the notion of biopower as inadequate to account for contemporary forms of subjugation of life to necropower. Here he also tries to account for the varied ways in which “vast populations are subjected to conditions of life conferring upon them the status of the *living dead*.” (139-140).

²⁹ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign power and Bare life*, 122-125.

This, then, is modern democracy’s “inner contradiction” in that instead of abolishing “sacred life”, it rather “shatters it and disseminates it into every individual body, making it into what is at stake in a political conflict.” (Agamben *Homo Sacer* 124).

³⁰ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign power and Bare life*, 126-129.

racism, in the economy of biopower, helps regulate the “distribution of death” and enables the “murderous functions of the state.”³¹

The emphasis on the separation of what has to be ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ is what impacts refugees and the stateless people. These people, devoid of citizenship and legal rights, cannot be slotted easily in terms of “nativity and nationality” or “blood or soil” and hence pose a problem for sovereignty. The advent of the First World War, with an increase in the number of refugees in Europe and the “mass denaturalization and denationalization “ brought about by many European states results in creation of a rift in the “birth-nation link” which had laid the foundation for the declaration of 1789. Thus there is now a separation between the rights of man and the rights of citizens which eventually results in a separation between humanitarianism and politics. It is only in the form of bare or “sacred life” that these humanitarian organizations can deal with human life, hence their involvement with “the very powers they ought to fight.” The refugees from Rwanda are a case in point.

An observation of the ambiguous legal status of refugees or the prisoners in Nazi concentration camps, as seen in Agamben’s analysis of Auschwitz,³² invites parallels with the maltreatment of detainees at camps such as Guantanamo Bay, Abu Ghraib, and Bagram. Here people held in a “legal limbo”³³ are bereft of any benefits of the rule of law and thus seen as “legally unnameable and unclassifiable being(s)”.³⁴ Such places are seen by Agamben as the paradigmatic spaces of exception of political modernity where “bare life reaches its maximum indeterminacy.”³⁵

Given, then, the centrality of bare life to the functioning of a sovereign power, Richard Ek notes how each citizen is to be seen as perpetually poised on the threshold and never entirely “in” or “out.” Thus Agamben can claim that all the subjects of a biopolitical system of regime are to be seen as *homo sacers* in potentia and “at least potentially if not actually abandoned by the law and exposed to violence as a constitutive condition of political existence.”³⁶

³¹ Mbembe, “Necropolitics”, 17-18.

Mbembe himself attests to the importance of race in the calculus of biopower and sees race as the “ever present shadow in Western political thought and practice, especially when it comes to imagining the inhumanity of, or rule over foreign peoples.”(Ibid 17).

³² In *Remnants of Auschwitz*, Agamben elaborates on the figure of the Muselmann which is the most extreme case of bare life in the camp and is “located at the zone of indistinction between the human and the inhuman.” Here Agamben seeks to bring to the fore an ethics of witnessing and testimony. As Mill quotes Agamben –“the witness, the ethical subject, is the subject who bears witness to desubjectification.” (Mills *The Philosophy of Agamben* 100).

³³ Stephanie Palmer, “Arbitrary Detention in Guantanamo Bay: Legal Limbo in the Land of the Free”, 2003. 9.

³⁴ Under the order given by the U.S. President Bush, the Talibans captured in Afghanistan, in defiance of the Geneva conventions, were not to be given the status of Prisoners of War (POWs) nor accorded the status of persons charged with a crime in accordance with the American laws. Thus being “object(s) of pure de facto rule” they could be subject to an indefinite detention. (Agamben *State of Exception* 3).

³⁵ Post September 11 attacks in the U.S, detainees were denied all access to law and counsel and were designated as “enemy combatants”. In having declared a “war” against terror the President was to enjoy absolute powers, with the Executive’s pronouncements relying on the Constitution’s Commander-in-Chief clauses so that no other law mattered. So crude and inhuman acts, that proliferate in the camps, would not be seen as a violation of the U.S. laws against torture. (Diane Marie Amann, “Abu Ghraib”, 2005, 2122-2124).

Several people see the United States Supreme Court’s approach to habeas corpus entitlements of the detainees at Guantanamo Bay, as seen in cases like *Rasul vs Bush* and *Hamden vs Rumsfeld*, as suggesting that constitutional habeas corpus rights might be extended to these detainees sometime in the future. (Fiona de Londras, “Guantanamo Bay: Towards Legality?”, 2008).

³⁶ As Agamben says –“It is not so much a war of all against all as, more precisely, a condition in which everyone is bare life and a *homo sacer* for everyone else, and in which everyone is thus *wargus*.” (Agamben *Homo Sacer* 64).

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GHOSTS OF MASTERNARRATIVES: MAHASHWETA DEVI'S “PTERODACTYL, PURAN SAHAY AND PIRTHA” AS AN ENQUIRY INTO SUBALTERN VOICE

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The notion of the link between science and technology and progress has been around since the pre-independence years. The scientific community's association with the nationalist ideology led to science being related to the projects of development and decolonisation during the struggle for independence. According to Gyan Prakash, the power of science as a mechanism of establishing control is related to the establishment of the cultural authority of science. The colonial project of mapping and controlling India and making it manageable was tied to a belief in empirical sciences as the source of universal reason, knowledge and rationality (3-4). Translation of European modernity into Indian modernity was a task taken up by the intelligentsia and the nationalists with the aim of creating a nation state based on universal reason and a critique of old traditions. Science's cultural authority thus became the legitimating sign of India's modernity, rationality and progress. According to Prakash, a functioning of the language of reason as an idiom of power failed to attain hegemony in civil society and functioned only in the state domain. The colonial state functioned as an external entity that led to the process of governmentalisation through a discourse of developmentalism, followed by a native translation of this governmentalisation. The nationalist movement was about snatching the power of governmentality and the technics of the state from one power and place it in the hands of another (9-11). Thus, the architecture of the Indian nation was dependent on the project of science borrowed from the colonial rulers. Technology thus, according to Prakash, became not only the instrument but also the substance of state power in colonial India. The state power became inseparable from the technics of state; technology thus forged a link between state and the spaces of technological configuration and a claim to one meant a claim to the other (160).

To establish the uniqueness of the project of science borrowed from the colonial rulers, the science bureaucracy sought to popularize science and scientific temper by projecting a different modernity of India. According to Suresh Raina, the science bureaucracy's film on A.K. Ramanujan that employs the tradition/modernity dichotomy is an attempt at decolonization by establishing projected links between Indian traditional science and Western science. The attempt at maintaining an autonomous, objective status of scientific research manifested in the post independence years in professionalization and institutionalization of the project of science is also influenced by an aspiration to decolonization. However, such projects were limited by their view of science as what Raina calls a one-time investment package (2247). By the 1970s, there was skepticism about science and the trickle-down/transition theory of development as discussed in

the previous section. A disillusionment with the transition theory of development led to the popularity of poverty alleviation programmes. Although liberalism took the place of the developmental discourse of Nehru since around the 1980s, the trajectory of the Indian state shows that the discourse of liberalisation shared a lot with Nehru's notions of progress and growth. A major difference between the pre and the post 1980s is that after the 1980s, Nehru's socialist belief in a change in society that will lead to everyone being accommodated within the realms of progress and modernity disappeared. Instead, there was an acceptance of the fact that subaltern is a necessary evil and will continue to exist on the fringes. Thus, the discourse of the redressal of the grievances of the poor and the marginal became very prominent. The project aimed at percolating the benefits of scientific knowledge and technological institutions to the subaltern, without any revolutionary notion of the disruption of the existing class divisions. Thus, the role of the new elite was confined to carrying forward Nehru's developmentalism, but without the socialist dimension of a revolutionary change. Tracing the change in the definition of science in the 1970s, Raina argues that the notion of "small is beautiful" driven by anti modernism, a crisis of legitimation and the dichotomy between science versus society became popular. This was in opposition to the earlier global model of Big science: big machines, huge investments, intense manpower (186, 189-90). As a consequence, alternate science movements and knowledge production systems with a regional focus have emerged that sought to bring the benefits of science and technology to the level of the masses and develop their critical awareness. Although some of the people's science movements have led to a democratic participation and a jettisoning of commodified scientific knowledge, science as package and the penetration of the multinational corporations, many of the movements have led to a consolidation of the elitist status-quo.

At a time when we are haunted by the prospect of a fully homogenised, technologically controlled, absolutely hierarchised world defined by polarities, it is more than pertinent to consider the implications of a colonialism that survives the demise of empires. Thomas Friedman's argues that the power structure of globalisation is built not only around nation states but also global markets run by what he calls the electronic herd of investors that gather in the metropolitan supermarkets of the world. So, USA can destroy third world countries both by dropping a bomb and by downgrading one's financial bonds (114-115). Globalization thus is the integration of markets, finance, and technology in a way that shrinks the size of the world and provides conditions for the existence of newer forms of oppression and resistance. As such, one has to be conscious of newer and various modes of dissent to the newer forms of colonialism and there is an urgent need to go beyond models of official dissent. Models of official dissent profess anti-colonialism in ways specified by the modern world as proper, sane and rational. What is instead required is a set of categories and concepts that translate the West in terms of the non-West's experience of suffering. The battle is thus, according to Nandy, between the technologised bureaucrat and the reified victim, the pseudo rulers and their fearsome other selves projected on to their subjects (xv-xvi). According to Nandy, a shift from cultural relativism to an alternate universality involves a critical awareness of an ethically sensitive and culturally rooted alternative social knowledge that is already partly available outside the modern social sciences.

In the texts that I consider in this section, there is a redistribution of the sensible and the true in that in both the there is a dismissal of what counts as science and the delineation of the

possibilities of new definitions of the scientific and the rational. In so doing, we also attempt to redefine the meaning of art in their own ways. Mahashweta Devi's *Pterodactyl, Puran Sahay and Prirtha* critiques the lopsidedness of the "modern" discourses of reportage, social service, healthcare and developmentalism and hints at the possibilities of non-scientific ways of seeing and believing.

Pterodactyl, Puran Sahay, and Pirtha

Introduction

The story in *Pterodactyl, Puran Sahay, and Pirtha* is told through the eyes of the urban journalist Puran Sahay. Puran travels to a remote, famine-stricken tribal village to report on the fascinating account of the supposed sighting of a pterodactyl. The plot revolves around Puran's struggle to decide how to represent the prehistoric creature in his factual report. The pterodactyl is symbolic of a scientific anomaly, but the natives of Pirtha see it as an ominous sign of impending famine and extinction. The novella proceeds in a way that events draw Puran away from the supposed objectivity of a reporter. Puran is gradually drawn in the mission to understand the appearance of the pterodactyl. Puran fails to find any rational explanation. All he is left with is a commitment to rebuild the tribal community with love that stretches beyond reason for a long time.

Writing as a mode of renegotiating visibility

According to Malaya Bhattacharya, the charismatic individual dedicated to a cause imparts a portion of his/her own high visibility to the cause that is being upheld. Her identification with the tribal cause has given Mahasweta Devi a high profile which she might not have gained working just as a writer. She has used this charisma to highlight the uncountable disadvantages that the tribals suffer from. She points out gaps and lacunae in the work done by the administration and the panchayats. At the same time, it is also true that the charismatic individual's perception of the cause that she considers to be her very own imprints the cause with exclusivity. This in turn adversely affects her historical assessment of it. The perception of the individual working for the cause tends to become a closure which he or she alone can comprehend (1003). In *Pterodactyl, Puran Sahay, and Pirtha*, there is a complex interplay of the position of Mahasweta Devi as writer-activist, of the new regimes of visibility that emerges during the course of the narrative and of what Bhattacharya calls the peculiar dialogic talent of Devi that is suitable more to the long story than to the novel.

The tribal "other" and an alternate history

According to Gayatri Chakrabarty Spivak, love, as finally understood by Puran in the novella, is an ethical responsibility, a longing for a time when terms as "tribal" and "civilized" will be acknowledged as social productions and not pre-given, leading to an awareness of the cultural divide that has been widened by constructs as "modernity," "progress," and "advancement." The tribal community is presented by Devi as a group that is nowhere implicated in the discourses of Indian education, development, science, industry, agriculture, technology. The "other" is not a theoretical concept but groups and peoples written out of history. However, such a notion runs the risk of romanticizing the tribal groups or professing to be able to frame and represent their subjectivities and points of views. The pterodactyl demonstrates the connection between the land and the people of Pirtha that has a distinct, unique history. To be displaced from this due to man-

made famine and starvation would mean a loss of identity for the inhabitants of Pirtha. As Spivak argues, Puran himself becomes part of the tribal community's historical record when he sees the pterodactyl. A step different from assuming a privileged position from where to narrate the stories of subaltern subjectivities would be to understand the tribals' relationship with their ancestry and their foundations.

A parody of the "help" narrative

The sufferings and problems of Pirtha never reach the "official" classification of famine. Hence, the government declares Pirtha as facing a drought. The government officials provide aid to Pirtha accordingly. Help and relief workers arrive in Pirtha. Devi describes the mechanical way in which relief is provided to the inhabitants of Pirtha who do not believe in the power of any help to be able to prevent the impending doom. The rhetoric of relief does not hold any meaning in the worldview of the tribals. Also, there is a segment in the novella where Devi describes how family planning posters are used for everyday purposes by the tribals. According to Spivak, the bitter humor with which Devi treats the government's family planning posters shows us how the entire initiative is unmindful of the robbing of the women and men of Pirtha of the dignity of their reproductive responsibility implying that to be human is to be always and already inserted into a structure of responsibility. A narrative of family planning is of complete insignificance for a people for who the pterodactyl functions as a symbol of ancestral history which gives them a self-determined legitimacy and right to their land. This is a land that is suffering from the developmental measures implemented in and around it, an instance of it being the poisoning of the wells through fertilization and the green revolution.

Conclusion

An aesthetic-political enquiry into *Pterodactyl*, *Puran Sahay* and *Pirtha* against the conditions of a post-globalization, post-liberalization, post-colonial world leads to a rethinking of the dominant structures available for understanding oppression and dissent. This in turn necessitates a retake of our ideas of modernity and identity and the negotiation between the two. Going beyond an understanding of the text as a reflection of political realities, I have sought to examine how the text itself is implicated in the processes of creating realities. Hegemonic discourses and methods of governmentality always exist with modes of dissent that might not fit into the canonical definitions of revolt. A questioning of the clear-cut relationship between art and politics enables one to be critically conscious of these modes of dissent. The constant reconfiguration of the radical as the conservative and vice versa makes us aware of the possibilities in a text that juggles between being a radical manifesto and a popular commodity. Texts written in a postcolonial, liberalized world by their very existence engage with diverse modes of being, living and thinking. Approaching these texts with the aim of delving into such forms of engagement opens possibilities of rethinking the definitions of the canon, the established modes of literary and non-literary analysis, the unilateral relationship between aesthetics and politics and the ideas of modernity and identity in the present world(s).

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OVERLAPPING IDENTITIES: THE INDIAN MIDDLE CLASS AND CASTE POLITICS IN *CHACHA CHOUDHARY* COMIC BOOK SERIES

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The nexus between caste and class is so complex that it is suggested that both categories should not be treated as two independent categories in the Indian context. Several scholars have debated the complex relation between class and caste and have arrived at different conclusions yet they tend to agree that the Indian middle class is not a pure class category (Beteille, 1965; Gupta 2000; Jafferlot, 2010; Aloysius, 1997). The Indian middle class carries certain elements of caste in it, despite of its self-projection as modern, liberal and progressive social group. The Indian middle class is still dominated by upper caste, projecting upper caste culture as legitimate Indian culture. The invocation of Indian civilizational values in the nationalist discourse tends to conceal the hierarchization of different social groups and succeeds to filter the upper caste values as national values to be retained and protected. The identity of the Indian middle class is rested on its claim to be representative of the Indian culture but these claims are further emphasized through reworking of cultural identities of religion, caste and gender in the public sphere (Joshi 2010 and Fernandes, 2006). In dominant form of nationalism, the lower caste is projected as embodying inferior values and norms, in dire need of reformism and domestication. Weiner also argues that caste is used “as an instrument for social change. Caste is not disappearing, nor is ‘casteism’ – the political use of caste – for what is emerging in India is a social and political system which institutionalizes and transforms but does not abolish caste” (Weiner 2001:196). In spite of projection of progressive intentions through the socialist rhetoric of the ruling class, the lower caste is still stigmatized as grotesque culture inappropriate to be encompassed into national culture. The violent opposition to the Mandal Commission reflected the progressive discourse of the middle class was only skin-deep. Hansen also pointed out the ruling class cleverly retained the social hierarchies in the nationalist discourse:

They created a form of public culture marked by radical rhetoric and high idealism, but more enduring social structures such as caste hierarchies, family structures, upper-caste norms of public behaviour, and so on, were rarely challenged.
(7)

Several political scientists have pointed out the continued role of caste in the construction of political identities in the contemporary Indian society. Undoubtedly, the democratic system has changed caste equations but caste still plays a critical role in shaping politics both at the local and national level (Brass 1990, Kohli 2001, Jafferlot 2003). Even in the age of liberalization, caste

has become more pronounced source of cultural identity. The efforts to modernize the Indian society coexist with the structure of casteism. In the public discourses which advocate progressive notions of society and political systems, the traditional hierarchy based on casteism is rarely debated. Analyzing the linkage between televisual image and Hindutva politics, Rajagopal also emphasizes the same point:

Older markers of brahminhood could thus be redefined rather than explicitly rejected. This, I suggest, was the cultural facade of Hindu society attempting to “liberalize” without directly confronting the illiberal ordering of caste. (67)

Indian comics have emerged as ‘cultural reaction’ to the dominance of foreign comics in the Indian society which came to be perceived as inappropriate for Indian sensibility. In comparison to Western comics, which were labelled as morally bankrupt and violent, Indian comics were reinvented as ‘respectable middle class pedagogic enterprise’ in the late 1960s. Indian comics require to be analyzed, as a part of public culture, as “a crucial site for studying the ways in which dominant ideologies of religion and national identity are actively created” (MacLain, 22). Lawrence Babb wrote in the introduction to the book *Media and Transformation of Religion in South Asia* (1995) that “comic books in India should be taken seriously, for they may well be among the more important channels of contact between English –educated, middle class children and South Asian religious traditions” (8).

The careful appropriation of comics as pedagogic tool to disseminate ‘Indian’ values has transformed the way comics are perceived in the Indian culture. Khanduri argues that in the production and consumption of Indian comics, ‘culture’ has been a resilient organizing principle (171). The indigenous comic-creators have succeeded to change its perception from something ‘funny,’ ‘cheap entertainment’ to what Chandra (2008) calls ‘infotainment’ –dissemination of cultural values in entertaining form. Aruna Rao (2001) has also suggested that Indian comics emerged at the time when Indian culture was in transition and the middle class was anxious to hand down their cultural background to young children who were more fascinated by Western comics.

The comic strip *Chacha Choudhary* was created by the cartoonist Pran Kumar Sharma for the Hindi magazine *Lotpot* in 1969. In the year of 1981, the publisher Diamond Comics decided to launch the comic strip as comic book. The comic book *Chacha Choudhary* emerged at a historical conjuncture, when the idea of nation was questioned from a set of different political positions and the cultural hegemony of the upper caste/ middle class was threatened by the rise of subaltern groups. Indian comics can be termed as ‘cultural intervention’ in the way Indian children were exposed to the western culture through comics. Like western comics and cartooning, all characters caricatured but the ‘real effect’ is retained through visual description of cultural background. The Indian comic creators have sanitized the form by introducing indigenous forms of narration and indigenous characters, behaviour pattern and cultural repertoire. In spite of Indian comics’ structural connections with the standardized form of western comics, the scholars have pointed out its distinctiveness from the standard format of comics as evolved in the west. In a sanitized form, Indian comics aimed at filling the vacuum created by the disappearing grandmother’s stories. In Indian context, the acceptability of comics as a serious medium owes to its standardization in accordance with upper caste/middle class

values and norms, aimed at teaching moral values. The appropriation of comics is seen by Chandra as “like an appropriate vehicle of smuggling in explosive matter without making it evident that something controversial was being done” (42). The appeal of comics lies in its ability to convey hegemonic meanings without any controversy. Each image is multidimensional and hence can be too vague to be interrogated. Highlighting the role of particularity of comics in the way upper caste/ middle class values and norms are transmitted and content is perceived by the audience, leading to active alignment between class and cultural formation, Babb argues that the fluidity of comic format permits ‘an unprecedented degree of iconic experimentation, which in turn has generated and supported new syncretism’(6).

Scholars like Hawley (1995), McLain (2009), and Chandra (2008) have pointed out the role of Indian comics in shaping national politics in the post-Nehruvian period. The upper caste /middle class came to perceive the socialist state as being captured by the subaltern groups. Fernandes pointed out the historical context which shaped the cultural politics of the Indian middle class in the 1980s and 1990s:

One of the central political trends in the 1980s and 1990s was the rise of a self-perception of the urban, upper-caste, Hindu middle class that Indian democracy had been corrupted by a political field that catered excessively to subordinate social groups such as Muslims and lower-caste groups such as *dalits* and other backward castes.(177)

Similarly, Corbridge and Harris (2000) argue that it is possible to “describe both economic liberalization, and Hindu nationalism, with their sometimes contradictory but often surprisingly complementary agendas for the reinvention of India, as ‘elite revolts.’ Both reflect and are vehicles for the interests and aspirations especially of the middle class and higher caste Indians” (xix). Previously dependent on the state for its political representation, the middle class began to assert itself in the public sphere through production of different public discourses. In the absence of televisual image, comics provided an effective alternative for the middle class to reconstruct national culture, visualizing the upper caste culture as national culture. Through the serialized sequential images which constitute the narrative, the upper caste/ middle class is foregrounded, leading to the marginalisation of the lower caste in the national imagination.

