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Editor

Dr. Saikat Banerjee
Assistant Professor & Head
Department of English,
School of Humanities & Social Sciences,
Assam Don Bosco University.
Assam, India
E-mail: gnosisprintjournal@gmail.com

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Table of Contents

Editorial

Research Articles

Prayer in Times of Extremism: A Study of Reflection of Protest and Love for Humanity
In Manglesh Dabral's *Hum Jo Dekhte Hain* **Dr. Ajay Sahebrao Deshmukh & Dr.**

Ramesh Manikrao Shinde 3

The Dialectic of Primitivism and Civilization: a Study of Cooper's *The Pioneers and The Deerslayer* **Dr. Sucheta Chaturvedi 14**

Retelling Mythologies for Popular Fiction: A Study of the Works of Amish Tripathi
Ayushi Zina 21

Regionalism in Literature: Selected Novels of Thomas Hardy **R.Velu 28**

The Complexity of Human Motivation and Action: A Reader-Response Approach to
Characterization in Ted Elemeforo's *Fountain of Betrayal*

Wisdom C. NWOGA 31

Poem

The Sad Second Childhood **Dr Raihana Barvin 41**

Our Esteemed Contributors 43

Editorial

The October 2021 issue of GNOSIS had a very warm response from the readers in India and abroad that articles have been flowing in quick succession to fill the folder or this issue even before the deadline of 15 August 2021. The thumping reception of the journal shows the depth of multicultural issues in literature to which critics and readers are attracted. As a journal committed to quality research and writing, we are aware of the need to delink quality from publication cost. Hence, our decision is to charge no publication fee from the scholars whose papers will be published in the issues of GNOSIS. At the same time since GNOSIS is a self-financed venture, co-operation and support in the form of subscriptions are solicited from the readers and admirers of English Literature and Language from all over the world.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the Academicians and well-wishers of GNOSIS who recommended GNOSIS for publication. There are twelve research/critical articles, four poems and one fiction in this issue. Before concluding, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our esteemed members of the Board of Advisors and Review Editors for their selfless and tiresome efforts in assessing the articles very sincerely and giving their valuable remarks to bring out this issue in such a grand manner. I am also grateful to the revered contributors who have made this issue of the Journal a beautiful reality. Wishing all the readers a mental feast. Happy Reading!

Dr. Saikat Banerjee

Editor

**Prayer in Times of Extremism: A Study of Reflection
of Protest and Love for Humanity In Manglesh Dabral's *Hum Jo Dekhte Hain***

**Dr. Ajay Sahebrao Deshmukh
&**

Dr. Ramesh Manikrao Shinde

Email: ajayd802@gmail.com

rameshmshinde@gmail.com

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Abstract: Manglesh Dabral is a major voice in Modern Hindi Literature. His contribution to Hindi Poetry and journalism is significant. His conversational tone and simplicity in expression have a great impact on the readers. His words evoke pathos and compassion for human life.

Manglesh Dabral's Hindi poetry collection *Hum Jo Dekhte Hain* is an essential read for avid readers for its universal appeal regarding the sensitive portrayal of diverse emotions and thoughts. It reflects the prevalent hostilities of the world. Tyranny and anarchy have messed up the lives of people across the world. But he also prays for love and hope in times of extremism. Manglesh Dabral's poetic world encompasses the human predicament that portrays their vulnerabilities as well as strengths.

This present paper is an attempt to trace the portrayal of protest against tyranny and anarchy and love for humanity in Manglesh Dabral's Hindi poetry collection *Hum Jo Dekhte Hain*.

Key Words: Manglesh Dabral, Hum Jo Dekhte Hai, Love, Protest, Extremism, Justice, Anarchy.

Human life is always surrounded by the ideas of a utopian world where justice would prevail and people would live in a state of bliss. But the aspirations of individuals to control others disturb this idea and means to achieve power, control and resources causing the decay of civilization. The moral breach against humanity degrades the status and existence of people. **Elton Trueblood** in his book *The Predicament of Modern Man (1944)* explores the questions related to the decaying social structure and failures to create an amicable and harmonious society. His analysis focuses on the attempts human beings have to make a liveable world. Human society in the backdrop of wars, political humbugs and extremism. His plea covers not only people in the centre but all those living on the periphery. He contemplates the sickness of civilization, failure of power culture, the impotence of ethics in times of extremism, inadequacy of individual religion that fails to attend to the needs in a crisis. He traces on the necessity to create a society that can redeem its citizens with each other's efforts. It can only be possible through the serenity of heart and optimism for humanity. **Hartenberg, S. J.** in his article entitled "*Extremism and Tolerance in Politics*" elaborates on the discussion on extremism and tolerance in politics. He focuses on the prevalence of extremism due to ongoing "economic conservatism, literal-minded states' rights,

constitutional construction and isolationist nationalism because they are far removed from a centrist or moderate position in the context..." (297). It aptly reflects the conditions of the way political scenario affects the common man's life. **Robert Nozick** in *Anarchy, State, and Utopia (1974)* elaborates on the state of nature theory, the various moral constraints and the state and how these moral constraints are based upon. He also focuses on the arrival of individual anarchists. The book brings out the facets of prohibition, compensation, and punishments that attempts to control the lives of individuals in society. His focus on distributive justice brings out the essence of the nature of justice and arguments over it. He also talks about equality, envy, exploitation, philanthropy and other mechanisms of human existence through which human beings connect or disconnect with each other. He further explores the concept of Utopia, its model, the model given to the common man, and its design. Within the ambit of utopia, his concern for community and nation underscores the aspects of the common man's experiences and turmoil in day-to-day life. While discussing Utopia, Nozick explores utopian means and ends, and the functioning of utopia.

The discourse on the human predicament, nation, utopia, state, anarchy and extremism thus relates the dense interconnections of ideals given to the common man to create a morally uplifted utopian state or society. Simultaneously, the political and economic mechanisms controlling the nerves of resources and their distribution, justice and order make individual life unbearable for the people without voice or vulnerable positions or on the margins. Manglesh Dabral's poetry portrays this opposite as well as prays for a better world and justice in society.

Manglesh Dabral's Hindi poetry collection ***Hum Jo Dekhte Hain*** is an essential read for avid readers for its universal appeal regarding the sensible portrayal of diverse emotions and thoughts. It reflects the prevalent hostilities of the world. But he also prays for love and hope in times of extremism.

The present paper is an attempt to trace the portrayal of protest against tyranny and anarchy and love for humanity in Manglesh Dabral's Hindi poetry collection ***Hum Jo Dekhte Hain***

Tyranny and anarchy have messed up the lives of people across the world. Ambitious and power-hungry leaders want everyone to follow and adapt their language and orders. They want to spread their ideology through social media, newspapers, and news channels. They force the writers to write their ideology as their own in figurative language. They try to show the world that they are always right. They tried to portray themselves as a positivist and ideal through news channels and newspapers. Those who didn't listen to them will meet their final destination very soon.

In his poem ***Kuchh Der Ke Liye (1992) (For a While)***, the poet portrays a contemporary world that is ruled by tyrants. Poet initiates the multiple dimensions of the poet as a father, as a servant. As a poet he questions:

Kuch Der Ke Liye Main Kavi Tha
Phati-Purani Kavitaon Ki Marmmat Karta Hua
Sochata Hua Kavita Ki Jarurat Kise Hai (Dabral 48)

English translation reads as:

For a while, I was a poet
Repairing the torn-out poems
Thinking about who needs poems.

The sensibility and understanding necessary for poetry or poetic heart are irrelevant in today's context. The common man, who can't raise his voice against this extremity, is helpless. He protested in the beginning, but tyranny has octopus clutches, so he could not withstand his voice for a long time. He denied following the whims, but he has to tolerate them as:

Kuchh Der Maine Anyay Ka Virodh Kiya
Fir Use Sahne Ki Taqat Jutata Raha
Maine Socha Main In Shabdo Ko Nahi Likhunga
Jinme Meri Atma Nahi Hai Jo Atatiyo Ki Hai
Aur Jinse Khun Jaisa Tapkta Hai
Kuch Der Main Ek Chote Se Gaddhe Mein Gira Raha
Yahi Mera Manviya Patan Tha (Dabral 48)

English translation reads as:

For a while, I protested against the injustice
Then I was gathering some strength to tolerate it
I thought I will not write those words
That is against my principles, which are of tyrant's
And the words that trickle blood

I fell and remained in a small pothole

It was my decadence

Poet didn't want to write according to the tyrant's will. It is troublesome for him. His life becomes tough. Poet attempts to protest against the tyrant's injustice but failed. He hates bloodshed and tyrants but finds himself helpless amid tyrannical situations though they are beyond his control. The sense of aversion towards them is the basic quality which remains with the poet:

Main Krurata Nahi Karta

Balki Jo Nirbhay Hoka Krurta Kiye Jate Hai

Unke Viruddha Meri Ghruna Bachi Hui Hai Yah Kafi Hai

English translation reads as:

I do not commit cruelty

Rather those who fearlessly commit cruelty

My hatred for them is enough

Poet is a peace-loving person. He is against injustice, war and inhumanity. He doesn't want to go with the whims of the oppressor. Routine has made his life monotonous. He wants a change in outlook, perception, behaviour and overall change in the world. But this is a distant dream. The night that passed through his mind was a long tunnel without any open end that opens to a new world. For him, awakening in the morning was not a new experience, it was the same world. He writes as:

Subah Mai Jaga To Yah

Ek Jani-Pahchani Duniya Me

Fir Se Janam Lena Tha

Yah Socha Maine Kuchh Der Tak. (Dabral 48)

English translation reads as:

I woke up in the morning which

was a like rebirth in the same

Identical-known world

I thought about it for a while.

