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**M.A (English Literature)
First Year
Indian English Literature- I**

**Prepared by
Dr.G.Vinothkumar M.A.,M.Phil.,Ph.D.,
Assistant Professor
Department of English and Foreign Languages
Bharathiar University
Coimbatore**

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INDIAN ENGLISH LITERATURE- I

UNIT- I - INTRODUCTION

- K. R. Srinivasalyengar : Indian Writing in English
Chapter- 1. Introduction
2. The Beginnings: Rammohan Roy
3. The Renaissance in India

Suggested Reading:

M. C. Naik- *A History of Indian English Literature*, SahityaAkademi, 2009.

UNIT- II - POETRY

- Henry Derozio : To India- My Native Land
The Harp of India
Toru Dutt : Lakshman
ManmohanGhose : The Lonely Road
Sarojini Naidu : The Faery Isle of Janjira

Suggested Reading:

Krishna Kant Singh, *Indian English Poetry Before Independence*, Book Enclave, 2017.

UNIT- III - PROSE

- Mahatma Gandhi : The Gospel of Swadeshi
Jawaharlal Nehru : The Discovery of India
(Chapter 3: "The Quest")
Ambedkar : Castes in India

Suggested Reading:

John B. AlphonsoKarkal, *Indian English Literature in the Nineteenth Century*, University of Mysore Press.

UNIT- IV - DRAMA

- Rabindranath Tagore : Chitra
T. P. Kailasam : Purpose

Suggested Reading:

Sudhir Chandra, *TheOppressvie Present- Literature and Social Consciousness in Colonial India*, Routledge, New Delhi.

M. K. Naik& S. Mokashi, *Perspectives on Indian Drama in English*, Oxford University Press, Madras.

UNIT- V - FICTION

A. Madhaviah : Clarinda
Bhabani Bhattacharya : So Many Hungers!

Indian Writing in English: Introduction

Indian Literature in English might as yet appear as a conundrum. India is of course, India, and English the language of England. English in India still reflects the stereotypical colonial hangover. But without resorting to such platitudes like English being an international language, and writing in English in India being one major way of getting noticed overseas etc, I might state that there is as yet little need for pleading the case for the existence and flourishing of Indian writings in English. But in festivals like this one where we are celebrating poetry from India under several sections like women's writing and Dalit Writing and writing in the regional languages, how do we envisage the situation of the writer in English? A fish out of water? Or a sore thumb? Barring the specific curio aspect of the language the experience of the Indian writer can unarguably be evidenced through this chunk of the Indian literary spectrum—this usually gets noticed in the west but sometimes for the wrong reasons. It is my argument in the following that the Indian writer in English is not a species apart but very much an integral part of the Indian literary scene. There is this feeling that writing in English from India is substandard and middle class, barring of course a few exceptional cases. This might be true primarily because the language itself is currently in use in living situations only among the educated upper middle class. the working class do not have easy access to this nor do they require it, and in the case of the upper class there is virtually very little self-reflexivity nor commitment to the literary. India is a land of violent contrasts—while the sweltering heat of summer blisters the IndoGangetic plains, perennial snow showers quietly on the calm heights of the Himalayas in the north; while the monsoon racks violently in the deep-south, the northwest regions reel under severe droughts.

Similarly, there yet survives the fabled rich image of the India with turbaned Maharajahs riding on bedecked elephants, of snake charmers, sadhus, curry and carpets—of unimaginable riches, ease and wealth, of promiscuity and extravagance, while alongside there exists the contradictory image of heat and dust, of brutalizing want and agonizing poverty, of inhuman exploitation and barbaric ignorance. For the most—a wounded civilization, with a glorious heritage. (See Naipaul, *A Wounded Civilization*, and A L Basham, *The Wonder that was India*) Here is at once the sublime and the grotesque coexisting in one plane. Perhaps, this could also account for the multiplicity of voices in Indian writing. Of course, India is like any other country in the world with its own history of battles and conquests, of treachery and turbulence. Indian literature is like the literature of everywhere else, and yet it is like the literature of nowhere else. In its indigenous diversity of paradox and unpredictability, of reception and acquiescence, of adaptation and assimilation, it survives and prevails in its own identity. It is different and it is Indian.

Multiplicity of languages is among the fundamental experience of being an Indian, and a plurality of cultural experience constitutes its underpinnings. There is this oft expressed view that Indian Literature is one though written in many languages—*Ekam sat viprabahudavadanti* (truth is one the sages express it differently). Here are nearly two dozen languages that have official status, and living literatures of their own, with equally highly evolved vocabulary and scripts! Small wonder then that English has been adapted with such skill and dexterity as in the present, so much so that the Indian writer in English is as much international as any other writer in that language. I believe that the Indian writer in English is just another Indian—just like the Indian writer in Bengali or Malayalam, in Gujarathi or Tamil. And yet there is something exotic and strange in the manner in which such writing is received in the West. Granted, Salman Rushdie and now Vikram Seth and Arundhati Roy and even ChetanBhagat are household names, but still

there are more than a few frills attached to the brown person who wields the English quill. We have the diametrically opposite reaction in the unceremonious references to Indian English poets in the posthumously published letters of Philip Larkin. Either way—whether he/she is received in the west with a mixture of exaggerated exoticism and awe or dismissed with racial derision and ethnic contempt—the Indian writer in English continues to create an international readership or, most certainly, a market overseas, as the phenomenal success of *The God of Small Things* would reveal. The only question that often has bothered me is, who the Indian writer is writing for? And because this occasion does not needlessly warrant a critical perspective, I do not propose to struggle with such sociopolitical issues related to class, economy, production, publicity and marketing. I shall now proceed, albeit in a rudimentary manner, to outline the growth and development of Indian Writing in English. II The end of the British Raj did not signal the end of English in India ; on the other hand, the language had by then very much seeped into the Indian creative psyche. By the time Prof. K.R.SreenivasaIyengar's comprehensive and detailed survey *Indian Writing in English* came out in 1962, there was no longer any necessity to debate the existence of a parallel literature in the English language arguably similar in more than one way to the various regional literatures. In the last four decades, the number of Indians writing in English has increased considerably so much so that a pressing need for creative appraisal and evaluation in terms of a pan-Indian aesthetic surfaced of necessity (Many conferences and Symposia like the one hosted by Prof. C.D.Narasimhaiah at Dhvanyaloka to develop a Common Indian Poetic for all Indian literatures have taken place in many parts of the country.) There has also been a similar rise in the percentage of readership as the huge number of publishers and distributors of books and periodicals in English that have emerged of late would reveal. The language has not died out in India but survived and prevailed in indigenous artistry.

In the context of Indians writing in English, as with many others in their regional languages as well, the process of coming to terms with tradition and the contemporary towards developing an indigenous sensibility has indeed been a large and complex historical process, which has evolved through a variety of phases. I have been able to discern four major phases in this trajectory, that are obvious and, for the main, largely accepted: the first phase is one of complete subservience and intellectual slavery, the second one of total defiance and a falling back on desperate nativity and national identity, the third a sort of internationalism and universalisation (sadhanikarana), and the last, almost concurrent with the third, one of creative integration. These are of course, generalized views and as such are not strict compartments; there are overlappings, anticipations, and retrospective movements as well. However, this way of mapping out the geography of Indian Writing in English, I believe, certainly has its advantages, especially when one approaches the terrain for the first time. In the history of this literature as with any other, there have also been phases of experimentation with content as well as form. For a language that has been implanted from a different locale and culture, and that which has been absorbed and assimilated by a once-colonized mind, writing in the English language in India exhibits a dramatic and dynamic history. It has also generated a whole new tradition fully immersed in indigenous values and culture. Writers of the stature of Gandhi and Nehru with their clear-cut prose, R.K. Narayan and Raja Rao with their sheer individualized imaginative recreations of characters, locale and territory, Kamala Das and Nissim Ezekiel with their poetic voices, as well as the new generations of post colonials like Arundhati Roy who has been able to carve out a nativised idiom and language, have in their own individualized ways grappled with a living tradition while constantly renewing their tryst with modernity. In many ways too writers in the English language have concurrently struggled with their generative roots and inborn tensions similar to the ones

confronted by their contemporaries writing in the regional languages. Perhaps, English language literature in India does have an edge over the others in terms of its comparatively easy marketability and reach overseas. I shall deal with this issue later. III “Indian Writing in English,” wrote M.K.Naik, “began as an interesting by-product of an eventful encounter in the late eighteenth century between a vigorous and enterprising Britain and a stagnant and chaotic India.” (M.K.Naik,p.1). The important words here are vigorous and enterprising, which imply a sense of ordered action or progress, and stagnant and chaotic, which in turn imply disorder and inaction. Postcolonial critics like HomiBhabha and others have drawn attention to the colonizing strategy of dividing “colonial space” into binary opposites—that of nature and culture, chaos and civility etc. The colonizing enterprise of the British subsumed the Indian subcontinent through its strategic deployment of such culture shocks. As we gather from Naik’s generalized statement, playing the Indian’s distorted psyche against its own self-styled superior order and culture, the British, unconsciously though at first, set in motion a new literature of the subject race. The birth of Indian writing in English could be traced to this paradox of subjectivity and reclamation of the self. Jawaharlal Nehru wrote in his, *An Autobiography* (1947) I have become a queer mixture of the East and the West, out of place everywhere, at home nowhere. Perhaps my thoughts and approach to life are more akin to what is called Western than Eastern, but India clings to me as she does to all her children, in innumerable ways... I cannot get rid of that past inheritance or my recent acquisitions... I am a stranger and an alien in the West. I cannot be of it. But in my own country also, sometimes, I have an exile’s feeling. But much before Nehru felt this sort of alienation in terms of a national identity, Indian intellectuals of the early part of the nineteenth century were compelled by the pressures of the colonial propulsion to subject their own selves to the superior civilizing culture of their colonial masters. They were branded with the need to de-

school themselves and build up a newer Western identity. Thus the reformist zeal of a Raja Ram Mohun Roy or a Vidyasagar could be accounted for by this compulsive colonial ideology. Alongside Macaulay's celebrated Minutes that drastically waved aside everything Indian as hardly of any worth, while simultaneously highlighting the civilizing force of everything English, Raja Ram Mohun Roy, gave a highhanded call to Indians to learn and master the English language. The need of the hour was felt to be a collective purging of the ill effects of a dormant and static culture coupled with a grafting of the Western culture and value systems on to the thus uncontaminated tree of Indian life. Of course the coloniser's intent remained distinct from the colonial's in this regard. K.N. Panikkar points out The nineteenth century intellectuals were firm believers in the efficacy of enlightenment as a panacea. They traced the source of all ills in Indian society, including religious superstition and social obscurantism, to the general ignorance of the people. The dissemination of knowledge, therefore, occupied a central place in their programme of reform. Their ideas on education were different both in purpose and detail from the educational policy of the colonial rulers. While dissemination of the colonial ideology and utility for administrative needs were the main objectives of the educational policy of the British government, the educational programme of the Indian intellectuals was oriented to the regeneration of the country. As for the creative writers of this formative period, there was but one obvious option – to write in the “more elite” language, and find their continuities in the great English literary tradition. They easily succumbed to the prescriptive role played by English literary canons and thus the earliest Indian writers in English were more Anglo than Indian in that sense. Perhaps for them the second category never existed—for a non-English identity would have necessitated an ejection of a civilized image which was the last thing they wanted. Therefore, we have in these writings a double struggle: a struggle to find a different harmony and

a struggle to infuse the English muse to accept and bless. The writers who could represent the first phase of colonial writing would be: Henry Derozio (1809-31) whom Iyengardubs:”the marvelous boy who perished in his prime,” KashiprasadGhose (1809-73), Toru Dutt(1856-77) [“Beauty and tragedy and fatality crisscrossed in the life of Toru Dutt, and it is difficult, when talking about her poetry, to make any nice distinction between poetry and what C.S.Lewis would call ‘poetolatory.’—Iyengar and Michael MadhusudanDutta (1824-73). It was natural for them to tune unto the nightingale’s throat and gather the sheaves of the great British bards. They let themselves be most profoundly influenced by the nineteenth century Romantics.