In the comic book, the lower caste is coded in a specific way: they are marked as dark-skinned, grotesque with unusual names, engaged in manual work in remote areas or depicted as criminal minded people who earn their livelihood through unethical means. M.S.S Pandian argued that caste and class relations are subtly transcoded into something else in the writings of the upper-caste writers. Caste in their writings “always belongs to someone else; it is somewhere else; it is of another time. The act of transcoding is an act of acknowledging and disavowing caste at once” (241). He further maintains that in the writings of upper caste writers, the question of casteism is rarely mentioned. Most of the times, either they are silent about casteism or the hierarchical structure of the society is depicted as natural state of the society, without questioning the social hierarchies which perpetuate social victimization. As Chatterjee (1994) pointed out that the

nationalist elites articulated the need to protect the Indian culture in order to counter the materialist culture of the West, in the projection of 'Indian' culture through the strategy of inclusion and exclusion, the upper caste culture was naturalized as 'Indian' culture, excluding the cultural practices of the lower caste from the discourse of national culture. The construction of 'national culture' in the nationalist discourse has continued to be shaped by the upper caste politics in the postindependent nation. M.S.S.Pandian argues that the triumph of Indian nationalism over colonialism can be perceived as a story of domination of the subaltern groups within the nation:

In other words, If we foreground dominant nationalism in a oppositional dialogue with the subaltern social groups within the nation –instead of colonialism – the divide between the spiritual and material , inner and outer ,would tell us other stories –stories of domination and exclusion under the sign of culture and spirituality within the so called national community itself.....the very domain of enforcing domination over the subaltern social groups such as lower castes, women, marginal linguistic regions, by the national elite. (242-243)

Fernandes, in her study of the Indian middle class in the context of liberalization, contends that the Indian middle class practices have transformed citizenship into a category that is characterized by exclusions based on the social markers such as caste (xxiv). She maintains that the Indian middle class is not a static entity. Rather it is a process which is continuously constructed and reconstructed. It is a process because it is continually competing with other political forces as the rise caste –based movements (xxvi).The identity of the Indian middle class is produced through reworking of the older social hierarchies of caste, gender and religion. In the Indian context, the caste factor provides an important source of cultural capital to claim membership to the middle class:

Caste has continued to provide segments of the middle class with an important source of capital, which has shaped the upper-caste character of the emerging identity of a new liberalizing middle class. (Fernandes, xxxiii).

In the comic book, the already constituted, caste –based cultural codes are deployed in representating the Indian society, through which the lower caste community is vilified as adverse force, requiring the intervention of the ruling class to build a strong nation. In the public discourses, the lower caste is projected as the dark forces of the Indian society. Rajagopal has argued that advertising agencies have exploited caste-based aesthetics, catering to the upper caste urban culture in which personal and social relations are cast through semiotic representations of intimacy of the upper castes and representations of utilitarianism for images of lower castes (89). In the narrative, the upper caste everyday life is carefully depicted as bounded space, sanitized from the chaotic, filthy and unsophisticated culture of the lower caste people.

In the story 'Fraud Begger' *Chacha Choudhary* (Diamond Comics -1706), the lower caste character is seen as criminal minded beggar who attempts to earn money by deceiving 'bhadrak' urban middle class. His presence in the urban middle class space is described in

terms of encroachment of the urban middle class space. The panel in which the beggar is visualized as rogue foregrounds the urban middle class setting which seems to be in chaos due to the arrival of the beggar.



Fig.1 Fraud Begger' *Chacha Choudhary* (Diamond Comics -1706)

While the fair- skinned rich couple is seen as sympathetic towards the poor, the beggar is projected as fraudulent who does not hesitate to deceive even those who are concerned with his plight. The story reflects the caste- ridden mind set of the members of the upper caste society who fail to perceive the lower caste community as equally citizens of the Indian nation. Rather they are perceived as unscrupulous, incapable of adopting and imbibing national cultural values and norms. Their co-existence with the upper caste / middle class is not denied but in their co-existence with the upper caste community, they have been seen as antagonistic forces, functioning against the development of the nation. Similarly, in the story entitled 'Hut Versus Apartment' *Chacha Choudhary* (Diamond Comics-1461), a poor, disfigured, dark- skinned and illiterate old woman is deceived by a builder who usurps her property to build a multistory apartment in place of her hut. The resistance of the old woman is followed by violent suppression of the resistant voice. When the old woman remains undeterred and refuses to leave her hut, the builder attempts to demolish the hut in order to force her leave that place. For his inhuman treatment of the poor old woman, Chacha Choudhary not only censures his behaviour but also humiliates him in order to teach him a lesson.



Fig. 2 'Hut Versus Apartment' Chacha Choudhary (Diamond Comics-1461)

His coincidental arrival on the crucial moments of crisis constitutes the dramatic part of the narrative, justifying his intervention as protection of Indian values and norms. In the story, the lower caste old woman is projected as object of state-protection not subject of power, rendering her secondary citizen who is part of the Indian nation but cannot claim to the nation.

In another story entitled 'Jal Baba' Chacha Choudhary (Diamond Comics-689), the lower caste character Shagnu is seen as sinister who can easily forsake the social ethics in order to earn money. He projects himself as *jal baba*, possessing divine powers and tricks the innocent villagers into believing that disobeying his order might be detrimental for the village and its people. He disguises himself as *jal baba*, using plastic cover, and usurps the well which is the only source of drinking water in the village. The villagers have to pay him money to take water from the well. Those who try to fetch water, without offering coconuts and money to him, have to face consequences for showing disrespect for the divine *baba*. Once, a girl fetched water from the well without his permission, he cursed her by throwing water from his *kamandal*, charring her face permanently. Scared of horrifying consequences of annoying the *jal baba*, they agree to offer him coconut and money for each bucket of water. The incidental intervention of the hero helps the villagers get rid of the sinister Shagnu. Chacha Choudhary exposes Shagnu's disguise as *jal baba* who wears plastic cover to protect himself from acid and throws acid as divine water on the faces of people who defy his dictations.



Fig.3 'Jal Baba' *Chacha Choudhary* (Diamond Comics-689)

The binary of black and white has been used to mark the character of Shagnu as lower caste. In the collective unconscious mind of the upper caste, the lower caste is supposedly dark-skinned in shabby clothes. Shagnu succeeded to convince the villagers of his identity as baba because he was wearing a fair-skinned mask that enabled him to resemble one of the villagers. The moment, he is exposed by the eponymous hero, the mask functions to differentiate from the upper caste and vilify him as outcaste.

In another story entitled 'Truck for Sale,' *Chacha Choudhary* (Diamond Comics -556), the dark-skinned, grotesque character in tethered attire is visualized as lower caste trickster who steals travellers' luggage and vehicles in remote areas and then sell them to innocently greedy people at very cheap rates, citing his current economic crisis and family problems. Jhanku is depicted as outside of filial network, exploiting filial emotions to delude people in order to earn money. Jhanku attempts to sell Chacha Choudhary's truck to a stranger by mentioning his urgent need of money. He exploits the fatherly emotion to convince the stranger of his genuine reason of selling the truck at cheap rate. The upper caste Indians tend to perceive the lower caste people as bereft of family values, who can evoke any emotion to mislead people in order to take advantage of human sensibility. The first panel depicts the entry of Chacha Choudhary and his Sabu into the remote area of India, suggesting their cultural location and marking their strangeness to the local culture. Most of the encounters between the upper caste '*bhadralok*' and lower caste criminals are narrated in the remote areas, symbolizing cultural differences and insider/outsider location.



Fig.4 'Truck for Sale,' *Chacha Choudhary* (Diamond Comics -556)

The lower caste Shagnu is pitted against the upper caste characters, and through visualization of encoded caste differences, he is stigmatized and excluded from the national culture. His presence merely functions to exhibit the threatened upper caste culture due to the ambiguous presence of criminal minded lower caste people.

In another story entitled 'The Dentist' *Chacha Choudhary* (Diamond Comics- 253), the wrestler Gobar Singh is portrayed as mindlessly stupid and insolent character whose dark skin suggests his lower caste identity. His moronic name and disfigured face further reinforce the stereotype of the lower caste as devilish in appearance and intellectually dull. The word 'gobar' (cowdung), attributed to the lower caste wrestler in the story, is used as an adjective in the Indian context for a person who is incapable of taking decisions, marking intellectual deficit of that person. By representing the lower caste as dark-skinned, disfigured and intellectually dull, their claim to the national culture has been invalidated, projecting the secondary citizen status of the lower caste community. In the story, the caricatured and dark-skinned lower caste character is differentiated from fair-skinned and sophisticated Chacha Choudhary through their appearance and behaviour patterns. The first panel introduces both Chacha Choudhary and the wrestler, depicting the wrestler as intruder who threatens Chacha Choudhary without any specified reason. The resentment of the lower caste against the hegemonic power of the upper caste society is appropriated and projected as individual antagonism, rather than as social movement for social equality, challenging the centralized power of the ruling classes.



Fig.5 'The Dentist' *Chacha Choudhary* (Diamond Comics- 253)

While Chacha Choudhary is engrossed in his leisure time, the wrestler challenges him for a fight, questioning his hegemonic power in the society. The wrestler is not only lampooned but also thrashed badly by Chacha Choudhary, legitimizing the subordinate position of the lower caste in the stratification of the Indian society.

The boundaries of the middle class are constructed through reworking of the traditional hierarchy of caste. The entry to the middle class is mediated through construction of values and norms attributed to the upper caste community. Through representation, even the legitimate claims of the richer segment of the lower caste community to the membership of the Indian middle class are invalidated by projecting them as morally corrupt, incapable of transcending their greed and selfishness to create harmonious society. For instance, in the story entitled 'Story Book', *Chacha Choudhary* (Diamond Comics Digest-102), the lower caste character Premiji is seen as rich and well-educated person who indulges in leisure time like the hero Chacha Choudhary, exploiting all facilities available to the urban citizens of the Indian state, yet he is excluded from the middle class society by projecting him ethically incapable of imbibing those values and norms which are required to be middle class in the Indian context. The Indian middle class is not just a social category. Rather the middle class, in the Indian context, signifies a historically constructed value system which is required to be possessed in order to claim to be middle class. In the story, the economically qualified lower caste character is invalidated as middle class due to moral deficit in his character.

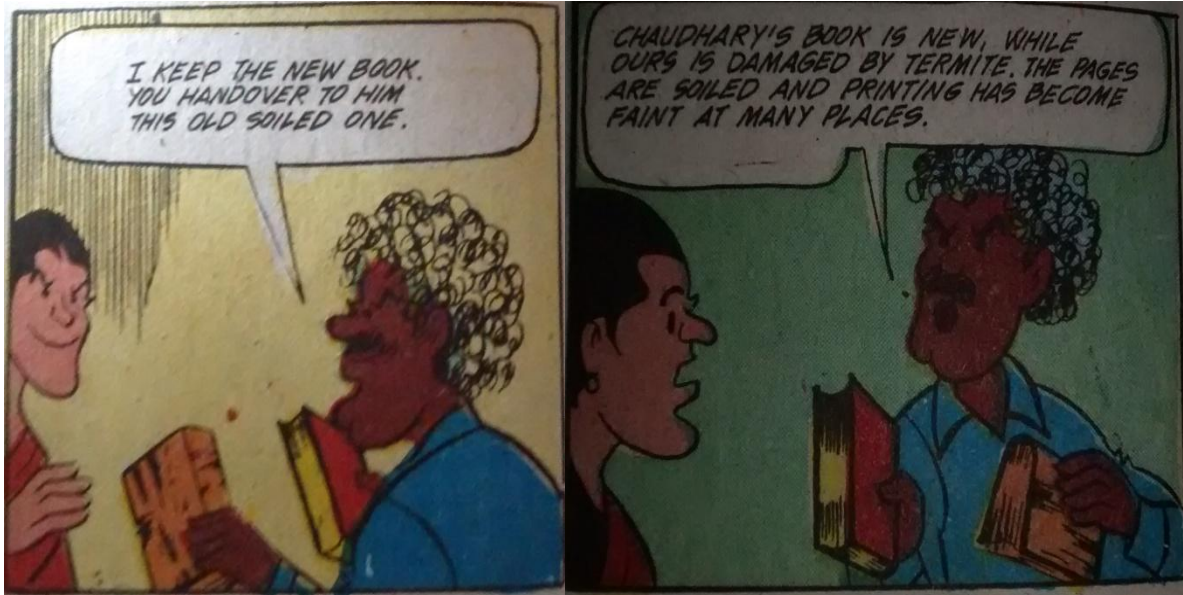


Fig.6 'Story Book', Chacha Choudhary (Diamnod Comics Digest-102)

The theft of a story book constitutes the central thread of the story in which the lower caste character borrows a book of stories from Chacha Choudhary but returns a dilapidated book, succumbing to his greed. Instead of reacting to his trickery, Chacha Choudhary knowingly receives the torn book and leaves his place, forcing the reader to judge his character.

In most of the stories in the comic book series, the lower caste characters appear as minor characters who are seen only as either as street-dwellers or poor working class, bumping coincidentally into hero or villains. However such depiction of the lower caste characters is not a narrative design to depict the diversity of Indian society. Rather their marginalization is naturalized by such representation in the comic book.

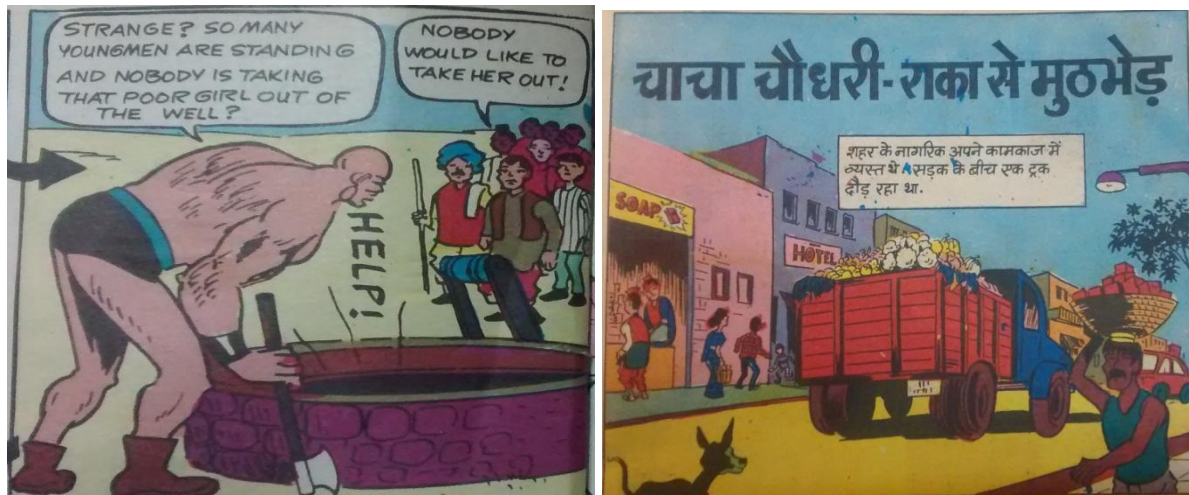


Fig.7 the lower caste characters as minor characters in Chacha Choudhary comic book series

In the story entitled 'Som's Ball' *Chacha Choudhary* (Diamond Comics-1701), the lower caste character is seen as unknown poor worker who sells mangoes in residential areas of the city. He appears only in a single panel in which he is seen as hit by a boy and his fruit are scattered over the road. In the supposedly comic scene, he is depicted as in misery, crying for help but both Chacha Choudhary and his assistant Sabu are amused at the boy's comic behaviour, instead of helping the poor fruit-seller who is pain-stricken. The lower caste characters are represented as subordinate to the upper caste people through different visual tactics in the narrative. For instance, in the story entitled 'Manko's Marriage,' *Chacha Choudhary* (Diamond Comics-335) in a conversation between Sabu and a rural crowd, the members of lower caste are seen standing behind the members of an upper caste community, suggesting their marginal status in the society. The lower caste community is codified in the narrative in tactful manner. They are never overtly elaborated as lower caste people. Rather their social identity as outcaste is suggested through deploying cultural codes which could be easily deciphered by the reader who is well familiar with those cultural codes. In another story entitled 'Clash with Raaka,' *Chacha Choudhary* (Diamond Comics-400), two lower caste characters appear once in different two panels, suggesting the Indian culture background with its social stratification. Both characters are not directly related with the story. Rather they mere function as cultural signifiers, helping the reader to imagine the cultural background. However, the representation of the lower caste serves to naturalize the class boundaries in the narrative. Both characters in different two panels, serialized into a story, are depicted as poor labourers. Their passive appearance in the narrative seems to justify their lower rank in the Indian society. While one lower caste character appears as labourer who is carrying bricks on his head in a large panel, which introduces the social background of the story, suggesting his class identity, the other lower caste character is portrayed in a short panel as shepherd in a remote area. In the first large panel, while the upper caste society is visualized as consumer class, indulging in hedonistic pleasure, the lower caste dark-skinned character is shown as a labourer, suggesting his working class identity.

What is striking in the narrative is the way the social disparity is naturalized in the narrative, representating the constructed social hierarchies as essential categories. The lower caste characters rarely appear as major characters in the comic book. Rather, they are depicted as minor characters, constituting only subplot of the narrative and representating antagonistic forces within the Indian society. For instance, in the story 'Raak's Attack' *Chacha Choudhary* (Diamond Comics-525), Chacha Choudhary and the monster Raaka are major characters, representing respectively good and evil in the narrative. However, the story does not begin with the main plot, involving the devil Raaka who symbolises all evil forces of the Universe. Rather, the story begins with a local evil, posing threat to the Indian society. The first panel introduces a taxi driver whose social identity is suggested through his dark-skin which has been deployed in the narrative to mark the lower caste community. The lower caste characters are rarely depicted as upper class characters. Most of the times, they figure in the narrative as working class characters who are either deployed as domestic servants or are engaged in manual work as labourer. In the comic book *Chacha Choudhary*, their social location and economic status are closely interlinked through narrative tricks which consistently delineate them as both lower caste and lower class. In the story, the unknown taxi driver is seen lower class criminal who is engaged in criminal activities, including theft and kidnapping. While the upper caste fair society

is seen as kind and innocent people who easily trust him, he is a cruel criminal who even does not hesitate to kill children and women for money. He kidnaps a child of rich couple and demands one lakh rupees. The threat posed to the Indian society by the sinister driver is timely subdued by the middle class's hero Chacha Choudhary. The upper caste society is differentiated from the lower caste through stereotyping depiction of the lower caste as criminal-minded community.

The lower caste is not only seen as dark-skinned poor, featuring often engaged in manual work but also as unfaithful servants who conspire with criminals to usurp the property of their owners, who trust him blindly and allows them enter into their private spaces. In the story entitled 'Mysteries of Candle' *Chacha Choudhary* (Diamond Comics-365), the lower caste is depicted in a typical stereotype which represents the lower caste as dark-skinned poor community, deployed as servants in the domestic work by the upper caste rich people. In the story, Bhola, the lower caste character, is portrayed as servant, working in a rich businessman's house. The first panel depicts both the master and servant in conversation and their relationship of master and servant is suggested through deployment of cultural codes which specify not only their economic status but also their social location.



Fig. 8 'Mysteries of Candle' Chacha Choudhary (Diamond Comics-365)

While the master is sketched as fair-skinned, fatty turbaned middle aged man, clothed in expensive clothes, the servant is visualized as dark-skinned, thin old man whose appearance suggests his social and economic status. Even the posture of Bhola, folding both hands in reverence for his master, symbolizes the power equation between the two, relegating Bhola to the

marginal social position in terms of both class and caste. In the carefully knitted story, Bhola is not only seen as a lower caste servant, he is also depicted as unfaithful and crooked who is ready to deceive his master even for a small amount of money. Through the narrative trick, the linkage between caste and class is established, notifying Bhola as both a member of both lower caste and lower class. In the first panel, the servant seems to be a sincere and hard working man, who never disappoints his master. However, the impression of his honesty was cautiously created in order to shock the reader at the end of the story, representing the lower caste Bhola as cunning servant. In contrast to the depiction of Bhola as cunning servant, the character of Seth Sambandass is delineated as an innocent person who is considerably vulnerable to trickery, naturalizing the class and caste boundaries constructed on supposedly inherent community-based values. At the end of the story, Bhola emerges as treacherous servant who conspires with Seth's wife to usurp his master's property, reinforcing the historically created stereotype of the lower caste community as unfaithful community.

Similarly, in the story 'Low Priced Car' *Chacha Choudhary* (Diamond Comics-1297), a lower caste dark skinned is sketched as loafer who leads a fraudulent life. He is introduced in the middle of the story as intruder, disrupting the social harmony. The story begins with a pleasant scene in which Both Chacha Choudhary and Sabu are in a euphoric mood, enjoying the mundane things of the urban life. Their amusing mood is disrupted by their coincidental encounter with the loafer, whose name is not specified in the narrative, marking him as outsider. The marked character is directly introduced as crooked person who is trying to sell a stolen car at cheap rate. He is not only seen as thief but also as a stupid criminal who becomes victim of his own trickery. In a farcical scene, he attempts to sell the stolen car to the real owner of the car as he has almost forgotten the real owner of the car. The hero Chacha Choudhary appears on the scene when both are engaged in a fierce brawl, both claiming to be the owner of the car. As soon as Chacha Choudhary looks at them, he immediately recognizes the real owner of the car. By just perceiving their appearance, he confidently makes a judgement about their economic capacity to afford that car, linking the colour of skin with economic power. The lower caste dark-skinned is notified by the hero as the fictitious claimant, without investigating the case, as the hero's judgement is based on his perception of the dark-skinned people as poor people who are incapable of earning money through ethical means.

In the story entitled 'Actress Neil' *Chacha Choudhary* (Diamond Comics-912), the lower caste character is represented as a member of a gang who indulges in criminal activities. In the story, the lower caste is seen as assistant to a Muslim kidnapper who plans to kidnap a famous heroine. Mata, the dark-skinned character, plays the role of a driver in the conspiracy to kidnap the heroine. In the representation of the lower caste as a member of a criminal gang, he is depicted as playing the role of assistant who either drives the vehicle or serves the role of a hidden protection for the villain. In the story, he is deployed to help a Muslim criminal, projecting both Muslim and lower caste as antagonistic forces, posing threat to the Indian nation. In the political imagination, the subaltern groups including the Muslim community and lower caste are seen projected as 'enemy within the nation.' In the 1970s the hegemonic power of the upper caste was challenged by the social movements launched by the subaltern social groups. These social movements of protest against the power of the ruling class were perceived and projected as agents of national disintegration. In media representation, the assertion of the marginalized

groups came to be seen as threat to the social harmony in the Indian society. The representation of both the lower caste and Muslim community in the comic book series is implicated in the cultural politics of the upper caste /middle class. In the story, both the lower caste and Muslim character are portrayed as criminal- minded people, who do not think twice before killing the social servant Chacha Choudhary who tries to rescue the heroine from the impending danger. By weaving a narrative about a menacing situation and placing the characters in that situation, the reader is suggested to make judgement about the characters through their actions.

In the discourse casteism, the lower caste woman is projected as lecherous, greedy and insolent, who acts on her impulses, instead taking rational decisions. Even the lower castes women are portrayed as disfigured and indecent, differentiating them from upper caste fair and sophisticated women. In the story 'Manko's marriage' Chacha *Choudhary* (Diamond Comics-335), the lower caste woman is seen devilish in both appearance and nature, projecting appearance as extraneous expression of the inner mind.