Sleep took the poet away from the real tyrannical world. He woke up and found himself in this tyrannical world again. He was upset with the life trapped in stereotypes. He relates his sleep as a birth while an awakening as a death due to the unsafe world. He thinks about the unsafe tyrannical world every morning because he had to face it every day. He found that a man with a principle had to follow the orders of a corrupted person. It is the irony of this tyrannical world. History has proof that tyrants took away the world on the wrong path of injustice and bloodshed. Hitler's cruelty, holocaust, and concentration camps are proof of inhuman behaviour. Jews were forced to leave their homeland in history. In the Indian context, Kashmiri Pundits were forced to leave Kashmir. The communal drift is increasing in the subcontinent. Extremists like the Taliban forcibly took command of Afghanistan. It shows the inhuman,

tyrannical world formation. Humanity began to disappear from the world and inhumanity ruled everywhere.

Poet experienced the dramatic world in his surroundings. People hide their emotions in public. Everyone has a mask on their face, a mask of fake and deceptive emotions. Poet also tries to hide his emotions but some people identify his inner feelings. He writes about the façade of the world in his poem *Abhinay (1990) (Acting)*.

Ek Gahan Atmvishwas Se Bharkar
Subah Nikal Padta Hu Ghar Se
Taki Sara Din Ashwast Rah Saku
Ek Adami Se Milte Huye Muskurata Hu
Vah Ekaek Dekh Leta Hai Meri Udasi (Dabral 48-49)

English translation reads it as:

I leave home in the morning
Full of self-confidence
To remain convinced throughout the day
I meet a person with a smile on my face
Suddenly, he senses my melancholy

Poet starts his day with self-confidence. He wants to prove that he is happy and not worried at all. He carries a plastic smile on his face but people perceive his inner anxiety and grief. Expressing sorrow in public is generally avoided to maintain the decorum of strength. It may be to maintain the dignity and integrity of self so people would not mock at and make a fun of a person. People are afraid of such reactions and hide their feelings as though everyone is in the race of best actor for skilfully presenting what actually they are not as he writes:

Shesh Jo Kuch Hai Abhinay Hai
Hatyara Ek Masoom Ke Kapade Pahankar Chala Aaya Hai
Harek Chahta Hai Kis Tarah Zapat Lu
Sarvshresht Abhineta Ka Puraskar. (Dabral 49)

English translation reads it as:

Whatever is remained, is acting

A killer has come in the disguise of innocent
Everyone wants to snatch the
Award of the best actor.

It seems that world is a stage and human beings are all actors. It is also possible that faking the emotions to deceive other. Emotional blackmailing is also inevitable aspect of life. Bluffing too has increased the problems around us. It is the difference between hiding emotions and showing fake emotions. Using emotions to cheat someone is a serious offense. Poet wants to hide his emotions but not want to deceive anyone with the fake emotions.

It needs courage to voice against the unjust treatment meted out to oneself. It may be not possible to voice it in a loud noise, but however weak one is, registering protest with its weakness is essential with a great hope. This hope is only instrument to pass through the roughest patches of life-time as poet writes in his poem, *Bar Bar Kahata Tha (Said Again and Again)* as:

Joro Se Nai Balki
Bar Bar Kahta Tha Main Apani Baat
Uski Puri Durbalta Ke Saath
Kisi Ummid Mein Batlata Tha Nirashayen
Viswas Vyakt Karta Tha Bagair Atmavishwas
Maslan Aisa Hua Hota Raha
Hona Chahiye Tha Ho Sakta Tha
Hota To Kya Hota (Dabral 50)

English translation reads it as:

Not loudly rather
I expressed my thought Again and again,
With all its weaknesses
Expressed my hopelessness with a hope
Conveyed my optimism with fear
... namely it happened had always happened
Should have happened, Could have been
If happened, then what would have been.

Poet delicately puts his thought on the world affairs. He reflects on past, present and future too hypothetically. However weak, vanquished or neglected he may be, but expressing his thoughts and raising the voice is essential for him.

As a child, everybody wants their parent to be with them in their activities or they want to be the part of activities of their parents. But parents being engaged in balancing the life could not give time to them. On the other hand, the cruelty and indifference has been imprinted on their mind, that world is nothing but battlefield. This mal-transformation of sensible people into robotic soldiers waging war against unnamed enemy is pathetic development of modern society.

Bachcho Ke Liye Chiththi (1988) (A Letter To Children) portrays the scenario and upbringing of children where parents prepare them for an imaginary inevitable war. It reflects present hostile and indifferent reality. It also expresses increasing cruelty and decreasing love and sacrifice. Here, poet wants to tell about the outer world that is insecure.

*Pyare Bachcho Hamne Hi Tumhe Bataya Tha Jivan Ek Yuddhsthal Hai Jaha Ladte
Hi Rahna Hota Hai. Hum Hi The Jinhone Hatyar Paine Kiye. Hamne Hi Chheda Yuddh
Hum Hi The Jo Krodh Aur Ghruna Se Baukhlaye The. Pyare Bachcho Hamne Tum Se
Jhuth Kaha Tha. (Dabral 54)*

English translation reads it as:

Dear children, we told you that life is a battlefield
where you have to keep fighting.
We sharpened our own weapons. We
started the battle.
We just freak out of anger and jealousy. Dear children we
lied to you.

Poet focuses on the excessive expectation of parents from their children. All the time, the advice and training imparted show that children are born to fight only. It destroys the harmonious world. It disturbs the fabric of integrity. But the realization is important, so the poet also highlights to be a warrior in life one has to be sensible to tackle issues sanely. Poet wants peace in the world. He says that “*we lied to you*” at the end of the stanza. As a spokesperson for all the parents, he attempts to convey to them that life is a celebration too, He gives a lesson of love, happiness, and unity to children in another stanza.

*Humne Jhuth Kaha Tha Ki
Jivan Ek Yuddhsthal Hai.*

Pyare Bachcho Jivan Ek Utsav Hai. Jisme Tum Hasi Ke Tarah Faile Ho.
Jivan Ek Hara Ped Hai Jis Par Tum Chidiyo Ki Tarah Fadfadate Ho. Jaisa
Ki Kuchh Kaviyo Ne Kaha Hai Jivan Ek Uchhlati Gend Hai Aur Tum Uske
Charo Aur Ekatr Chanchal Pairo Ki Tarah Ho.
Pyare Bachcho Agar Aisa Nahi Hai To Hona Chahiye. (Dabral 54-55)

English translation reads it as:

We lied to you that
life is a battlefield.
Dear children, life is a festival where you spread like a smile.
Life is a green plant on which you dance like a sparrow. Like
some poets said that life is a bouncing ball and you
are like dancing feet around it.
Dear children if it is not like this then it should be.

Poet teaches children to spread happiness and not anger. He expects from children to change the old prejudiced pattern because they are the future of the world. He believes that if children learn about peace, happiness and sacrifice then automatically future world would be happy and peaceful.

But innocence, inner-peace, happiness, integrity, harmony are lost in course of changing times. Everyone was leading a content life when these all virtues were in their life. So, Poet regrets on the loss of these:

Ek Din Wah Humse Kho Gai

.....

Khoi Hu Cheezo Ka Apna Ek Jeevan Hai Jo Mithas Se Bhara Hua Hai Aur We Aapas Mein Itna Ghul-
Mil Kar Rahati Hai Ki Yah Pahchanana Lagbhag Asambhav Hai Ki Wah Cheez Kahan Hai.
(Dabral 62-63)

English translation reads as:

One Day we lost that thing
....
Lost things have their own life which is full of sweetness
And they live together in such a way that it becomes nearly impossible to locate it.

Manglesh Dabral meticulously analyses the traits of an oppressor. He initiates the discourse with the proof of the innocence of an oppressor. He comments that he does not have red eyes, long teeth, or nails but he carries a lucrative smile on his lips all the time. On the other hand, he has soft hands. The oppressor is surprised to see why people are afraid of him. Poet ironically puts it as:

Atyachari Ke Ghar Purani Talware Aur Banduke
Sirf Sajavat Ke Liye Rakhi Hui Hai
Uska Tahkhana Ek Pyari-Si Jagah Hai
Jahan Shreshth Kalakrutiyon Ke Aaspas Tairate
Umda Sangeet Ke Beech
Jo Suraksha Mahasoos Hoti Hai Wah Bahar Kahi Nahi Hai
Atyachari In Dino Khoob Lokpriya Hai
Kai Mare Hue Log Bhi Uske Ghar Aate-Jaate Hai (Dabral 65)

English translation reads as:

Swords and guns in his house are only kept for decorations
His undercroft is a lovely place
The security is felt with the classic music in the air
among best artefact can nowhere be experienced outside
Oppressor is popular these days
Many dead people visit him at his house

Uncertainty and hostility, and unpredictability of life have made human life complex and marginal. It can't be guaranteed that people would live like a respectful human being with minimal expectations from life. This may be the physical or psychological, or intellectual tragedy of our time. People turn dumb, deaf, heartless, buffoon, homeless, and insane too either to achieve something and after achieving it or after being failed to achieve it. The present time allows no one to be sane, to see, to express, to feel, to think or to decide, to choose etc. Poet writes this unpredictability as:

Yah Aisa Samay Hai
Jab Koi Ho Ja Sakta Hai Andha Langada
Bahara Beghar (Dabral 66)

English translation reads as:

This is the Time
When anybody can turn blind, lame

Deaf and homeless

Manglesh Dabral desires that life on earth should sustain its charm, delicate feelings, the beauty of truth, innocence in eyes, and taste of saving things, the efforts to maintain balance and protest for justice.