The Beginnings: Rammohan Roy

To India – My Native Land - Henry Louis Vivian

“To India – My Native Land” - Henry Louis Vivian Derozio My country! In thy days of glory past A beauteous halo circled round thy brow and worshipped as a deity thou wast— Where is thy glory, where the reverence now? Thy eagle pinion is chained down at last, And grovelling in the lowly dust art thou, Thy minstrel hath no wreath to weave for thee Save the sad story of thy misery! Well—let me dive into the depths of time And bring from out the ages, that have rolled A few small fragments of these wrecks sublime Which human eye may never more behold And let the guerdon of my labour be, My fallen country! One kind wish for thee! - Henry Louis

Vivian Derozio . In this poem, Derozio personifies India and talks to her in a monologue.

Derozio talks about the glorious past of India. He tells her (while Derozio does not hint at what sex he personifies India as, I assume it to be a female because we always refer to a country as mother and in India we refer to our country as Bharat Mata (or mother India the diety)) that in her days of glory, she used to be regarded highly, worshipped and was considered sacrosanct.

Derozio is evidently unhappy with the British rule in India and refers to the same in the line “The eagle pinion is chained down at last”, where eagle refers to India. It is believed that in early days of British rule, foreigners referred to India as the Golden Eagle or Golden bird as it was very rich and one of the largest producer of gold and diamonds. Foreign visitor were awed by the riches and hospitality that India offered. However, the British rule and internal weaknesses brought the country slavery and demolished its pride and identity. This thought is clearly conveyed in the following line by Derozio: “And groveling in the lowly dust art thou” There was an acute sense of hopelessness due to lack of freedom and stagnation in the standards of living. Derozio says that there is nothing more to write apart for the then current situation of the country (“no wreath to weave for thee, Save the sad story of thy misery“). Therefore Derozio wishes to bring back / write about the past of India (“ages that have rolled”) by “diving into the depths of time” and bringing back its glory (“small fragments of those wrecks sublime”). This glorious past may be forgotten with time and people may never get to see or read about again (“Which human eyes may never more behold“). As a reward for his labour, Derozio prays to his country to grant his wish i.e. return of the past glory and pride. My country! in thy day of glory past A beauteous halo circled round thy brow, And worshipped as a deity thou wast. Where is that glory, where that reverence now ? Thy eagle pinion is chained down at last, And grovelling in the lowly dust art thou; Thy minstrel hath no wreath to weave for thee Save the sad story of thy misery! Well—let me dive into the depths of time, And bring from out the ages that have rolled A few small fragments of those wrecks sublime, Which human eyes may never more behold; And let the guerdon of my labour be My fallen country! one kind wish from thee! The poet expresses a sense of personal loss in the downfall of his country, India. Addressing India, the poet says that in the old days, India was worshipped like a deity. Poet wonders where that glory and splendour have

disappeared and regrets the fact that his motherland has now been reduced to the position of a slave of the British Empire. The author also mentions that the country has been humiliated and ashamed of herself grovelling in the dust. There was time when the country soared like an eagle in the skies but now the wings of that great bird have been clipped and it is chained. The poet has no wreath of flowers to offer the country but instead, he will dig into the past and will try to sing of some parts of that great history which is no longer available to the younger generation. The only reward author wants for his effort is that the country should have a kind wish for the author and the countrymen should love him. The author says that his last wish to all the Indians is to dive deep into the past and bring back the lost glory of India

Theme The theme is mainly patriotism. Henry Louis Vivian Derozio talked of the past glory of India and how the country that was called the "Golden Eagle" has chained and enslaved. He proposes to write about some of that heritage of the distant past and in return hopes for a kind wish from the country and its people. A sonnet of fourteen lines divided between three quatrains and an ending couplet, "To India My Native Land" is a song of love and deep emotion from Henry Louis Vivian Derozio to his "fallen country," India. The poem was published before Derozio's untimely death at the age of twenty-two from cholera in 1831. The abababccdedeff rhyme scheme employed by Derozio is most clearly identifiable as a variation of Edmund Spenser's Amoretti rhyme scheme

Introduction to the Poem

- To India- My Native Land is one of the best known poem of Derozio.
- In This Poem, Derozio expresses his grief over the past glory of India.
- The country has lost it altogether.
- Time was in the past when the country enjoyed lot of ...show more content...

* in thy days of glory past: in the past when India was full of glory In the past, India had a rich cultural, spiritual and literary attribute: she was full of glory and was admired and revered all over the world. India was regarded highly by all but now, because of her subjugation to the British imperial intentions, she has lost all her glory and grandeur.

* a beauteous halo Halo: a circle of light surrounding the head of a holy person in a painting or a sculpture. The phrase underscores the divine and stellar status that India enjoyed in the past. She was worshipped as a deity, as a goddess.

The poet resorts to the figure of speech Metaphor to compare India to a deity. Metaphor is a figure of speech in which two things are compared omitting like or as. E The car flew down the highway. My love is a red, red rose. Simile is a figure of speech in which two things are compared using like or as. E The car flew like a bird down the highway. My love is like a red, red rose. The poet then exclaims rhetorically where the glory and reverence that India enjoyed in the past have vanished. Rhetorical Question is a question in which the answer is implied in the question itself. Can we forget those happy days? Such a poetic technique is used by the poet to involve the readers in the drift of the poem.

* Thy eagle pinion is chained at last Eagle is a royal bird; pinion is its wings. The poem “To India – My Native Land” has been written by Henry Louis Vivian Derozio- the founder of the Young Bengal movement that took an active part in the freedom struggle against the British. The poem reflects his love for India. In this poem, the poet laments the fact that India has been enslaved by the British and he desires to bring back her glory. The theme of the poem is quite similar to that of Harp of India written by the same poet. “To India – My Native Land” is a sonnet having the rhyme scheme abababccdede ff. As argued in the first chapter, Indian English

poets from Henry Derozio onwards have had as part of their task the invention of the context that would give them a guilt and other complex free place in life . Some like Meena Alexander may claim the language itself on a selfreflexive context but it is so only because they feel exiled by a dead script, to use her own words. 1 This feeling of exile is what they contend with even where their language itself is their landscape, an they chisel out their personal space, as India that they inhabit. This India is as much for public consumption and approval as for individual self-assertion: The Indian landscape sears my eyes I have become a part of it to be observed by foreigners. They say that I am singular, Their letters overstate the case. I have made my commitment now. This is one: to stay where I am, As others choose to give themselves In some remote and backward place. My backward place is where I am. (.Ezekiel, "Background Casually") This not so casual attestation of commitment to India, this need to do something for one's given and chosen land, is seen in the very first Indian English poet of note as he sings to his native land : My country' in thy day of glory past A beauteous halo circled round thy brow, And worshipped as a deity thou wast, Where is that glory, where that reverence now? (Derozio, "My Native Land") Derozio' sIndia is "grovelling in the lowly dust" but the poet will give himself to the task of restoring some pride in his "fallen country" - all for "One kind wish from thee" All he asks for is to belong, to be looked at kindly by India, to be seen and recognised as an Indian poet. He sees himself as a successor to earlier Indian poets, much worthier than him, and it is his task to resurrect Indian poetry and India which is now. Neglected.mute, and devaluate ... Like ruined monument on desert plain. ("The Harp of India"). This India under foreign yoke, bound, and gagged ("Silence has bound thee with her fatal chain") has to be given her voice again, has to be awakened, if only by this Indian English poet: but if thy notes divine May be by mortal wakened once again, Harp of my country, let me strike the strain (Derozio, 'The Harp of India') M.K. Naik

finds as a "noteworthy feature of Derozio's poetry ... its burning nationalistic zeal, somewhat surprising in a Eurasian at a time when the average representative of his class was prone to repudiate his 59 Indian blood and identify himself with the white man, for eminently practical reasons". He feels that Derozio's poems "have an unmistakable authenticity of patriotic utterance which stamps Derozio as an Indian English poet who is truly a son of the soil. "2 The India that the early poets live in is a country which has been colonised, a country which has only a past glory to look back to : If then amidst thy sons a fallen race, Alas! degraded low (unhappy days!) I a poor schoolboy with my scanty store, Unlearned in thy mysterious shastras love, On painted wings of fancy strive to soar, And hail thee, India, from thy days of yore, Then welcome to my breast, forever dear, While on thy sad remains I drop a tear, And tho' I'm born in this unlucky age, Without the fire of any ancient sage, Accept the tribute of a heart sincere. (Gooroo Chum Dutt "Introductory Lives") Freedom and glories are both past a past - and the past has to be written about to resurrect a weakened land. In their bid to restore lost pride almost all early Indian poets reverted to historical and ancient themes - always with a lesson in mind. Michael Madhusudan. Dutt's. "King Porus" ends with a section on India's fall and loss of freedom: But where, oh! where is Porus now? And where the noble hearts that bled For freedom ... and where art thou Fair Freedom' thou Once goddess of land's sunny clime! 60 Waves of conquests have laid Dutt's India low: The crown that once did deck thy brow It's trampled down- and thou sunk low: Thy pearl, thy diamond and thy mine Of glistening gold is no more thine. Alas! -each conquering tyrant's lust Has robb'd thee of thy very dust! Thou standest like a lofty tree Shorn of fruits - blossoms - leaves and all Of every gale the sport to be, Despised and scorned c' en in thy fall' (M.M. Dutt, "King Porus")

The Harp of India- Henry Derozio

'The Poem mourns India's loss of freedom to the British and hopes it would regain its past glory'. The harp is simply a musical stringed instrument, that Derozio uses to represent as India's loss of art and literature. The harp is left unplayed, possibly because its strings are broken. Even when there is a breeze that touches the instrument, it has no motion. The ultimate use of an instrument is lost, there is no sound from it. The instrument has been used by several poets in the past but now it lays there like a statue, abandoned in a desert. The poets have become famous using the harp in the past. The fame still exists through their artwork(poem) like fresh flowers that bloom in the poets' grave. Derozio ends the poem exclaiming that the one with the skill should awaken the music, and to choose him to do the job.

Analysis of 'The Harp of India' by Henry Derozio

The poem 'The Harp of India' is written as a Petrarchan sonnet – a poem consisting of fourteen lines. A Petrarchan sonnet consists of an octave (eight lines) and a sestet (six lines). The poem is written in the first-person point of view. The rhyme scheme of the poem is 'ababbabcdcdcb'.

The poem is pretty straight forward, simple and elegant. The 'harp' is the main symbol used in this poem. The harp represents India's poets, culture, tradition, art and literature. The loss of these elements in India forms the outline of the poem. There are mainly two parts to the poem. The octave describes the abandoned harp, a metaphor the loss of art and literature and

sestet describes the poets' art and how the fame exists even after the death of artwork's author.