Fig. 9 'Manko's marriage' Chacha *Choudhary* (Diamond Comics-335)

In the story the lower caste disfigured woman Manko is disliked by every young man for her ugliness and lewd behaviour. When she falls in a dry well, nobody is ready to help her. Even the members of her community refuse to rescue her. She is a victim of double discourse of casteism and patriarchy which notify her as undesirable woman. However, her victimisation is further reinforced when she is bluntly rejected several times by her saviour Sabu. She is ridiculed for her desire to be married throughout the narrative, projecting her universally unwanted due to her ugliness.

Through representation, social identities are constructed and propagated as essential categories, legitimizing the dominant class's interests as public interests. In the Indian context, the upper castes have projected their own values and norms as national culture through constructing public discourses, claiming to be the national representative. In the projection of national culture, the lower caste has been excluded from the national imaginary, representing them as regressive elements within the nation. In the paper, I have sought to explore the ideological linkage between politics of class and caste and how these ideological connections are further played out and reinforced in different forms of popular culture such as comics. The comic book Chacha Choudhary is implicated in the cultural politics of the upper caste, reconstructing hegemonic identity of the upper caste/ middle class, leading to the marginalisation of the lower caste community.

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PATRIARCHY IN ENGLISH NOVEL: A STUDY OF GEORGE ELIOT'S *THE MILL ON THE FLOSS*

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Patriarchy has existed since from the times immemorial. What is the core issue of a patriarchal society? That man is the ruler and woman is destined to be ruled. Woman has to confine herself to the four walls of the house. Her duty is simply to serve, obey and not to instruct. She has no access to the world outside and even if she tries, she has to see her limits. So whatever a woman is supposed to do she has to think twice, she is never given a chance where she can speak about her decisions boldly. What is the result? The net result is that woman becomes a puppet and under such circumstances her identity is completely shattered. "Traditionally patriarchy granted the father nearly total ownership over wife and children including the power of physical abuse even those of murder and sale" (Millet33). This further marginalized the status of woman. "Nearly all patriarchies enforce taboos against woman..." (Millet 47). Even in contemporary times crime against women is one form of patriarchy.

Biologically men and women no doubt are different. But the trouble lies in culture where different yardstick is applied to men and women. To put it specifically it is the grooming of male and female which is to be blamed. Normally what is seen with parents is that "...they go shopping and bring home girl and boy toys for their male and female neonates" From here the trouble starts. "Infants spend time with these toys and ultimately express a preference for these familiar objects" (Locke17). What is inculcated in male the same thing is not inculcated in female. Accordingly it has a different impact upon the persona of both the sexes and this goes throughout life. Particularly when it comes to equality of rights it has been all together a tough battle for women.

English literature (whether it is novel or drama) provides us with ample examples of patriarchy. What gave upperedge to patriarchy? The answer lies in certain flaws seen in women:

A brief overview of the historical development of negative attitudes towards women may be helpful in understanding the system of patriarchy and by extension the instution of patriarchal marriage. Patriarchy was characteristic of ancient Hebrew societies and western attitudes allowing male supremacy in the household find basis in biblical edict and stories. The myth of Adam and Eve was used in Jewish and

Christian societies to attribute moral turpitude and weak will to the female.... Thus man's supposed physical intellectual and moral superiority to woman was acceptable for centuries. Some of the first Christian writing focusing on women promotes this negative attitudes towards women in addition to expressing an aversion to sex. In the New Testament St. Paul tells women to remain subservient to men. Women were presented as temptations and snare-traps leading to men's destruction. Until the later part of the seventeenth century in England some men believe that women did not have souls (Brackett 259).

When it comes to status of man and woman historical facts provide us with deep analysis:

In the sixteenth and seventeenth century woman's image did not improve much.... Men could legally divorce women for any stated cause but women could rarely divorce men. The debate over woman's position in society appeared in the pamphlet wars in which printed tracts argued in favor or against women. Some popular or derogatory imagery of women included that of monsters or snakes. Lack of education for women contributed to their oppression according to some of those writers negative attitude extended in the eighteenth century and with the development of the novel, fiction imitated reality producing romantic plots containing image supporting a patriarchal society. Although girls could attend schools in 1700 they were not allowed to advance into higher education. Women writers such as Mary Wollstonecraft mother of Mary Shelley who wrote *Frankenstein* argues in favor of the beneficial effects of education on woman in her *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. By the nineteenth century Victorian society with its restrictive social norms caused woman's subservient position to worsen (Brackett 260).

It was not until Feminism knocked doors in twentieth century that things began to change abruptly. So far as creative potential is concerned men (in comparison to women) right from the very beginning proved their supremacy. For woman to cope up with man was almost an uphill task. Patriarchy persuaded so many women novelists- Mary Ann Evans, Charlotte, Emily and Anne Bronte to adopt male pseudonyms. When Jane Austen wrote novels her identity was concealed for a prolonged period. What is important to analyze is how men portrayed women in novels. Portrayal of women in novels went according to male psyche. Women characters as such were assigned only secondary roles. It was "...womanly woman who was represented, shaped, celebrated and offered as aspirational model in every form of writing from the law and non – fictional documents like conduct books to novels and poetry." It was particularly seen "In conduct books where the coding of feminty was reflected , shaped and passed on... (Inham 21, 33). This is what was witnessed in eighteenth and nineteenth century England.

It would be more appropriate to have a look towards key novelists. So far as history of English novel is concerned Samuel Richardson can be taken as a pioneer. “The men (except for Richardson who has been by some flippant writers classed with the women novelists) are inclined to take male opportunism and irresponsibility as normal manifestations of male characters” (Steeves 100). However for woman it was important to be virtuous, because of “The supposed physiological determined qualities of the Angel...” which was assigned to woman whole confined herself to house only. More focus was on “Extreme emotional sensitivity... unlimited selfishness and crucially a lack of animal passion. Paradoxically these marks of woman’s inferiority were coded positively as concomitants of moral excellence” (Inham 23). Henry Fielding’s heroine Amelia has been portrayed as virtuous and forgiving wife despite the fact whatsoever her husband Captain Booth does. William Thackeray in *Vanity Fair: A Novel Without Hero* draws the line of demarcation between Amelia Sedley (portrayed as a virtuous and innocent wife) and Becky Sharp who can go to any extent so as to satisfy herself. So what comes over here is good versus bad.

It was the figure of rake which dominated the eighteenth and nineteenth century English novel, where young woman is left with no order alternative but to succumb. If she ever survived it was because of good will gesture on the part of some gentleman. Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela or Virtue Rewarded* and *Clarissa* can be taken as outstanding examples. Both the novels deal with rakes who dominated the scene. Olivia in Oliver Goldsmith’s *The Vicar of Wakefield* suffers as her virtue has been put to stake. Do rakes ever reform themselves? This remained on top of the agenda. Mr. B in Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela or Virtue Rewarded* is an exceptional case because he is completely changed the moment he marries Pamela. However “Young men of wealth and fashion went to the Universities not to become thinkers but to pursue the youthful vices in an environment of pleasure and with the companions of their own class. Chesterfield, Gibbon, Mackenzie, and Godwin all make clear that universities were turning out fops and spendthrifts as numerous as scholars and divines” (Steeves 90). On the whole it is culture which is to be blamed. These rakes played an instrumental role in abduction, seduction and abandonment of a young woman. The status of fallen woman has been one of the major themes of several eighteenth and nineteenth century novelists of England. Adultery was the order of the day for men. The very fact is that “The ruin of a girl” whether intentionally or unintentionally “meant generally of her becoming a common prostitute”(Steeves 98). If a woman lost her chastity it became subject to be talked about not only in her clan but in the community as well. Richardson’s Pamela (while doing service to Mr. B) receives a word of caution from her father that it is first and foremost duty of a woman to protect her chastity. What if a woman refused to comply to norms? Refusal of norms in all probabilities proved to be harmful. Charles Dickens in *Bleak House* makes Lady Dedlock die (once her secret is exposed to her husband). The reason being that she had a lover whom she bore a daughter before her marriage to Sir Lecistere Dedlock. Richardson’s heroine Clarissa is locked because she revolts against her family. Henry Fielding’s heroine Sophia Western in *Tom Jones: A Foundling* is locked in her room on account of her refusal to marry the person of her father’s choice. These instances are authentic enough to highlight that women had no say of their own. Domestic violence against women was because of the secondary status assigned to them.

Even women novelists in their subject matter followed the yardstick of men. Aphra Behn in the seventeenth century can be taken as a pioneer. Not much is revealed about Aphra Behn but if we go back to the eighteenth century England right from “.... Mrs. Haywood down to Mrs. Inchbald, Mary Wollstonecraft and Amelia Opie at the turn of the century woman’s subservient, and often humiliating role is presented by women writers with increasing resentment” (Steeves 100). Brutal treatment of woman is seen in gothic novels of Ann Radcliffe. Her heroines suffer in the hands of villains. It is no other than heroine confined to a haunted castle or planning for an escape. Adeline in *The Romance of the Forest* suffers so does Emily St. Aubert in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. Besides Ann Radcliffe we have novelists like Fanny Burney, Maria Edgeworth and Jane Austen. Maria Edgeworth was groomed by her father. She is remembered only for being a historical novelist before Sir Walter Scott. Fanny Burney and Jane Austen share certain similarities because both the novelists deal with patriarchy where more focus is on marriage and family. Fanny Burney’s *Evelina or A Young Lady’s Entrance into the World* is worthy of consideration. This where young woman (not so much refined in her character) comes in contact with the male dominated society of London. To talk about the fictional world of Jane Austen she is always there to make a clearcut difference between men and women which means that man or woman cannot be on the same platform. Jane Austen in *Northanger Abbey* speaks about repercussions of learning on the part of woman that “A woman especially if she has the misfortune of knowing anything should conceal it as well as she can” (Austen 25). By and large Austen’s women groom themselves in a claustrophobic world where obedience of norms is the key. How to compete in marriage market? This is the major goal of Austen’s women. Austen keeps eye on ballroom where young men and women had access to each other and young woman is always accompanied by chaperone. It is man not woman who takes the lead. What if a young woman fails to enter in wedlock? Austen’s spinsters became an object of ridicule in the eyes of others. Mrs. Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice* feels worried because she wants to see her daughters settled, similar is the case with Charlotte Lucas. Her family feels relieved when she enters in wedlock. The reason being that “Marriage was deemed the apotheosis of woman’s fulfillment alternatives to which were regarded as pitiable or unnatural” (Foster 6). Who is responsible for it? The answer of course lies in patriarchy. Contemporaries of Jane Austen – Charlotte Bronte Elizabeth Gaskell and George Eliot followed the chronological sequence. Jane Austen never married despite the fact that she shared a romantic relationship with her Irish friend. Charlotte Bronte died just a few months after her marriage. Elizabeth Gaskell married and was blessed with children as well. She had been a good care taker of her daughters and at times spoke about the emancipation of woman as well. But “Her energies dissipated in the concurrent exercise of her role as wife mother, writer, she personally suffered trying to do justice to all of them” (Foster 140). George Eliot entered in wedlock when she was an old woman. Charlotte Bronte, Elizabeth Gaskell and George Eliot were little advanced in comparison to Jane Austen. But the other part of the story was that “Each was inconsistent in herself and there was little agreement among them. Charlotte Bronte could not see the point of Jane Austen, George Eliot could not see the point of *Jane Eyre* and Elizabeth Gaskell was distressed that George Eliot was not Mrs. Lewes” (Beer 1). Charlotte Bronte in her novel *Shirley* deals with the debate of marriage and single life of woman. Bronte’s women have no resemblance with Austen’s women because she makes them independent. At times they do rebel but authority remains in the hands of men. Men are always there to monitor women. *Jane Eyre*

no doubt is an example of feminine protest but its hero Edward Fairfax Rochester is an epitome of authority. He woos Jane through purely conventional terms. Frances Herni in *The Professor* is seen in a dual role wife and career oriented woman but as a wife she is always there to obey her husband. What is assigned to a woman is seen in the character of Polly Home (a seven year old girl) in *Villette*. Freedom denied to woman is one of the issue which Bronte picks up in *Villette*. Elizabeth Gaskell deals with the industrial society of nineteenth century England. Even in this society men in comparison to women had an upperedge in terms of employment. When it comes to subjection of woman Elizabeth Gaskell leaves no stone unturned. Gaskell like Austen "...lamented that girls could not take the initiative but had to wait for marriage till someone gave them a chance" (Beer136). We have women like Edith Shaw and Fanny Thornton in *North and South* who go according to the conventions. Particularly for Edith Shaw marriage is the only option. The case of Molly Gibson in *Wives and Daughters* deserves to be mentioned. Molly Gibson in the very beginning remains confined to domestic world. How she grows from here onwards is one of the theme of *Wives and Daughters*. Seduction and abandonment of a young woman which can be taken as one form of patriarchy is the extremity seen in Gaskell's novels. Gaskell's *Ruth* deserves to be mentioned in this context. "Elizabeth Gaskell has an interesting line of near seducers, the flirts the triflers, who without doing anything wrong cause a great deal of misery (Beer 152)" to women with whom they come in contact. Such is the case seen in *Sylvia Lovers* and *Cousin Phillis*. So for as George Eliot is concerned she proved to be unconventional in personal life. She had to pay a heavy price for it. She was ostracized from her clan because of her illicit union with George Henry Lewes who was already married. George Eliot had access to men which proved to be beneficial in her literary endeavour but what is seen in her novels is all together a different story "... her work is built more firmly on sexual orthodoxies than that of many other Victorian women novelists"(Foster 186). What gives upperedge to patriarchy in her novels? This needs to be addressed in details. "Like early feminists Eliot was cautious about too radical a stance on women question. To some extent she supported the call to reform. She recognized the hardships faced by self-supporting women sympathizing with her old school friend Maria Lewis now an over worked governess and with fellow writer Eliza Lynn who had great difficulty in obtaining any literary employment. She saw the need for improved education, for admiring the energetic campaigns of friends and acquaintances such as Barbara Bodichon, Octavia Hill, Florence Nightingale and Bessie Parks to achieve those ends." But at the same time she advocated this belief that "Women are incapable of dealing with social and political ideas with brisk decisiveness. She declares to a feminist friend that 'Enfranchisement of Woman' only makes a creeping progress and that is best, for woman does not deserve a much better lot than man gives her"(Foster 187, 88). This sounds little paradoxical. One of the significant feature of George Eliot's novels is that her men have access to the world outside. George Eliot wrote political novels like *Felix Holt* and *Romola* but "Few of her women characters function in the outside world of employment" (Foster 193). Miss Merry (who is governess) and Princess Halm-Eberstein (who involves herself in acting) in *Daniel Deronda* can be taken as exceptionals. Eliot portrayed women in different roles. "First are those women who seek to defy orthodox womanhood or to separate themselves from traditional womanly functions, for this they may undergo harsh chastisement or more gentle restoration to the normality of female experience. Second are those women who abuse matrimonial pieties either as wives or as objects of devotion those who err from self delusion or misplaced idealism are redeemed by a

process of spiritual degeneration while those who are more willfully to gratify themselves endure deeper suffering”(Foster 198). So whatsoever a woman does she has to face the repercussions. One class of women which Eliot presents is a typical feminine type devoted to their partners. Esther Lyon in *Felix Holt* and Mirah Lapidoth in *Daniel Deronda* are examples. Wifhood to Eliot came at a very late stage but apart from this she had been a dutiful daughter. It is wifhood which persuades woman to be housemaker as well. How house looks in the absence of women Eliot comments in the description of Squire Cass’s house in *Silas Marner*. “For the Squire’s wife had died long ago and Red House was without that presence of the wife and mother which is the foundation of wholesome love and fear in parlour and kitchen...” (Eliot 25). This can be taken as one part. But Eliot’s women at times are driven to commit violence. What drives them to this extremity? It is the unsuccessful union between man and woman or disappointment in relationship which plays an instrumental role. Caterina Sartri the heroine of “Amos Barton” in *Scenes of Clerical Life* is compelled by her conscience to kill her lover simply because he had betrayed her. The case of Hetty Sorell in *Adam Bede* is much worse. She is seduced by her lover and then abandoned. What adds fuel to the fire is of course an indifferent attitude of husband towards wife where freedom is curbed and she is made to dance to the tunes of her husband. Grand Court in *Daniel Deronda* follows the same strategy. Janet Dempster the heroine of “Janet’s Repentance” in *Scenes of Clerical Life* is tortured physically by none other than her own husband. So on the whole women remain mere sufferer in Eliot’s novels “...because of the narrowness of their traditional roles” (King 75-76).

The narrowness of tradition is more prevalent in *The Mill on the Floss* where woman is torn between what she owes to her family and the relationship outside her family. One part of the story is that Eliot in *The Mill on the Floss* “...presents a world in which ships of commerce must be seen in relation to the pastures of disappearing agrarian society...” (Newton 125). Eliot through her male characters presents a clear cut contrast between agrarian and industrial society. We have a man like Mr. Tulliver who is the owner of the mill and Mr. Deane who knows how to invest so that things should speed up. Mr. Pullet is connected with agrarian class. Commerce no doubt signifies better opportunities and progress of community in every field. But has it really changed women? Absolutely not. Where is the trouble? The trouble is seen in society of St. Ogg’s where different norms are applied to men and women. This is particularly seen in heroine’s relation with her family; father, mother, brother and two men who come into her life. Even uncles and aunts (who are from Dodson clan) too form of part of this family saga. When we about stereotypes it is prevalent not only in heroine but even in rest of the women characters. Mrs. Tulliver symbolizes wifely submission. Her sisters Mrs. Glegg, Mrs. Pullet and Mrs. Deane fall in the same category. Particularly Mrs. Pullet is always there to display what is in her possession. The tag connected with these women is of course of the domestic world. Even Lucy Deane (heroine’s cousin) is a typical feminine prototype.

It is a common belief that parents owe a sense of duty towards their children in terms of upbringing, education and inculcation of right values. Childhood is said to be very tender. Man is the product of society. So is woman. If a man is bestowed with a right to live his life the way he wants. Then why not woman? What is important for the progress of society is equality of rights where men and women need to be on the same platform. So things need to be changed from

roots. But deprivation of rights has contributed to the suffering of women. This is one of the dominant theme of Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*.

"*The Mill on the Floss* is a positive compendium of handicaps imposed on women..." (Beer 89). Education is one of the parameter where demarcation line is drawn between male and female. What works here is an age old belief that man has to be breadearner of family. He has to take responsibilities of life. So it is better to provide him with the best possible. Woman on the other hand has been relegated to secondary status. What man can do that woman cannot do. So whatsoever is given to woman that should not exceed to what is given to man? Parents have expectations from male child only. The trend has come from patriarchy. Tullivers follow the same strategy with their children. Education of Tom Tulliver is one of the major debate in the novel. While as Maggie Tulliver is told to be well acquainted with pianoforte because it will fetch her a "...bigger price" (Eliot 12). The hint is towards marriage and girl as such is to be specifically trained for it. What is required for male and female that is revealed in the speeches of characters. Mrs. Tulliver would never allow Maggie Tulliver to cut her hair short because long hair is symbolic of feminine beauty. Tom Tulliver during his school days makes it clear that "Girls can't do Euclid" and Mr. Stelling (the clergyman) who teaches Tom is of the opinion that "Girls have a great deal of superficial cleverness but they couldn't go into anything. They are quick and shallow"(Eliot 156). Even in the very beginning of the novel we see Tom is already out and Maggie is seen with her parents. Chapters like "Tom is Expected" and "Tom Comes Home" are clear enough to justify that mobility is restricted to Maggie only. It is not only Tullivers who are to be blamed even Tom himself plays an active role in discrimination of Maggie. Whenever something happens between the two Tom is always there to prove his supremacy because the ideology which works with Tom is that woman is simply made to please the man. Maggie is always there to apologise. Maggie at times makes an escape from this suffocating atmosphere. But what is the aftermath? "Eliot makes clear for example that Maggie's resistance to the powerlessness and insignificance of the feminine role, her rebellions against it and her fantasies of power cut her off from the affection and approval of women, for it is the role of women as in life to impose on female children, the very restrictions against which Maggie rebels. The Dodson aunts in their horror at her recalcitrance can give her no words of approval until she is in her teens and her mother finds her for the most part an embarrassment and burden: '...it seems had as I should have but one gell an' so comical'"(Newton 145). So in a way woman is the worst enemy of woman, despite the fact that patriarchy plays a primary role. Retaliation on the part of Maggie is all but natural because after all she too is a human being. But are Tullivers as parents really successful? The answer to this questions is no. The education imparted to Tom is simply a flopshow. It has nothing to do with life which he leads as a mature person. Maggie no doubt shows enthusiasm for learning. She even tries to be self-supportive. But her feelings are provided with no outlet. "The theme of female education and its failings is left unfinished" (Ashton 99) in the novel. This is one of the major flaw and to a great extent responsible for the subjection of woman.

But this fact cannot be denied that Eliot in *The Mill on the Floss* deals with family, neighborhood and by and large with community. The close tie between these three components leads to the foundation of society. What comes into force is "Religion of Humanity" where one should love one's neighbor a concept "propounded by Auguste Comte and the philosopher-historian

Ludwing Feuerbach” (Ashton 4). This is an admitted fact that Eliot was influenced by these theorists. However if there is an enmity or rivalry of any sort it is likely to shake the foundations of society where everyone is affected. As mentioned earlier Mr. Tulliver is the owner of the mill which has been with Tullivers since from generations. What is specific about mill is that it is near river Floss. “The river Floss the medium ... contributes to the tight scheme of the novel.” Particularly it can be well analyzed with reference to Tom and Maggie. “It is important as a river since Mr. Tulliver goes to law about its waters...” (Ashton 71) and the rival is Wakem who has been meddling in land as well as river which is near the mill. This sows the seeds of enmity between Tullivers and Wakems. Mr. Tulliver remains in debt. loses mill and is forced to work under Wakem which actually paves the way for his death. Even at the time of family crisis it is Tom who takes responsibilities. This again speaks the same story that women cannot handle tough situation.