Main Chahata Hoon Ki Sparsh Bacha Rahe

Wah Nahi Jo Kandhe Cheelata Hua

Aatatayi Ki Tarah Gujarata Hai

Balki Wah Jo Ek Anjani Yatra Ke Bad

Dharati Ke Kisi Chhor Par Pahuchne Jaisa Hota Hai (Dabral 66)

English translation reads as:

I want to save the touch

Not like shrugged shoulders that pass like oppressor

Rather than like that when after a long unknown journey

One reaches the other side of the earth

Manglesh Dabral's appeal to universal brotherhood, prayer in times of extremism, and preserving love and sensibility is highly expressive in this poem. It currently can be experienced. The feeble and meek tone strongly focuses on the strength and intensity of his prayer. His scope may not be magnificent but the simplicity of his desire is sublime. His miniature expressions encompass the whole universe together as in:

Ek Saral Wakya Bachana Mera Uddeshya Hai

Masalan Yah Ki Hum Insan Hai

Main Chahata Hoon Is Wakya Ki Sacchai Bachi Rahe

Sadak Par Jo Nara Sunai Deta Raha Hai

Wah Bacha Rahe Apne Arth Ke Saath

Main Chahta Hoon Nirasha Bachi Rahe

Jo Phir Se Ek Ummid

Paida Karti Hai

Shabd Bache Rahe

Jo Chidiyon Ki Tarah Pakad Mein Nahi Aate

Prem Mein Bachkanapan Bacha Rahe

Kaviyon Mein Bachi Rahe Thodi Lajja(Dabral 66)

English translation reads as:

To save a simple sentence is my intention
Namely, we are human beings
I want to save the truth of this sentence
A slogan heard from the road
Should be saved with its meaning
I want to save hopelessness
That would procure one hope
Words must be saved
Those like sparrows are always beyond reach
Childishness in love must be saved
Must be saved little modesty in poets

His efforts to save the innocence in touch, words, hopes, the truthfulness of the expression and their meanings, childishness in love, and modesty in poets are remarkable. The simple conversational tone of his poetry straight comes from the heart.

To sum up, the poetry of Manglesh Dabral reflects the direct conversation with the readers. Its appeal stands in its simplicity of expression and intense appeal to the heart. The mastery of expressing the coin sides of the thought, and its perception is noteworthy. ***Hum Jo Dekhte Hai*** perceives the brighter side of human existence in the backdrop of dark zones.

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The Dialectic of Primitivism and Civilization: a Study of Cooper's *The Pioneers* and *The Deerslayer*

Dr. Sucheta Chaturvedi

Associate Professor
Department of English
Lakshmibai College
Delhi University

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Abstract: The foundation of every civilization is laid with the settling of land for productive purposes. And this was an important factor in the settlement of colonies in the wilderness of the new-found American continent. This act led to the conflict between the simple, hunting-based tribal life and farming-based civilization. This is an important theme in American literature, especially in James Fenimore Cooper's novels. In his novels, the theme of the national guilt of having settled civilization at a great price gets synchronized with adventure. A number of writers like Cooper have dealt with this theme which formed an important part of sentimental literature. Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales*, like many great books such as Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* and Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* are not merely children's literature but are also tales of great socio-historic and moral significance. They form an important critique of that civilization which exterminated numerous Red Indian tribes and displaced its own pioneers and scouts such as Natty Bumppo. Cooper, like Francis Parkman believed that "civilization has a destroying as well as creating power" and it sweeps away its own precursors /pioneers very often. His creations, Natty and the Red Indians thus, are among the first victims of socio-economic processes in American literature. Cooper whose own father had been involved in the settlement of Cooperstown looked askance at the kind of settlements that were coming up and saw minutely and critically the destructive tendencies of the settlers towards the newfound land. This manifested in his novels in the form of nostalgia for the primitive and pre-civilized state of man. This nostalgia, as Michael Bell has pointed out, is a part of the misgivings that accompany the whole enterprise of civilization and is evident in the works of writers such as Cooper, Melville, Conrad and Lawrence. However, this nostalgia for primitivism arises paradoxically from the process of civilization itself and is accompanied by the desire for transforming and curing the crisis in civilization.

Keywords: Civilization, pioneers, Red Indians, settlements, individualism.

The American continent had been envisaged as a land of better opportunities and of a better moral society by previous writers such as Bradford and Crèvecoeur. Crèvecoeur envisaged a new social system when he said: "Americans are the Western pilgrims who are carrying along with them that great mass of arts, sciences, vigour and industry which began long since in the East; they will finish the great circle." These

achievements could be had only at a great price. The harsh reality of the eviction of the original inhabitants of this wilderness and setting colonies which involved the rape of the wilderness went unnoticed. Besides this the dissatisfaction with the individualistic civilized society which was prevented by avarice and rapacity, made writers like Cooper and Mark Twain hate civilization, from which their characters like Natty Bumppo and Huck forever seek escape. Cooper explodes the myth of the Utopian ideal by showing the schism between the ideographic picture and actual reality. And in **The Pioneers** (1823) and **The Deerslayer** (1841), which are a part of the **Leatherstocking Tales**. Cooper explores the relations between man and man and man and nature in order to explore the theme of the moral inadequacy of the American civilization.

The central figure around whom Cooper bases his critique is Natty Bumppo (known as Straight – tongue, the Deerslayer, Hawkeye and the Leather stocking), who is a white man adopted by the Delaware tribe. He has adopted the better qualities of the tribals along with the simple, moral teachings of the Moravian missionaries. In the 1850 Preface to **The Leatherstocking Tales**, Cooper had said that Natty is someone who: “possessed little of civilization but its highest principles as they are exhibited in the uneducated and all of savage life that is not incompatible with these great values of conduct”. Thus, Natty who is illiterate and a hunter (primarily the occupation of savage man) becomes what Kay Seymour House has called the “buffer state between primitivism and civilization” (Kay Seymour House, 11). Using him as a touchstone, Cooper judges the savage Red Indians and the civilized men in these two novels.

In **The Pioneers**, Natty appears as the old hunter (in his 70s), who lives in the forest along with his friend, the erstwhile Delaware Chief Chingachgook. Both have been reduced to a disgraceful condition by the settlements on Otsego Lake, which one may see in its untouched glory as the Glimmer glass in **The Deerslayer**. The settling of land by Judge Temple ironically takes place with the help of Natty. He was the first inhabitant Temple had met in the wilderness and whose hunting skills had helped him feed the early settlers. Judge Temple’s vision of Templeton when he first sees the wilderness in all its untouched glory from Mount Vision, raises two major questions. The first is the question of land ownership which arises out of settling the land. Cooper seems to be questioning Judge Temple’s absolute right over the land which had belonged to the Delawares, and later to the adopted Effinghams and to hunters like Natty Bumppo who had embraced the wilderness as their home since long. According to Tocqueville (cited in Philip Fisher), the Indians and men like Natty occupied the land “without possessing” it for they did not use it for farming. But Cooper raises the issue of the unethical nature of their eviction. In Chapter XXI, Effingham and Judge Temple exchange a dialogue regarding land rights: “The Indian title was extinguished so far back as the close of the old war, and if it had not been at all I hold under the patents of the Royal Governors ... and no court in the country can affect my title (**The Pioneers, 226**). This scene explicitly

raises the question of the legality of settling a colony on the land owned primarily by the Red Indians. Cooper seems to be suggesting that due to historical necessity and due to the “law of unintended consequences”, civilization replaces the wilderness and displaces the original inhabitants (**Dekker**,87-90).

The opening scene of the novel suggests in nutshell the hostility of the claimants of the land namely Judge Temple, Oliver Edwards and Natty. All three shoot the same deer and the actual killer of the deer, Edward is injured by Temple’s shot. The attempt of Temple to acquire the venison of the deer that he has not killed shows at a symbolic level the exploitation of the American landscape and the eviction of the unsophisticated and peace-loving owners by the now intruding civilization.

Natty openly criticizes the use of power by the European civilization to colonize the wilderness. In course of the altercation that follows, he tells Temple: “I don’t love to give up my lawful dues in a free country. Though for the matter of that, might often make right here, as well as in the old country, for what I can see.”(**The Pioneers**, 20). Natty also emphasizes that his right to shoot in the woods is older than that of Temple’s. The question of the right of ownership raises the painful issue of colonization and extermination of the tribes that had lived in the forests. Cooper was addressing a problem that his contemporaries felt needed attention. As James Grossman points out, Eastern America rid of the Indian and the squatter was ready “to be sentimental about them and weep for their wrong”. In **The Pioneers** Cooper mourns the loss of the brave warrior races who lived peacefully except for inter-racial conflict which had been a part of their way of life. This he does through the dirge, or what Kay House calls, the “jeremiad” of Chingachook or John Mohegan. It is the use of rum and gunpowder by the land-hunting European settlers which helps them exterminate these races. Cooper nostalgically recounts the story of their lost empire while also expressing his unhappiness at their extinction.

And the sole representative of the brave Delawares in Templeton is John Mohegan. The baptism of Chingachgook to John Mohegan shows how the Christian civilization (being the dominant culture) has finally forced the only remnant of a sub-Christianized and yet fallen state, Cooper seems to be questioning the democratic nature of America which had forced the tribes to submission to a more powerful culture. And grafted to this Christian civilization, Mohegan cannot survive. Rum which is the tomahawk of the whites has conquered the brave and fearless warrior that he was in the past. He is a rum- addict and lives on the outskirts of Templeton. He comments on the beast-like state he has been reduced to: “Then John was a man. But warriors and traders with light eyes followed ... One brought the long knife and one brought rum ... The evil spirit was in their jugs, and they let him loose” (**The Pioneers**, 177).

Besides this painful issue of appropriation of Indian rights, the other question that Temple's vision at Mont Vision poses is that if enterprising men like Temple are opening the doors of the wilderness to civilization with great "toil and suffering", how can their design be an evil one? (**The Pioneers, 224**) Since nomadic life is no solution a colony had to be settled. Cooper, therefore does not reject it completely, he is only drawing the attention of the reader to the danger that accompanies civilization. Judge Temple's vision of an ideal society fails for he is unable to restrain the greed and wastefulness of the settlers such as Richard Jones and Billy Kirby.

Natty who follows the tribal principle of killing when required, and using nature's bounty according to one's needs is critical of the extravagance of this civilization. This is bound to disturb the ecological balance by driving away the animals and by wasting natural resources. The feeling of numerous sugar maples for making sugar is looked upon cheerfully by Richard Jones and Billy Kirby. But Billy Kirby who realizes the commercial potential of it fails to see the waste the process entails. Judge Temple incriminates Kirby and other wasteful settlers: "It grieves me to witness the extravagance that parades the country ... where settlers trifle with the blessings they might enjoy with the prodigality of successful adventures" (**The Pioneers, 218**).