There is a political background to this poem. It was written in the 19th Century, and very much reflects colonization and how it reflected in India's literary work.

Why hang'st thou lonely on yon withered bough?

Unstrung for ever, must thou there remain;

Why do you hang on a broken branch? The word 'thou' refers to the harp. The 'unstrung' means that the harp hasn't been played, possibly because the strings are broken. Should the harp remain like that?

The first two lines evoke a sense of sadness. The harp refers to the art, that is not being used or created. The poet questions, if the culture of art should remain like this.

Thy music once was sweet – who hears it now?

Why doth the breeze sigh over thee in vain?

The music or the sounds produced by the harp was once very melodious. But now, since nobody plays it, nobody hears the sounds anymore. Even the winds can stir music within harp and is useless.

Silence hath bound thee with her fatal chain;

Neglected, mute, and desolate art thou,

The harp is silenced, as it does not produce any music or sound. That makes the harp close to being dead as it defeats the purpose of an instrument. It is abandoned and dumb and cannot make any music.

Like ruined monument on desert plain:

O! many a hand more worthy far than mine

Thus the harp is like a ruined statue on a desert-useless. There are many poets better than the narrator. The word 'hand' refers to the other talented poets.

Once thy harmonious chords to sweetness gave,

And many a wreath for them did Fame entwine

when the harp did make melodious music and entertained, it gave fame to the poets. The word 'wreath' suggests that the poets are dead, also refers to the flowers on the poets' grave.

Of flowers still blooming on the minstrel's grave:

Those hands are cold – but if thy notes divine

the flowers still bloom on the poets' graves. 'flower' can also be compared to fame. Even when the poets remain dead, the artwork they produced is celebrated even after the death of poets.

*May be by mortal wakened once again,
Harp of my country, let me strike the strain!*

Let the harp be played again, to revive art and literature again and let him- the narrator be the one to begin it.

Literary Devices

The major literary devices used in 'The Harp of India' are personification, simile and synecdoche. Throughout the poem, the 'harp' is personified. It is given the importance as if it is a living being. It perhaps enhances the value of art in India. Words like 'thou' and 'her' are used to personify the harp. The simile used in this poem is "Like ruined monument on desert plain:". This simile compares the broken harp to an abandoned statue in the desert. One synecdoche used here is "hands" that refer to the poets.

Lakshman-Toru Dutt

Summary

The poem "Lakshman" is from Dutt's *Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan* (1882). It tells a story from the Hindu epic *Ramayana*, in which the hero Rama is told to procure a golden deer for his wife, Sita. After Rama leaves Sita with his brother, Lakshman, for safekeeping, he finds out that the deer is actually a demon and kills it. However, when the demon dies, it calls out for help using Rama's own voice. Though Lakshman knows Rama is invincible and does not worry,

Sita panics at the sound of the cry for help and asks Lakshman to go and investigate. So that he can both please Sita and also ensure that she stays put, as ordered by Rama, Lakshman draws a line in the ground that Sita is not to cross while he leaves to search for Rama. While he is absent, however, Sita crosses the line and is abducted by the demon king Ravana.

The poem takes this story from the *Ramayana* and opens up the discussion between Sita and Laskhman, expanding it beyond what is present in the epic. Still, much of the core elements of their dialogue are preserved from the epic. First, Sita warns Lakshman to take heed of what are allegedly Rama's cries. When Lakshman tries to counsel Sita otherwise, she accuses him of conspiring to bring Rama down and take her for his own wife. Lakshman is harmed by her words and finally bows to her wishes, drawing a circle with an arrow that she is not to cross while he goes out to assist Rama. Despite the fact that Sita is enraged and has hurt Lakshman's feelings, however, he is calm, only speaking to bless Sita and pray that the deities of the forest will keep her safe when he leaves. The poem ends with a "sorrow dark" on Lakshman's face and a "vulture scream[ing]" as he departs.

Analysis

In terms of its form and rhyme scheme, the poem is written in twenty-two stanzas of eight lines each and closely mirrors a standard ballad, with each stanza consisting of alternating rhymes. Importantly, however, the stanzas of a standard ballad are only four lines, so the doubling of the line count per stanza in "Lakshman" might be meant to reflect the dialogue occurring between Lakshman and Sita. Also important to Dutt's rendition of the legend is her preservation of language that mirrors other translations from the Sanskrit original, such as "succour" and "Videhan Queen" in reference to Sita. This lends Dutt's rendition the authority of an accurate and rigorous account while still allowing her to innovate greatly on the story.

Where Dutt chooses to embellish the original account, then, is in providing additional descriptions of both the surroundings and Rama, so as to round out the sentiments conveyed by both Lakshman and Sita. First, when Lakshman begins speaking in stanza 4, he quickly begins listing a series of figures that would cower before Rama, adapted from the original, including "the lion and the grisly bear," "sun-staring eagles," "pythons and cobras," "Rakshases, Danavs, demons, [and] ghosts." The rhymes that are set up between these beings and their surroundings reinforces not only their connection to nature, but also Rama's supremacy—his power both to make the world and her children bow before him and his might. Further, the move from natural animals such as lions and bears to supernatural figures such as Raskshases and ghosts emphasizes that Rama is a being who commands not only things of natural significance, but also things of divine import.

Second, Dutt has Sita taunt Lakshman and his supposed cowardice by means of a new, original metaphor: "But then thy leader stood beside! / Dazzles the cloud when shines the sun, / Reft of his radiance, see it glide / A shapeless mass of vapours dun; / So of thy courage,—or if not, / The matter is far darker dyed, / What makes thee loth to leave this spot? / Is there a motive thou wouldst hide?" Sita here is comparing Lakshman to a cloud that seems to shine only when it borrows the light or radiance of the sun. She suggests that Lakshman's courage is similar, only present when his brother (who is like the sun) is around; otherwise, Sita suggests, Lakshman is cowardly, just as the cloud is "shapeless" and "dun" without the sun's light. This metaphor connects Lakshman to the natural world as well, conveying the message that he himself is also inferior to Rama, who is the master of nature. The later detail of Sita shooting "flames from her eyes" paints Sita also as a goddess or supernatural being that Lakshman must not deny, further isolating Lakshman from the couple of Sita and Rama.

Finally, at the poem's close, Lakshman turns to nature and prays that it will keep Sita safe from harm, in a manner adapted from the original but far more explicit and extensive: "And oh ye sylvan gods that dwell / Among these dim and sombre shades, / Whose voices in the breezes swell / And blend with noises of cascades / Watch over Sita." As a merely loyal servant to the more powerful Rama and Sita, he must entrust nature with the task of protection when he fails. Further, the "hoarse" scream of a vulture serves as an ill omen that foreshadows Sita's eventual abduction by Ravana. Here, too, nature seems to play an important role as it mirrors the affairs of the demigods and legendary figures depicted in the *Ramayana*.

The poem is thus characteristic of many of Dutt's interests—the relationship of humanity, divinity, and nature; the complexity of family relationships; the experience of loss or bereavement; and the merging of English verse forms and poetic traditions with her own innovations and Indian inspirations. At the same time, its more formal tone and register—as distinct from those of other, more personal poems in the collection such as "The Tree of Life" and "Our Casuarina Tree"—also shows that, in writing this poem, Dutt was intentionally calling back to something other than her own experience, something deeply rooted in tradition and timeless in its telling and retelling over time.

Sarojini Naidu -The Faery Isle of Janjira

UNIT- III - PROSE

The Gospel of Swadeshi- Mahatma Gandhi

Swadeshi is that spirit in us which restricts us to the use and service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote. Thus, as for religion, in order to satisfy the requirements of the definition, I must restrict myself to my ancestral religion. That is, the use of my immediate religious surrounding. If I find it defective, I should serve it by purging it of its defects. In the domain of politics I should make use of the indigenous institutions and serve them by curing them of their proved defects. In that of economics I should use only things that are produced by my immediate neighbours and serve those industries by making them efficient and complete where they might be found wanting. It is suggested that such Swadeshi, if reduced to practice, will lead to the millennium...

Let us briefly examine the three branches of Swadeshi as sketched above. Hinduism has become a conservative religion and, therefore, a mighty force because of the Swadeshi spirit underlying it. It is the most tolerant because it is non-proselytizing, and it is as capable of expansion today as it has been found to be in the past. It has succeeded not in driving out, as I think it has been erroneously held, but in absorbing Buddhism. By reason of the Swadeshi spirit, a Hindu refuses to change his religion, not necessarily because he considers it to be the best, but because he knows that he can complement it by introducing reforms. And what I have said about Hinduism is, I suppose, true of the other great faiths of the world, only it is held it is specially so in the case of Hinduism. But here comes the point I am laboring to reach. If there is any substance in what I have said, will not the great missionary bodies of India, to whom she owes a deep debt of gratitude for what they have done and are doing, do still better and serve the spirit of Christianity better by dropping the goal of proselytizing while continuing their philanthropic work?

Following out the Swadeshi spirit, I observe the indigenous institutions, and the village Panchayats holds me. India is really a republican country, and it is because it is that, that it has

survived every shock hitherto delivered. Princes and potentates, whether they were Indian born or foreigners, have hardly touched the vast masses except for collecting revenue. The latter in their turn seem to have rendered unto Caesar what was Caesar's and for the rest have done much as they have liked. The vast organization of caste answered not only to the religious wants of the community but it answered to its political needs. The villagers managed their internal affairs through the caste system and through it they dealt with any oppression from the ruling power or powers. It is not possible to deny the organizing ability of a nation that was capable of producing from the caste system its wonderful power of organization. One has but to attend the great KumbhaMela at Hardwar..to know how skilful that organization must have been which, without any seeming million pilgrims. Yet it is the fashion to say that we lack organizing ability. This is true, I fear, to a certain extent, of those who have been nurtured in the new traditions.

We have labored under a terrible handicap owing to an almost fatal departure from the Swadeshi spirit. We, the educated classes, have received our education through a foreign tongue. We have, therefore, not reacted upon the masses. We want to represent the masses, but we fail. They recognize us not much more than they recognize the English officers. Their hearts are an open book to neither. Their aspirations are not ours. Hence there is a break. And you witness not in reality failure to organize but want of correspondence between the representatives and the represented. If during the last fifty years we had been educated through the vernaculars, our elders and our servants and our neighbours would have partaken of our knowledge; the discoveries of a Bose or a Ray would have been household treasures as are the Ramayan and the Mahabharat. As it is, so far as the masses are concerned, those great discoveries might as well have been made by foreigners. Had instruction in all the branches of learning been given through the vernaculars, I make bold to say that they

would have been enriched wonderfully. The question of village sanitation etc. would have been solved long ago. The village Panchayats would be now a living force in a special way, and India would almost be enjoying self-government suited to her requirements, and would have been spared the humiliating spectacle of organized assassination on her sacred soil. It is not too late to mend.