What is seen with Maggie is the craving for admiration, respect and love. This in a way makes her run from one corner to another. First with her father then with Philip Wakem (son of her father’s rival) and finally with Stephen Guest (fiancee of her cousin). As long as Mr. Tulliver remains hale and hearty he is always there to support Maggie. But what is the hard truth for Maggie? That she is more attached to Tom. The craving for admiration and respect gains momentum when Maggie becomes little mature for which she is least to be blamed. However “The main feeling which George Eliot directs towards her women characters which she herself created is compassion” (Beer 185). This works with Maggie because Philip Wakem is deformed. It is compassion at the initial stage which gets transformed into love between Philip Wakem and Maggie. Philip Wakem is more learned and in comparison to Tom he has better dealing with Maggie. He is very much possessive of her. To see Maggie in the company of someone else (Stephen Guest) is very hard for him. Philip has a soft corner for Maggie. But Philip is “...predominant too. He advises and loves Maggie but as Eliot is careful to indicate his needs come first and it is Maggie’s function to fulfil them: ‘I am not happy... I should be contented to live, if you let me see you sometimes’” (Newton 147). So Philip also follows the yardstick of patriarchy. It is pertinent to mention here that feud (between Tullivers and Wakems) creates obstacles in the relationship of Philip and Maggie. Above all it is Tom who is always there to dig the grave. Philip no doubt prepares Maggie to take the lead. He clearly reveals to her: “If you can really cling to me with all your heart every obstacle will be overcome in time. We need only wait” (Eliot 335). There is nothing unusual in the statement of Philip because men have always been taught “...To impose one’s self on another or to defend one’s self from imposition” (Newton 11). But Maggie cannot continue with Philip because of the commitment which she has with family (particularly with her father and brother) which she values above everything else. This too has come from patriarchy where woman is simply assigned to make others happy and to do what they wish her to do.

Stephen Guest is little different from Philip Wakem. What Stephen Guest can do that Philip cannot do. Stephen Guest is capable enough to make Maggie materialistically comfortable. What is Stephen Guest in the very beginning? An industrial man unofficially engaged to one woman (Lucy Deane) but at the same time feeling attracted towards another woman (Maggie). This notion has come from patriarchy where man has been provided with so much of liberty. Under such circumstances it is certain that the sanctity of relationship will remain under dark clouds.

Stephen Guest appears to be troublesome because “He represents and argues articulately for the claims of passion as against those of duty” (Ashton 53). With Stephen Guest the intensity of passion reaches its height. He plays the role of catalyst while forming a love triangle between himself, Lucy Deane and Maggie. Lucy Deane plays an instrumental role in bringing Philip and Maggie together. Stephen is ready to disengage himself from Lucy Deane because of Maggie. Stephen follows a double standard which is a predominant feature of patriarchy. “He may believe that the whole duty of woman lies in service to man but he can maintain that he lives only for Maggie. He may patronize Lucy while sitting at her feet for as Eliot points out it is possible for women to be worshipped and looked down upon at the same time” (Newton 148) Stephen through his dominance goes to that extent where Maggie succumbs to the temptation and the result is elopement. The relation of Stephen and Maggie reflects a tendency where “...human beings are bound by their constitution to obey the laws of Instinct” (Ashton 56). Instincts no doubt are a part of persona but sense of belongingness too is an integral part of human life. Happiness cannot be achieved at the cost of giving trouble to others. This is where things turn chaotic for Maggie. She is left with no option that is to renounce Stephen just for the sake of Philip and Lucy Deane. Accountability works with Maggie but not with Stephen. It is because woman has always been told to take priorities into consideration. Her identify is always seen in relation with others. Stephen is not punished for whatever he does. Things prove costly only for Maggie because she is a woman. She receives harsh rebuke from her brother and is ostracized from her clan because community of St. Oggs is there to raise fingers against her “...so that she could go out of the neighborhood to America or anywhere so as to purify the air of St. Oggs from the taint of her presence extremely dangerous to daughters there” (Eliot 492). Indiscretion on the part of woman where penalty is very hard too has evolved from patriarchal society. Moreover Eliot in *The Mill on the Floss* speaks about Victorian era where strict norms were imposed upon women. Maggie’s relationship with Stephen when taken within this context becomes a turning point. Accordingly Eliot gives a twist to the tale where it is certain that Maggie should not survive and Tom too is to be engulfed in it. But before this happens there is a glimpse of reconciliation between the two. This needs an explanation. Whatever has happened that has happened to Maggie only. Tom could have been spared and Eliot would have let Maggie die alone. Tom no doubt follows the norms of patriarchy. “Tom’s mobility his faith in his power to achieve his ability, to define himself and to feel self-worth, his pleasing sense of control all contribute to that confidence and that ability to adapt which make for steadiness in surviving young adulthood much as they make for skill in ice skating, walking fences, or engaging in any other risky prospect” (Newton 142). But what is significant to note is that Eliot through Maggie and Tom gave outlet to her relationship which she shared with her brother Isaac Evans. Eliot after Lewes’ death entered in wedlock with John Cross. This step on her part “...indicated that she wished very much to belong within the accepted social framework of legal marriage” (Ashton 105) and perhaps to get reconciled with Isaac Evans. So up to certain extent Maggie is Eliot. With Maggie, Eliot moves one step back. She denies marital status to her but not the eternal world which Maggie shares with Tom.

It is the fury of nature (flood in river Floss) which sweeps both Tom as well as Maggie and community of St. Oggs. Eliot makes it very clear that “...every man and woman mentioned in this story was still living except those whose end we know” (Eliot 521) which means that Mrs.

Tulliver, Lucy, Stephen and Philip have survived the catastrophe. What is interesting about *The Mill on the Floss* is that most of the characters are bestowed with peculiar traits and everyone is struggling for existence. Here comes the survival of the fittest which is a hidden fact that Eliot was influenced by Charles Darwin. The character of Maggie remains puzzle to the readers. She struggles a lot and it is the conflict between inward and outward impulses which proves to be domineering.

When we take true compatibility into consideration it is neither with Philip Wakem nor with Stephen Guest because both of them hardly care for what Maggie actually wants. They are always at the receiving end. It is Maggie who has to be at their service. Consequently “Maggie’s progress from one man to another her progress in the love plot of the novel is marked by increasing renunciation of autonomy, of self-direction and self-identification both” (Newton 149) and ultimately Maggie stands nowhere. The absence of sisterhood is one of the factors responsible for the tragedy of Maggie.

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THE POLITICS OF SEXUALITY IN E.M. FORSTER'S *MAURICE*

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E.M. Forster remains one of the early twentieth century British authors whose homosexuality and homosexual writings have been of immense importance to the discourse on literature and sexuality. Not only was he closeted, his work on homosexual themes were also not published but only shared with close friends. This paper will look at the politics of sexuality in his novel, Maurice, published posthumously at a time when homosexuality was still a crime, other gay writings were censored, and a fearful atmosphere pervaded following Oscar Wilde's imprisonment.

Modernist writings have always been hailed for its nuanced relationship with sexuality. This paper looks at the ways E.M. Forster, one of the modernist writers on the fringes, dealt with the discourse of sexuality, at a time when England was highly intolerant to homosexuality, through his novel *Maurice* (written in 1913-14 and published posthumously in 1971). To what extent Forster's homosexuality and his novel on same sex love negotiate with other homosexual writers and activists of the period? The mere fact that Forster could not even think of publishing *Maurice* during his lifetime and was a closeted homosexual show the grim situation of homosexual men and women of the time. *The Life to Come and Other Stories* is another work with homosexual themes and also published posthumously. This paper will look at the novel, *Maurice*, and situate its transgressions and liberation in the larger context of same-sex writings of the early twentieth century.

Unlike the other modernist novels, *Maurice* does not experiment much with language, form or style. However, its modernist ethos lies in its transgressiveness – dealing with homosexual themes in the way Oscar Wilde anticipated modernism in the previous century. Michel Foucault in his essay “A Preface to Transgression” writes: “the whole of modern thought is imbued with the necessity of thinking the unthought...for modern thought, no morality is possible” (qtd. in Tambling 4). It is hereby interesting to look at Forster, a homosexual author, and his novel *Maurice* which raises and/or daringly answers difficult questions on same-sex love, family and society when homosexuality was still a crime only to be decriminalised in 1967 in England- thirty three long years after the novel was written. Forster's dealing with same-sex love is very outright and realistic unlike the other modernists such as Virginia Woolf who deal immensely with sexuality but in a subtle, mysterious ways archetypal of high modernist writing.

One of the possible reasons why *Maurice* was never published during Forster's lifetime was the fear created by the infamous trials of Oscar Wilde, 1895. Linder in his account on the

Wilde trials argues that the trials have completely changed public attitude towards homosexuality which was increasingly being seen as a threat to the society and construed effeminacy as a signal of homosexuality. However, Forster's view on homosexuality in *Maurice* is markedly different from the homosexual apologists of the nineteenth century who were trying to defend homosexuality in the name of Platonic love. Wilde's response during his trial, calling homosexual love between an elder and a younger man as 'intellectual', 'spiritual' and 'not unnatural' are definitely not enough to prove that there is as much love and affection in same sex love as in love between opposite sexes or myriad other forms of love. Wilde was ultimately imprisoned for two years on charges of 'gross indecency' never able to affirm his "love that dare not speak its name." It should also be noted that Forster was less optimistic about the Wolfenden report of 1957 which recommended decriminalization of homosexuality in England, despite which he still does not want to publish the novel as explained in the 1960, "Terminal Note" to *Maurice* :

Unless the Wolfenden Report becomes law, it will probably have to remain in manuscript. If it ended unhappily, with a lad dangling from a noose or with a suicide pact, all would be well, for there is no pornography or seduction of minors. But the lovers get away unpunished and consequently recommend crimes...and the only penalty the society exacts in an exile they gladly embrace (220).

It should be noted that unlike its contemporary novels, Forster's *Maurice* does not have a tragic ending. It is worth noting that Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness* (1928), a lesbian novel transgressing the sexual norms has a tragic ending in which the love between the two women Stephen Gordon and Mary Llewellyn is impaired by morality and law of the time. The novel was also banned and finally released in 1949 after Hall's death. David Smith's account of the trial of Hall, 'Lesbian Novel was danger to Nation', looks at how the novel became a big threat to the English nation and he quotes Sir Archibald Bodkin, Director of Public Prosecutions:

[Lesbianism] is well known to have a debasing effect on those practicing it, which is mental, moral and physical in character...It leads to gross mental illness, nervous instability, and in some cases to suicide in addicts to this vice. It is a vice which, if widespread, becomes a danger to the well-being of a nation.

Forster also moves away from the poeticizing idealism of the nineteenth century on same-sex love and, instead, he focuses on the very physical and emotional aspects of 'lust' and more so of 'affect', which he deals with profoundly throughout the novel. The first half of the novel talks about Maurice's love for Clive at Cambridge. It was a passionate affair against the backdrop of the intellectual climate of Cambridge and Clive's love for Greek Hellenism. This is shown by Forster's description of Clive's love for Maurice which depends upon the renunciation of physical passion: "The love that Socrates bore Phaedo now lay within his reach, love passionate but temperate, such as only finer natures can understand..." (85). Their love was never consummated and ended on a tragic note. Platonism is too weak an argument to face the Gargantua of morality, religion and law. He finally opts for a heterosexual marriage and

condemns Maurice's purely physical love for man. In his introduction to *Maurice*, David Leavitt debunks the claim that Forster emasculates desire and sexuality in the novel and he (Leavitt) points out that the novel also speaks a language of war and not just love and sex that it is replete with stories of 'battle', 'power', 'winning', 'warrior', 'defy', and so on (xiv-xv). As Forster writes: "...only a struggle twists sentimentality and lust into love" (194). It is the struggle of Maurice Hall and Alec Scudder, the gamekeeper, in the second half of the novel. None of them is an intellectual aesthete like Clive Durham. The encounter with Alec evokes the Dionysian spirit in Maurice and subverts all the values Maurice has hitherto lived by. If the episodes with Clive have not served to question any fundamental assumptions of society or even of their own lives, the affair with Alec goes far deeper:

[...]all that night his body yearned for Alec's, despite him. He called it lustful, a word easily uttered, and opposed it to his work, his family, his friends, his position in society. In that coalition must surely be included his will. For if the will can overleap class, civilization as we have made it will go into pieces (qtd. in Martin 108).

Their love defies the constraints of heterosexism and shows that love between same sex and different class is possible if not in Cambridge or Penge but in 'Sherwood'. Why not Cambridge or Penge? Forster could not foresee a quick decriminalization of homosexuality in London. It was not just the Wilde trials as discussed earlier; the law was increasingly being (mis)used to blackmail or imprison homosexuals in England. This is shown clearly in the 1987 film adaptation of the novel directed by James Ivory starring British actor Hugh Grant (as Clive Durham). Maria Lancy, in her essay "Filmed Forster," talks about the special designs the film has on its audience without being accused of infidelity to its source. For example, the insertion of scenes of Risley's arrest for solicitation of a guard, and his appeal to Clive for aid, and his trial shifts the focus of the story from the internal dilemmas of Clive and Maurice to the social and political world against which Maurice rebels and to which Clive succumbs (246).

'Sherwood', on the other hand, represents the future, the dreams and the ferment of every homosexual in love. It does not represent a binary opposition of the heterosexual world in England. Forster, in fact, had feelings for a heterosexual policeman, Bob Buckingham, and became a close friend of his wife, May. He spent the later years of his life at their house and took his last breath there¹. Moreover, the happy ending at Sherwood in *Maurice* contrasts with the tragic ending of Hall's *The Well of Loneliness* or Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890).

Notwithstanding the sexual transgressiveness we have discussed above, it is important to look at *Maurice* vis-à-vis the political homosexuality of Edward Carpenter, Walt Whitman et al, all Forster's contemporaries. Forster was heavily influenced and inspired by his friend Edward

¹*E.M. Forster: A Life* by P.N. Furbank (New York : Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978) remains the official biography of the author till today.

Carpenter who was a key figure in the marginal culture of late nineteenth century Western anti-imperialism. In his, “Terminal Note”, Forster wrote:

It was the direct result of a visit to Edward Carpenter at Milthorpe. Carpenter had a prestige which cannot be understood today. He was a rebel appropriate to his age...a socialist who ignored industrialism and a simple-lifer...he was a believer in the Love of Comrades, whom he sometimes called Uranians. It was this last aspect of him that attracted me in my loneliness...he and his comrade George Merrill combined to make a profound impression on me and to touch a creative spring (219).

In his essay, “Man the Ungrown”, Carpenter says ‘the men of English speaking well-to-do class’ stop their learning after public school, and, ‘it seems quite natural that our marriage and social institutions should lumber along over the bodies of women, as our commercial institutions grind over the bodies of the poor and our ‘imperial’ enterprise over the bodies of the barbarian races’ (31). As Martin discusses that the character of Clive is Forster’s illustration of the ‘ungrown man’, analysed by Carpenter, who has never learned to question any values of his class (109). Whereas, Maurice is the ideal hero based on the model of Carpenter and whose love for Alec frees him from the stifling values of middle-class England and offers him the possibility of spiritual growth. He is also involved in many social works such as the Church, joining the Territorials, tutoring the working class youth of the College Settlement and so forth, and Forster describes his protagonist, “struggles like his are the supreme achievements of humanity, and surpass any legends about Heaven.”

We shall look at how the outlawed position of the homosexual in the novel provides the radical perspective on society in the way the robust political homosexuality of Edward Carpenter claims. First, *Maurice* clearly rejects the idea of the superiority of homosexuality, an idea that is specifically Clive’s and derived from Plato, while keeping the idea that homosexuality may provide the occasion for spiritual growth. Maurice’s realisation at the end echoes Carpenter’s view: “They must live outside class, without relations or money; they must work and stick to each other till death” (212). *Maurice* tells us the story of two lovers which shows the possibility of a world where homosexual could build a new social order, a classless society where men will be bound by personal relations and not social or economic relations. The revolutionary part of *Maurice* is not its homosexuality but what Carpenter praised in his congratulatory letter to Forster: “I am so glad you end up on a major chord. I was so afraid you were going to let Scudder go at the last – but you saved him and saved the story, because the end tho’ improbable is not impossible and is one bit of real romance – which those who understand will love” (qtd. in Martin 111).

Leela Gandhi, in her essay, “A Case of Radical Kinship: Edward Carpenter and the Politics of Anti-Colonial Sexual Dissidence”, examines Carpenter’s anti-colonial discourse in the history of sexuality. The notion of *affective communities* brings together all the marginalized and minority groups but Carpenter expresses “a sort of guilt, an ultimately unconscionable, cloaking of homosexual designs while trying to extol homosexuality as the utopian inclusiveness.” On the other hand, Forster’s *Maurice* is a riposte to Carpenter’s eclipsing of sensuality. In the words of

Gandhi, “*Maurice* puts the sex back into homosexuality and, in doing so, foregrounds the rights of sexuality as the originary postulate of a homosexual politics” (96). And Forster rightly puts it in the novel that ‘two men can defy the world’ (119).

It has never been easy for a homosexual writer to come out of the closet and speak about homosexual desires. We have seen how difficult Forster’s life would have been – to be closeted, to be not able to publish your work. The immense pessimism in the real life of Forster contrasted with the ideal world of ‘Sherwood’ – where one can dream to fulfill their dreams, their hopes, and their aspirations. *Maurice*, despite the fact that it was not published during Forster’s lifetime, throws open in front of us a world where desires and affect cannot be subdued but will ultimately find their ways through.

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SUBSISTENCE, INDIVIDUALITY IN DIASPORA: A RESPONSE THROUGH JHUMPA LAHIRI'S SHORT STORY *MRS. SEN'S*

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“Who am I???” The dialogue seems almost movie like but isn't it something we all think about at least ones a day; and it has become one of modern era's biggest concerns. Modern era has given us all the opportunity of completing our dreams of education, employment, global tourism, and global employment; but it has taken from us much more. We human beings have created a monster which is destroying us from the inside. Our logic stands above emotions and relationships. And the above uncanny and unconscious question pushes us towards an abyss of the unfathomable psycho-analytical convulsion, driving us to find solutions and peace to our inner conflict of subsistence.

Human beings are subjected to have relationships and form cultures, as plainly as having one's own peculiar yet astounding Individuality, and most likely, these very aspects influence each other in a dynamic way: as it depends on the personality of a person who we befriend or what sort of company we desire to keep, and eventually our relationships determine our individuality. It is our individuality which forms our relationships and cultures, and furthermore our position in the general public and our cultural individuality, which gives vent to the thought of nationalism and later national individuality. But unexpectedly if we discover ourselves estranged and without any connection to our associations, traditions, and homeland, and what follows is 'disaster'. Due to the abrupt jolt of tremendous and brutal reality we feel lost, lonely, depressed, and demonstrate patterns of dysfunctional behavior.

The very notion can be found in Jhumpa Lahiri's *Mrs. Sen's* included in her debut short-stories' collection *Interpreter of Maladies – Stories of Bengal, Boston and Beyond*, which is the sixth short story of the book. In the collection Lahiri explores the issues of love and individuality among immigrants, with a persuasive, universal smoothness, stylish, unswerving prose, avoiding over-romanticizing without abandoning compassion; she portrays the sensible and expressive adversities of her diverse characters, like describing the hardships of a lonely Indian wife (Mrs. Sen) adapting to the life in the United States. As, Prema Srinivasan, writing for Hindu, called *Interpreter of Maladies*, ..."eminently readable," and noted that Lahiri "talks about universal maladies in detail, with a touch of humour and sometimes with irony which is never misplaced."

1

In *Mrs. Sen's* Lahiri has dealt with ideas of individuality and illustration, issues experienced by all immigrants trying to adapt to a new culture. Lahiri had said in an interview with Newsweek that the main character in *Mrs. Sen's* found its root in her mother as a babysitter

of American children, from which we can conclude that the story is partially autobiographical. The story speaks of the many isolated immigrant women of not just Indian descent, but of worldwide origin, through its poignant depiction of a woman trying to assimilate but disinclined to let go of the aspects of her life in India that leads into psychological conflict, as happens with Mrs. Sen. Leaving aside her young age Mrs. Sen acts more of a mature adult; which is a function of her dislocation in America. As Amy Larsen in *National Women's Studies Association* says,

Identity is a continuous construction of how one construes oneself in the present, past, and future. Gender, familial, and socioeconomic roles interact to form one's identity. Collectivist cultures, which stress strong in-group identification, encourage allocentrism. When allocentric individuals immigrate to a more individualistic culture, they are more vulnerable to feelings of alienation and stress. Lahiri's Mrs. Sen, who moved to New England for her husband's career, misses her family in India. Without this group identification to define her, she struggles to translate customs, particularly gendered domestic practices, into American culture in an effort to find security in a stable role.”²

In the story, living in the United States, Mrs. Sen baby-sits an eleven year old boy named, Eliot, who is old enough to feed and entertain himself, but only requires adult supervision, which shows that how most Indian house-wives in America try to earn a living by baby-sitting small children, but at the same time it was her call for Subsistence in loneliness. As she had a formal relationship with her husband without intimacy; and everything Mrs. Sen had known or loved was in India and we see the effects of her dislocation in her proceedings and Diaspora, as she keeps recalling her luxurious life in India and which gives confirmation of her middle class life-style in America, and her loneliness in a strange country.

Mrs. Sen said...At home, you know, we have a driver.”.....Eliot's mother nodded, too, looking around the room.“And that's all . . . in India?”.....“Yes,” Mrs. Sen replied. The mention of the word seemed to release something in her. “Everything is there.”³

We witness through the character Eliot, Mrs. Sen's daily activities at home of chopping vegetables, as the chopping blade reminds her of the friendly neighbours in India who would come to each other's house out of concern or curiosity, if ever heard a small resonance, quite opposite to what was happening in America where everyone was so busy in their own lives that no one would come, even if a person died, in other words she died. She had brought the blade from India...“Whenever there is a wedding in the family,” ...“or a large celebration of any kind, my mother sends out word in the evening for all the neighborhood woman.....” “It is impossible to fall asleep those nights, listening to their chatter.” “Here, in this place where Mr. Sen brought me, I cannot sometimes sleep in so much silence.” (115)

Eliot, if I began to scream right now at the top of my lungs, would someone come?”.... “At home that is all you have to do...and one whole neighborhood and half of another has come to share the news, to help with arrangements... . (116)

We again monitor the terror, alienation, solitude, and anticipation in Mrs. Sen's mind during her driving practice, as she feels fear while driving the car, while changing lanes because

she does not understand the right-side driving rule followed in America, which is a problem many Indian immigrants have to face, and we also see her yearning for home as she thinks about driving to Calcutta after she would get her license, as she says “Could I drive all the way to Calcutta?... (119) We witness her psychological pain of estrangement due to her workaholic husband, when he refuses to share her enthusiasm to go shopping for fish with her or understand her emotions of being lonely, as she shows her agitation to Eliot;

“When have I ever worn this one? And this? And this?” she tossed the saris....“Send pictures,’ they write...’ What picture can I send?” “They think I live the life of a queen, Eliot.” (125)

“I have a meeting in twenty minutes,” he said, staring at the dashboard as he spoke. “Please don’t waste time.” (126)

We spectator her happiness and excitement, when she gets letters from India, she talks about it to her husband, immediately, and celebrates the occasion with Eliot, and rereads her letter again.