An incision in the tree is sufficient, instead of felling the trees. However, in Judge Temple and Natty's conservationist tendencies, there is a major difference. Natty's devotion to nature a part of his pantheistic world view but in Judge Temple, it is the result, as George Dekker also points out, of his utilitarian tendency, for he stresses the "usefulness" of nature's bounty (**The Pioneers, 219**). In Chapter XXII, once again the wastefulness of the settlers is criticized. Here in the pigeon-shooting scenes, numerous pigeons are killed merely for sport. And Richard Jones employs a more deadly means to kill more pigeons in the form of the cannon. This rightly evokes Leatherstocking's ire for never before were God's creatures massacred (even by the tribals) as ruthlessly as Richard Jones does now. Natty disapproves of the use of such a "wasty manner" of killing pigeons, though he approves of killing one at a time to satisfy one's hunger. He is like the tribals who do not horde and kill only to satisfy their wants. To kill twenty and eat one, according to him is criminal. Natty's lament against "wasty ways" is timely warning to the American settlers, for this wasteful extravagance later became a social malaise.

Cooper, in pointing out this anticipates Thorstein Veblen's warning against conspicuous consumption, as well as the social criticism of writers like Theodore Dreiser. The wastefulness that accompanied early settlement life is re-enacted in the lake-fishing scene of Chapters XXIII and XXIV, where Natty denounces the large-scale dumping of fish from the lake. Natty uses his own fish spear to kill one, when

hungry and refuses to accept Judge Temple's gift of fish. He even puts Judge Temple to shame, saying that he eats of "no man's wasty ways". Thus, we see in the three scenes that take place in different seasons, the acts of injustice done to nature by the settlers. The wastefulness of this civilization gets expressed even in the ill-planned architecture of Templeton. The abundance of resources and the absence of restrictive laws leads to anarchy in Templeton. Cooper shows later in the novel that when Judge Temple formulates the game laws, ironically, it is Natty who gets caught as the offender. The law that punishes Natty, however, is unable to prevent the misrule of such a constable as Hiram Doolittle. Nor does the law-making body punish Billy Kirby and the villagers who set afire the forest of Mt . Vision.

Destruction on a large – scale of nature's bounty has become a prominent feature of civilization. The plot therefore ends with the hot summer of destruction which ends with a fire. Realizing that the wastefulness of the settlers cannot be restrained by the curbs of law (where curbs of conscience are absent) Natty who has lost his friend Mohegan, moves further west. The unrestrained passions of society find an apt metaphor in the image of the westering frontier, which forces pioneers like Natty beyond the frontier. The hut, as Kay House points out, is the only fixed property of Natty and one may see this rejection of property as the rejection of civilization, which as pointed out earlier, is a process which begins with setting the land.

Natty's disgust for civilization and settlement life expressed in **The Pioneers** is the result of the drama of lust and revenge which is witnessed yet again in **The Deerslayer**. The setting is the Otsego Lake in the 1740s. In this novel which was published later (1841) but shows Natty in his youth (he is in his 20s), his bitterness towards the exploitation of nature, rising individualism and suppression of the rights of other gets more strongly expressed. The novel juxtaposes the romantic and conservationist to the pragmatic and exploitative tendencies of human nature which are embodied in Deerslayer, Hurry Harry and Hutter respectively. The plot of the novel reveals four moral visions of life: that of Natty which touches tangentially the Christian view of life of Hetty ; the exploitative view of life as seen in Hurry and Hutter ,besides the tribal view of life . Cooper, in this novel keeps Deerslayer's character consistent with his former self which is critical of white society . His liberal humanism calls for peaceful coexistence between man and man; and man and nature. Though not ruled by law in the wilderness, Deerslayer is governed by higher laws of conscience. When Hurry Harry tries to enlist his aid to kill the man Judith Hutter may have married while he was away, he refuses saying: "We are thought to be beyond human law ... but there is a law and a law maker that rule across the whole continent. He that flies in the face of either need not call me friend"(**The Deerslayer, 21**).

On the other hand, Hurry Harry's views about men are as callous and unscrupulous as his opinion about killing a man .His attitude is blatantly racist. He advocates an exclusive world view where white is the

supreme colour, followed by black and lastly red. Thus, in his scheme, the Red Indian is the least significant. On the contrary, Deerslayer believes that since God made all three, there can be no difference. Cooper through Harry's prejudice explodes the melting-pot myth of America.

Cooper shows up in this novel the white civilization is more perverted than the Red Indian. The French colonizers pay for English scalps to the Red Indians, while the English Governors pay for Indian scalps. But it must be remembered that if the Indians seek white scalps, it is the French and English Governors (representatives of the two great civilizations) who induce them to it. Deerslayer refuses to dehumanize himself, for though scalping is permitted in the Indian value system it is not for a white society. He has adopted only the better values of white society and of primitive society. He chooses to remain what Balzac termed as the "moral hermaphrodite" (cited in James Grossman, 147). Though his skill has earned him the name of Deerslayer, he is not a "slaughterer". The rifle sounds to him like the "voice of nature calling out again' a wasteful and unthinking action" (**The Deerslayer , 48**). His worldview remains pantheistic throughout the two novels. This pantheism comes closer to the principles of "animism and natural piety" that Michael Bell points out as the important features of primitive life.

Deerslayer refuses to settle down with Judith among the settlements for he has seen the vices of settlements. As he points out, "forts and churches almost go together and yet they are downright contradictions" (**The Deerslayer , 255**). Civilization is progressive but it always carries destruction in its wake. He alone remains untainted and he kills his first victim only when he is attacked treacherously in Chapter VII. He remains a pacifist, unlike his white counterparts. He realizes his error when he kills the water eagle just for sport. He takes his conservationist pledge that since "life is sweet even to the beasts of the woods ..." he will try not to kill unnecessarily (**The Deerslayer, 432**). It is the power that corrupts men and the power of the European civilization over the Red Indians makes it cruel. Colonization offers the "children of the setting sun" (as Rivenoak calls the tribes) and Natty as a sacrifice at the altar of civilization (**The Deerslayer , 457**).

The primitive or pre-civilized way of life may be anti-progress but Cooper commends it more emphatically in these two novels in order to draw attention to the breakdown of moral values in a civilized society. Critics such as Marius Bewley commend Billy Kirby and Hurry Harry as the exponents of the commercial expediency of America. However, Cooper questions the predatory and wasteful nature of civilization. The ideal man is represented by Natty and remains an exception. He represents the better values of both white and Red Indian cultures civilized and pre-civilized society. In **The Pioneers**, he prefers the life of the solitary savage man. The epigraph of the opening chapter of **The Deerslayer** from **Childe Harold** sums

up Natty's attitude to civilization: "There is society where none intrudes /By the deep sea, and music in its roar /I love not man the less, but nature more ... (**The Deerslayer, 9**).

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**Retelling Mythologies for Popular Fiction:
A Study of the Works of Amish Tripathi**

Ayushi Zina

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Abstract: In recent times there has been an increasing interest in mythical tales. Modern-day writers have been retelling mythologies to cater to the need of the present readers. The youth wish to read mythological tales to feel connected to their roots and culture. Writers like Amish Tripathi have understood the pulse of the reading audiences and brought a shift in the narrative of mythical tales. Popular fiction refers to tales which draw the masses and connects to their dreams and aspirations. Mythology in Popular fiction is a new genre that is excelling. Tripathi with his *Shiva Trilogy* and *Ram Chandra Series* has taken up mythological characters and transformed them into humane ones without tarnishing their grandeur. He weaves his stories with a blend of fantasy, logic and myth. The present paper aims at analysing mythologies as a part of Popular fiction.

Keywords: Mythology, Popular Fiction, Amish Tripathi, Shiva Trilogy, Ram Chandra Series, Genre Fiction.

In the past few decades, the interest in writing Mythologies has increased significantly. It has happened to cater to the interests of the modern-day readers. This new found interest in Myth is because of the blend of popular trends with the stories of the past. If one looks at the term Myth, it refers to an untrue story, away from reality. M.H. Abrams defines Myth as,

Myth is one story in mythology- a system of hereditary stories which were once believed to be true by a particular cultural group, and which served to explain (in terms of the intentions and actions of deities and other supernatural beings) why the world is as it is and things happen as they do, to provide a rationale for social customs and observances and to establish the sanctions for the rules by which people conduct their lives. (Abrams:170)

So, it is understandable that ‘myth’ is a tale created by an ancient sage to present the nature of life and the rule of existence. The word ‘myth’ has been taken from the classical Greek word ‘Mythos’ which signifies any plot, whether true or false. Over the years the writing of mythological tales has gained momentum. With the emergence of young writers in India, a shift in the subject matter of novel writing was found. They took up the task of retelling mythological tales keeping in mind the context they were writing in.

Mythological studies have always intrigued readers because they wish to know about their present existence in relation to the ancient past. But the past stories had to be put in the garb of a new fashion in order to arouse the interest of the readers. They also strove to break the glass walls of elitism which were found in the works of Arundhati Roy, Salman Rushdie, and Amitav Ghosh, among others. They wrote for the Indian market of readers who had their own dreams, hopes and aspirations to trace their roots to famous epics like The Ramayana and The Mahabharata.

Another aspect of this newfound interest is that, in the fast-changing world where most families have become nuclear families, there is a lack of storytelling by the grandmothers. When these children become adults, they look for works which could remind them of the stories their grandmothers would tell them when they were small. Instead of looking towards the West to satiate their thirst for novels, they revel in the glory of the ancient tales. If the tales would not be given a modern twist, they might have lost interest. So, writers like Amish Tripathi and Ashwin Sanghi have blended mythology with fantasy. Amish Tripathi has demystified the 'godly' characters and made them humanly. In the 'Shiva Trilogy' he has depicted Shiva as a human being, who rises to the stature of being a God by the strength of his character. What attracts the readers the most, is his logical explanation behind everything that happens in his life. As logical adults, people often found it difficult to blindly believe the mythological events in a story. By explaining why Shiva had to rise, what was his purpose in life and how ultimately the world recognized him as a God, Tripathi appeals to the rationale of the modern-day readers. He does not believe in making the characters saintly. He crafts them in a way that they have their own flaws.