And now for the last division of Swadeshi. Much of the deep poverty of the masses is due to the ruinous departure from Swadeshi in the economic and industrial life. If not one article of commerce had been brought from outside India, she would be today a land flowing with milk and honey. But that was not to be. We were greedy and so was England. The connection between England and India was based clearly upon an error. But she does not remain in India in error. It is her declared policy that India is to be held in trust for her people. If this be true, Lancashire must stand aside. And if the Swadeshi doctrine is a sound doctrine, Lancashire can stand aside without hurt, though of Swadeshi not as a boycott movement undertaken by way of revenge. I conceive it as a religious principle to be followed by all. I am no economist, but I have read some treatises which show that England could easily become a self-sustained country, growing all the produce she needs. This may be utterly ridiculous proposition, and perhaps the best proof that it cannot be true, is that England is one of the largest importers in the world. But India cannot live for Lancashire or any other country before she is able to live for herself. And she can live for herself only if she produces and is helped to produce everything for her requirements within her own borders. She need not be, she ought not be, drawn into the vortex of mad and ruinous competition which breeds fratricide, jealousy and many other evils. But who is to stop her great millionaires from entering into the public opinion and proper education, however, can do a great deal in the desired direction. The handloom industry is in a dying condition. I took special care

during my wanderings to see as many weavers as possible, and my heart ached to find how they had lost, how families had retired from this once flourishing and honourable occupation.

If we follow the Swadeshi doctrine, it would be your duty and mine to find out neighbours who can supply our wants and to teach them to supply them where they do not know how to proceed, assuming that there are neighbours who are in want of healthy occupation. Then every village of India will almost be a self-supporting and self-contained unit, exchanging only such necessary commodities with other villages as are not locally producible. This may all sound nonsensical. Well, India is a country of nonsense. It is nonsensical to parch one's throat with thirst when a kindly Muhammedan is ready to offer pure water to drink. And yet thousands of Hindus would rather die of thirst than drink water from a Muhammedan household. These nonsensical men can also, once they are convinced that their religion demands that they should wear garments manufactured in India only and eat food only grown in India, decline to wear any other clothing or eat any other food.

There is a verse in the Bhagavadgita which, freely rendered, means masses follow the classes. It is easy to undo the evil if the thinking portion of the community were to take the Swadeshi vow, even though it may for a time cause considerable inconvenience. I hate best it is the lesser evil. But I would tolerate, welcome goods. Natal, a British colony, protected its sugar by taxing the sugar that came from another British colony, Mauritius; England has sinned against India by forcing free trade upon her. It may have been food for her, but it has been poison for this country.

It has often been urged that India cannot adopt Swadeshi in the economic life at any rate. Those who advance this objection do not look upon Swadeshi as rule of life. With them it is a mere patriotic effort-not to be mad if it involved any self-denial. Swadeshi, as defined here, is a religious discipline to be undergone in utter disregard of the physical discomfort it may cause to

individuals. Under it spell the deprivation of a pin or a needle, because these are not manufactured in India, need cause no terror. A Swadeshi will learn to do without hundreds of things which today he considers necessary. Moreover, those who dismiss Swadeshi from their minds by arguing the impossible, forget that Swadeshi, after all, is a goal to be reached by steady effort. And we would be making for the goal even if we confined Swadeshi to a given set of articles allowing ourselves as a temporary measure to use such things as might not procurable in the country.

There now remains for me to consider one more objection that has been raised against Swadeshi. The objectors consider it to be a most selfish doctrine without any warrant in the civilized code of morality. With them to practice Swadeshi is to revert to barbarism. I cannot enter into a detailed analysis of the proposition. But I would urge that Swadeshi is the only doctrine consistent with the law of humility and love. It is arrogance to think of launching out to serve the whole of family. It was better to concentrate my effort upon the family and consider that though them I was serving the whole nation and, if you will, the whole of humanity. This is humility and it is love. The motive will determine the quality of the act. I may serve my family regardless of the sufferings I may cause to others. As, for instance, I may accept an employment which enables me to extort money from people. I enrich myself thereby and then satisfy many unlawful demands of the family. Here I am neither serving the family nor the State. Or I may recognize that God has given me hands and feet only to work with for my sustenance and for that of those who may be dependent upon me. I would then at once simplify my life and that of those whom I can directly reach. In this instance I would have served the family without causing injury to anyone else. Supposing that everyone followed this mode of life, we should have at once and ideal state. All will not reach that state at the same time. But those of us, who, realizing its truth,

enforce it in practice, will clearly anticipate and accelerate the coming of that happy day. Under this plan of life, in seeming to serve India to the exclusion of every other country, I do not harm any other country. My patriotism is both exclusive and inclusive. It is exclusive in the sense that in all humanity I confine my attention to the land of my birth, but is inclusive in the sense that my service is not of a competitive or antagonistic nature.

Analysis

The concept of swadeshi played an important role in the freedom movement in India in opposing colonial exploitation, but as was emphasized by Mahatma Gandhi even then, we should also look at this concept in terms of its continuing relevance even after the end of colonial rule. It is good to see that this concept is still mentioned and discussed in India, but this use is often devoid of the real significance of the concept. As Mahatma Gandhi played a very important role in the evolving of this concept, it is important to keep in mind his views as well as contemporary reality to bring out the wider and increasing relevance of the concept of swadeshi for our times.

While certainly the immediate need was for protecting indigenous artisan-made goods from colonial imports in highly unfair and imposed colonial trade conditions, Gandhiji clearly pointed to the wider meaning of the concept of swadeshi. He stated that the basic principle is to use the local, village-based products produced in neighborhood to the extent that this is possible and practical.

Of course this is not practical for many products and Gandhiji was perfectly happy to accept this. But he encouraged people to think in original ways regarding this and to find creative ways of meeting more needs at local level, instead of accepting the existing situation as a given. In particular he was keen to revive and protect some recently lost livelihoods (or prevent on-going

loss of livelihoods) such as those relating to hand-spinning and weaving of cloth, or village-based food and crop processing. He saw this as a way of protecting diversity of rural livelihoods and preventing villagers from getting excessively dependent of agriculture only. He also saw this as a means of providing creative work to villagers during the time when there is not much agricultural work, or during the lean season. Finally he saw this particularly as a means of providing some livelihood to rural women.

The immediate relevance which historians are quick to trace is in terms of the massive loss of livelihoods of weavers and spinners following imports of Manchester or British imports in a highly unequal and unfair system, a colonial imposition, which inflicted massive unemployment on India, a country once famous worldwide for its textiles. The British Governor General Bentick himself acknowledged this when he wrote that bones of cotton weavers are bleaching the plains of India. He had no reasons to exaggerate the damage .

While opposition to this injustice may have been the starting point for Gandhiji also he soon made it clear that for him the concept of swadeshi also includes protection of village livelihood or cottage-industry based livelihood from the products of the domestic big industrialist. This wider understanding of saving the small farmer, artisan and entrepreneur from unfair completion both of imports as well as domestic big manufacturers continues to be very important today. In the immediate post-independence period India tried to retain this concept in some important ways, but under the influence of big industrialists this commitment was steadily diluted. Now when system increasingly of crony-capitalism is strengthened in India, there is less commitment than ever before and increasingly policy decisions which favor big capitalists at the

cost of small farmers, artisans and entrepreneurs, even at the cost of small traders, are being taken.

However in his wider concept of swadeshi Gandhii has also left a message for how to face this difficult situation. The message of swadeshi is to be taking forward in terms of a people's movement which goes on strengthening the commitment of people to protecting village, local and cottage/small sale livelihoods regardless of what the authorities do. So increasingly there is a need for swadeshi as a movement of people which protects small farmers, artisans, entrepreneurs and traders from the onslaught of neo-imperialism, unfair/ rigged international trade, giant multinational companies and aggressive crony capitalism.

The rural and farmers' movements should also give more emphasis to improving overall self-reliance of communities and overall internal strength of communities in various ways.

Understood in this wider context this movement links up with several highly relevant social and environmental movements at world level too.

The Discovery of India (Chapter 3: "The Quest") - Jawaharlal Nehru

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's "The Discovery of India"

Chapter 3: The Quest

The diversity of India is tremendous; it is obvious; it lies on the surface and anybody can see it. It concerns itself with physical appearances as well as with certain mental habits and traits. There is little in common, to outward seeming, between the Pathan of the North-West and the Tamil in the far South. Their racial stocks are not the same, though there may be common strands running through them; they differ in face and figure, food and clothing, and, of course, language. In the

Northwestern Frontier Province there is already the breath of Central Asia, and many a custom there, as in Kashmir, reminds one of the countries on the other side of the Himalayas. Pathan popular dances are singularly like Russian Cossack dancing. Yet, with all these differences, there is no mistaking the impress of India on the Pathan, as this is obvious on the Tamil. This is not surprising, for these border lands, and indeed Afghanistan also, were united with India for thousands of years. The old Turkish and other races who inhabited Afghanistan and parts of Central Asia before the advent of Islam were largely Buddhists, and earlier still, during the period of the Epics, Hindus. The frontier area was one of the principal centers of old Indian culture and it abounds still with ruins of monuments and monasteries and, especially, of the great university of Taxila, which was at the height of its fame two thousand years ago, attracting students from all over India as well as different parts of Asia. Changes of religion made a difference, but could not change entirely the mental backgrounds which the people of those areas had developed.

The Pathan and the Tamil are two extreme examples; the others lie somewhere in between. All of them have their distinctive features, all of them have still more the distinguishing mark of India. It is fascinating to find how the Bengalis, the Marathas, the Gujratis, the Tamils, the Andhras, the Oriyas, the Assamese, the Canarese, the Malayalis, the Sindhis, the Punjabis, the Pathans, the Kashmiris, the Rajputs, and the great central block comprising the Hindustani-speaking people, have retained their peculiar characteristics for hundreds of years, have still more or less the same virtues and failings of which old tradition or record tells us, and yet have been throughout these ages distinctively Indian, with the same national heritage and the same set of moral and mental qualities. There was something living and dynamic about this heritage which showed itself in ways of living and a philosophical attitude to life and its problems.

Ancient India, like ancient China, was a world in itself, a culture and a civilization which gave shape to all things. Foreign influences poured in and often influenced that culture and were absorbed. Disruptive tendencies gave rise immediately to an attempt to find a synthesis. Some kind of a dream of unity has occupied the mind of India since the dawn of civilization. That unity was not conceived as something imposed from outside, a standardization of externals or even of beliefs. It was something deeper and, within its fold, the widest tolerance of belief and custom was practised and every variety acknowledged and even encouraged. Differences, big or small, can always be noticed even within a national group, however closely bound together it may be. The essential unity of that group becomes apparent when it is compared to another national group, though often the differences between two adjoining groups fade out or intermingle near the frontiers, and modern developments are tending to produce a certain uniformity everywhere. In ancient and mediaeval times, the idea of the modern nation was non-existent, and feudal, religious, racial, or cultural bonds had more importance.

Yet I think that at almost any time in recorded history an Indian would have felt more or less at home in any part of India, and would have felt as a stranger and alien in any other country. He would certainly have felt less of a stranger in countries which had partly adopted his culture or religion. Those who professed a religion of non-Indian origin or, coming to India, settled down there, became distinctively Indian in the course of a few generations, such as Christians, Jews, Parsees, Moslems. Indian converts to some of these religions never ceased to be Indians on account of a change of their faith. They were looked upon in other countries as Indians and foreigners, even though there might have been a community of faith between them. To-day, when the conception of nationalism has developed much more, Indians in foreign countries inevitably form a national group and hang together for various purposes, in spite of their internal

differences. An Indian Christian is looked upon as an Indian wherever he may go. An Indian Moslem is considered an Indian in Turkey or Arabia or Iran, or any other country where Islam is the dominant religion -

All of us, I suppose, have varying pictures of our native land and no two persons will think exactly alike. When I think of India, I think of many things: of broad fields dotted with innumerable small villages; of towns and cities I have visited; of the magic of the rainy season which pours life into the dry parched up land and converts it suddenly into a glistening expanse of beauty and greenery, of great rivers and flowing water; of the Khyber Pass in all its bleak surroundings; of the southern tip of India; of people, individually and in the mass; and, above all, of the Himalayas, snow-capped, or some mountain valley in Kashmir in the spring, covered with new flowers, and with a brook bubbling and gurgling through it. We make and preserve the pictures of our choice, and so I have chosen this mountain background rather than the more normal picture of a hot, subtropical country. Both pictures would be correct, for India stretches from the tropics right up to the temperate regions, from near the equator to the cold heart of Asia.