As soon as they were inside the apartment she kicked off her slippers this way and that, drew of weir pin from her hair, and slit the top and sides of the aerogram in three strokes. Her eyes darted back and forth as she read... (121)

Afterward the apartment was suddenly too small to contain her. They wandered through the student union.....In athletic building Mrs. Sen took out the aerogram from India out of her purse and study the front and back. She unfolded it and reread to herself, sighing every now and then. (122)

Her wearing the intricate saris brought cautiously from India which have no remaining function; her trips to the fish market that keeps her feeling whole and sane, while illuminating us her very emptiness, as her feelings towards buying and cooking fresh fish is too extreme, because if she does not, she would go through the dramatic psychological traumas of being alienated in a strange country surrounded by sea but without any fresh fish, as she says to Eliot’s mother:

“It is very frustrating,”...“To live so close to the ocean and not to have so much fish.”...“She added that while there tasted nothing like the fish in India, at least it was fresh... (123)

For Mrs. Sen fish was more than just food, as it was a reminder of her being a Bengali, an Indian, which holds out as a dilemma for immigrants because of their eating habits. This peculiarity has been mentioned by Margaret Visser: “Lahiri also uses Mrs. Sen to show how important food is to Indian culture, by the lengths to which Mrs. Sen is willing to go to acquire it....When her husband will no longer go to the market to retrieve it for her, she steps out of her area of comfort and takes a bus out to the seaside. After receiving an unpleasant experience on the bus, Mrs. Sen works past her fear and hatred of driving to try to make it to the fish market on her own. The importance of this particular dish to her is enough to bring her to this desperate act, despite the fact that she has no license....”⁴

Mrs. Sen's rituals of living a plain life for one month to show her grief for her grandfather's demise; her listening to Indian classical music or 'raga' or listening to her family's cassette shows us her loneliness and sorrow of being so far away from her family in India.

One day she played a tape of something she called a raga...Another day she played a cassette of people talking in her language – a farewell present, she told Eliot, that her family had made for her... Mrs. Sen identified each speaker. "My third uncle, my cousin, my father, my grandfather." (128)

We get a glimpse of Mrs. and Mr. Sen's happy moments, as they have a good time together with Eliot, when they go to the seaside, eat at a restaurant, walk by the beach and take photos. Things to observe, while they are taking photos are the formal kind of marital life Indians live, even in another country, always keeping distance no superfluous intimacy, not making a scene and always respectable, especially in front of a child. Then Mrs. Sen's words while eating in the restaurant: "Like pakoras, no?", then again while walking at the beach:..Mrs. Sen pointed to the water, and said that at a certain moment, each wave resembled a sari drying on a clothesline. "Impossible!" she shouted eventually, laughing as she turned back, her eyes teary.... (129) giving out her longing for India. But unfortunately the Sen Couple quarrels while returning home, because Mrs. Sen denies driving home on Mr. Sen's insistence.

After that incident, as Mrs. Sen leaves driving and starts traveling by bus to the fish market with Eliot, and their conversation, increases her concern about Eliot and his mother's relationship, and she tries to get a better view of his distant relationship with his mother. Being motherless, Mrs. Das speculates her life in Eliot and his mother's, and feels the sorrow of being left out in old age in a strange country. Another dilemma the Indian immigrants have to face in a different country, like America, regarding food, where all the inhabitants prefer frozen food in place of fresh food-stuff, if they see or smell something as close to blood they would think or take it in a unusual manner; as happens on one occasion, when the blood and smell from the fresh fish disturbs the passengers of the bus, and Mrs. Das is looked at with suspicion and later on has to give an explanation and open the window, which seems very insulting.

On the way home an old woman on the bus kept watching them, her eyes shifting from Mrs. Sen to Eliot to the blood lined bag between their feet...."What's in the bag?"...Mrs. Sen looked up, startled...."A fish," Mrs. Sen replied. "The smell seems to be bothering the other passengers...open her window or something. (132-33)

And after that incident, Mrs. Das takes the wrong decision of driving her car to the market and has the accident and losses the babysitting job of Eliot, who had become her only confidant to share her feelings with.

We observe another dilemma faced by Indian immigrants regarding putting on vermilion, a symbol of marital assurance; which we perceive from Eliot's curiosity earlier in the story: regarding the vermilion her put-on each day. We witness Eliot's anxiety that she had cut her scalp or something had bitten her; and the same confusion can be witnessed regarding the police man's evaluation of Mrs. Sen's wounds after the accident, as he thinks that Mrs. Sen had cut her scalp, showing us that the customs of other countries often baffles the foreigners.

It can be accomplished in the end that Lahiri has sketched Mrs. Sen as a lonesome woman who faced the challenge of being in an alien environment with no close relationships who could understand her Diaspora, cultural divergence and loneliness, with Eliot being only a spectator, which gave rise to the inevitable problem of identity, and in her case: her individuality and culture both, which brings her towards the pitiful ending of the story.

Hence, I quote in support of Lahiri's efforts to illustrate us a foretaste of the heartbreaking plight of an individual, who tries her best to keep up her individuality and a reason for sustenance in Diaspora:

“Solitude and Sustenance
Go hand-in-hand,
Few have the courage
To foresee this path,
And funnily life has its own disputes,
With distance playing its best.” (B.M.)

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NANOMATERIALS IN MODERN PHYSICS: STRUCTURE–PROPERTY RELATIONSHIPS AND APPLICATIONS

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Abstract

Nanomaterials exhibit significantly altered physical properties compared to their bulk counterparts due to reduced dimensionality, quantum confinement, and enhanced surface-to-volume ratio. In the present study, nanostructured materials were synthesized using controlled chemical and physical routes to systematically investigate the influence of structural parameters on measurable physical properties. Structural characterization using X-ray diffraction (XRD) confirmed the formation of nanocrystalline phases with crystallite sizes in the range of 10–50 nm, while electron microscopy provided detailed insight into morphology and particle distribution. Optical analysis using UV–visible spectroscopy revealed a pronounced blue shift in the absorption edge with decreasing crystallite size, indicating size-dependent band gap modulation governed by quantum confinement. Electrical measurements demonstrated an increase in resistivity for smaller particles, attributed to enhanced grain boundary scattering and carrier localization effects. Thermal analysis further indicated reduced phase stability at smaller sizes due to dominant surface energy contributions. The combined results establish a quantitative correlation between nanoscale structural features—such as crystallite size, defect density, and morphology—and the resulting optical, electrical, and thermal behavior. The study highlights that precise control over structural parameters enables tunability of physical properties, providing a strong framework for the design and optimization of nanomaterials in advanced applications including nanoelectronics, optoelectronics, and energy systems.

Keywords: Nanomaterials, Quantum Confinement, Structure–Property Relationship, XRD, TEM, Band Gap Engineering, Nanostructures

Introduction

Nanomaterials have emerged as a significant area of study in modern physics due to their size-dependent physical properties and potential for technological applications. When the characteristic dimensions of a material are reduced to the nanometer scale, the behavior of electrons, phonons, and photons deviates from that observed in bulk systems. This deviation

arises primarily from quantum confinement and the increased contribution of surface atoms, which alters the electronic structure and transport mechanisms. In nanoscale systems, the energy levels become discretized as the particle size approaches the de Broglie wavelength of charge carriers. This leads to modifications in band structure, resulting in measurable changes in optical absorption, electrical conductivity, and thermal behavior. Experimental studies have shown that semiconductor nanomaterials exhibit an increase in band gap energy with decreasing particle size, directly influencing their optical response (Kamat, 2007). Similarly, enhanced surface scattering and grain boundary effects significantly impact charge transport in nanostructured materials.

The ability to control synthesis parameters such as temperature, precursor concentration, and growth environment has enabled the fabrication of nanomaterials with tailored structural features. These features include particle size distribution, morphology, crystallinity, and defect density, all of which play a crucial role in determining physical properties. Understanding the relationship between these structural parameters and resulting material behavior is essential for optimizing performance in practical applications. The present study focuses on the experimental investigation of nanomaterials to establish clear correlations between structure and physical properties. Emphasis is placed on measurable parameters obtained through standard characterization techniques such as X-ray diffraction and electron microscopy, and their direct influence on optical and electrical properties. This approach provides a quantitative framework for analyzing nanoscale systems within the domain of applied physics.

The present study is designed to investigate the relationship between nanoscale structural parameters and the resulting physical properties of nanomaterials. The specific objectives are as follows:

1. To synthesize nanomaterials using controlled chemical and physical methods in order to obtain variations in crystallite size and morphology.
2. To determine structural characteristics such as crystallite size and lattice strain using X-ray diffraction (XRD) and electron microscopy techniques.
3. To analyze the effect of crystallite size on optical properties, particularly band gap energy, using UV–visible spectroscopy.
4. To evaluate the influence of nanoscale structure on electrical resistivity and charge transport behavior.
5. To examine the variation in thermal properties, including melting temperature, as a function of particle size.
6. To establish a quantitative correlation between structural parameters (size, strain, morphology) and physical properties (optical, electrical, and thermal).
7. To assess the potential of nanomaterials for applications based on observed structure–property relationships.

Experimental Methods

The present study follows an experimental approach aimed at establishing quantitative relationships between structural parameters and physical properties of nanomaterials. The methodology involves controlled synthesis of nanostructured samples, followed by systematic characterization using standard physical techniques. Emphasis is placed on obtaining measurable parameters such as crystallite size, morphology, band gap energy, and electrical resistivity, which are subsequently analyzed to understand structure–property correlations.

a) Synthesis of Nanomaterials

Nanomaterials were synthesized using both bottom-up and top-down approaches to obtain controlled variation in structural parameters such as particle size, morphology, and crystallinity.

In the bottom-up approach, oxide nanomaterials were prepared using the **sol–gel method**. Metal precursors were dissolved in a suitable solvent and subjected to hydrolysis and condensation reactions to form a homogeneous gel. The gel was dried and subsequently annealed at controlled temperatures (300–600 °C) to obtain nanocrystalline powders. The annealing temperature and duration were systematically varied to control crystallite growth. For thin film formation, the chemical vapor deposition (CVD) technique was employed. Reactive gaseous precursors were introduced into a heated chamber, where controlled decomposition and deposition resulted in the formation of nanostructured films on substrates. Deposition parameters such as temperature, gas flow rate, and pressure were optimized to achieve uniform morphology. In the top-down approach, mechanical ball milling was used to reduce bulk materials into nanoscale particles. High-energy milling was carried out for varying durations (5–20 hours), leading to progressive reduction in particle size due to repeated fracture and cold-welding processes.

b) Structural Characterization

The structural properties of the synthesized nanomaterials were analyzed using X-ray diffraction (XRD). Diffraction patterns were recorded using Cu-K(α) radiation ($\lambda = 1.5406$ Å) over a range of diffraction angles. The average crystallite size was estimated from peak broadening using the Scherrer relation:

$$D = \frac{(K\lambda)}{(\beta \cos\theta)}$$

where D represents the crystallite size, K is the shape factor, λ is the wavelength of the incident X-ray radiation, β is the full width at half maximum (FWHM) of the diffraction peak, and θ is the Bragg angle.

c) Morphological Analysis

The morphology and particle size distribution were examined using 'Transmission Electron Microscopy (TEM) and Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM). TEM provided high-resolution images for determining particle size at the nanoscale, while SEM was used to analyze surface morphology and grain distribution.

d) Optical Characterization

Optical properties were investigated using **UV-visible spectroscopy** in the wavelength range of 200–800 nm.' The absorption spectra were recorded, and the optical band gap was determined using Tauc plots derived from absorption data. Variations in the absorption edge were analyzed to study size-dependent optical behavior.

e) Electrical Measurements

Electrical properties were measured using a standard two-probe method. The resistivity of the samples was evaluated as a function of particle size and structural characteristics. Measurements were conducted at room temperature under controlled conditions to ensure consistency.

Results and Discussion

The results obtained from structural, optical, electrical, and thermal characterization are presented in this section. Emphasis is placed on quantitatively examining how variations in synthesis conditions influence crystallite size, lattice strain, and morphology, and how these structural parameters, in turn, affect measurable physical properties. The analysis is based on experimentally derived values and is organized to establish direct correlations between structure and property.

1. Structural Parameters from XRD Analysis

The structural characteristics of the synthesized nanomaterials were evaluated using 'X-ray diffraction (XRD), with emphasis on crystallite size and lattice strain as key indicators of nanoscale structural evolution. These parameters provide insight into the degree of crystallinity, defect density, and internal stress' within the material.

Table 1: Structural Parameters of Synthesized Nanomaterials

Sample ID	Annealing Temperature (°C)	Crystallite Size (nm)	Lattice Strain ($\times 10^{-3}$)
S1	300	12	4.8
S2	400	18	3.6
S3	500	28	2.4
S4	600	45	1.5

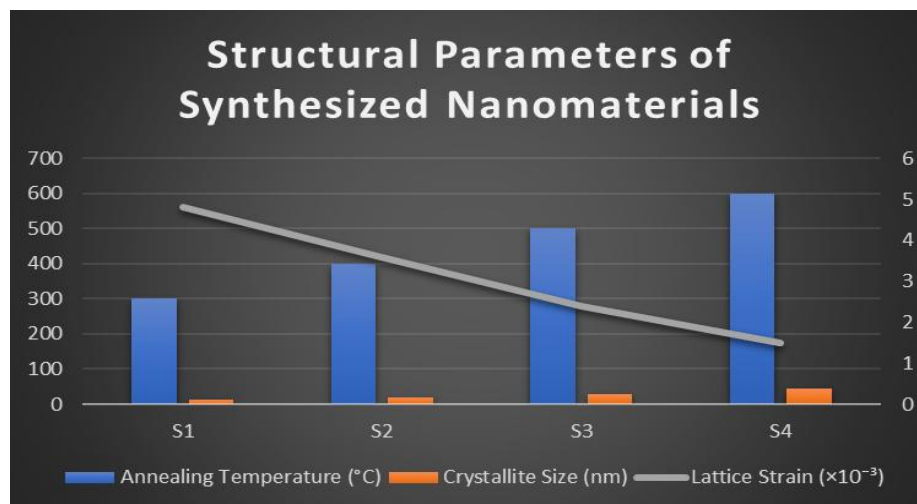


Figure 1: Structural Parameters from XRD Analysis

The data reveals a pronounced increase in crystallite size with annealing temperature, indicating that **thermal energy plays a critical role in atomic diffusion and grain growth mechanisms**. At lower temperatures, the limited mobility of atoms restricts coalescence, resulting in smaller crystallites with a higher density of grain boundaries. As the temperature increases, enhanced diffusion facilitates atomic rearrangement and grain boundary migration, leading to the formation of larger and more stable crystalline domains.

The reduction in lattice strain with increasing crystallite size further supports this interpretation. Smaller nanoparticles exhibit higher strain due to lattice distortions arising from surface effects and structural defects such as dislocations and vacancies. 'With increasing annealing temperature, these defects are progressively minimized through defect annihilation and lattice relaxation processes. This trend is consistent with established observations in nanostructured systems, where **strain is inversely related to crystallite size due to the dominance of surface-induced stresses at smaller dimensions** (Gleiter, 2000)'. Overall, the results demonstrate that **annealing-driven structural refinement significantly improves crystallinity while reducing internal stress**, thereby directly influencing the physical behavior of nanomaterials.

2. Optical Properties

The optical properties were analyzed through absorption measurements, with particular focus on the variation of band gap energy as a function of crystallite size. The results provide direct evidence of size-dependent electronic structure modification.

Table 2: Optical Band Gap Variation with Particle Size

Sample ID	Crystallite Size (nm)	Band Gap (eV)
S1	12	3.85
S2	18	3.60
S3	28	3.35
S4	45	3.10

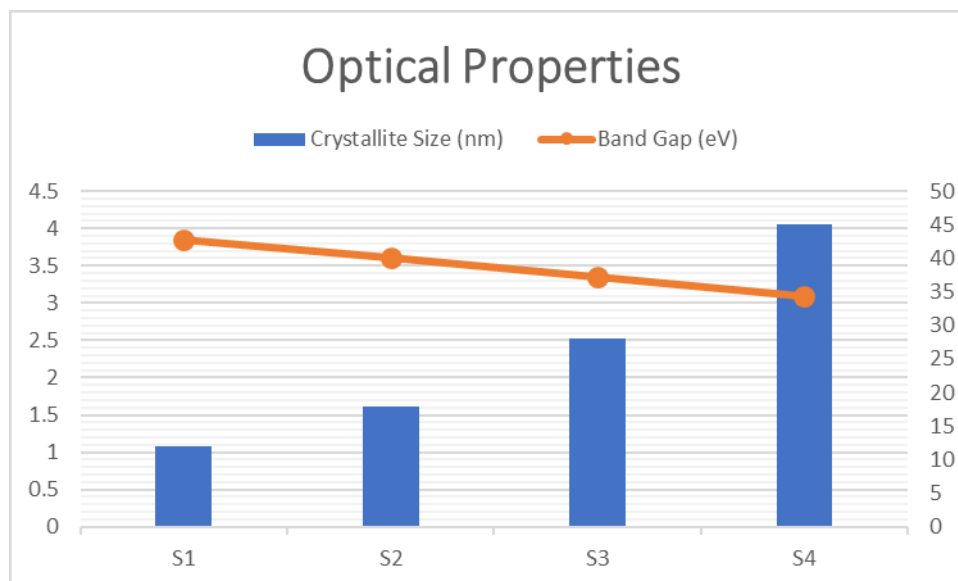


Figure 2: Optical Band Gap Variation with Particle Size

A clear inverse relationship between crystallite size and band gap energy is observed. The smaller nanoparticles exhibit significantly higher band gap values, which can be attributed to the **quantum confinement effect**. 'At reduced dimensions, the spatial confinement of charge carriers leads to discretization of energy levels, increasing the energy required for electronic transitions. As the crystallite size increases, the confinement effect weakens, and the band structure gradually approaches that of the bulk material. This results in a decrease in band gap energy, as observed in the larger particles. The continuous and systematic variation in band gap values confirms that **electronic properties are highly sensitive to nanoscale dimensions**, enabling tunability through controlled synthesis.

This behavior is in strong agreement with earlier experimental findings, where size-dependent band gap variation has been reported as a fundamental characteristic of semiconductor nanomaterials (Kamat, 2007). The results highlight that **optical response in nanomaterials is governed not only by composition but also by structural confinement**, making them suitable for wavelength-specific applications.

3. Electrical Properties

Electrical measurements were performed to investigate the influence of crystallite size and structural features on charge transport mechanisms.

Table 3: Electrical Resistivity Variation

Sample ID	Crystallite Size (nm)	Resistivity ($\Omega \cdot \text{cm}$)
S1	12	8.5×10^{-2}
S2	18	6.2×10^{-2}
S3	28	4.1×10^{-2}
S4	45	2.8×10^{-2}

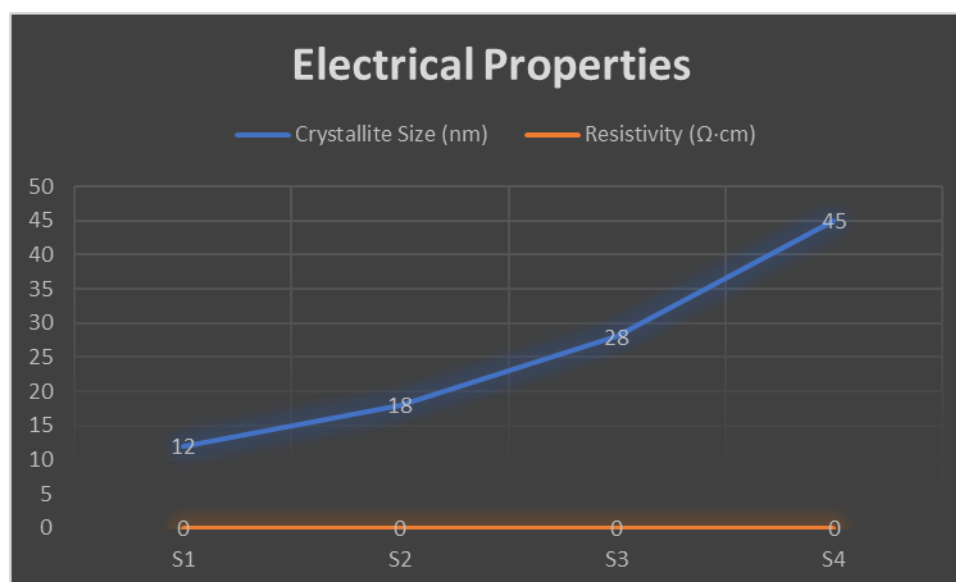


Figure 3: Electrical Resistivity Variation

The results indicate a significant decrease in resistivity with increasing crystallite size. In smaller nanoparticles, the high density of grain boundaries introduces numerous scattering centers, which impede the movement of charge carriers. These grain boundaries act as potential barriers, leading to localized charge trapping and increased resistive behavior. As the crystallite size increases, the reduction in grain boundary density enhances charge carrier mobility by providing more continuous conduction pathways. This results in improved electrical conductivity and lower resistivity values. The observed trend confirms that **grain boundary scattering is a dominant factor governing charge transport in nanostructured materials.**

Also, the presence of surface states and defects in smaller particles contributes to carrier localization, further increasing resistivity. With improved crystallinity at higher annealing temperatures, these effects are minimized, leading to enhanced electronic transport. Similar behavior has been reported in nanostructured systems where electrical conductivity is strongly dependent on structural uniformity and defect density (Whitesides, 2005).

4. Thermal Properties

Thermal analysis was carried out to examine the effect of crystallite size on phase stability and melting behavior of nanomaterials.

Table 4: Melting Temperature Variation

Sample ID	Crystallite Size (nm)	Melting Temperature (°C)
S1	12	780
S2	18	820
S3	28	870
S4	45	910

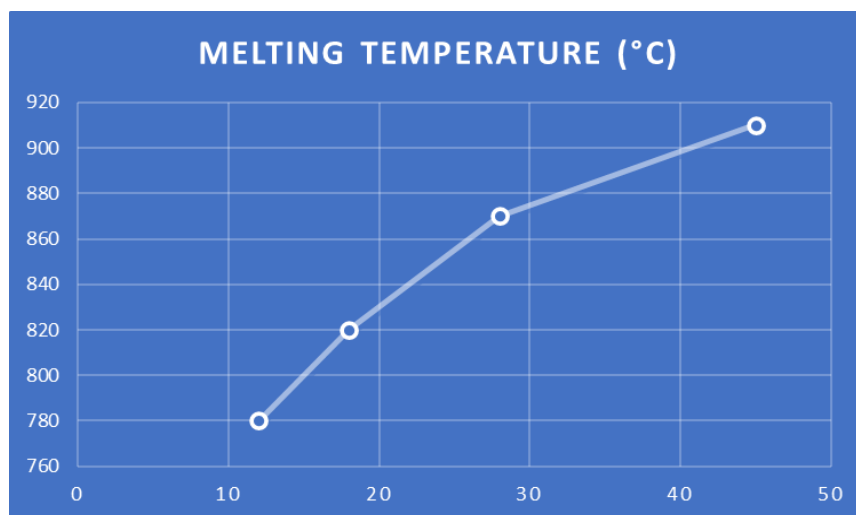


Figure 4: Melting Temperature Variation

The results show a clear increase in melting temperature with increasing crystallite size. 'Smaller nanoparticles exhibit significantly lower melting temperatures compared to larger particles, which can be explained by the **high surface-to-volume ratio at the nanoscale**. A large fraction of atoms in smaller particles reside at the surface, where atomic bonding is weaker due to

reduced coordination. This reduction in cohesive energy leads to decreased thermal stability and lower melting points. As the crystallite size increases, the proportion of surface atoms decreases, and the material exhibits behavior closer to bulk thermodynamic stability. This results in higher melting temperatures. The observed size-dependent melting behavior is consistent with established thermodynamic models, which predict that **surface energy plays a dominant role in determining phase transitions in nanomaterials** (Cao, 2004). The results emphasize that thermal properties at the nanoscale are strongly influenced by structural dimensions and surface effects.