Amish Tripathi is an Indian author who was born on 18th October 1974 in Mumbai Maharashtra, India. He is widely acclaimed for his book series '*The Shiva Trilogy* and '*The Ram Chandra Series*'. "The Shiva Trilogy was the fastest-selling book series in Indian publishing history, followed by the Ram Chandra Series which was the second fastest selling book series in Indian publishing history".

He shows a deep reverence for the ancient scriptures and it is evident from his works. He humanizes the godly characters and imparts philosophies of life through his stories. In the first book of the Shiva Trilogy- '*The Immortals of Meluha*' he presents a detailed description of the rise of Shiva and his quest to find evil. He paints a picturesque view of Mount Kailash and their journey towards the kingdom of Meluha. He puts forth his views on the two ways of life- the masculine; the Suryavanshi way of life and the feminine; the Chandravanshi way of life. The king of the Meluhans- King Daksha asks Shiva to save them from the Chandravanshis. After waging the war against them, he realizes they were not really evil. In the next two books - '*The Secret of the Nagas*' and '*The Oath of the Vayuputras*' we see his expedition across India and his struggle to root out evil, that is, the preparation of *Somras*. In the book, we can find eco-critical

concerns as well. He explains how, when humans exploit the world of nature, they are the ones who ultimately suffer the wrath of the supreme power of Nature. What interests modern-day readers is the systematic interpretation of the intentions of their mythological gods. He beautifully depicts the love story of Shiva and Sati and how they respected one another. In the Ram Chandra Series, he has created three different narratives for the same incident- the kidnapping of Sita. The three novels work as a bildungsroman for the lives of Ram, Sita and Raavan respectively. When we read the epic 'Ramayana' we are told the story from the side of an omniscient narrator who glorifies Ram as a living god and Sita as the mother and portrays Raavan as the villain. Tripathi aims at presenting the story from the perspectives of these three main characters so that the readers can form their own opinions. It is an artistic brilliance which he achieves by creating links between the incidents of all three tales.

The use of the features of the Popular genre has brought a great change in the perception of mythological works. Amish Tripathi, in his works, has undergone an in-depth study of the ancient texts and then used his imaginative prowess to create extraordinary tales by the blend of fiction, facts and mythology. Mythological studies have emerged as a vital study in the contemporary era through their use in popular fiction. Its pertinence and relevance to a better understanding of the minds of modern-day readers cannot be ignored. Mythology has always remained embedded in our culture. Modern writers are bringing mythology out of temples and closed spaces into a free space of creativity and discussion. *The Shiva Trilogy* which acquired Tripathi a great fan following is written based on a thorough study of all the mythological tales concerning Lord Shiva. He is an ardent follower of Lord Shiva himself.

What if Lord Shiva was not a figment of a rich imagination, but a person of flesh and blood? Like you and me. A man who rose to become godlike because of his karma. That is the premise of the Shiva Trilogy, which interprets the rich mythological heritage of ancient India, blending fiction with historical fact. (Meluha:xv)

Tripathi begins the Shiva Trilogy with these words. He endeavours to bring out the rich heritage of mythology of India and portray it with historical facts. He even takes up famous Sanskrit sayings and presents an explanation for the common readers' understanding, for example, he explains the oft quoted chant '*Har har Mahadev*'. He beautifully explains how Lord Shiva had used this line for the first time to ignite his followers by saying '*Har har Mahadev*' which means "*Har Ek Hai Mahadev*... "The Meluhans roared. All of us are Mahadevs!"

"The primary aim behind the writing of popular literature is to reach a large number of people and find favour with them." It can be understood that the term 'Popular Fiction' consists of two different terms

‘Popular’ means anything aimed at ordinary people as opposed to specialists and ‘fiction’ refers to a literary type of writing using imaginative writing instead of real facts. Now there is a need to understand what ‘Popular Fiction’ actually means. It is also referred to as Genre fiction. It includes any form of writing which is based on the imaginative prowess of the writer and is written to appeal to the common masses. Elitism comes from the term ‘Elite’ which means a special group or social class of people who have a superior intellectual status. Thus, Elitist fiction is written keeping a specific audience in mind. The use of vocabulary is also such that only people with high intellect can understand them. The background or setting is of a certain kind, not easily accessible to the common people. On the contrary, Popular fiction aims at reaching a higher reader base by using topics or subject matter close to them. The writers of popular fiction do not wish to write only for a select group of people. They try to catch the pulse of the readers and create stories which resonate with them. In the recent times, there has been a rise in readership for tales which bring out the beauty of our rich cultural heritage. People are turning towards the ancient texts to reclaim their identity. The obsession for the ‘Eurocentric’ view has lessened. The youth is not blindly trying to copy the West. Instead, they are reading works of the past to feel more empowered with their own identity. Amish Tripathi has correctly analysed the need of the hour and taken up ‘Popular’ subject matters in his writings.

‘Amish Tripathi’s Shiva Trilogy is based on the reconstruction of several mythical characters and stories drawn from The Ramayana, The Mahabharata, and Shivpuran. The philosophical arguments presented or hinted at by him often echo the classical Sanskrit texts of the Vedas, the Upanishads and the philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism.’

This work falls under the category of ‘epic fantasy which is the sub-genre of popular fantasy fiction. The main characteristic features of this type of writing include a story which is the length of a novel and stretches into series and spans over a period of years and creates an imaginary world with the historical and topographical significance of its own kind to denote the geographical cover-up to the readers. These elements are found in the Shiva Trilogy. The story is in the form of a novel with three books belonging to the series- *The Immortals of Meluha*, *The Secrets of the Nagas* and *The Oath of the Vayuputras*. Together these books form the *Shiva Trilogy*. The novels span over a period of years and contain all the major incidents in the life of the mythological god Shiva. The story also brings out other mythical gods like Sati, Ganesh and Kartikeya. There are incidents where Shiva falls in love with Sati, how they eventually get married, and Ganesh comes into the picture. In Hindu Mythology Lord Ganesh has been depicted having a

human body with an elephant's face. In order to keep up the mythical description, he presents Ganesh as a Naga. He describes Nagas as people born with deformities.

‘The Naga's forehead was ridiculously broad, his eyes placed on the side, almost facing different directions. His nose was abnormally long, stretching out like the trunk of an elephant. Two buck teeth struck out of the mouth, one of them broken’

This is how he describes Ganesh keeping the resemblance true to the mythical image of Lord Ganesh. Thus, we can find numerous mythological elements in his story.

In the Ram Chandra Series, his storyline revolves around the three main characters from the original ‘Ramayana’ but he changes the narrative and shows the growing up of Ram, Sita and Raavan in the three books respectively. He has depicted the world where Ram grew up and what shaped his ideologies. He presents Ram as a human character who valued truth and justice above everything else. His bond with his three brothers has been depicted. To make the tale a part of Popular fiction he has shown the lives of King Dashratha and how he behaved with his three wives. He shows that King Dashratha was not very fond of Ram at the time of his birth, as he considered him to be the reason for his first major defeat. Eventually, Ram rises in rank by his own good character and his sense of duty. As the story continues, we see that he meets Sita and is won over by her skills at stick fighting and her righteous sense of justice for the weak. Tripathi weaves the story by introducing many incidents which the common readers might not have heard before. He makes the characters behave like human beings instead of some flawless, out-of-the-world godly figures. In the second book *Sita Warrior of Mithila* we get a glimpse of the growing up years of Sita. The intrigue surrounding Sita's birth is presented and we are told that she was the daughter of the earth goddess and had a great affinity for the world of nature as she had been found in the wilderness. She comes across as a fierce warrior who was courageous and knew how to make the most of any given situation. He has shown how love and mutual respect sprung between Ram and Sita. Keeping in the tradition which popular fiction, he weaves a love story which readers find endearing. She had her own share of complaints against Ram, like any other wife would have. Sita also had her flaws which eventually would lead to her abduction by Raavan. While weaving this human story, Tripathi also presents philosophies of life. He brings out the legend of Vishnu and Mahadev in his books. According to the legend, Vishnu is a male character, a reincarnation of God. In the second book of the Ram Chandra series, we see that after observing the intellectual genius and warfare prowess of Sita, ‘Vishwamitra chooses her as the next Vishnu and the title of Vishnuhood is conferred upon her’. This makes us interpret the books also from a feminist perspective. Popular fiction often encompasses different theories of studies- like gender studies, masculinity and feminism. We can read these works from the lens of the aforementioned theories. Apart from Sita we see many other women characters of importance. Sita was the adopted child of King Janak and Queen Sunaina. Sunaina had been endowed with pragmatic excellence and fighting

spirit. “But the new queen Sunaina who had married Janak two years earlier was not of the ideal sort. She planned to restore Mithila to its old glory. Janak was spending more and more time lost in the world of philosophy (Mithila: 21).” This line highlights the general belief that women were not expected to have the acumen to run a kingdom. They were supposed to be silent observers and look after the needs of their husbands and children. It was Sunaina, who was efficient enough to run Mithila. Janak was too engrossed in philosophy to be a good ruler. Sunaina took control of the running of the kingdom but it was Janak who was the king and the ruler in the eyes of the public. Sunaina also trained her daughter to be efficient to look after the citizens of her land. She made her the Prime Minister and Sita worked wonders for the people of Mithila. She in turn had a confidant who helped her in every work- Samichi. She was again an intriguing character who was too ferocious and rough and was quite opposite to the accepted ‘feminine’ traits.

In the third book of the Ram Chandra Series; ‘*Raavan-Enemy of Aryavarta*’ the story is told from Raavan’s perspective. He has been presented as a misguided genius. He had been wronged by the people around him. His description is quite different from what we have seen in the mythological tale. He was a kind man who had turned into a villain because of the circumstances. He had the power to rise as a saviour but the odds were always against him. Tripathi has the craftsmanship of developing a character with such finesse that the readers find it hard to assess them. There are so many incidents that evoke such strong emotions in the readers, that they are hooked to the next chapter. There is a character named Vedavati in the story who intrigues us. She is portrayed as a goddess throughout the story though she does not possess any supernatural attributes. Tripathi shows that she had the power to turn a hardcore criminal like Raavan into a good man. The emotional depth of these two characters imparts a magical touch to this book.