Caste in India-B.R. Ambedkar

Hindu society is defined and associated with various institutions and the caste system is regarded as one of the social institutions which have foundations of social and moral codes in the Hindu society. But there are many disparities in the understanding of caste in itself. Caste has been largely seen as a functional unit by some scholars but there are many kinds of natural justification of inequality and gendered violence that are embedded itself in the origin and

mechanism of the caste system. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in his essay titled 'Caste in India, their origin, mechanism, and development', published in the journal of Indian Antiquity in August 1917, he redefined the concept and understanding around caste as a whole. He criticized and largely questioned the ignorance of scholars around the caste in India as for example European scholars emphasised the role of color in the caste system. They were also dragged with the colour prejudices which denied their approach to analysed its formation and relations to other factors of discrimination. Secondly, there are also explanations around the origin of the caste as defined by scholars are occupational, religious, etc. Theorists tried to analyze caste within the folds of the division of labour not labourers and alienate the intersections of the caste system. Ambedkar criticized them by arguing that belief can be one factor of caste origin but before belief comes, the institution itself needs to be perpetuated and fortified.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar defined various characteristics of caste and explained how these not only sustained the caste system itself but restricted the kind of consciousness of one's community to its caste boundaries only. The first characteristic is the "idea of pollution". This has been associated with the caste institution and the caste which enjoys the highest rank also has the highest purity. As Ambedkar quoted "priest and purity are old associates". Secondly, caste is the self-enclosed unit which leads to restricting social intercourse and messing with other castes. The prohibition of intermarriage and membership by autogeny are the results of exclusiveness. Ambedkar criticized the concept of endogamy and quoted "caste in India means an artificial chopping off of the population into fixed units each one prevented from fusing into another through the custom of endogamy. Thus endogamy is the only characteristic that is peculiar to caste". The central point about the studies of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar is that he expressed the essential

concern about women suppression and questioned why the maintenance and oppression of caste are dwelled over women's heads? The caste is perpetuated with the various customs and women are disposed to preserve the endogamy of the caste. The sati, forced widowhood, and girl child marriage are the rituals which ensured that women must not marry outside their caste and enforced widowhood is the solution to solve the problem of surplus man and women is a condition to ensure both the ends. The men of the caste community have also faced the imposition of celibacy but it failed both theoretically and practically. The numerical disparity between the two sexes and maintenance of endogamy is done by the imposition of four customs as the burning of wife with her husband or compulsory widowhood so that she cannot look for men beyond his caste. As Ambedkar defined widowhood as "a milder form of burning", imposition of celibacy on the widower and wedding him to a girl who is not yet marriageable. These are forms through which the caste system is sustained and made itself into a self-enclosed unity. These customs were mainly practiced by the higher caste Brahmins so what leads to the growth of the caste system all over India? Ambedkar argued that Manu and Brahmins were guilty of many things but they did not lead to the spread of the caste system. They are the upholders and ensured their proximity maintenance but imposing the caste system over the non brahmins is beyond their scope and mettle. The subdivision of society is natural but what is Unnatural is that they have lost the open-door character and have formed as a self-enclosed units as "some closed the door: others found it closed against them". The spread and growth of the caste system are made possible only by the non brahmins with 'the inflection of imitation'. The various castes have tried to imitate the customs, rituals, and practices to made them integrated within the folds of Hindu society. Ambedkar tried to explain this process of imitation functioning in Indian society with the theory of Gabriel Tarde and argued that there are certain conditions

required firstly the source of imitation must enjoy prestige in the group secondly there must be 'numerous and daily relations among the members of the group'. For example, the imitation is associated with the distance (as here distance is seen through the sociological lenses) and explained that the more, one caste is close to the higher one they will imitate the more, the customs like sati, girl child marriage, and forced widowhood are also imitated by the caste nearest to brahmins one. Therefore with this analysis, Dr.B.RAmbedkar called this process "mechanistic process of the formation of caste".

Lastly, Ambedkar put forward that caste in the singular number is an unreality, caste exist only in the plural number from this we can understand that there is no such single thing as a caste, rather there are always castes. The four main points from his study are firstly, in spite of the composite makeup of the Hindu society, there is a deep cultural unity. Secondly, there was one caste that started the process and others become caste by the act of imitation and ex-communication. The subject of caste is always seen as an all-absorbing problem. To understand caste as an embedded process one needs to understand Ambedkar's lines that "sentiment must be outlawed from the domain of science and things should be judged from an objective standpoint". The only remedy to annihilate the caste system is the self reflection and questioning the authority of shastras. The intercaste marriages and social interactions are the tools to strengthen the morality and unity among all the castes. As Buddha says "see the truth as truth and untruth as untruth".

Chitra -Rabindranath Tagore

Chitra is a one-act play written by Rabindranath Tagore, first published in English in 1913 by the India Society of London.^[1] The play adapts part of the story from the *Mahabharata* and centers upon the character of Chitrangada, a female warrior who tries to attract the attention of Arjuna. *Chitra* has been performed worldwide and has been adapted into several different formats, such as dance.

The play adapts the story of Chitrāngadā and Arjuna from the Mahabharata and begins with Chitra beginning a conversation with Madana, the god of love, and Vasanta, the god of springtime and eternal youth. They ask Chitra who she is and what is bothering her, to which she replies that she is the daughter of the king of Manipur and has been raised like a boy as her father had no male heir. She is a great warrior and hero despite being born as a woman, but has never had the chance to truly live as a woman or learn how to use "feminine wiles". Chitra explains that she had met the warrior hero Arjuna after seeing him in the forest while she was hunting for game. Despite knowing that he had pledged several vows including one for twelve years of celibacy, Chitra fell instantly in love with him. The following day she tried to approach him and plead her case, but Arjuna turned her away due to his vows. Chitra begs the two gods to give her a day of perfect beauty so she can win over Arjuna and have just one night of love with him. Moved by her pleas, the two gods give her not just one day but an entire year to spend with Arjuna.

The next scene opens with Arjuna marveling over the perfect beauty he has seen. Chitra, the beauty of which he mentions, enters and Arjuna immediately strikes up a conversation with her. He requests to know what she is searching for, to which Chitra coyly replies that she is seeking the man of her desires. The two go back and forth until Chitra admits that she is looking for him, which prompts Arjuna to say that he will no longer hold to his vows of chastity. Chitra is

extremely unhappy since he is not falling for her true self and tells him not to offer his heart to an illusion.

Later the next day, Chitra admits to Madana and Vasanta that she had spurned Arjuna due to him falling for what she saw as a false image of herself. The two gods scold her as they had only given her what she had asked of them. Chitra replies that despite their gift, she sees the perfect beauty as a being separate from herself and that even if she had slept with Arjuna, it would not be the true her that he loved- only her beauty. Vasanta advises Chitra to go to Arjuna and spend the year with him and that at the year's end Arjuna will be able to embrace the true Chitra once the spell of perfect beauty is gone. Chitra does so, but throughout their year together she assumes that Arjuna will not love her once the year is up. After much time has passed, Arjuna begins to grow restless and longs to hunt once again. He also begins to ask Chitra questions about her past, wondering if she has anyone at home that is missing her. Chitra remarks that she has no past and that she's as transient as a drop of dew, which upsets Arjuna. With the year approaching its end, Chitra asks that the two gods make her last night her most beautiful, which they do.

However, around the same time, Arjuna hears tales of the warrior Princess Chitra and begins to wonder what she might be like. Never having told him her name, Chitra assures Arjuna that he would never have noticed Chitra if he had passed by her and tries to coax him into bed. Arjuna declines, saying that some villagers have informed him that Manipur is under attack. Chitra assures him that the city is well protected but to no avail. Arjuna's mind is occupied with thoughts of the princess, to which Chitra bitterly asks if he would love her more if she were like the Princess Chitra he admires. Arjuna replies that since she has always kept her true self a secret, he has never truly grown to love her as much as he could and that his love is "incomplete". Noticing that this upsets her, Arjuna tries to console his companion.

The play ends with Chitra finally admitting to Arjuna that she is the princess of which he spoke of and that she begged for beauty in order to win him over. She admits that she is not a perfect beauty, but that if he would accept her then she would remain with him forever. Chitra also admits that she is pregnant with his son. Arjuna meets this news with joy and states that his life is truly full

THE PURPOSE-T. P. KAILASAM

We are all familiar with the story of Eklavya and we often look at the character of Eklavya with the perspective of the epic teller Veda Vyasa. His character 'Eklavya' as portrayed in Mahabharata offers the reader a very little of him. See the video to recall the story in a more accurate way. Hence, a Kannada writer, T.P. Kailasam wrote an English play inspired by this Puranic theme, called the "The Purpose". His work unfolds the youthful idealism of Eklavya as he highlights the character in such a way that we can deeply feel the pain of Eklavya. Hence, the marginal character of the peripheral character of Mahabharata is furnished in a very convincing way by Kailasam that he actually suits as a hero/the central character of the play. Click on the link to know more on the "Father of Humorous Plays" - T. P. Kailasam.

Compare and Contrast Arjun and Eklavya's Character.

Arjun and Eklavya both have one common goal to be the best archers and both have learned from one teacher – Guru Drona. A major thing to be noted here is that Arjun was a 'dependent learner' while Eklavya can be securely said as a 'self-learner'.

What is Subaltern? Who do you think is the Subaltern in this play? Explain with examples.

“Subaltern” is a British word for someone of inferior military rank. It is a combination of the Latin terms-

While mentioning the term Subaltern, the name of the person becomes undoubtedly to mention- Antonio Gramsci, an Italian Marxist intellectual who coined the term subaltern. He was the first to refer the word in a non-military sense (As it is the British military term for a junior officer, in a military sense the word is used to describing the commissioned officer before the rank of captain). In a way, a subaltern is “other to the other”. As per M. H. Abrams, “The subaltern has become a standard way to designate the colonial subject that has been constructed by European discourse and internalized by colonial peoples who employ this discourse”. A subaltern is an agent of resistance to the thought which created a subordinate identity.

It can be securely said that Eklavya is a subaltern in the play “The Purpose”. As per subaltern discourse, a marginalized tribe or person who is conceived by upper authority is a subaltern. Eklavya is a Nishada boy belonging to the tribal community, lower class, as against the Prince –Arjun. The Prince is a Kshatriya and has a right to learn Archery from Drona but Eklavya (though talented) is not given lessons by Drona as because he belongs to the minor group. As according to class stratification, Eklavya belongs to a tribal community and it was the rule during the time that only the Brahmins and Kshatriyas are allowed to learn archery. So, here Eklavya as a Nishada is easily suppressed by Drona and the Prince and though he learns, he is bound to pay the high price demanding his right-hand thumb. Though he isn’t given a chance to speak, to question the authority for such an injustice as well as to convey the doctrine of equality, he becomes a puppet in the hands of the dominance, Drona. Hence, T P Kailasam, through “The

Purpose”, tries to explain the subaltern suppressed voice of Eklavya. Here is an example of Eklavya's grief and can rightly be called a subaltern.