Discussion

The experimental results presented in the previous section establish clear relationships between structural parameters and the resulting physical properties of nanomaterials. This section provides an integrated interpretation of these observations by examining the underlying physical mechanisms governing the behavior. A key outcome of the study is the strong dependence of material properties on crystallite size. The increase in crystallite size with annealing temperature is accompanied by a reduction in lattice strain and defect density. This structural evolution directly influences electronic and optical behavior. Smaller crystallites, characterized by high surface-to-volume ratio and significant lattice distortion, exhibit pronounced quantum confinement effects. This is evident from the higher band gap values observed in smaller particles. As the crystallite size increases, the confinement effect weakens, and the electronic structure transitions toward bulk-like behavior.

The optical and electrical properties exhibit complementary trends that can be understood through charge carrier dynamics. The increase in band gap with decreasing particle size indicates restricted carrier motion and higher energy separation between electronic states. At the same time, the increase in resistivity for smaller particles suggests that charge transport is hindered by enhanced scattering at grain boundaries and interfaces. These two observations together confirm that carrier confinement and scattering mechanisms are simultaneously active in nanostructured systems, and their relative contributions depend on particle size and structural uniformity.

Another important aspect is the role of grain boundaries and surface states. In nanomaterials, a significant fraction of atoms resides at or near interfaces, where the atomic arrangement deviates from the bulk crystal structure. These regions introduce localized energy states that act as traps or barriers for charge carriers. As a result, electrical conductivity is strongly influenced by the density and distribution of these boundaries. The reduction in resistivity with increasing crystallite size indicates that improved crystallinity minimizes such scattering centers, thereby enhancing carrier mobility. The thermal behavior further supports the structural interpretation. The reduction in melting temperature for smaller particles is consistent with the increased

contribution of surface atoms, which possess lower cohesive energy. This size-dependent thermal stability highlights the importance of surface energy in determining phase transitions at the nanoscale. As crystallite size increases, the system approaches bulk thermodynamic behavior, resulting in higher melting temperatures.

When considered collectively, the results demonstrate that structure–property relationships in nanomaterials are governed by three primary factors: quantum confinement, surface effects, and defect-mediated interactions. These factors are interdependent and vary systematically with crystallite size and synthesis conditions.' The ability to control these parameters provides a pathway for tailoring material properties for specific applications. The findings of this study are consistent with established experimental trends in nanomaterials research, particularly in relation to size-dependent band gap variation and transport behavior (Kamat, 2007; Whitesides, 2005). The present analysis extends these observations by providing a unified interpretation based on experimentally derived structural parameters.

Applications

The experimentally observed dependence of physical properties on nanoscale structural parameters enables the utilization of these materials in several advanced technological domains. The applications discussed below are directly supported by the measured variations in band gap, electrical resistivity, and thermal behavior.

- 1. Optoelectronic Devices:** The increase in band gap energy with decreasing crystallite size, as observed in the optical measurements, makes nanomaterials suitable for optoelectronic applications. The tunability of the band gap through size control allows precise adjustment of absorption and emission wavelengths. This property is particularly useful in light-emitting devices, photodetectors, and display technologies, where wavelength selectivity is critical. The observed blue shift in absorption edge indicates that smaller nanoparticles can be effectively used in high-energy optical applications.
- 2. Electronic and Nanoelectronic Systems:** The variation in electrical resistivity with crystallite size highlights the role of nanomaterials in electronic devices. Larger crystallites with reduced grain boundary scattering exhibit improved conductivity, making them suitable for conductive channels in nanoscale circuits. Conversely, higher resistivity in smaller particles can be utilized in applications requiring controlled charge transport. The ability to tune electrical properties through structural modification is essential for the development of nanoscale transistors and interconnects (Lieber & Wang, 2007).
- 3. Energy Conversion and Storage:** The size-dependent optical properties and enhanced surface area of nanomaterials make them effective in energy-related applications such as solar cells and catalytic systems. Increased band gap tunability allows better control over light absorption, which is important for improving the efficiency of photovoltaic devices.

Additionally, the high surface-to-volume ratio enhances reaction kinetics in catalytic processes, contributing to improved energy conversion efficiency (Kamat, 2007).

4. **Thermal Management Systems:** The observed variation in thermal behavior, particularly the reduction in melting temperature at smaller sizes, indicates that nanomaterials can be engineered for specific thermal applications. Materials with controlled thermal conductivity and stability are useful in heat dissipation systems and thermal barrier coatings. The ability to manipulate phonon transport through nanoscale structuring provides opportunities for designing materials with tailored thermal properties.
5. **Sensing Applications:** Nanomaterials with high surface area and sensitivity to environmental changes are well-suited for sensing applications. Variations in electrical and optical properties in response to external stimuli such as gases or temperature enable their use in gas sensors and biosensors. The strong dependence of properties on surface states enhances detection sensitivity, making nanostructured materials effective for low-concentration detection systems.

Conclusion

The present study establishes a clear relationship between nanoscale structural parameters and the resulting physical properties of nanomaterials. Controlled synthesis techniques enabled systematic variation in crystallite size, morphology, and lattice strain, which were quantitatively analyzed using X-ray diffraction and electron microscopy. The results demonstrate that crystallite size plays a dominant role in determining optical, electrical, and thermal behavior. A significant increase in band gap energy was observed with decreasing particle size, confirming the influence of quantum confinement on the electronic structure. Electrical measurements revealed that charge transport is strongly affected by grain boundary scattering, leading to higher resistivity in smaller crystallites. Thermal analysis indicated reduced melting temperature at the nanoscale, highlighting the role of surface energy in phase stability. The combined analysis shows that the physical properties of nanomaterials are governed by the interplay of quantum confinement, surface effects, and defect-mediated interactions. These factors vary systematically with structural parameters and can be effectively controlled through synthesis conditions. The ability to tailor material properties through nanoscale engineering provides a strong foundation for their application in optoelectronic devices, nanoelectronics, energy systems, and sensing technologies.

The study demonstrates that precise control over structure–property relationships is essential for optimizing the performance of nanomaterials in practical applications. Further work involving advanced characterization and device-level integration can extend the applicability of these materials in emerging technologies.

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उच्च शिक्षा के अन्तर्गत नैतिक शिक्षा— वर्तमान आवश्यकता

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भारतीय शिक्षा प्रणाली के इतिहास पर दृष्टि डालने से विदित होता है कि प्राचीन शिक्षा, विद्यार्थी के शारीरिक, मानसिक, आध्यात्मिक एवं शारीरिक शक्तियों और योग्यताओं का सर्वांगीण विकास करती थी। प्राचीन भारत में विद्यार्थी महर्षियों के आश्रम में विद्या अध्ययन करता था, वहाँ उनके सर्वांगीण विकास पर ध्यान दिया जाता था। विद्या अध्ययन के पश्चात् विद्यार्थी एक आदर्श नागरिक बन समाज में प्रवेश करता था तथा नैतिकतापूर्वक अपने कर्तव्यों का निर्वहन कर समाज कल्याण में अपना योगदान देता था। किन्तु वर्तमान में, नैतिक व आध्यात्मिक लक्ष्यों से कोसों दूर, मात्र भौतिकवादी लक्ष्य तक सिमटी शिक्षा व्यवस्था ने भौतिक एवं बौद्धिक विकास तो किया है परन्तु चरित्र हनन अथवा मूल्य हनन जैसी गंभीर समस्याओं को हमारे समक्ष उपस्थित किया है।

विद्वानों का मत है कि वर्तमान भारत में उच्च शिक्षा के स्तर पर शिक्षा का जो विस्तार हो रहा है वह शिक्षा को एक उद्योग, एक व्यापार के रूप में परिवर्तित कर ऐसे विद्यार्थी तैयार कर रहा है, जो ज्ञानार्जन के पश्चात् विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में प्रवेश कर, नित नयी समस्याएँ पैदा कर रहे हैं। सामुदायिक राजनैतिक, आर्थिक जीवन में भ्रष्टाचार के साथ, मानसिक असंतुलन एवं उनसे पनपती अन्य विकृतियों जैसे लैंगिक अपराध, आतंकवाद वैज्ञानिक तकनीकियों का दुरुपयोग आदि ने संपूर्ण मानव समाज को भयक्रांत कर, वर्तमान शिक्षा प्रणाली पर प्रश्नचिन्ह अंकित किया है। यद्यपि यह सत्य है कि वर्तमान शिक्षा प्रणाली ने बौद्धिक विकास व वैज्ञानिक विकास में अपूर्व योगदान देकर विकास के सर्वोच्च आयामों को छुआ है। किन्तु यह भी नहीं भुलाया जाना चाहिए कि वर्तमान शिक्षा ने ही विद्यार्थियों को महत्वाकांक्षी बनाकर अपराध की दुनिया में धकेला है। मैकाले शिक्षा पद्धति में ढला विद्यार्थी अपनी जानकारियों एवं सूचनाओं को ज्ञान के रूप में आत्मसात न कर पाने के कारण जहाँ स्वयं अनेक मानसिक विकृतियों का शिकार हो रहा है। वहीं उसके समस्त शिक्षण, प्रशिक्षण, नैतिक चेतना एवं मूल्यों के अभाव में निष्फल सिद्ध हो रहे हैं। गांधी जी की यह युक्ति कि “आत्मा संस्कार के बिना सभी प्रशिक्षण हानिकारक व व्यर्थ हो सकते हैं” वर्तमान उच्च शिक्षा के सन्दर्भ में सार्थक सिद्ध हो रही है। यदि हमें उच्च स्तर पर प्राप्त शिक्षा एवं प्रशिक्षण को सार्थकता प्रदान करनी है तो भारत में उच्च स्तर पर दी जाने वाली शिक्षा में नैतिक मूल्यों का समावेश करना होगा। बड़े दुर्भाग्य का विषय है कि विभिन्न शिक्षा आयोग एवं धार्मिक व नैतिक शिक्षा समितियों की सिफारिश के उपरान्त भी नैतिक शिक्षा को भारत में मात्र विद्यालयीन स्तर पर औपचारिक रूप में ही सही क्रियान्वित होते देखा जा रहा है किन्तु शिक्षा के उच्च स्तर जहाँ यह सर्वाधिक आवश्यक है वहीं यह सवर्था उपेक्षित है।

वर्तमान में शैक्षिक पद्धति से उत्पन्न विसंगतियों के निवारण हेतु उच्च शिक्षा के स्तर पर नैतिक शिक्षा की अवधारणा विकसित करना अत्यन्त आवश्यक है। जिसको विभिन्न आयामों में देखा जा सकता है।

उच्च शिक्षा के काल में विद्यार्थी सामाजिक परिवेश में प्रवेश के लिए तैयार होता है तथा उसके पश्चात् उसे व्यापक स्तर पर सामाजिक क्रियाकलापों में सम्मिलित होना पड़ता है। इन क्रिया कलापों के समयक निर्वहन के लिए ज्ञान के अतिरिक्त कर्तव्यों एवं उत्तरदायित्वों की समझ होना अति आवश्यक है। नैतिक शिक्षा इस संदर्भ में बालक को उसके कर्तव्यों एवं दायित्वों का बोध करा कर उसके व्यक्तित्व के सामाजिक पक्षों को भी विकसित करती है। जैसा कि आचार्य जे. कृष्णमूर्ति का मत है कि "नैतिक शिक्षा एक दूसरे के प्रति अपने दायित्वों को आपसी सम्बंधों को समझने में सहायक होती है।"¹ यही समझ सामाजिक समरसता एवं मैत्रीय भावना को विकसित कर सुदृढ़ सामाजिक व्यवस्था का आधार बनती है।

विद्वानों का मत है कि नैतिक आदर्श एवं मूल्य सामाजिक निमंत्रण के भी साधन है। इसके बिना एक सफल सुसंगठित व विकसित समाज व राष्ट्र की कल्पना भी नहीं की जा सकती। जैसा कि आचार्य विनोबा भावे जी का मत है कि "ब्रह्मचर्य, अहिंसा, सत्य आदि आध्यात्मिक मूल्य ही नहीं है बल्कि सामाजिक मूल्य भी है अर्थात् ये शक्ति का नियंत्रण कर सामाजिक व्यवस्था एवं संगठन में सहायक होते हैं। नैतिकता की शिक्षा व्यक्ति को स्वार्थ की भावना से ऊपर उठाकर हम की भावना का सृजन कर व्यक्ति में सहयोग सेवा आदि भावनाओं को उत्पन्न करती है।

उच्च शिक्षा ग्रहण के पश्चात् छात्रों को सरकारी एवं गैर संगठनों अथवा संस्थाओं में भी कर्तव्य एवं दायित्वों के निर्वहन करने होते हैं, साथ ही नेतृत्व भी स्वीकारने होते हैं। इनके सम्यक पालन में नैतिक शिक्षा प्रधान तत्व है। नैतिक शिक्षा विद्यार्थी को उत्तरदायित्व की मूल भावना का बोध करा कर कुशल नेतृत्व की योग्यता प्रदान कर जहाँ उसके व्यक्तित्व का विकास करती है। वहीं विभिन्न संस्थाओं के लक्ष्यों को लोक कल्याणकारी स्वरूप प्रदान करने में सहायक सिद्ध होती है। नेतृत्व और उत्तरदायित्व को सद् लक्षित करने के लिये नैतिक शिक्षा इस संदर्भ में भी आवश्यक है, कि अपने अधीनस्थ या आगामी पीढ़ी के लिए आदर्श प्रस्तुत करना होता है। श्रीकृष्ण गीता में अर्जुन को यही शिक्षा देते हुए कहते हैं "कि महापुरुष जो आचरण करता है, सामान्य व्यक्ति उसी का अनुसरण करते हैं वह अपने अनुकरणीय कर्मों से आदर्श प्रस्तुत करता है।"² नैतिक शिक्षा के माध्यम से विद्यार्थी सामाजिक आदर्श आगामी पीढ़ी के लिए स्थापित कर सकते हैं।

वर्तमान में उपयुक्त मार्गदर्शन के अभाव में मनुष्य (विशेषकर उच्च शिक्षित युवा) संस्कृति एवं सभ्यता की लगातार बली देता जा रहा है। जबकि किसी भी राष्ट्र व समाज की पहचान उसकी सांस्कृतिक विरासत से होती है। जैसा कि स्वामी विवेकानन्द जी ने कहा है " प्रत्येक राष्ट्र की एक विशिष्टता होती है अन्य सब बातें उसके बाद में आती हैं।"³ उनके अनुसार किसी संस्कृति की रक्षा एवं देश की राष्ट्रीय एकता के लिये प्राचीनता से जुड़ाव, चारित्रिक विकास एवं नैतिक भावना का होना आवश्यक है।

नैतिक शिक्षा के द्वारा बालक का चारित्रिक विकास कर सांस्कृति एवं सभ्यता की सुरक्षा के साथ ही उत्कृष्ट नागरिकों का निर्माण कर राष्ट्रीय एकता में सहयोग लिया जा सकता है। इस प्रकार का नागरिक जो कि उचित अनुचित का निर्णय करने में सक्षम हों, सभी प्रकार की संकीर्णताओं से (धार्मिक, साम्प्रदायिक, प्रजातीय) ऊपर उठकर न केवल राष्ट्रीय एकता बनाये रखने में अपितु विश्व स्तर पर अपने चिंतन को सकारात्मक रखते हुए वसुधैवकुटुम्बकम की भावना से ओतप्रोत होकर विश्व शांति में अपना योगदान दे सकते हैं।

उच्च शिक्षा के दौरान नैतिक प्रशिक्षण विज्ञान के दुरुपयोग पर नियंत्रण के लिए भी आवश्यक है। आज विज्ञान नित नये-नये प्रयोगों से गुजर रहा है। यद्यपि यह सत्य है कि उसने मनुष्य की अनेक समस्याओं का सामाधान किया है, उसके जीवन को सुविधा सम्पन्न बनाया है, किन्तु उसके हाथ में विध्वंसक शक्ति भी दी है। स्वामी विवेकानंद जी का भी मत है कि बिना नैतिकता और धर्म के विज्ञान मानव जाति के लिए विध्वंशकारी हो सकता है। छात्र अध्ययन काल में विज्ञान की शक्ति से परिचित हो चुका होता है

जिनका प्रयोग उसे भविष्य में करना होगा। अतः पूर्व में ही नैतिक शिक्षा द्वारा उसकी आत्मा को इतना परमार्जित करना आवश्यक है कि वह मानव कल्याण को ध्यान में रखते हुए ही इनका प्रयोग करे। आचार्य जे. कृष्णमूर्ति ने भी विज्ञान की शक्ति के प्रति सचेत करते हुए कहा था कि “तकनीकी ज्ञान को हम नजर अंदाज नहीं कर सकते लेकिन अपने भीतर अपनी कुरुपता, अपनी हृदयहीनता, अपने छल, कपट, विध्वंसक विचारों के प्रति जागरूक हो सकते हैं।”⁴ इस जागरूकता में नैतिक शिक्षा महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका अदा कर सकती है।

विज्ञान के दुरुपयोग पर नियंत्रण के साथ-साथ उपयोगितावाद एवं अति उपभोक्तावादी प्रवृत्ति पर नियंत्रण के लिए भी नैतिक शिक्षा आवश्यक प्रतीत होती है। उच्च शिक्षा काल में विद्यार्थी, भौतिक चकाचौंध से प्रभावित हो अति उपयोगितावादी एवं उपभोक्तावादी प्रवृत्ति से सर्वाधिक संक्रामित है। जैसा कि अरविन्द जी ने कहा है कि पिछले सौ वर्षों से मानव जाति एक बीमारी से ग्रस्त है जिसे उपयोगितावाद कहते हैं। उपयोगितावाद और उसके सहोदर उपभोक्तावाद ने नवयुवकों को अपनी गिरफ्त में सर्वाधिक लिया है। भौतिकवाद की चमक ने नवयुवकों को अति उपभोगतावादी बना कर अनेक दुष्कृत्यों की ओर धकेला है। आज उच्च शिक्षित युवकों का विभिन्न अपराधों में लिप्त होने के बढ़ते आंकड़े बहुत चिन्ता का विषय है। वस्तुतः उच्च शिक्षा काल में विद्यार्थी अपनी यौवन अवस्था में होता है। इस काल में ऊर्जा का स्तर भी चरम होता है। वह जिस ओर भी बहता है पूर्ण प्रवाह के साथ बहता है। इस ऊर्जा के रूख को सही दिशा देने के लिए नैतिक शिक्षा एक आवश्यक पहल है। बिना नैतिक समझ के ऊर्जा, विध्वंशकारी लक्ष्य, हिंसात्मक गतिविधियों एवं यौन विकृतियों की ओर प्रेरित हो सकती है। इन्हीं तथ्यों को ध्यान में रखते हुए नीतिग्रन्थों एवं धर्मशास्त्रों में अहिंसा, सत्य, अस्तेय, ब्रह्मचर्य, अपरिग्रह आदि प्रत्ययों को सार्वभौम धर्म (कर्तव्य) के रूप में रखा गया था। गांधी जी ने भी अपने नीतिदर्शन में ऊर्जा के सदुपयोग के लिए अहिंसा ब्रह्मचर्य, प्रत्ययों को महत्वपूर्ण कारक माना था। इन प्रत्ययों के अनुरूप आचरण हेतु उच्च शिक्षा में नैतिक शिक्षा वर्तमान संदर्भ में अत्याधिक प्रासंगिक लगती है।

निष्कर्षतः कहा जा सकता है कि नैतिक अथवा मूल्य शिक्षा के साथ संयुक्त होकर ही शिक्षा छात्र को पूर्णता की ओर अग्रसर कर, उसके उच्चतर ज्ञान, योग्यताओं एवं क्षमताओं को, परिवार, समाज, राष्ट्र एवं सम्पूर्ण मानवता के हित में परोस सकती है। इस हेतु आवश्यकता इस बात की है कि शिक्षा के उच्च स्तर पर प्रचलित विभिन्न पाठ्यक्रम में नैतिक शिक्षा का समावेश किया जाए। पाठ्यक्रम निर्धारित करते समय हमें उच्च स्तर के ऐसे नीतिविदों जिनका दृष्टिकोण सद्भाव, समभाव एवं वैज्ञानिक दृष्टि से संपन्न होए से मार्गदर्शन लेना होगा। इस सन्दर्भ में शिक्षकों की भूमिका भी महत्वपूर्ण होगी, उन्हें पूरी ईमानदारी व मनोयोग से छात्रहित में जुटना होगा। साथ ही संपूर्ण शिक्षा तंत्र को भी इस ओर प्रतिबद्ध होना होगा। सभी ओर से सम्मिलित प्रयास होने पर ही नैतिक शिक्षा के सामवेश का समुचित लाभ अर्जित किया जा सकेगा।

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नैतिक शिक्षा की आवश्यकता

डॉ. प्रभा अग्रवाल

प्राध्यापक, वाणिज्य

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*विद्याध्ययन वस्तुतः एक तप है। इसी से विद्यार्थी तपकर कुन्दन बनता है,
इसी से उसकी बुद्धि पैनी होती है और व्यक्तित्व प्रखर बनता है।*