“Popular culture is the set of practices, artefacts and beliefs shared by the masses, and is constituted by the everyday life of the masses: the food habits, fashion, forms of transport, the music, the reading habits, the spaces they occupy and traverse.” (Nayar: 6) Thus we can see that Tripathi has studied the reading habits of the masses and captured their essence in his writings. The masses are drawn toward mythologies in the present times, but they wish to find some logical explanation behind the mystical incidents. Tripathi demystifies the mythological incidents and makes them a part of popular culture.

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Regionalism in Literature: Selected Novels of Thomas Hardy

R.Velu

Email: velu@drbccchinducollege.edu.in

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Abstract: This paper presents regionalism in the Literature of Thomas Hardy's novels: *Return of the native*, *Far from Madding Crowd*, and *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. His novels are called the Wessex Novels are celebrated ones. These novels have been considered regional novelists. He has imparted global interest to a particular region. His greatest strength as a Novelist lies in his unique depiction of Wessex... he touched full-length pastoral of the sheep country, *Far from the Madding Crowd*, and reached the height of his power in *The Return of the Native* and *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*.

Keywords: Regionalism, Wessex.

Introduction:

In literature, regionalism refers to fiction that focuses on specific features, such as dialect, customs, history, and landscape, of a particular region. The setting is particularly important in regional literature and the locale is likely to be rural. D.H. Lawrence is also one of the regional novelists in England. He popularized the landscape by beautifully depicting the nature and environment of the particular land and the people, highlighting the conflict between man and nature. The physical features – hills and dales, rivers, pastures, meadows, and woodland are dominant in his novels.

His remarkable achievement had been in the settings and ways of life that had impressed his childish imagination, at his father's cottage in a picturesque hamlet in Dorset. In all his novels, the scenes and characters are taken from the region. His art is mainly built as a result of his deep and sympathetic understanding of the short and simple of the poor people-Shepherds and shepherdesses. His greatest strength is the presentation of people and their customs dwelling in the region he selected. He used the Wessex dialect.

Features of the Regional Novel:

- The regional novel is a genre of fiction that is set in a perceptible region
- It illustrates the features of life, social relations, customs, language, the culture of that area and its people
- Fiction creates the sense of geography, landscape or topography is also covered by the region.
- Regional culture illustrates an aspect of life in general or the effects of the environment on the people living in it.

Thomas Hardy's Wessex:

Thomas Hardy's Wessex was first mentioned in 'Far From Madding Crowd', describing the "partly real, partly dream -country" that unifies his novels of southwest England. *Far from Madding Crowd* offers in ample measure and details of English rural life that Hardy so relished

Regionalism in 'Return of the native':

'Return of the Native' by Hardy is a controversial theme. It is the most popular novel which is formally conventional; thematically it thrives on doubt and ambiguity. With its extensive narrative description, abundant classical and scriptural references and stylized dialogue, the book adheres closely to the high Victorian style. This novel is set in vast sparsely populated land in rural England called Edgemoor Heath. Rolling hills, the quiet grassland and small but valuable shrubs, the furze bush...empty except for isolated cottages, little hamlets and people struggling to survive the harsh conditions in the valley's meagre farms and their loneliness.

The native coming back is Mr.Clement yet bright, a local legend...a strange move leaving glamorous Paris, involved in the lucrative diamond business there to return home. Eustacia Vye, a beautiful woman who roams the hills in the dark of night.

Regionalism in 'Far from Madding Crowd':

He proposed to avoid the modernized life of a city, modernized government, crowds and industry. He tries to fashion a portrait of what he saw as an endangered way of life and to create awareness for future generations. Independent and spirited Bathsheba Everdene has come to Weatherbury to take up her position as a farmer on the largest estate in the area. Hardy's novels are swift passion and slow courtship. He described of rural life and landscape. The Novel's hero, Gabriel Oak is a farmer, shepherd, marked by his humble and honest ways.

' Regionalism in 'Tess of the d'Urbervilles'

In this novel, he tells about the attributes, personal emotions, and therefore the means of man's existence. It tells the story of a country girl whose parents discover that they are related to a noble family.

Tess eventually finds work as a dairymaid in a peaceful and rural setting but continues to be haunted by her past. He tells about the details of their professions, skills and the hardships of their lives. Also, he explains the dignity of their souls, their persistence and their geographic area works. We tend to get the temple of Stonehenge that the traditional had engineered to placate of ancient geographic area families like

that of the D'Urbervilles, currently in ruins and inaccessible, but still important landmarks in Hardy's landscapes

Conclusion:

The basic theme of his novels is the place of man in this universe and his predicament. He revealed the beauty and charm of Wessex to the reader's eye and immortalized it. It must not be supposed that he inhabited a region with which no one could compare in beauty, or that such spots exist nowhere else. The physical feature like hills and dales, rivers, pastures and meadows, woodlands and health appear and reappear in all his works. This imparts to his works a kind of scenic continuity and a touch of realism difficult to match in any fiction. Every event in his novels takes place within this locality. It is seldom that he stays out of it. It is for this reason that he is referred to as a regional writer.

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The Complexity of Human Motivation and Action: A Reader-Response Approach to Characterization in Ted Elemeforo's Fountain of Betrayal
Wisdom C. NWOGA

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Abstract: According to critic Wilbur Scott, “art is not created in a vacuum.” It is invariably, the work not simply of a person, but of an author fixed in time and space, answering to a community of which he is an important part. The literary artist is informed by what happens in his environment. In achieving this, he recreates fictional characters that reflect the realities of society. In this regard, the study of literature does not only keep us abreast with the realities of our immediate environment, but it also gives us a deeper understanding of human nature; its motives and action. What drives individuals differs. This is one of the many thematic concerns being explored through the lenses of Elemeforo's characterization. Literature is ingrained in one form or another as a mirror of the ways of humanity and through absorbing it, one obtains a better understanding of human behaviour. This paper, therefore, attempts a reader-response approach to the issues of complexity of human motivation and action in Ted Elemeforo's novel, *Fountain of Betrayal*. It advocates a deeper understanding of people's experiences, culture, events and circumstances around them as these could trigger the way they act at a given time.

Keywords: *Action, Betrayal, Characterization, Motivation, Nigerian Novel*

Introduction

If we must fulfil our mandate of evolving a literary education that resolves the complexities of human motivation and action, what we teach and how we teach must be emphasized. Our students must know what constitutes the literary text as a produced object of art (Udumukwu 8).

Throughout human history, literature has been an important aspect of human culture. It has traditionally been used to describe how people interact with one another. In addition, it helps us to gain an understanding of human nature. Literary works do not just reflect their context and paradigms but they

explore facets of human lives that can resonate over time and stay relevant and accessible to the readers, despite their settings and ideologies.

William Shakespeare's plays and Chinua Achebe's novels for instance are brilliant examples of literary works that are not just entertaining for the sake of entertainment, but also provide valuable insight into human character and motivation. Literature is ingrained in one form or another as a mirror of the ways of humanity and through absorbing it, one obtains a better understanding of human behaviour.

Human nature is complex and as such, one needs a deeper understanding of them. The literary artist is burdened with the responsibility of recreating this human nature to inform and instruct society. A characterization is an important tool in this respect. As a literary device, it is used step by step in literature (specifically prose narrative), to highlight and explain the details about a character in a story and serves as a veritable instrument in writing good literature. Modern fiction has taken great advantage of this literary device. Understanding the role of characterization in storytelling is very important for any writer. To put it briefly, it helps us make sense of the behaviour of any character in a story by helping us understand their thought processes. Good use of characterization always leads the readers or audience to relate better to the events taking place in the story. Dialogues play a very important role in developing a character because they give us an opportunity to deeply examine the motivation and actions of the characters. According to M.H Abrams and Geoffrey Galt Harpham in *A Glossary of Literary Terms*,

Characters are the persons represented in a dramatic or narrative work, who is interpreted by the reader as possessing particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities by inferences from what the person says and their distinctive ways of saying it - the dialogue- and from what they do - the action. The grounds in the Characters' temperament, desires, and moral nature for their speech and actions are called their motivation (46).

As Abrams and Harpham rightly observe, close attention should be given to the understanding of a character's temperament, desires, and the moral nature of their speech and actions because these are resultant implications of their motivation. Accordingly, it is one of the reasons we study literature; "to gain an understanding of the complexities of human motivation and action" (Udumukwu 38). He argues that

men and women are driven by their motives which eventually manifest themselves in their actions. More often than not, these motives that underlie actions are not made apparent. By interpreting the connection between words, character and their actions, patterns of imagery and symbols we can tease out meaning of these motives (38).

Ted Elemeoro's novel, explores the complexities of human motivation and action by reflecting on issues that bothers society. Human beings do not act in a vacuum. Motive drives their actions. Against this

backdrop, therefore, we shall be analyzing *Fountain of Betray* through the lens of Elemeforo's characterizations while reflecting on the thematic concerns.

Theoretical Framework

This paper will be anchored on the reader-response theory of literary criticism. The theory focuses on the reader of a text and the experience of reading such a literary piece. This is however in contrast to some theories that centre on the author or form of the literary text. M.H Abrams and Geoffrey Galt Harpham in *A Glossary of Literary Terms* opine that "Reader-response critics turn from the traditional conception that a text embodies an achieved set of meanings, and focus instead on the ongoing mental operations and responses of the readers as their eyes follow a text on the page before them" (330). This school of thought agrees that to a reasonable extent, the meanings of a text are the 'production' or 'creation' of the individual reader, hence that there is no one correct meaning for all readers either in linguistic parts or of the artistic whole of a given text (330). In this regard, Ann Charters and Samuel Charters further assert that

...reading is as much as creative act as writing of a text, because both involves the play of imagination and intelligence. Some reader-response critics even go so far as to say that a literary text has no existence outside of a reader's mind. Recognizing that different readers can find different meanings in work of literature. Reader-response critics also emphasize the fact that the same reader can, at different periods of his or her life, find the experience of reading a book changes with maturity (1614).