Analysis:

As you can see from the last lines, Eklavya is still torn, confused and uncertain. He was caught between a loyalty to his Guru (who had made his purpose possible) and a loyalty to his purpose (for which he needed the Guru). Caught in this paradox and a fit of rage, he made an impetuous decision. The fact that he is still undecided after having sacrificed his thumb reflects the agonizing pain that he must be feeling. He is caught between two sides, both favoured equally, but he's already committed wholeheartedly to one. This can be seen as being reflective of the pain of indecision. Another important point worth mentioning is that things go slightly differently in the original story in the Mahabharata. In the original story Drona is portrayed as being vengeful. Unhappy that Eklavya 'disobeyed' his instructions, he **demand**s the Guru Dakshina. The fact that this is quite different in the two tellings helps us extract a little information about the significance of the text. Drona is caught between his promises and what he knows is right. He is torn by his loyalty towards his promise (which he swore he would not break) and his loyalty to his sense of justice (which tells him that Eklavya's purpose is noble and pure). Despite the fact that all the outwardly conflicts are catalysed by Arjuna, the larger predominant conflicts are the internal ones of Eklavya and Drona. Both suffer tremendous turmoil and indecision. While Drona suppresses his and keeps thinking of possible solution, Eklavya makes an impetuous decision which further catalyses the internal clashing of resolves. In the end however, Eklavya is **still** unsure as to whether what he did was right or wrong. His confusion and pain makes a lasting impact on the viewer. The play also implicitly comments on the concepts of loyalty and

heroism. Is the idea of loyalty an worthwhile one? Can it really be chosen over common sense? What does one really get out of being loyal? These are a few of the questions evoked in the mind of the viewer throughout the play. Eklavya's heroism can also be read into. In a fit of rage he made a sacrifice he was unwilling to make. In a desperate attempt to maintain his loyalty to the Guru, he gave away what was not his to give: his purpose.

The aforementioned purpose is a reflection of the title and the overall significance of the piece. What is the purpose?

The initial reference to purpose comes in the beginning of the piece with these lines spoken by Bheeshma, Arjuna's father

Clarinda -A. Madhaviah

Madhaviah (1872–1925) are deeply ambivalent toward British Protestant missions in the Madras Presidency. The son of a Brahmin family from the Tirunelveli District in what is now the state of Tamil Nadu, Madhaviah had the opportunity to form close intellectual relationships with British missionaries and Indian Christian converts while studying for his B.A. at the Madras Christian College, completing his degree in 1892. Although he remained a Hindu throughout his life, Madhaviah's first English novel, *ThillaiGovindan* (Reference Madhaviah1903), praises some missionaries for their moral characters, naming in particular the Madras Christian College's principal, William Miller (1838–1923); however, the same novel also criticizes other unnamed Madras missionaries for extravagant lifestyles that squandered the money of unsuspecting supporters in Britain . Madhaviah's deep commitment to late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century Indian women's reform movements, including widow remarriage, the abolition of child marriage, and women's education, meant that he often agreed with British missionaries

championing similar reforms in Indian society. However, his early novels also criticize the proselytizing activities of missionaries, particularly in educational settings. In his Tamil novel *Padmavati Carittiram* (1898, 1899) and English novel *Satyananda* (1909), Madhaviah exposes missionary attempts to take advantage of a young pupil's inexperience in an educational setting or to exploit a quarrel between pupil and family members to secure a conversion. Yet in contrast, Madhaviah's final English novel, *Clarinda: A Historical Novel* (1915), offers perhaps the most positive depiction of an Indian Christian conversion in his fiction. A historical novel that reimagines the life of a renowned eighteenth-century Marathi Brahmin woman convert living in Thanjavur, Madhaviah's *Clarinda* offers Christian conversion as a liberating decision for the young Clarinda. Her conversion allows her as a widow to escape the patriarchal control of her abusive husband's family and to contribute to her community as a philanthropist and an early social reformer. While Madhaviah remained critical of certain conversion tactics, which could transgress ethical boundaries, Madhaviah also acknowledged that missionary goals for women's improved lot within society often intersected with his own convictions.

Madhaviah's mixed support and censure for colonial missions exemplifies his ability as a late-colonial Indian subject to shuttle between cultures, religious traditions, and languages in both his education and his fiction. Receiving both colonial English education and traditional instruction in Tamil with a pandit in his youth, Madhaviah produced novels, poetry, plays, and translations simultaneously in both English and Tamil throughout his writing career (Holmström xii). This choice set Madhaviah apart from some of his contemporaries, Footnote ¹ gained him recognition as one of the Tamil novel's founding innovators, and also opened the possibility for English-language publication outside Madras. Madhaviah was seeking to publish his English works in Britain as early as 1910, writing to the English Indian poet Sarojini Naidu to inquire into the best

way to find a publisher abroad (Naidu). In 1915, the same year in which he published *Clarinda* in Madras, Madhaviah sent both *Clarinda* and *ThillaiGovindan* with his friend J.C. Maloney in the hopes that Maloney could find a publisher for him during his time in Britain (Holmström xv). VinayDharwadker suggests that this ability to write while shifting between political allegiances, cultures, and literary traditions is a characteristic of what Dharwadker calls the “ambidextrous” Indian subject (123). Rather than choose to “resist” or “collaborate” with British political power and cultural influences, these late nineteenth-century Indian authors chose to cultivate “syncretistically interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, and transnational” roles in the colonial order that allow them to intervene in multiple colonial and metropolitan contexts

Madhaviah's ability to write in different languages and envision multiple audiences for his work is linked to his multivalent stance towards colonial projects like Protestant missions.

In *Clarinda* in particular, Madhaviah's nuanced portrayal of his heroine's conversion reflects his ability to shuttle “ambidextrously” between multiple cultures and their values, but *Clarinda*'s conversion narrative also signals Madhaviah's own appropriation of approaches to comparative religion that were practiced at the very missionary institution he attended as an undergraduate. *Clarinda* deliberately reworks Protestant missionary approaches to discussing comparative religion, especially late-Victorian fulfillment theology, to establish common ethical ground in Hindu and Christian traditions. While missionaries might encourage these conversations as tactics to draw potential converts towards the Christian faith, Madhaviah's novel urges Hindu and Protestant communities to allow their similar ethical values regarding philanthropy and virtuous womanhood to unite them for the common purpose of promoting Indian women's educational reform.

Rather than see Clarinda's conversion as the adoption of a new identity, to theorize her conversion process as a cultural or ethical “translation” of her old identity as a high caste Brahmin woman into a new social and religious context. The word “translate” carries the etymological sense of carrying something between two locations, essentially “to bear, convey or remove from one person, place or condition to another”. When the concept of translation is applied to a cultural or ethical value, the initial cultural concept is not lost, but is rather introduced into a new milieu or community, necessitating some changes but also resting on a fundamental similarity, or comparison, that makes translation possible in the first place.

In staging Clarinda's conversion as translation, Madhavia's novel may participate in a teleological vision for a synthesis of religious and ethical values in Indian intellectual projects and future collaborations among Hindu and Protestant social reformers. However, Madhavia's eighteenth-century heroine's narrative simultaneously (and anachronistically) touches on many of the women's social reform issues of the nineteenth-century British Raj (including the abolition of *sati*, child marriage, widow remarriage, and women's education) and it contains a different historical telos than traditional historiographies of British India would suggest. As Mary Ellis Gibson puts it, the narrative “moves from Orientalist inquiry, to Anglicist cultural hubris, to the rebellion of 1857, to late Victorian jingoism and racism, to the triumph of Indian nationalism. Gibson suggests that scholars in recent years have complicated this metropole-centered historiography, examining “new global historiographies that emphasize imperial circuits and transperipheral exchanges in addition to dyadic relationships. Gibson and Leela Gandhi have each challenged the often unquestioned boundaries that have separated authors based on race or national origin through investigating the political and literary friendships existing between authors writing on the subcontinent and in Britain Looking at networks rather than national

origins, Caroline Levine suggests, interrogates the very assumptions that nationalism predicates itself upon, including the assumption that the land of one's birth should align seamlessly with a national culture and identity . In situating works like Madhaviah's *Clarinda* within the histories of late-Victorian Protestant institutes of higher education in India and turn-of-the-century Indian women's social reform movements, this essay reveals the cultural and religious networks that scholars have increasingly traced between colonial India and the British metropole. Madhaviah's *Clarinda* as both “translated” convert from Hinduism to Christianity and ultimately as “translator” of religious and cultural values across multiple religious, caste, and racial boundaries situates Indian colonial subjects – and novelists – in a complex, if also uneven, set of relationships and ideologies which might limit them, but also provide contexts for exchange and collaboration.

Clarinda as a Historical Novel: Representing Two Religious Traditions

Mathavaiah's *Clarinda* reflects upon century of women's social reforms in colonial India within the genre of historical romance. In her study of English-language poetry in nineteenth-century India, Mary Ellis Gibson has pointed out that British literary movements like Romanticism could influence the work of colonial poets far beyond the periodized parameters typically given to those movements (*Indian Angles* 156), and the same could perhaps be said of the Victorian novel's influence on colonial Indian prose. *Clarinda* owes much of its basic structure to the nineteenth-century British historical novel. Like the works of Walter Scott and George Eliot's *Romola* (1862–63) with which Madhaviah was familiar, *Clarinda* draws on historical accounts, interweaving the narratives of historical figures with those of fictional characters. Madhaviah's *Clarinda*, or *Clavirunda* as she is called before her conversion, is a brilliant young Sanskrit scholar whose Pandit grandfather has taught to read and write in multiple languages.

After her grandfather's death, Clavirunda is hastily married to the elderly Dewan, who treats her unkindly and does not appreciate her cultivated intellect. When the Dewan dies, Clavirunda narrowly escapes a forced *sati*. An English officer, Lyttelton, rescues her from the pyre and offers her shelter from her husband's family. The plot device of the English officer rescuing the unwilling *sati* ties Madhavia's work with other nineteenth-century Orientalist romances, but the rescue also reminds readers of earlier women's social reform issues in which British East India officials and missionaries were involved in the first decades of the nineteenth century. Lyttelton and Clavirunda fall in love, and she converts to Christianity after receiving Lyttelton's religious instruction, changing her name to Clarinda. Although Lyttelton cannot legally marry Clarinda because he already has a (mad) wife in England, he tricks her with a sham wedding, a deception that perhaps signals Madhavia's debt to other Victorian narratives like *Jane Eyre* (1847). With this device, Madhavia creatively absolves Clarinda from knowingly cohabitating with Lyttelton outside of marriage, allowing her to retain her status, to some extent, as a moral exemplar of female sexual purity, while remaining faithful to historical accounts of her relationship with Lyttelton. Lyttelton's trick is only exposed when a German missionary, the historical figure Frederick Schwartz, learns of their unlawful liaison and refuses to baptize Clarinda. Although Clarinda is devastated at Lyttelton's betrayal, she returns to care for him in his final illness. After Lyttelton's death, Clarinda becomes an active philanthropist and leader in the Christian community of Palamcottah, and Schwartz returns to baptize her along with her faithful servant and her adopted son.