शिक्षा ज्ञान की संवाहिका है, यह विद्यार्थी के मानसिक व बौद्धिक विकास में सहायक होती है। नैतिक विकास से मनुष्य का समग्र विकास संभव है। नैतिक स्तर पर शिक्षित व्यक्ति सामान्य व्यक्ति की तुलना में ज्यादा कामयाब होता है। बौद्धिक शिक्षा हमारे दिमाग पर असर डालती है, जबकि नैतिक शिक्षा हमारे समग्र मन को संतुलित करती है और जीवन को जीवंत रूप से सफल बनाती है। अगर हम अपने दफ्तर एवं समाज के लोगों का चरित्र निर्माण करना चाहते हैं तो हमें उच्च स्तरीय नैतिक शिक्षा देनी होगी। यही कारण है कि शासन द्वारा प्राथमिक स्तर से लेकर महाविद्यालयीन स्तर तक के पाठ्यक्रम में नैतिक शिक्षा को शामिल किया जा रहा है। निश्चित ही नैतिक शिक्षा से विद्यार्थियों में नैतिक मूल्यों का प्रादुर्भाव व संवर्धन होगा।

नैतिक शिक्षा के उद्देश्य हैं :-

१. व्यक्ति के चरित्र का निर्माण करना।
२. जीवन के प्रत्येक क्षेत्र में व्यक्ति के व्यक्तित्व का विकास करना।
३. वाह्य अनुशासन के साथ-साथ आन्तरिक अनुशासन को महत्व देना।
४. भौतिक जगत से चित्त हटाकर आन्तरिक जगत की ओर लगाना।
५. सामाजिकता की भावना का विकास करना।

प्राचीन भारत में शिक्षा ज्ञान का स्रोत थी, उसे लोक और परलोक को सुधारने का माध्यम माना जाता था। वास्तव में प्राचीन शिक्षा धर्म से प्रेरित थी, इसका प्रमुख कारण प्राचीन भारतीय विचारधारा तथा जीवन दर्शन का पूर्ण रूप से धार्मिक होना था। जीवन का प्रत्येक क्षेत्र चाहे आर्थिक हो, सामाजिक हो या राजनैतिक सब पर धर्म का प्रभाव था। शिक्षा मोक्ष प्राप्त करने का एक साधन मानी जाती थी। छात्र विद्याध्ययन किसी स्वार्थ की भावना से न कर अपने अज्ञान को दूर करने के लिये करते थे। इसमें व्यक्तित्व को तराशा जाता था, मेधा जगाई जाती थी, और प्रयास किया जाता था कि समग्र जीवन ऊर्ध्व गामी हो।

मध्यकाल में ईसाई मिशनरियों ने अत्यंत लगन और उत्साह के साथ भारत में शिक्षा का प्रसार किया, इनका शिक्षा का माध्यम स्थानीय भाषाएँ थीं। व्याकरण, इतिहास, भूगोल आदि के अध्ययन के साथ-साथ ईसाई मत के प्रसार की भावना इन मिशनरियों की थी। इस

काल में प्रगतिशील भारतियों व अन्य उदार हृदय अंग्रेजों ने शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में महान कार्य किये।

मध्यकाल में ऐसे विद्वान थे जो पाश्चात्य शिक्षा के महत्व को भली भांति समझते थे, उनका मानना था कि भारत की प्रगति के लिये अंग्रेजी भाषा का ज्ञान परमआवश्यक है। राजाराम मोहनराय तथा उनके मित्र डेविड हेयर के सम्मिलित प्रयासों से २० जनवरी १८८७ को हिन्दू कॉलेज की स्थापना की गयी। पाश्चात्य शिक्षा प्रदान करने वाला यह प्रथम उच्च कोलेज था। इस कॉलेज में अंग्रेजी, व्याकरण, नीतिशास्त्र, इतिहास, बंगला, भूगोल, गणित तथा ज्योतिष आदि की शिक्षा का प्रबंध किया गया। १८३५ से १८५४ तक शिक्षा का पूर्ण रूप से पाश्चात्यीकरण हो गया। शिक्षा का माध्यम अंग्रेजी को स्वीकार कर लिया गया। प्राथमिक शिक्षा की उन्नति इस युग में कम रहीं। देशी भाषाओं का विकास पूर्ण रूप से रूक गया परन्तु सबसे बड़ा काम यह हुआ कि शिक्षा का उत्तरदायित्व सरकार ने अपने ऊपर ले लिया। १६ जुलाई १८५४ को बुड के घोषणा-पत्र में शिक्षा के संबंध में कम्पनी के अधिकारियों को स्पष्ट संकेत दिया गया कि भारतियों में शिक्षा प्रसार करने का उद्देश्य उनके नैतिक, बौद्धिक तथा आर्थिक स्तर को उठाने के साथ-साथ शासन को द्रढ़ करने वाले राजपदों को संभालने योग्य भारतियों को उत्पन्न करना है। यह शिक्षा इस ढंग से हो जिसे प्राप्त करने वाले भारतियों को हम अपना विश्वास पात्र समझ सकें।

यहां यह उल्लेखनीय है कि भले ही ब्रिटिश शासन ने शिक्षा का उद्देश्य नैतिक, बौद्धिक व आर्थिक स्तर में सुधार बताया हो परन्तु उनकी मूल भावना अपने ब्रिटिश आकाओं का हित साधन ज्यादा थी। शिक्षा में अंग्रेजी भाषा के ऊपर ज्यादा ध्यान दिया गया। देशी पाठशालाएँ धीरे-धीरे बंद होने लगीं। शिक्षा को यान्त्रिकी बनाये जाने के कारण शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में भी नौकरशाही और लालफीताशाही आ गयी। घोषणा पत्र ने शिक्षा के आध्यात्मिक पक्ष की पूर्ण उपेक्षा की। विश्वविद्यालयों की स्थापना हो जाने पर छात्रों का एक मात्र उद्देश्य विश्वविद्यालयों में प्रवेश पाना व राजकीय क्लर्क बनना रह गया। इस व्यवस्था का दूषित प्रभाव आज भी मिलता है। भारत के अधिकांश कार्यालयों के कर्मचारी बेकाबू नजर आ रहे हैं। कर्म संस्कृति का क्षय हो रहा है परिणामस्वरूप भ्रष्टाचार, अनाचार, अकर्मण्यता का बोलबाला है।

स्वतंत्रता प्राप्ति के बाद विश्वविद्यालयीन शिक्षा पर पुनः विचार करने के लिये डॉ. राधाकृष्णन की अध्यक्षता में ४ नवम्बर १९४८ को विश्वविद्यालय शिक्षा आयोग की नियुक्ति की गयी। आयोग के सुझाव थे :-

१. नेतृत्व की शिक्षा देना,
२. प्रगतिशील चेतना उत्पन्न करना,
३. भौतिक समृद्धि की ओर,
४. ज्ञान के विभिन्न स्वरूप का समन्वय,
५. आध्यात्मिक विकास,
६. वसुधैव कुरुम्बकम का आदर्श भरना,
७. अनुशासन की भावना उत्पन्न करना।

आयोग ने कृषि शिक्षा, वाणिज्य शिक्षा, व्यवसाय, इंजीनियरिंग और तकनीकी आदि की शिक्षा पर विशेष बल दिया। इसके बाद भी समय-समय पर विभिन्न आयोगों की स्थापना की गयी परन्तु व्यावहारिक रूप से यह पाया गया कि आज छात्रों में नैतिकता की कमी दृष्टिगोचर हो रही है, व्यक्ति आत्म केन्द्रित होता जा रहा है। हमारे लोकतंत्र के अनुकूल शिक्षा का समुचित विकास नहीं हो पाया है। गत वर्षों में हमारी शिक्षण संस्थाएं हृदय की विशालता, समीक्षात्मक चिंतन और विवादों का चर्चा द्वारा निपटारा जैसे उदारवादी जनतांत्रिक नैतिक मूल्यों का विकास करने में असफल रही है। शायद यही कारण है कि आजादी के बाद की पीढ़ी में भी संकीर्णता, साम्प्रदायिकता, विधटन और हिंसा की प्रवृत्ति देखने को मिल रही है। भारतीय शिक्षित समाज, ले-लपक और आपाधापी में इस कदर लिप्त होता जा रहा है कि यहां मूल्यों का अंधापन उत्तरोत्तर बढ़ता जा रहा है। इसके पीछे भागने में विवेक को गंवाया जा रहा है। रहन-सहन की दौड़ में व्यक्ति में सुविधा और उपयोग की लालसा इतनी बढ़ती जा रही कि कुछ शिक्षित लोग अपने दिमाग का उपयोग आत्मा को बेचने के लिये करने लगे हैं। हमारी नैतिक आक्रोश की क्षमता दिनोदिन घटती जा रही है। जातिवाद, प्रादेशिकता मजहबी उन्माद की विकृतियां इसी का प्रतिफल है। नैतिकता की कमी के कारण लोकतांत्रिक अधिकारों का सदुपयोग कम दुरुपयोग ज्यादा हो रहा है।

ज्ञान और मूल्यों का पुनः संयोजन आज की बहुत बड़ी जरूरत है। आज अक्षर शिक्षा की जगह नैतिक शिक्षा की आवश्यकता है। नैतिक स्तर पर शिक्षित व्यक्ति सामान्य व्यक्ति की तुलना में ज्यादा कामयाब होता है। बौद्धिक शिक्षा हमारे दिमाग पर असर डालती है, जबकि नैतिक शिक्षा हमारे मन को प्रभावित करती है। ज्ञान वही होता है जो हमारे चरित्र को श्रेष्ठ बनाता है व जीवन को सफल बनाता है। असली शिक्षा व्यक्ति के दिल और दिमाग दोनों को शिक्षित करती है। ज्यादा शिक्षा प्राप्त की जाय अच्छी श्रेणी प्राप्त हो जाय परन्तु यदि नैतिकता का अभाव है तो उक्त प्राप्ति निरर्थक है। नैतिक मूल्य रहित शिक्षा समाज के लिये अभिषाप है। सुखी जीवन के लिये सद्भाव पूर्ण मानवीय संबंध आवश्यक है, इस हेतु हमें पूरे संकल्प के साथ अच्छे व्यवहार, अच्छे विचार को अपनी जिंदगी का हिस्सा बनाना होगा। वर्तमान जीवन में हम धार्मिक तो हो जाते हैं परन्तु नैतिक नहीं हो पाते। नैतिकता के बिना धार्मिकता अपूर्ण है। सामाजिक ग्रहस्थ जीवन में जिस प्रकार वस्त्र पहनना जरूरी है उसी प्रकार मनुष्य का सुविचार, नैतिकता अपनाना जरूरी है। मनुष्य द्वारा किया गया अच्छा व्यवहार उसे ताकत देता है और दूसरों को उसी तरह अच्छा व्यवहार करने के लिये प्रेरित करता है। मनुष्य में ऐसी ताकत है जो आगे बढ़ने के लिये प्रेरित कर सकती है या आपके पंख काटकर आगे बढ़ने के रास्ते बंद कर सकती है।

नैतिक मूल्य रहित शिक्षा समाज के लिये अभिषाप है। शिक्षा का स्वाभाविक उद्देश्य विकास है। शिक्षा विकास का उत्तम साधन है। राष्ट्र के विकास प्रतिमान, राष्ट्रीय लक्ष्य एवं आकांक्षाओं को ध्यान में रखकर शिक्षा की संरचना गठित की जाती है। किसी भी राष्ट्र की गुणवत्ता उसके नागरिकों के चरित्र, उनकी सामाजिक, आर्थिक, नैतिक स्थितियों का निर्धारण शिक्षा के द्वारा किया जाता है। प्रजातंत्र में शिक्षा का महत्व और भी ज्यादा है क्योंकि शिक्षा ही सही एवं विवेकसम्मत चयन करने का प्रशिक्षण एवं अवसर उपलब्ध कराती है। राष्ट्र की सुरक्षा भी शिक्षा द्वारा संभव है। शिक्षा के अभाव में न तो सैन्य प्रशिक्षण संभव है और न ही नवीन प्राद्यौगिकी पर आधारित सैन्य उपकरणों का निर्माण। राष्ट्रवादी कौटिल्य तो शिक्षा का अर्थ ही राष्ट्र के लिये प्रशिक्षण एवं से लेते हैं।

अतः आवश्यकता है कि विद्यालय व विश्वविद्यालयों में नैतिक शिक्षा द्वारा व्यक्तित्व विकास किया जाये। विद्यार्थी जीवन समग्र जीवन की एक प्रयोगशाला है। यहीं बुद्धि बढ़ती है, व्यवहार में शालीनता आती है और व्यक्तित्व संवरता है। विद्यार्थी अपने जीवन का उद्देश्य समझे, स्वयम् को समाज का एक महत्वपूर्ण अंग माने और लक्ष्य की ओर बढ़ चलने के लिये मनोयोग पूर्वक जुट जाये - बड़ी से बड़ी उपलब्धियाँ उसके हाथ लगेंगी।

मनुष्य का चिंतन और चरित्र ठीक हो तो उसके हर कर्म का संस्कार भी श्रेष्ठ होगा। ऐसा व्यक्ति ही समाज को श्रेष्ठता प्रदान करता है और वहीं बनता है, उस समाज की रीढ़। समाज का उत्थान और देश का गौरव ऐसे ही व्यक्तियों पर निर्भर है। यदि विद्यालयों में ऐसे व्यक्तित्व ढलें तो देश का खोया हुआ गौरव पुनः प्राप्त किया जा सकता है।

संदर्भ ग्रंथ सूची -

- भारतीय शिक्षा का इतिहास (नवमुद्रित दसम संस्करण) लेखक कपूर चंद जैन, संयोजक दिनेश चन्द्र भारद्वाज, विनोद पुस्तक मंदिर आगरा, पेज- १,०३,७४,७६,१०१,१०३,१४४,२४४
- विद्यार्थी जीवन की दिशा धारा-डॉ. आर.पी. कर्मयोगी, प्रकाशन युगान्तर चेतना शशांति कुंज हरिद्वार, पेज-३
- मानव मूल्य व्याख्या कोष -(प्राकृतिक मूल्य भाग-१) प्रथम संस्करण २००६ लेखक-डॉ. धर्मपाल सैनी एवं कृष्ण गोपाल, पेज २४५,२४६
- ओम शांति मीडिया- जून ११, २०१४
- जीने की कला- विलियम हार्ट, प्रकाशन-विपश्यना विशोधन विन्यास इगतपुरी, पेज १३,१७
- सामाजिक परिवर्तन और शिक्षा-उमराव सिंह चौधरी-१९६४, विश्व प्रकाशन, दरिया गंज नई दिल्ली, पेज ८

वैश्वीज रज जे परिप्रेज्य में हिंदी भाषा

प्रा. डॉ. जयंत बोबडे

हिंदी विभाज

श्री शिवाजी महाविद्यालय,
परभजी (महाराष्ट्र)

भाषा मुनष्य के विचार एवं भावों को व्यक्त करने का माध्यम है। मनुष्य समाजशील प्राणि होने के कारण अपने विचार प्रजट ज रने जे लिए भाषा सहायज बनती है। भाषा जी सहाय्यता से अपने विचार दूसरों तज आसा-नी से पहुंचाता है। प्राचिन जाल से मुनष्य ने अपनी अभिव्यक्ति प्रजट ज रने जे लिए, ज्ञान प्राप्ति जे लिए, भाषा ज प्रयोज जिया है। वर्तमान परिवेश में भी मनुष्य अपना स्वार्थ साधने के लिए भाषा का प्रयोग किया है। संसार में अनेक भाषा बोलियाँ बोली जाती है। बावजूद इसके कि संसार में अनेक भाषाएं है तो भी चुनिंदा भाषाओं को ही व्यावहारिक जीवन में प्रयोग किया जाता है। आज वैश्विक स्तर पर अनेक परिवर्तन आ रहे है। इन परिवर्तनों के कारण भाषा के अस्तित्व के खतरें निर्माण हुए है। यह खतरे वैश्वीकरण के कारण निर्माण हुए है। वैश्वीकरण ने मुनष्य के जीवन प्रणालि, संस्कृति, खानपान में परिवर्तन लाया है। साथ ही भाषा में भी परिवर्तन लाया है। इस परिवर्तन में हिंदी ज अस्तित्व टिज ही नहीं जो मजबूत बन रहा है।

वैश्वीकरण की अवधारणा:-

वैश्वीकरण के लिए ग्लोबलायजेशन अर्थात भूमंडलीकरण, बाजारीकरण शब्द का पर्यायी वाची अर्थ प्रयोज जिया जाता है। आज जिस वैश्वीज रज जहा जाता है उसे भारतीय संस्कृति में प्राचिन जाल से वसुधैवजु टूम्बज म जे नाम से पुकारा जाता है। लेकिन समय की धारा में इसमें नवनवीन अवधारणाएँ जूड गई है- जैसे भूमंडलीकरण. इस वैश्वीकरण की हमारी मूल धारणा में विश्वपरिवार और विश्वसमाज जैसी मानवतावाद की उंचाईयों को छूनेवाली संकल्पनाएँ समाहित थी, लेकिन भूमंडलीकरण, बाजारीकरण आदि धारणाओं में विश्वपूँजी, विश्वबाजार जैसी संजल्पनाएँ समाविष्ट है जिन्जे द्वारा एज राष्ट्रविशेष जी पूँजीवाद जी जिरफ्त सबजो जिरेबान तज पहुंचा रही है।

सन 1985 के बाद विश्व में वैश्वीकरण का प्रारंभ माना जाता है। वास्तविक तौर पर इसकी शुरुआत 1991 में जैट अनुबंध जे द्वारा माना जाता है। युनो, जैट, विश्व बैंज आदि संजठनों ज महत्वपूर्ण उद्देश्य यह था जि विश्व जे सभी देशों के बीच सभी प्रकार के व्यवहार बिना किसी समस्याओं से उत्पन्न हो। इसलिए इन संगठनों की ओर से नीजिकरण (Privatization), उदारीकरण (Liberalization) और वैश्वीकरण (Globalization) की प्रक्रिया शुरु की जई। 1991 में भारत में वैश्वीकरण की प्रक्रिया शुरु हुई। वैश्वीकरण, बाजारीकरण, सुचना प्रौद्योगिकी ने हिंदी भाषा जे विश्वभाषा की ओर ढकेल दिया।

वैश्वीज रज जे परिप्रेज्य में हिंदी ज स्वरप :-

वैश्वीकरण के परिप्रेक्ष्य में विचार करते समय सबसे पहले जो बात सामने आती है वह यह की आज बोलनेवालों जी संज्या जी दृष्टि से अनुमानतः चीनी प्रथम अंज्रेजी द्वितीय एवं हिंदी तृतीय ज मांज जी भाषा है। डॉ. सुनीतिजु मार चटर्जी ने आंतरराष्ट्रीय भाषाविद संम्मेलन में यह प्रस्ताव रजा था जि संसार में जि सी भाषा जी समझने -

बोलने वालों की संख्या की दृष्टि में हिंदी का नंबर तीसरा है इसलिए अंग्रेजी, फ्रांसीसी, स्पेनी, रूसी, चीनी के साथ हिंदी को भी राष्ट्रसंघ की कार्यलयीन भाषा मंजूर करना चाहिए। मारिओ पेई नामक शोधकर्ता ने संसार की प्रमुख भाषाएँ बोलने वालों की संख्या इस तरह से दी है - चीनी (50 करोड़), अंग्रेजी (25 करोड़), हिंदी (16 करोड़) वास्तविकता यह है कि यह आंकड़े प्रमाण पर नहीं तो अनुमान पर आधारित दिए हैं। वैश्वीकरण की प्रक्रिया के कारण हिंदी बोलनेवालों की संख्या में इजाफा हो रहा है। बहुराष्ट्रीय कंपनियों का भारत में आना, अपने व्यापार को बढ़ाने के लिए भारतीयों की जुबान में बात करना, सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी के कारण हमारी ही भाषा के माध्यम से सूचनाओं का बेचना, लोगों को मनोरंजन में डूबो देना आदि कई साधन थे जिसके द्वारा आम जन की भाषा में आम से बात की जा रही थी। परिणाम यह हुआ कि हिंदी बोलनेवालों की संख्या बढ़ने लगी। हिंदी 'अनपढ़' हो 'जँवार' हो या 'हिज्जिश' हो पर थी तो हिंदी ही। परिणामतः बीसवीं शती के अंत में ऐसा चित्र निर्माण हुआ कि अब हिंदी विश्व की भाषा बनने जा रही है।

हिंदी विश्व में तीनों में सर्वाधिक बोली जानेवाली भाषाओं में एक है। आज नब्बे करोड़ लोग हिंदी बोलते और समझते हैं। आज चीनी और अंग्रेजी के समकक्ष हिंदी जड़ी है। डॉ. जयन्ती प्रसाद नौटियाल के सन 2005 के भाषा शोध रिपोर्ट के अनुसार विश्व में हिंदी जानने वालों की संख्या 1, 10, 19, 96, 447 है। विश्व में हिंदी ने अपने पैर तो जमाएँ हैं लेकिन भारत में मात्र राजभाषा ही बन पायी। इसका कारण हमारे यहाँ की अंग्रेजी मानसिकता वाले विद्वानों, राजनेता और अधिकारियों को हिंदी को पद और कुर्सी की भाषा कभी बनने नहीं दिया।

वर्तमान परिवेश में हिंदी वैश्वीकरण, संचार-सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी के कारण वैश्विक स्तर पर अपना विशेष स्थान बना रही है। सामाजिक-सांस्कृतिक प्रेरणा के रूप में मॉरीशस, फीजी, सूरीनाम, नेपाल, बांगलादेश, द. अफ्रिका, इंडोनेशिया, सिंगापोर, मलेशिया आदि अनेक देशों में प्रयुक्त की जा रही है। विदेशी भाषा के रूप में अमेरिका, जर्मन, ब्रिटेन, स्वीडन, जेनडा, नार्वे, फ्रान्स, जापान, रूस, चीन आदि हिंदी का अध्ययन-अध्यापन में प्रयोजन कर रहे हैं। वैश्वीकरण के विजसित व्यवसायों से हमारी मायताओं में परिवर्तन होने लगा है। पर्यटन पहले केवल शौक था। अब तो वह विदेश मुद्रा प्राप्त करने का उद्योग बन गया है। पर्यटन स्थानों पर हिंदी-अंग्रेजी दुभाषियों का धंधा चल रहा है। वैज्ञानिक तथा तकनीकी शब्दावली आयोग और सूचना-प्रौद्योगिकी द्वारा तकनीकी दस हजार शब्दों के हिंदी पर्यायों, वेबसाइट तैयार की है। जेन्द्रीय हिंदी निदेशालय और भारतीय इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स अनुसंधान और विज्ञान केन्द्र के संयुक्त तत्वावधान में भारत की चौदह भाषाओं का भारतीय कोश तैयार हो रहा है। मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय तथा सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी द्वारा हिंदी विश्वजोश इंटरनेट पर पहुँच रहा है।