An Overview of Ted Elemeforo's *Fountain Of Betrayal*

Fountain of Betrayal is a fiction made up of twenty-nine complex chapters. The novel reflects on the everyday realities and beams light on the understanding of human motives. It has some of its literary materials from historical experience and everyday life of the Niger Delta people of Nigeria while holding a mirror to the immediate surroundings, and creating characters from the situations that we are conversant with.

The fiction revolves around the character, Amatu, a quixotic young man who is all too conscious of his personal inadequacies. He suffers rejection from Bodiere, the love of his life, and finds distraction in the historic Kaiama Declaration of December 1999 which snowballed into the destruction of Odi. His option for violence as a means of securing self-respect lands him in jail. Despite having to save Bodiere's life on her sick bed, he still suffers another rejection from her when she learns of his illness. She left him for another man during his time in jail. His later marriage with Ovie seems to bear both good and evil.

It is important to react to Nengi Josef Ilagha's review where he notes that, "...there are several other sub-plots in the novel with interesting vignettes which recall our everyday existence...Elemeforo shows great dexterity in managing all these various plots, and still keeps the story on track" (n.p). On the

contrary, “there are several other sub-plots in the novel” that seems to distort the flow of the main plot. Elemeforo has so many literary resources at his disposal that he seems to have been ‘struggling’ with where to place such materials. This could account for some of the distortions in the flow of events in the novel. The development of a plot ought to be animated by the actions of the chief character since he is the one who gives identity to the plot by sustaining the readers’ elementary interest. Elemeforo’s plot somewhat deviates from R.S Crane’s position of plot as the “temporal synthesis effected by the writer of the elements of action, character, and thought that constitute the matter of his invention” (Crane 141). Nevertheless, the author manages to ‘end’ the story.

Ilagha observation that Yenagoa is virtually recreated in a microcosm in the novel is valid. To him, it is as if a movie maker has gone around town with a camera, taken shots of everyday life, and sat down to transpose his images in crystal print. He believes that Bayelsa is practically called awake in the pages of the novel to remember the events of bygone days, the resolutions of past governments, and the deep-seated aspirations of the Izon nation and the Niger Delta people at large.

The invasion of Odi by forces of the federal government of Nigeria and the pointless massacre of its people and their property is one of the many setbacks to the government and people of Bayelsa State. It came with psychological trauma to the state which has been immense and disturbing. It is yet to heal completely. This constitutes the core preoccupation of Elemeforo’s novel. It spells out the most desperate moments of that despoliation.

In the days after the event, the state government committed huge funds to rehabilitate Odi and sustain the hope of the people for a better future. This novel comes as a timely reminder to the Federal Government and lovers of freedom around the world that it is not enough to apologize to the community for the wanton decimation of its sons and daughters. The Federal Government owes itself a duty to rebuild Odi and pay adequate compensation to the innocent victims of that unwarranted military affront.

The novelist is daring and engages competently the subject of Odi on the grand scale of fiction for our individual and corporate instruction. Ultimately, he is telling us that the people of Odi will enjoy full respite only when their passionate call for redress evoke a deserving response.

Fountain of Betrayal x-rays the imbalances in our nation; the cankerworm that has eaten deep into the social-political fabric which have caused us to diminish in the eyes of the world. It underscores the errors of governance, the hypocrisy of politicians, and the sheer lack of patriotism that has been at the heart of our corporate decline as a nation. One is therefore not taken aback by attempts to undertake a study of Nigeria as a prime example of a failed state in Africa by some western countries. This is as the author puts it that “our leaders have not given the citizenry a cause to minimize the lure of whiteness” (240). Practically, we always like to see them as a superior race with superior somatic and mental capacities. In fact, we think, even though it seems we say otherwise, that they are better than we are in all ramifications.

We force ourselves to be like the whites thereby “eroding significant moral values and cultural components that give our civilization identity and character” (240).

The novelist, therefore, has exceptionally transformed what may have been seen as a part of our historical waste to literary material. Thus, Ilagha asserts that,

He has demonstrated what it means to amass the raw material around you and apply it as useful grist in the unfolding story of your immediate community and the nation at large. To read Elemeforo’s novel is to watch the Odi massacre in slow motion, and to come to a better understanding of the various sub-plots that led to the event. (n.p)

The unfolding incidents in the novel also gives us an opportunity to peep into the lives of those who suffered the resultant effects of being displaced. More than anything else, the novel stresses the resilience of the human spirit in the face of distress. His characters are picked from the streets of Yenagoa, the incidents he projects are home made, but the moral lesson they teach remain universal, namely that peace is a staple condition for any human being to excel in life. Although themes of love, hope, greed abound in the novel as they form the backdrop of the depths of Amatu's struggle. These thematic concerns reflect how flaws in the values of society descend into corruption. Through an exploration of the characterization, we shall therefore evaluate the values that shape human nature in this paper.

Betrayal: A Reader-Response Approach to Elemeforo's Characterizations

One of the major thematic preoccupations of Ted Elemeforo's novel is that of betrayal. The author, through his characterizations, explores the issue. Elemeforo through the character of the executive governor brings to fore the never-ending post-independence disillusionment in Nigeria and Africa at large. He exposes their antics and subtleness in an attempt to amass wealth from oil exploration and exploitation in the Niger Delta. Symbolically, the ex-servicemen represent the disillusioned masses whose hopes have been dashed to the wall of empty promises. Sadly, when a man is pushed to such a wall, he becomes helpless and easily gets persuaded to betray the trust of his fellow ‘people’ specially when he is being promised a plate of special crumbs. This is the situation we find Papawey who was previously vocal against the injustice being served to them by the governor. He is soon cajoled by the governor and he betrays his people.

Papawey is also presented as not having a strong grip over his household. There is an obvious air of a failed father. Bodiere, her daughter seems to have been “maning” the affairs of the family. As a revelation, she says to their mother, “just a week ago, I gave you three thousand naira for fish because we have some foodstuffs and ingredients. Now you’re telling me you have nothing left to cook today. And to make the situation worse, you are supporting your son for squandering the money I gave him” (25).

Bodiere does not just provide food for the family, she also pays the fees of her siblings; parental responsibilities that Papawey ought to shoulder. Although Papa doesn’t have a steady source of income as

he often relies on his unpaid pension as an ex-serviceman. Could the situation he finds himself be responsible for his actions? First, he never questioned Bodiere's source of income even when he knows that it is through dubious means. Papawey's 'shut mouth' and 'blind eyes' to Bodiere's sources of wealth is not far from his inability to meet the needs of the household which obviously, Bodiere was sorting; circumstances has held him down. If he complains or irons that issue out with Bodiere's, who will fend for the family?

As Elemeforo observes,

It took him [Papawey] some time to warm up to the fact that his daughter's opinion mattered in major family decisions, especially when she started defraying some important 'welfare' bills. He had to admit at times that he could not have behaved better than his wife if he found himself in her shoes. Bodiere is responsible and different, he thought (85).

Even when one considers his unpaid pension, there is a sense of deceit in his dealings as it has turned fortunate bait for him to beg money from his wife. One is therefore not surprised when he decides to murder justice for a crumb from the governor's table; taking bribes and perverting justice. Human's inability to meet social and economic needs has proven to be a drive for their actions.

Bodiere and the Other Side of Love

There is always a side of love that births bitterness along the line of a sweet love story. Bodiere, Amatu's first lover is another character in the novel whose impact is worth dissecting. There is no doubt that Bodiere has a 'soft love spot' for Amatu or so the reader perceived. But because of the complexity of human nature and their insatiable needs, Bodiere chickened out of the relationship to date Chief Bogos. Although not without some pressure from her parents and friend Ovie. However, the manner in which she went about calling the relationship a quit, makes one wonder if she truly 'loved' Amatu.

I'm really fed up with you. Don't you come to my house again, do you hear? Don't even step an inch close, you shameless local champion. Are you not satisfied after practically preventing me from having meaningful relationships? I know where I could have been if you hadn't showed up with your bad luck... With her index finger jutting out her folder fist, pointing at him, forcefully rocking back and forth, she said 'I'm warning you. Stay away from me. If I ever see you five metres close, I will give you an acid bath. Do you hear me? Acid bath is what you we get for coming close to me. Nonsense! (20-21).

Despite the humiliation and once again the betrayal of the love which both claimed to have for each other, Amatu never stopped loving her even after she abandons him for Chief Bogos. Unfortunately, Chief Bogos abandons Bodiere on the sick bed when Nine hundred thousand naira was requested for Bodiere's treatment. Indeed, she was dying. Amatu willingly steps into the situation despite having been laid off at the oil rig where he worked. He told Papawey, Bodiere's father that "when his payoff comes, he would see

what he could do to help defray part of the medical bill" (145). As the author observes, "he did not imagine getting paid with anything close to the amount required to restore Bodiere's health" (145).

When Amatu was compensated after his ordeal with Sampou and his gang at the Apama forest, he sent a million naira for Bodiere's treatment. " It was in fact the first thing he did when his account was credited with five million naira" (219). Their love eventually rekindled. Amatu was her saviour. In this context, one would have expected an unending devotion beyond words through thick and thorns. Bodiere betrays such a good gesture when Amatu was in prison. Although as Ovie reveals in her conversation with Amatu that;

(Bodiere) visited twice with the intention of meeting you. But like you, she chickened out at the last minute. I guess she couldn't bear seeing you the way you were.... Finally, when she heard of your terminal disease, she could no longer withstand the pressure from friends and so caved in. She couldn't muster the stamina required to weather Captain Tuomo's daily pressure (316-317).

There seems to be an unbelievable turn of events here. Bodiere who Amatu sacrificed his time and money for to save her life on her dying bed was the one who couldn't stay when she heard of Amatu's sickness. Before Amatu got back to his feet, Bodiere has already done the introduction to her marriage with a newfound lover.