The action of *Clarinda* is situated at a crucial turning point in eighteenth-century subcontinental history, when the British were gaining ascendancy over the French in South India and consolidating their power in various Indian kingdoms, including the kingdom of

Thanjavur. Choosing this transitional period in colonial history allows Madhaviah to imagine Hindu Brahmin society before it has come into significant contact with Protestant Christianity and British cultural influences. For Madhaviah, the romance between Clarinda and Lyttelton thus represents the first contact between two different civilizations. The “Prayer” which opens the novel depicts the graves of Lyttelton and Clarinda as a place where “The East and the West lie there side by side,” the final resting place of “two distant representatives of the two great civilizations” (*Clarinda* 3). Critics have read Eliot's *Romola* as both an individualized, realist heroine and a representative for larger shifts in moral and intellectual growth in Western culture, and Clarinda has a similarly dual status, representing her cultural and religious community even as she remains an individuated character in a realist narrative.

Madhaviah's tactic of comparison does essentialize, to some extent, religious and cultural traditions in a way that might obscure internal differences in doctrine, practice, or ritual within each. Madhaviah also sometimes allows Brahmin traditions to represent “Hinduism” as a whole and similarly sometimes positions Hinduism to stand in for a pan-Indian “civilization,” as he does in the Prologue. Benjamin O'Dell has cautioned contemporary scholars against such an approach, which could “[smooth] over seismic differences in favor of an artificial creation of common ground,” obscuring caste, regional, and other differences . In my analysis of Madhaviah's text, I have chosen to mirror Madhaviah's use of the word “Hindu” in speaking of a variety of Indian religious and cultural traditions, and “Brahmin” when speaking of traditions that he acknowledges are caste specific, although I acknowledge that these two terms are sometimes conflated in his work. However, Clarinda's status as a Christian convert also complicates this reading of Clarinda as a representative for Brahmin/Hindu/Indian cultures

before European contact. As she falls in love with Lyttelton, Clarinda chooses to convert to his religion, allowing herself to be wooed away from both her community and her religion.

Yet the way in which Madhavia depicts Clarinda's early education and Christian conversion is not the celebration of a historical progression that would replace Hindu ethics or Indian political power with Protestant doctrines and the British Raj; rather, Madhavia explores Clarinda's conversion as a synthesis of Hindu/Brahmin and British Protestant values. Clarinda is a moral exemplar as a philanthropist and a self-sacrificial, loving wife, two roles that Madhavia argues are valued in both religious and cultural traditions. As the next sections will demonstrate, Clarinda's cultivated mind aids her in becoming an example for Indian women; her education gives her the tools to critique her society and to become an early social reformer herself by the end of the text. Although at times Madhavia's text might reinforce differences between religious communities and threaten to ossify religious traditions themselves through the act of comparison, I would argue that his depiction of Clarinda as convert also aims beyond religious or cultural essentialism, attempting to establish commonly held values that will unite both communities around women's education and other women's reform efforts.

Sakuntala, Eve, and the Problems of Misogyny in Hindu and Protestant Traditions

The author uses the scene to critique misogynist perceptions of women's intellects and to suggest that these perceptions have roots in both Hindu and Judeo-Christian tradition. Clarinda, already an accomplished Sanskrit scholar, becomes outraged when she reads the verses in Kalidasa's play *Sakuntala* that compare the subtlety of women to the wiles of the *koil* bird, which lays its eggs in other birds' nests for them to raise. Clarinda fumes to her grandfather:

Clarinda suggests these verses are symptomatic of a larger patriarchal narrative that constructs women as deceivers who use their cunning to manipulate the men around them. Her grandfather initially attempts to deflect Clarinda's outrage by criticizing her reading practices, reminding her, "This is drama . . . and you should not saddle the poet with all the sentiments he puts into the mouths of his various characters. The Pandit may be correct in assuming that in the context of the play itself, the audience's sympathies rest with Sakuntala as a woman whose husband has falsely accused her of deception; however, he also offers other examples from the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* to support the play's claim, suggesting that Sita and Draupadi caused major wars in Indian mythological history. Rather than acknowledging the Pandit's interpretations as proof that traditional Indian texts contain nothing but misogynistic narratives, however, Clarinda offers a counter-interpretation of these two female characters' stories. Clarinda reads Draupadi as a woman who "showed a keener sense of honor than her husbands . . . and she had to goad them on in the noble path of duty and glory" while the "saintly Sita . . . [is] far less subtle and cunning than Rama; in fact, she was like a child to the bitter end, and suffered all her life for it" at Rama's hands. In Draupadi's narrative, Clarinda reads against patriarchal scorn for women's cunning to uncover the potential for women to use their intelligence for moral purposes. She also acknowledges the personal suffering that iconic women like Sita and Sakuntala undergo in spite of living up to the feminine ideal of a chaste and loving wife. In Clarinda's reading, women suffer more when men exercise their cunning and superior social positions against them.

For Clarinda Hindu texts do not always put forth the notion of women as troublemakers and schemers; rather certain male-dominated interpretations of those texts reinforce these female stereotypes. In interpreting the narratives of Sita and Draupadi, Clarinda anachronistically

answers those early missionary and Orientalist scholars who would assume that Hindu texts merely reinforce female submission, rather than problematize it. Furthermore, Clarinda offers this critique as a product not of Western education, but of a traditional Sanskrit one. Lakshmi Holmström argues that this passage demonstrates that Clarinda not only has acquired knowledge through her education, but with it the ability to reason, so that she “achieves a post-Enlightenment intellectual make-up without having had a ‘Western’ education” (xxx). Some contemporary Indian readers received Clarinda's thoroughly traditional and Sanskrit-based education as evidence of the potential impetus for general social reform within Indian traditions, perhaps in exclusion of British influence. Madhaviah's friend SrinivasaSastri praised Madhaviah's portrayal of Clarinda in this respect:

That without English education she could early bring a fresh mind to bear on the characters of legend and the perplexing problems of actual life around her is proof to me, welcome beyond words, that in indigenous culture at its best, you still discover the elements of courage, freshness of outlook and virility of purpose so necessary to progress.

While Clarinda's “post-Enlightenment” critique of patriarchal bias in literary interpretation may represent a cultural anachronism in her mid-eighteenth century context, her proto-feminist interpretations counter Orientalist discourses that criticized the supposed moral deficiencies in Hindu texts, knowledge, and practices. Clarinda's rebuttal represents the novel's own confidence in a moral and intellectual basis for social progress within indigenous traditions.

Madhaviah reserves some critique for Western misogynistic treatments and interpretations of women's characters within this exchange as well. The Pandit, in his efforts to argue for the dangers of women's cunning, tells Clarinda, “The Jews say that the first woman tempted the first

man to transgress and sin against God, and thus ‘brought death into the world and all our woe’” (*Clarinda* 57; bk. 1, ch. 9). Here Madhaviah juxtaposes Hindu and Judeo-Christian narratives to draw a strong comparison between the ways that women have been maligned in both traditions. Madhaviah even allows PanditRao to quote Milton's description of the Fall in Genesis to show a critique of female cunning that runs through some literary as well as sacred Christian texts. Both traditions need “reform” based on their common belief that women's cunning represents a danger for men and for society as a whole. However, as the novel progresses, Madhaviah also reserves strong praise for the social equality and compassion emphasized in Christian tradition, values that can undergird similar projects to improve Indian women's lives. *Clarinda* suggests while some traditional Hindu and Christian texts, and more importantly, their interpretations, reflect a misogynistic skepticism towards women's capacity to use their minds for moral ends, both cultural traditions also contain values which can bolster social reform efforts in India.

So Many Hungers!-Bhabani Bhattacharya

The novel starts with the birth of the newest member of the Basu family, an upper middle class family in Calcutta City, India. While awaiting the birth, news of war was heard over the radio. RahoulBasu, the expectant father was anxious not only about his wife’s safety in childbirth but also over the war. KunalBasu comes in, full of energy. He is an impetuous young man and announces his plan to go to war as a member of the artillery division. A few moments later, SamarendraBasu comes home. He was also wrought with anxiety and his mind was on the upcoming war. This anxiety, however, was not shared by Rahoul. As a businessman, he was busy reading the situation in order to make a killing in the stock market. Rahoul was troubled over the war. How could India fight for freedom when the nation itself was not free? For this, he

packed his things and went for a short visit to Baruni, a folk village near the Bay of Bengal.

Here, his grandfather, DeveshBasu, lived a simple life among the common people.

Seventy-year-old DeveshBasu had retired from his work as a teacher in the city school. He participated in Civil Disobedience years ago. Rahoul would have gladly followed his footsteps but his father dangled the possibility of going to London to study Physics and enticed him to use his knowledge in science to help the people instead of participating in Civil Disobedience. In Baruni, Rahoul discovered that his grandfather was the most respected and most revered man because he taught his values to the people. He was called Devata or “God” by the people because they loved him very much. He met the peasant family that was Devata’s family there. The very compassionate Mother; Xanu, the father; Kajoli, the well-bred peasant girl; Kanu, the eldest in the family who has a chronic earache; and Onu, the youngest one who was ten to eleven years old. He also met Mangala, the family’s beloved milk cow.

His grandfather discussed to him the merits of the National Movement. He learned that the top priority of the movement is for village reconstruction work because this is the basis of life income. Furthermore, the Government and the landlords have grown to fear the peasant masses and mass literacy. Mass education would make the trampled ones conscious of their right to live as human beings. SamarendraBasu on the other hand was bent on making easy money from the war. He justifies this callousness by saying that he is only doing this for the luxury of his family so that he can give them what he never experienced as an impoverished youth in his teens. However, his dreams were shattered as the Calcutta Stock Market crashed. To recover his

money, prestige and social security, he resumed his work at the High Courts and toiled harder than ever before.

At this point, he was planning great things for his son, Rahoul. In a dinner at the Government House, he made it a point to impress upon the Chief Secretary that his son was an important man with lots of potentials. This would strengthen his dream for his eldest son – that he would become the Technical Adviser of New Delhi. This time, the war had spread to the Pacific – from Pearl Harbor to Hong Kong, to Malaya and Singapore. While thinking of schemes to earn money, he conceived an idea to monopolize rice and so that he would become the Army's lone supplier. He would call this Cheap Rice, Ltd. He got this idea when a beggar asked rice from him instead of money. In Rahoul's laboratory in the University of Calcutta, Prokash, a research student who worked under him was beginning to arouse his political awareness with regards to the war and the movement. Though there was no admittance from him, he placed a copy of the "Statement of Nehru at his trial in Gorakhpur Prison." Rahoul was grateful since he wanted to read this and this speech was banned. He knew that he had to fight for the elemental urges of freedom, food and security but his wife, Monju and the baby kept him back.

In Baruni, the fisherfolk faced the first assault from the war. As the Japanese were drawing nearer and nearer to the Bay, the agents of the rulers came to burn their boats so that the enemy would be bogged down and helpless. This was the beginning of the community's economic downturn since the fisherfolk were robbed of their only means of production. To them, the agents of the rulers had just robbed them of their life. Girish, the grocer of the village was an

augurous man of ambition. He was laying his plans to exploit the community folk so that he can fulfill his dreams of having a bigger home and a store in the district. A man from the “Kompanee” promised him a commission if he could buy all the rice in the village. This is the scheme of the businessmen – buy the rice, keep the supply and raise the prices. The Government was engaging in the same business too, but they sowed panic in the hearts of the community folk by spreading the word that the Japanese will loot the barns. Therefore, it would be better to sell rice to the Government so that the earth’s rich yield will not go to the hands of the evil ones.