सन 1999 में डॉट जॉम इंडिया लि. ने हिंदी पोर्टल का विज्ञापन किया है। वेब दुनिया के इस कार्यक्रम में मेल चेंट, जो कि सम्मिलित किया गया है। डॉ. अमर सिंह प्रधान कहते हैं कि, 'विश्वभाषा के रूप में हिंदी इसलिए विजसित हो रही है क्योंकि इसमें आत्मसातीकरण की जबरदस्त ताकत है।' इसलिए तो हिंदी इंटरनेट पर है। जनसंचार माध्यमों में विविध माध्यमों के योग्य इसने अपनी शब्दावली और क्षमता का विकास किया है।

वैश्वीकरण के इस भागदौड़ में हिंदी ने अपना अलग स्थान बनाया है। अनेक देशों में समझी एवं बोली जाती है। इससे इसकी ताकत का अंदाजा आ सकता है। सुरिनाम नामक देश में सुरिनाम हिंदी परिषद द्वारा हिंदी के विज्ञापन के लिए यहाँ के नागरिक प्रयत्नशील है। ताज्जुब की बात यह है कि यहाँ देवनागरी लिपी में हिंदी लिखी जाती है। मॉरीशस में सत्तर प्रतिशत लोग हिंदी में वार्तालाप करते हैं। इतना ही नहीं यहाँ हिंदी में पत्र पत्रिकाएँ प्रकाशित होती हैं। यहाँ हिंदी के विज्ञापन के लिए आंतरराष्ट्रीय हिंदी सचिवालय जोला गया। त्रिनिदाद में भारतीय भाषा, संस्कृति, संजीत के संवर्धन हेतु प्रयास होता है। यहाँ जेई शिजा संस्थाओं में हिंदी पढ़ने तथा पढ़ाने की भी सुविधाएँ हैं। इससे आलावा भी इटली, जुयाना,

चीन जापान आदि देशों में हिंदी में अध्ययन - अध्यापन होता है। इससे यह स्पष्ट होता है जी आज हिंदी ने वैश्वीज रज जे बलबूते पर विश्व के अनेक देशों में अपना अलग अस्तित्व बना लिया है।

वैश्वीकरण के परिप्रेक्ष्य में हिंदी ने अपने पंख फैलाए हैं, हिंदी आज न साहित्य, संस्कृति की भाषा है तो यह व्यापार, सुचना और प्रौद्योगिकी भाषा बनी है। इसी कारण आज यह भाषा बाजार की भाषा बनी है। इससे यह स्पष्ट हो जाता है कि आज के परिवर्तनीय समय में हिंदी अपनेआप को बदल कर समृद्ध बन रही है। कई विद्वानों ने वैश्वीज रज जे प्रभाव में भाषा मर जाएगी ऐसी आशंका जताई थी लेकिन शब्द संपत्ति, लोकाश्रय, समन्वय, सरलता आदि विशेषता के कारण विश्वग्राम के व्यवहार में हिंदी अधिक समृद्ध बनते जा रही है।

वैश्वीकरण के परिप्रेक्ष्य में हिंदी की संभावनाएँ : -

वर्तमान परिवेश में वैश्वीकरण का बोलबाल है। इस वातावरण में हिंदी को अच्छा भविष्य है क्योंकि हिंदी आम बोलचाल की भाषा है। वैश्वीकरण के परिप्रेक्ष्य में हिंदी भाषा के लिए अच्छी संभावनाएँ हैं- निम्न प्रकार से

1. वैश्वीज रज जे कारण बहुराष्ट्रीय कंपनियों को अपना उत्पाद बेचने के लिए दरवाजे जुल जये है। उपभोक्ता तज पहुँचने और उन्हें अपने भारत से परिचित कराने के लिए इतर कंपनियों को एक ओर भारतीय भाषाओं की जरूरत महसूस हो रही है। उसके लिए हिंदी एक मात्र ऐसी सशक्त भाषा है जो उनकी जरूरत पूरी कर सकती है। इसलिए आनेवाले दिनों में हिंदी को सुदिन है।
2. वैश्वीकरण के परिणाम स्वरूप विश्व की पाँच हजार भाषाएँ मृतावस्था की ओर जा रही हैं। लेकिन हिंदी का प्रचार-प्रसार मात्र देश-विदेशों में बढ़ने लगा है।
3. वैश्वीकरण के युग में जनसंचार का अनन्यसाधारण महत्व है। जनसंचार के सभी माध्यमों की हिंदी एकलौती भाषा बनी है। भाषा का प्रभावशाली प्रयोग विज्ञापन में किया जा रहा है। इसीलिए हिंदी सरल, सीधी, मर्मस्पर्शी तथा आकर्षक होने के कारण ग्राहकों के हृदयपर छा रही है।
4. आज भारत के अधिकांश शिक्षा मंडलों में हिंदी भाषा के माध्यम से विज्ञान, वाणिज्य, वीधी, इंजिनियरिंग, व्यवस्थापन शास्त्र की पढाई की जा रही है। इतना ही नहीं केंद्रीय स्तर की स्पर्धात्मक परिक्षाएँ हिंदी में होने के कारण आज हिंदी समाज की छोटी इज्जत तज पहुँचने के लिए तैयार है।
5. हिंदी को साहित्यिक भाषा के साथ साथ प्रयोजनमूलक भाषा बनाकर व्यवहार्य दृष्टीकोन से अधिक सशक्त बनाया जा सकता है।
6. आज भारतीय हिंदी फिल्मों आंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर पर अपना अलग अस्तित्व बनाने में कामयाब हुई है। फिल्म और मीडिया के माध्यम से हिंदी वैश्विक स्तर पर पहुँच सकती है।
7. आज पर्यावरण, स्वास्थ्य, चिकित्सा, उर्जा, स्त्री-विमर्श आदि विषयों की अधिकांश सामग्री हिंदी में प्रकाशित हो रही है। समग्र विज्ञान का ज्ञान तथा उच्च शिक्षा, तकनीकी, भूगोल, समाज विज्ञान आदि संबंधी पुस्तकें हिंदी में उपलब्ध होने पर वैश्विक स्तर पर उसका स्थान मजबूत हो जाएगा।
8. आज भारत के वैश्वीकरण को केवल व्यापार और अर्थनीति के संदर्भ में लिया जा रहा है। परंतु वैश्वीज रज जे साथ भारतीय ज्ञान, विज्ञान आयुर्वेद, योग, धर्म दर्शन, संस्कृति, आहार, कृषि, साहित्य और कलाओं के संदर्भ

जुड़ेंगे तब भारतीय भाषाओं और विशेष रूप से हिंदी भाषा का महत्व भी उजागर होगा साथ ही हिंदी वैश्विक जा रूप भी निखरकर सामने आएगा।

9. दूरदर्शन, विविध चैनल, समाचार पत्र, आकाशवाणी, पत्र-पत्रिकाएँ हिंदी के सहारे ही अपना जाल देश-विदेश में फैला रही है। कृषि, उद्योग और सेवा क्षेत्रों में हिंदी भाषा का प्रयोग दिन-ब-दिन बढ़ता ही जा रहा है। आज हिंदी व्यापार - नीती का आधार बन सकती है।
10. हिंदी में साहित्य विपुल मात्रा में उपलब्ध है। प्रादेशिक भाषाओं के साहित्य का अनुवाद हो रहा है। इस दृष्टि से अनुवादको को सुअवसर मिल रहा है। बड़ी मात्रा में हिंदी में अनुवादित साहित्य के कारण हिंदी साहित्य समृद्ध बनते जा रहा है।
11. आज हिंदी पारिभाषिक शब्दावली के माध्यम से ज म्यूटर और इंटर-नेट से जुड़ जयी है। अनेक वेबसाइट्स हिंदी में उपलब्ध है। और भी वेबसाइट्स हिंदी में निर्माण कर हिंदी को वैश्विक स्तर पर पहुँचाया जा सक्त है।
12. वैश्वीकरण के इस दौर में वैश्विक पूँजिपतियों का एक मात्र उद्देश है जि, राज्य, राष्ट्र, समाजरचना, सरकारी मशीनरी को हमेशा के लिए समाप्त करना और उसके स्थान पर वैश्विक अर्थ-व्यवस्था का निर्माण करना है। इस वैश्विक अर्थव्यवस्था के लिए एक वैश्विक भाषा होना आवश्यक है। जो हिंदी यह भूमिका बखुबी निभा सकती है।
13. नई वैश्विक व्यवस्था में प्रत्येक नागरिक को उसके धर्म, पंथ, संस्कृति, जाति, लिंग समाज से संबंध पहचान से छेड़छाड़ नहीं जी जाएगी लेकिन वह उस प्रदेश, राज्य, देश का नागरिक है, ये पहचान धीरे-धीरे नष्ट होजी। इन परिस्थितियों में हिंदी भाषा सबको एक सूत्र में बांधने का काम कर सकती है।

अंततः उपर्युक्त संभावनाओं को देखते हुए ऐसा लगता है कि वैश्वीकरण के इस दौर में संपर्क भाषा, प्रशिक्षण, संचार-संप्रेषण, ज म्यूटर, इंटर-नेट, ई-मेल, एसएमएस, संभाषण, अनुवाद, साहित्य, विज्ञापन, पर्यटन, जेल, अभिनय प्रतियोगिता, संगोष्ठी तथा अनुसंधान कार्य के रूप में वैश्विक माध्यम के रूप में हिंदी का प्रयोग हो रहा है। अंतः इन्ही संभावनाओं के साथ 21 वी सदी में वैश्वीकरण के कारण ही हिंदी का विस्तार एवं प्रचार-प्रसार संभव है।

सहाय्यक ग्रंथ :-

- | | | |
|---|----|----------------------------|
| 1) वैश्वीकरण नई गुलामी | | :- एडमिरल विष्णु भागवत |
| 2) समकालीन भारतीय साहित्य | :- | अक्तुबर-दिसंबर 1999 |
| 3) भाषा और समाज | | :- डॉ. रामविलास शर्मा |
| 4) संचारिका | :- | सं.डॉ. माधव सो-नटके |
| 5) भाषा | | :- जुलाई-अगस्त 2000 |
| 6) भाषा | | :- जनवरी-फरवरी 2007 |
| 7) भाषा तथा भाषा विज्ञान के अद्यतन आयाम | | :- सं. डॉ. देविदास इंगळे . |

अज्ञेय के काव्य में व्यक्तिवादी स्वर और युगीन संवेदना

डॉ० अरविन्द कुमार उपाध्याय

असिस्टेंट प्रोफेसर, हिन्दी

राजकीय महाविद्यालय बिलासुर, रामपुर (उ०प्र०)

सार:

हिंदी साहित्य के आधुनिक युग में अज्ञेय (सच्चिदानंद हीरानंद वात्स्यायन) का स्थान अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण है। उनके काव्य में व्यक्तिवादी चेतना और युगीन संवेदना का अद्भुत समन्वय दिखाई देता है। प्रस्तुत शोध-पत्र में अज्ञेय के काव्य में निहित व्यक्तिवादी दृष्टि और उनके समय की सामाजिक, राजनीतिक तथा सांस्कृतिक संवेदनाओं का विश्लेषण किया गया है। यह अध्ययन स्पष्ट करता है कि अज्ञेय का व्यक्तिवाद केवल आत्मकेन्द्रित नहीं है, बल्कि वह व्यापक मानवीय अनुभवों और युगीन यथार्थ से जुड़ा हुआ है।

कुंजी शब्द: अज्ञेय, व्यक्तिवाद, युगीन संवेदना, आधुनिकता, काव्य

प्रस्तावना:

हिंदी कविता के आधुनिक दौर में अज्ञेय एक ऐसे कवि के रूप में उभरते हैं, जिन्होंने परंपरा से अलग हटकर एक नई काव्य-दृष्टि प्रस्तुत की। वे प्रयोगवाद और नई कविता के प्रवर्तक माने जाते हैं। अज्ञेय का काव्य मनुष्य के आंतरिक अनुभवों, आत्म-संघर्ष और अस्तित्वगत प्रश्नों को केंद्र में रखता है। उनकी रचनाओं में एक ओर 'मैं' की गहरी उपस्थिति है, तो दूसरी ओर युगीन परिस्थितियों के प्रति सजग दृष्टि भी। यही कारण है कि उनका काव्य केवल व्यक्तिगत अनुभूति तक सीमित नहीं रहता, बल्कि व्यापक सामाजिक संदर्भों को भी स्पर्श करता है।

अज्ञेय के काव्य में व्यक्तिवादी स्वर:

अज्ञेय के काव्य की सबसे प्रमुख विशेषता उनका व्यक्तिवाद है, जो उनके समूचे काव्य-संसार का आधार बनता है। उनका 'मैं' केवल आत्मकेन्द्रित नहीं, बल्कि आत्म-अन्वेषण और आत्म-बोध का माध्यम है। वे व्यक्ति की स्वतंत्रता, आत्म-सम्मान और आत्म-चेतना को अत्यंत महत्व देते हैं। उनके लिए व्यक्ति का अस्तित्व सर्वोपरि है, किंतु यह अस्तित्व समाज से कटकर नहीं, बल्कि समाज के भीतर अपनी पहचान स्थापित करता है।

अज्ञेय के काव्य में 'मैं' का स्वर एक सजग और संवेदनशील चेतना का प्रतीक है। यह 'मैं' अपने भीतर झांकता है, अपने अस्तित्व के प्रश्नों से जूझता है और जीवन के गहरे अर्थों की तलाश करता है। उनकी प्रसिद्ध पंक्ति— "मैं भी तुम्हारी तरह एक मनुष्य हूँ"—इस बात को स्पष्ट करती है कि वे व्यक्ति की गरिमा और समानता के पक्षधर हैं। यह पंक्ति उनके मानवीय दृष्टिकोण और व्यक्तिवादी चेतना को उजागर करती है।

अज्ञेय का व्यक्तिवाद संकीर्ण या आत्ममुग्ध नहीं है, बल्कि यह व्यापक मानवीय अनुभवों से जुड़ा हुआ है। वे व्यक्ति को समाज से अलग नहीं करते, बल्कि उसे समाज के संदर्भ में ही समझते हैं। उनके काव्य में व्यक्ति अपने अस्तित्व की खोज करते हुए सामाजिक यथार्थ से भी संवाद करता है। इस प्रकार उनका व्यक्तिवाद एक संतुलित और समन्वित दृष्टि प्रस्तुत करता है।

उनकी कृतियों—‘असाध्य वीणा’, ‘हरी घास पर क्षण भर’ और ‘इत्यलम्’—में यह व्यक्तिवादी स्वर स्पष्ट रूप से दिखाई देता है। इन रचनाओं में आत्म-अनुभूति, संवेदनशीलता और चिंतनशीलता का सुंदर समन्वय मिलता है। अज्ञेय का व्यक्तिवाद आधुनिक मनुष्य की जटिलताओं, उसके अकेलेपन और उसके संघर्षों को भी अभिव्यक्त करता है, जिससे उनका काव्य अधिक प्रासंगिक और प्रभावशाली बन जाता है।

युगीन संवेदना का स्वरूप:

अज्ञेय का समय स्वतंत्रता आंदोलन, सामाजिक परिवर्तन और आधुनिकता के उभार का समय था। इस युग की जटिलताओं, संघर्षों और अंतर्विरोधों का प्रभाव उनके काव्य पर स्पष्ट रूप से पड़ा। यह वह दौर था जब भारतीय समाज परंपरा और आधुनिकता के बीच संतुलन खोज रहा था, और व्यक्ति अपनी पहचान को लेकर गहरे द्वंद्व से गुजर रहा था। अज्ञेय ने इन परिस्थितियों को केवल बाहरी घटनाओं के रूप में नहीं देखा, बल्कि उन्हें मनुष्य के भीतर घटित होने वाली प्रक्रियाओं के रूप में समझा और व्यक्त किया।

उनकी कविता में युद्ध, विस्थापन, अकेलापन, और आधुनिक मनुष्य की त्रासदी का चित्रण मिलता है। द्वितीय विश्वयुद्ध और उसके बाद की परिस्थितियों ने मनुष्य के भीतर असुरक्षा और अनिश्चितता की भावना को जन्म दिया, जिसका प्रभाव अज्ञेय की रचनाओं में स्पष्ट रूप से दिखाई देता है। वे आधुनिक जीवन की भागदौड़, मशीनों के बढ़ते प्रभाव और मानवीय संबंधों में आई दूरी को गहराई से महसूस करते हैं। उनकी कविताओं में एक ऐसा मनुष्य दिखाई देता है जो भीड़ में रहते हुए भी अकेला है और अपने अस्तित्व के अर्थ की तलाश में भटक रहा है।

अज्ञेय की युगीन संवेदना केवल सामाजिक या राजनीतिक घटनाओं तक सीमित नहीं है, बल्कि वह मनुष्य के आंतरिक संसार को भी स्पर्श करती है। वे व्यक्ति के भीतर उठने वाले प्रश्नों—जैसे जीवन का उद्देश्य, स्वतंत्रता का अर्थ, और आत्म-साक्षात्कार की प्रक्रिया—को अपने काव्य का विषय बनाते हैं। इस प्रकार उनकी संवेदना बाहरी यथार्थ और आंतरिक अनुभवों के बीच एक सेतु का कार्य करती है।

उदाहरण के लिए, उनकी कविताओं में प्रकृति के माध्यम से भी युगीन संकटों को व्यक्त किया गया है। प्रकृति उनके लिए केवल सौंदर्य का विषय नहीं, बल्कि एक गहन दार्शनिक और प्रतीकात्मक तत्व है। वे प्रकृति के माध्यम से मनुष्य की स्थिति, उसकी सीमाओं और संभावनाओं को व्यक्त करते हैं। कभी प्रकृति शांति और संतुलन का प्रतीक बनती है, तो कभी वह मनुष्य के भीतर के द्वंद्व और अशांति को उजागर करती है।

इसके अतिरिक्त, अज्ञेय की कविताओं में स्वतंत्रता की आकांक्षा भी एक महत्वपूर्ण युगीन संवेदना के रूप में उभरती है। यह स्वतंत्रता केवल राजनीतिक नहीं, बल्कि मानसिक और आत्मिक भी है। वे व्यक्ति को बाहरी बंधनों से मुक्त होने के साथ-साथ अपने भीतर के भय, संकोच और भ्रम से भी मुक्त होने का संदेश देते हैं। इस प्रकार अज्ञेय का काव्य अपने समय की जटिलताओं को गहराई से समझते हुए उन्हें एक व्यापक मानवीय संदर्भ में प्रस्तुत करता है।

व्यक्तिवाद और युगीन संवेदना का समन्वय:

अज्ञेय के काव्य की सबसे बड़ी विशेषता यह है कि वे व्यक्तिवाद और युगीन संवेदना के बीच संतुलन स्थापित करते हैं। उनका ‘मैं’ समाज से कटा हुआ नहीं है, बल्कि समाज के अनुभवों से निर्मित होता है।

वे व्यक्ति की स्वतंत्रता को महत्व देते हुए भी सामाजिक जिम्मेदारी को नहीं भूलते। उनके काव्य में व्यक्ति और समाज के बीच संवाद स्थापित होता है।

अज्ञेय का 'मैं' केवल आत्मकेंद्रित नहीं है, बल्कि वह एक सजग और संवेदनशील चेतना का प्रतिनिधित्व करता है। यह 'मैं' अपने भीतर झांकते हुए भी बाहरी दुनिया से जुड़ा रहता है। उनके काव्य में व्यक्ति अपने अस्तित्व की खोज करता है, लेकिन यह खोज केवल निजी नहीं होती, बल्कि उसमें सामाजिक और ऐतिहासिक संदर्भ भी जुड़े होते हैं।

अज्ञेय के समय में समाज अनेक प्रकार के परिवर्तन और संघर्षों से गुजर रहा था—स्वतंत्रता आंदोलन, आधुनिकता का प्रभाव, और बदलती सामाजिक संरचनाएँ। इन सभी परिस्थितियों का प्रभाव उनके काव्य में स्पष्ट रूप से दिखाई देता है। वे इन परिवर्तनों को केवल बाहरी घटनाओं के रूप में नहीं देखते, बल्कि उन्हें व्यक्ति के भीतर घटित होने वाली प्रक्रियाओं के रूप में भी समझते हैं। उनकी कविताओं में व्यक्ति का अकेलापन, असुरक्षा, और आत्म-संघर्ष भी दिखाई देता है, जो आधुनिक जीवन की देन है। लेकिन यह अकेलापन निराशा का प्रतीक नहीं बनता, बल्कि आत्म-चिंतन और आत्म-विकास का माध्यम बन जाता है। इस प्रकार अज्ञेय व्यक्ति के भीतर और बाहर दोनों स्तरों पर चल रहे संघर्षों को एक साथ प्रस्तुत करते हैं।

अज्ञेय के काव्य में प्रकृति भी इस समन्वय का एक महत्वपूर्ण माध्यम बनती है। प्रकृति के माध्यम से वे व्यक्ति की आंतरिक भावनाओं और युगीन परिस्थितियों को जोड़ते हैं। प्रकृति उनके लिए केवल सौंदर्य का विषय नहीं, बल्कि एक जीवंत प्रतीक है, जो व्यक्ति और समाज के बीच संबंध को स्पष्ट करता है। इस समन्वय के कारण उनका काव्य एक ओर आत्मानुभूति की गहराई लिए हुए है, तो दूसरी ओर युगीन यथार्थ की सच्ची अभिव्यक्ति भी करता है।

भाषा और शैली:

अज्ञेय की भाषा सरल होते हुए भी अत्यंत प्रतीकात्मक और सांकेतिक है। वे नए बिंबों और प्रतीकों का प्रयोग करते हैं। उनकी भाषा में आधुनिकता की स्पष्ट छाप दिखाई देती है। उनकी काव्य-शैली में प्रयोगधर्मिता, बौद्धिकता और संवेदनशीलता का सुंदर मेल है। वे परंपरागत छंदों से हटकर मुक्त छंद का प्रयोग करते हैं, जो उनके व्यक्तिवादी स्वर को और अधिक प्रभावशाली बनाता है।

निष्कर्ष:

अज्ञेय का काव्य हिंदी साहित्य में एक महत्वपूर्ण मोड़ का प्रतिनिधित्व करता है। उनके काव्य में व्यक्तिवादी स्वर और युगीन संवेदना का गहरा और संतुलित समन्वय दिखाई देता है। वे व्यक्ति की स्वतंत्रता, आत्म-चेतना और मानवीय गरिमा के पक्षधर हैं, साथ ही अपने समय की जटिलताओं को भी गहराई से समझते और व्यक्त करते हैं। इस प्रकार अज्ञेय का काव्य आधुनिक हिंदी कविता की एक सशक्त और संवेदनशील अभिव्यक्ति है।

संदर्भ:

1. अज्ञेय – इत्यलम्
2. अज्ञेय – हरी घास पर क्षण भर
3. अज्ञेय – असाध्य वीणा
4. नामवर सिंह – कविता के नए प्रतिमान