At Yenegoa, Amatu's "eyes caught the face of the bride and his heartbeat stopped. It was Bodiere no doubt...he cast Ovie a hurtful look. His eyes were full of unuttered questions. He stood there staring at her like a corpse, unable to talk or move a muscle" (315). A trying moment it was for Amatu, he couldn't bear the stench of the betrayal. Bodiere murdered his love and trust. His feet failed him as he almost collapse but Ovie holds him from falling.

Ovie and the Unspoken Things

One other interesting character in *Fountain of Betrayal* which is relevant to the analysis is Ovie. From a reader-response approach, Ovie's act of betrayal remains the final blow on Amatu's life; his later wife whom he felt would finally resurrect the hope of life in him.

There's an interesting turn of event worth observing in the novel. Ovie who is Bodiere's closest female friend at the beginning of the novel had expressed her derision towards Bodiere's relationship with Amatu whom she then described as a struggling "Chewing gum boy". She succinctly asks her to ditch him for Chief Bogos. In her words,

We all know that Amatu's best offer is occasional treatment to bouts of cold beer and fresh fish pepper-soup. Nothing more. Moreover if they said leave him because Chief Bogos is close to knowing your little secret, for me, it is not a death sentence. For God's sake they are only concerned about your future. If you ask me I will say Amatu should take a jump into the lagoon for all I care. Haven't you had enough of this chewing-gum boys that fly with you in their Lovecraft but have no

place to berth so end up plummeting with you into the lagoon? Is that what you want? Is that how you want to end up with Amatu? What happened to your big dreams? (Elemeforo 12).

The same Ovie later plays the good girl who helps Amatu during his stay at the prison. She later becomes Amatu's wife. No doubt, she had an eye on Amatu all this while. One would wonder why Ovie never brought Bodiere to see Amatu in the prison despite Bodiere visiting twice. Perhaps Ovie was nursing the intention of making Amatu hers as we finally see at the later end of the novel. Amatu probes;

You could have at least brought her to me" His (Amatu's) voice sounded strange even in his ears as he released the words that had been on his lips since yesterday."If she (Bodiere) had known that I was alive, I am sure she wouldn't have made this hasty decision. She could have waited.

Ovie places her response thus:

And you why didn't you request to see her? Maybe you shouldn't have chickened out. And by the way who told you she wasn't aware of your incarceration at kuje? She visited twice with the intention of meeting you. But like you, she chickened out at the last minute. I guess she couldn't bear seeing you the way you were. Remember, you were a flattering sight to behold and you were also ashamed of yourself. I know how frustrated she was, walking past your cell in disguise, seeing your pains and helplessness and unable to do something. Finally, when she heard of your terminal disease she could no longer withstand the pressure from friends and close ones and so carved in (316-317)

Ovie's explanation from the above excerpt is a mere defensive mechanism. Come to look at it, she couldn't bring Bodiere to see Amatu in the prison yet she eagerly made arrangements for them to travel down to faraway Yenegoa to see Bodiere after Amatu recovers from the hospital. Interestingly, Bodiere was getting married that same day. Amatu's heart was broken. All these set the pace of his forced or perhaps manipulated chemistry with Ovie which eventually lead to their marriage. It seems to be a well-planned strategy by Ovie such that one is not surprised when she says, "my annual leave begins next month maybe you should leave the world behind, after your release, and accompany me to have a fresh breath at Obudu Resorts for a week or two. It could help heal your wound. Only if you want to." she added quickly (318).

As one would expect, Amatu's mind drifted for a while to a space of thoughts.

She would be fun to be with, he told himself but doubted the genuineness of the booting chemistry. It seemed forced, or at best, manipulated. Was she merely trying to help him forget his grief? Is she in love with him or mistaking sympathy for love? If the former turned out to be true could she have done something to bring Bodiere and him together, yet refused? On the other hand, couldn't she have orchestrated their separation in order to make him hers? That can't be possible he thought (318).

With the later development in the plot, one would conclude that the union was not built on solid genuineness of love. Maybe on Amatu's side, he needed an escapist approach to handle his life's situation since Bodiere had already betrayed his love for her.

The climax of Ovie's betrayal comes when she was caught by Amatu, making out with her boss at the office. She never expected that Amatu would storm the office at that hour neither did she think a visitor could barge in abruptly knowing that the officers in the outer office would neither come in nor let anyone in. She didn't reckon that in a moment of the sergeant's lapse of attention a visitor in a desperate hurry could go past him and open her door before her Orderly could have the opportunity to react. Amatu is dumbfounded at what he sees; not sure he opened the right door. But seeing his wife wrapped in the arms of the towering and bearded man, froze his thought. In his presence, they slowly disentangled from their warmth. As Ovie tries to mutter a word, Amatu storms. He is apparently broken.

The incident remains a disappointing moment for Amatu who prided himself on their emotional compatibility and her preparedness to sacrifice everything for her and their daughter. When one puts together the love and care Ovie showered Amatu in the Prison, one wouldn't have thought of this betrayal from Ovie.

However, considering the core of this analysis which rests on the complexities of the human nature, there's the need to note that human beings are a complicated species. This is as a result of the many events, occurrences, cultures and life experiences around them. Nevertheless, literature which is a mirror of the society and human experience enables us to look for additional information in order to have a deeper knowledge of people, cultures, events, and experiences. As such, understanding the past and present realities of individuals will help you to critically access their motives and actions. What drives people are obviously different just as our faces are different.

In the novel, Amatu needed to understand Ovie's on so many levels that he was veiled to. At least it would have helped him evaluate the situation of things before it went out of hand. Ovie's reaction to her infidelity shows she has kept many things unspoken.

... She was hysterical lamenting how unlucky she was in relationships - how people easily forgot her sacrifices and magnified her mistakes. And in the other, she subtly justified her action, asking how else she could have got all the favours and promotion in an establishment such as the Nigerian Prisons if she did not flirt a little with the authorities in order to give her family the comfort they deserved? And how could she solely provide for the family if she didn't overlook moral and ethical standards? (324).

It was shocking for Amatu that his wife Ovie had nursed all these in her heart- calling him a loser, indolent and even visionless. Who would have thought that the once loving Ovie's could betray his trust to that extent? Such is the human nature and "women, sooner than later, got bored with their husbands, especially the ones without means to nurture their vanities" (324). So one is not surprised that "the act seemed not sacrilegious enough for her to recant it or foreclose recurrence" (324). This ultimately implies that she may have been indulging in the act in the past. Thus sees her infidelity as a norm.

Nevertheless, what appears to be an irreconcilable issue between two people could simply be a lack of understanding of the other's side of the story. As unfortunate as Amatu has found himself in such cage of betrayal, we have all been in similar situations, either through our personal experiences or from witnessing others go through them.

Conclusion

As it has been illustrated in this paper, virtually everything one does is based on their motives. Elemeforo's characterization is a reflection of societal realities. Thematic concerns such as betrayal, oppression, greed, love etc. are outcomes of human actions. Literature is ingrained in one form or another as a mirror of the ways of humanity and through absorbing it, one obtains a better understanding of human behaviour. This paper, therefore, advocates a deeper understanding of people's experiences, culture, events and circumstances around them as these could trigger the way they act at a given time. This is one of the reasons why we study works of literature; to gain an understanding of the complexities of human motivation and action. Men and women are driven by their motives which eventually manifest themselves in their actions. More often than not, these motives that underlie actions are not made apparent. By interpreting the connection between words, character and their actions, patterns of imagery and symbols we can tease out the meaning of these motives (Udumukwu38).

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The Sad Second Childhood

Dr Raihana Barvin

With the sunken eyes and the skeletal body,
He is walking with a kind-hearted stick.
I am reading those longing desires
On the saddened wrinkles of his face.
They search for someone recklessly,
Like an abandoned child searches for its parents with teary eyes.
As he is waiting, a man passes him,
And acts like he doesn't notice this pathetic very old child.
His dry eyes shed the waterless tears,
That did not wet his bony cheeks or even his eyelids
But poured a fiery acid through my eyes,
That pierced into the bottom of my heart,
Burned me inside out, placed an everlasting burden,
And came out as salty drops from my all-seeing black pearls.

I just don't know how to console this long-forgotten existent.
He looks so fragile with his long-tied emotions,
I do not dare to touch him even with kind words,
Surely, he will fall and I know I can't bring him back.
He's still standing there like a dying hungry child,
Watching a grand party but forbidden to touch any of the delectables.
He stares at those men and women:
The heartless deaf, dumb and blind.
They are always unaware of his soundless presence and plight.
If he has his parents too,
They might dress him properly,
Never ever let him feel sad and lonely,
They might give him food on time with love and care,
Perhaps he might not stand here as pathetic as he is today.

To a father, his children are always his children in all aspects,
But when a father becomes a child,
There is no son to cradle this age-sicken toddler.
He is helpless with his irrationality in his second childhood.
There are no patient ears for his feeble complaints,
They can't find sweetness in his babbles;
As he once found in theirs.
No eyes to see his needs and ailments.
No mouths to entertain his silence-filled ears.
No hands to hold him with love on his slippery walk.
Like the well-used and tattered footwear,
He was renounced at a time and thrown into a corner.
He will be there as an unnoticed object,
Until death, the mother of eternity, finds and adopts him.

Our Esteemed Contributors

- **Dr. Ajay Sahebrao Deshmukh** Associate Professor, Department of English, Shri Muktanand College, Gangapur, Dist. Aurangabad, Maharashtra, India.
- **Dr. Ramesh Manikrao Shinde** Associate Professor, Department of Hindi, Yeshwantrao Chavan College, Ambajoi, Dist. Beed, Maharashtra, India.
- **Ayushi Zina** Research Scholar, Department of English, Ranchi University, Jharkhand, India.
- **R.Velu** Assistant Professor, Department of English, D.R.B.C.C.C Hindu College, Pattabiram, Chennai, Tamilnadu, India.
- **Wisdom Chika Nwoga** Researcher in African Literature Department of English and Communication Arts, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, Nigeria.
- **Dr Raihana Barvin** Guest Lecturer, PG. Department of English, Sethupathy Government Arts College, Ramanathapuram. Achundanvayal, Tamil Nadu, India.