However, these two institutions had to contend with the power of Devata’s word since he had told the people not to rush and think this over before engaging in such transaction. The basis for Devata’s decision simply came from his sense of community and balance in the village’s economy. No sooner than the people expected, the city was in the grip of revolt. This move was unsanctioned by the national movement but this cannot be stopped because of the flare-up of the people’s wrath. Rahoul made his first gesture of rebellion by joining a demonstration but was set free after a day. Prokash informed him that a spy was copying his notes. He advised Rahoul to keep doing notes so that he can mislead the spy. Prokash went underground to keep his safety since he could do more outside prison.

Nehru and Ghandhi proposed the Quit India Resolution. It stated that “A free India will throw out her great resources in the great struggle... Freedom will enable India to resist aggression effectively with the people’s united will and strength behind it...”[1] However, both proponents were imprisoned before the implementation of the resolution. Gandhi and the "Quit India

Resolution" In the countryside, the poor folk were also in revolt. Devata, Xanu and the other followers of Devata were arrested one early morning. The people demonstrated in front of the Red Turbans. Devata was able to pacify them before yielding to the police. He left this message to his people: "Friends and comrades, do not betray the flag. Do not betray yourselves. There is violence even in your thoughts: that is evil enough. Do not make it worse by violence in action. Ours is a harder task. If we use the weapons of our enemy, we play in their hands. The supreme test has come. Be strong. Be true. Be deathless.

Kajoli and his brothers vowed to keep their vow to the flag and to follow Devata's word whatever may happen. However, to avenge Devata's arrest, men in the village burned the post office. Kanu participated in this act. He was arrested along with the others while he was having an earache. Since there was no man in their house, Kajoli and Onu had taken over their father's task in the farm. One day, their father sends Kishore, his companion in the prison cell. He was arrested because he led a strike in the cotton mill. In Father's letter, Mother and Kajoli read his intention for the betrothal of Kishore and Kajoli. After two moons, they were married. Rahoul visits the village once more bearing the news about Devata. He was transferred to the prison a thousand miles away from Bengal in Dehra Dun. Rahoul also gave the family reassurance with his visit.

Times were already hard for Baruni. Other villages nearby have been attacked so that military installations can be set up. Girish was tirelessly convincing the peasant folk to sell their rice while using Devata's name. Rice and provisions were already running out fast when a tax

collector came and announced the obligation of each home to pay a levy. This would be for progress and for another purpose that the collector did not disclose: the punitive police force that will be imposed on rebel villages. To augment their resources, Kishore decides to leave the village and go back to the city to work. The army shot him on his way to the train since guards were placed by the track to ensure the security of His Highness who was to pass in his special train. Kunal writes to Rahoul to inform him about the situation of the Indian Army. In battle, the Indian people have killed their sense of inferiority and they would not take the current situation of India sitting down.

The man-made hunger has crept into the cities and Rahoul saw men, women and children fall down because of hunger. Bengal is in economic crisis, authority was apathetic and corruption was prevalent in the bureaucracy. Hospitals on the other hand wouldn't let the hungry in because only those who had diseases were allowed inside. While the masses grew hungry for food, those in position grew hungry for money. Destitute humanity was overflowing into the city in the tens of thousands. Meanwhile, Kajoli's family copes with starvation. She carefully planted a vegetable patch that was threatened by ants and Mangala. The Battle of Bengal was already at hand. Onu, the family's breadwinner had noticed a change in himself brought about by hunger. He used to share his best with his friends but now, hunger had debased his warm and innocent spirit. While grazing Mangala in a patch of green, the Mother came upon the fisherman's wife burying her child alive. She was doing this so that the child may sleep in peace instead of hunger keeping him awake and slowly killing him. In an act of selflessness with the purpose of saving this woman's soul, the Mother gives Mangala to her and instructs her to head to Calcutta so that she may have a chance at life.

In their home, city people were there. They showered them with gifts of new sari and food. However, Mother banished them because their real intention was to buy Kajoli and prostitute her in the city. Hunger and misery was gnawing deeply into the family. One afternoon, Kajoli, in her weakness was attacked by jackals. Onu was able to drive these jackals away. Since she needed hospital treatment, she was driven to the hospital in the City by Captain Bannerji and Kaptaan Sa'b. Mother and Onu came with her.

In the city, Mother and Onu joined the hundreds of thousands of destitute people. While Kajoli was still in the hospital, Mother fed her with illusions regarding their situation. But when she got out of the hospital, she received her life with her family as part of the destitute. For Monju, the destitute were lower life creatures, the befouled ones. One evening, a woman was dying in the front steps of their house. The family helped the woman but it was too late. She died moaning on their couch. This awakened Monju and softened her heart. She never understood Rahoul who was busy with their kitchen serving free gruel to the destitute but now, she firmly resolved to help in the struggle.

Sir Abalabandhu was the prince of the black market and the director in the company which Samarendrais part of. He took advantage of the destitute's dilemma: to starve or to sell one's body. He was also at the head of the brothel business that was fast growing in the city. All over, people were debasing themselves for the sake of food. Rahoul witnessed this in a young girl who showed her breasts to the American soldiers for a rupee or two. However, this task of the

young girl was noble since the money she earned was used to buy food for her brethren. Kajoli, Mother and Onu always wished to see Rahoul. Rahoul on the other hand was seeking this family whom Devata called 'his family.'

Through a betel-woman who was an agent of Sir Abalabandhu, Kajoli decided to sell the last thing that she possessed – her body so that Mother and Onu can live. For the starting rate of eighty rupees, Kajoli consented although she herself was troubled. She woke up early one morning and tied the money to her mother's sari and went away to meet the betel-woman. Mother on the other hand felt the beckoning of the Ganges to end all her suffering.

While on the verge of going inside the brothel house, Kajoli was taken aback at the news that a certain hunger strike was going on inside the prison. This was led by Devesh Basu. At the mention of his name, she immediately changed her mind and resolved to engage in work that will not involve selling her body – that is selling newspapers – to the dismay of the betel-woman. Mother on the other hand walked towards the Ganges and slowly began to throw herself over the bridge to end all her suffering. At the same moment, a vehicle was coming. Rahoul and the others who got arrested were on the way to prison. A few moments earlier, in their home, Samarendra got the information that his son, Captain Kunal of the Artillery of the Indian Army was missing. The phone rang and Rahoul was on the phone. He was saying goodbye to his family. Monju received this firmly saying that she too would follow.

In the end, everything seems to be bright and full of hope because of the intensifying and continuing struggle.

Historical Context and Value

It is always thought that history and literature are different discourses. However, in Battacharya's novel, he effectively chronicles real, historical events of a war torn India. Etienne Balibar and Pierre Macherey's concept becomes concrete. Literature and history are not set up externally to each other but are in intricate and connected relationship, the historical conditions of existence of anything like literature.

The novel, published in 1978, is a historical chronicle of the struggles of India as a nation. There are allusions to the struggle previous to the World War II in the experience of Devesh Basu and the Mother. Devesh Basu, the grandfather of Kunal and Rahoul was perceived by Monju as an "eccentric and has old ideas." He participated in civil disobedience before when he formed a band of volunteers and made salt from seawater in defiance of the law. He had gone to prison because of this.

In the meeting of the peasant family and Kishore, Onu proudly discloses that Kanu, the eldest one was born in prison when Mother was jailed for following Ghandiji's satyagraha. Through the mention of these events before World War II, the author gives the readers an immediate glimpse of the long struggle that the people of India have already engaged in.

The novel began with the outbreak of the Second World War. Viceroy Lord Linlithgow declared India to be at war by signing the necessary documents regarding the matter without even going through the motions of consulting Indian politicians. As a response, the Congress leaders had

asked for a declaration of the British war aims with regard to India. Was this an anti-fascist war or was it just an imperialist war aimed at maintaining British colonial rule in India? These events are reflected in Rahoul's thoughts when he ponders, "...how could a people step out into a war said to be waged for democratic freedom so long as that very freedom was denied them?"

Viceroy Lord Linlithgow

As the war continued, there was a rapid conquest of Southeast Asia by the Japanese. The American allies were expecting a lot from Britain. They had their own geo-strategic concerns. There was a possibility of a Japanese advance through Burma (Myanmar) and then, into India. In such an event, India's support is very vital. In the end, to tap India's support, the British cabinet had to make a declaration of its war aims. To prevent Linlithgow's resignation the British cabinet cannot accept, Sir Stafford Cripps offered to fly to India to negotiate a viable compromise. He visited India in 1939 to talk about his country's political aspirations. However, he failed. As written by Battacharya, the state was busy preparing for the Japanese invasion although India's full support during the war was yet to be solicited by the Allied forces. Boats of fisherfolk were burned to render the enemies helpless. Villages near the bay were attacked and burned so that military outposts and training grounds can be established. Devata himself recognized these atrocities when he thought to himself. They had scorched the boats. They had scorched the food. They would scorch people. Even the conscientious thoughts of Flight Lieutenant Brooks were a recognition of the Government's callousness and neglect for the majority of its people. And here he was, trying to strike terror in the hearts of the ill-fed, ill-clothed, unarmed people as though

they belonged to an enemy country. Other pilots had, under orders, attacked villages nearby, Brooks knew. The dirty, brutal business.

In 1942, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, popularly known as Mahatma (the Great Soul) Gandhi launched the “Quit India Movement.” From a large meeting ground in Bombay, a famous call reverberated: ‘do or die’. Indians were to wage one last struggle to achieve independence, or die in that attempt. As in Rahoul’s first act of rebellion after the ‘do or die’ declaration, large-scale violence was directed at railways, telegraph offices, government institutions and other emblems of colonial rule. Sabotage was widespread and Gandhi was blamed for this.

In the novel, ‘Quit India’ was articulated by Devata when he called the village to action and Prokash’s involvement in the Movement. Rahoul found himself slowly transforming as he addressed the elemental urges of freedom, food, and security and immersed himself in mass action.

The year 1943 was a very critical one for the Government of India. It had to cope with the distribution of rice grains, a task for which it was not equipped. A Food Department was established in 1942 but the Japanese Invasion prevented the prices from going down. There was no food shortage since the war years had good harvests but the traders could not be controlled from hoarding rice at the expectation of further price hikes.

The Great Bengal Famine of 1943

In the novel, the author through Rahoul and Devata asserted the man-made hunger and its causes. The year 1943 was a terrible one for the nation. About one million people were killed by the famine in Bengal and many others died due to malnutrition and other diseases. The novel effectively reveals the misery and the anxiety of the destitute out in the streets dying out of hunger not only through Kajoli and her family but through the eyes of Rahoul as well. As he goes through the City, he sees the destitute and the hungry debasing themselves just to get something into their stomachs.

Significantly, the text discloses how the rich become richer at the expense of the poor. The text also reveals those who feed on the decaying human spirit such as Sir Abalabandhu and the betel-woman. Battacharya concretely presents to the readers through the use of simple narrative and effective characterization, the voices of the Indian population as they become pawns of the powerful who are battling for more wealth and glory. Battacharya's novel has its timelessness because it teaches us the effects of war especially to ordinary people like the peasant folk and the community folk without being outright didactic. Furthermore, the novel affirms the culture of India through the practice of ahimsa or non-violence which has made its mark in the history of the nation and was elemental in the liberation of India from British colonial rule.