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Queer Studies and Literature : Nature, Scope and Future

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Editorial Note

Vivekanand College, Kolhapur (Autonomous) is devoted to dissemination of education, knowledge and culture. We strive to contribute in building a global community free of inequality, bias and prejudices; an all-inclusive society where every member has a right to lead a successful, free-willed, fulfilling life. As a part of our endeavors towards creating gender sensitive environment, we have organized this one day International Interdisciplinary Online Seminar on “Queer Studies and Literature: Nature, Scope and Future”; with an objective to provide a platform to academics, teachers, researchers, students and activists across the world engaged in the critical discussion of Queer Studies.

A healthy body and happy mind are the instruments of achievement. The demands and desires of a body are just as important as those of the mind/spirit. However, civil society smothers an individual’s aspirations for both physical and emotional needs within societal norms related to gender roles, hetero-normativity and most importantly individual expressions of sexual preferences. Considering the gender-biased liberties provided to men and women in societies around the globe, the individuals may find it either comfortable or awkward to come out with personal sexual orientations. The increasing unrest regarding an individual’s right to fulfill his/her own gender/sexual preferences has become prominent in the recent times. LGBTQ+ communities fight world-wide to create a liberal, welcoming, all-inclusive global community which may not shun individual expressions of gender identities and sexual orientations. In this light, Queer Studies is increasingly being explored to study world literature for explicit /implicit nuances of different sexualities. Not only the West, but the non-West world and its scholarship have dealt with the concept of Queer in various capacities. As reviewed by Dr. Kaustuv Bakshi, (Queer Studies : Texts, Contexts, Praxis, 2019) homosexuality always existed in Indian culture in the pre-British Indian society and cultural representations. However, the 18th C Western homophobia brain-washed us into tabooing the Queer and highlighting hetero-normativity. The agitations by LGBTQ+ members are just reminders that the queer identities have existed, do exist and will exist amongst us. As long as we stick to the binaries of gender, the ‘other’ ‘non-normal’ ‘homo-normative’ will clash and shatter the ‘hetero-normative’ view of sexual preferences and gender identities. As teachers and academicians, we need to facilitate a dialogue and gender-sensitivity between the two.

This seminar, surely, will add to the corpus of scholarly presentations on the themes of gender and the queer. We are immensely thankful to our eminent resource persons Ruth Vanita, Dr. Kaustuv Bakshi and Dr. Sachin Labade, who have contributed to the debate on acceptance of the LGBTQ+ identities in a hetero-normative world. More than 600 scholars, teachers and students from all over the nation registered for the seminar, presented their research work and contributed 42 papers; out of which selected ones are being published by Akshara Publication. We thank the participants and contributing scholars for making this seminar successful in brainstorming among the teaching fraternity about a relatively less discussed yet harrowing topic.

As the convenor, it is my duty to thank our patrons Hon. Abhaykumar Salunkhe (Executive Chairman, Shri Swami Vivekanand Shikshan Sanstha), Hon. Mrs. Shubhangi Gawade (Secretary, Shri Swami Vivekanand Shikshan Sanstha, Kolhapur) and Dr. R.R. Kumbhar (Principal, Vivekanand College) for their approval and liberal guidance in organizing the seminar. The organizing committee members Dr. Kavita Tiwade (HoD, English), Dr. P. A. Patil, Supriya Patil, Salama Maner, Ms. Madhuri Pawar have worked hard to realize this project. I am indebted to them for their selfless devotion to understand the concept of the



seminar and organizing the essentials in order to achieve the objective. Lastly, we thank Akshara publications for their cooperation and timely assistance in publishing the papers.

With the hope that this seminar has added to the academic corpus on Queer studies and to the awareness for gender sensitive, all inclusive community, I present this seminar proceeding to you all. Thank you!

Dr. Shruti Joshi

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01**Duality And Intimacy in Another Kind of Love:
D.H Lawrence's The Rainbow****Dr. Shelly Narang**

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Sri Guru Gobind Singh College,
Chandigarh**Abstract:**

As an author who foresaw both the adversities and opportunities that lay ahead, D.H. Lawrence's work gave rise to new possibilities of critical agency, not just in literature, but also in politics, society, and culture. Lawrence's works of homosocial desire remain significant in the Western literature canon for the future of queer studies and explorations of the social changes in which they participate. The current research explores the seminal work by D.H. Lawrence, 'The Rainbow' (1915). In novel, sexuality and repressed emotions are prominent themes. In this study, the bathing scene in the novel 'The Rainbow' is analysed and deconstructed. Various literary critics, philologists, and authors over the last century have interpreted and labelled the 'Other kind of love' in both of Lawrence's works, but they have consciously or unconsciously ignored - the obsession with labelling sexuality - how sexually fluid the characters in Lawrence's works are, and how it cannot be compartmentalised under social constructs of sexuality. In Lawrence's writings, homosexual love was as natural as heterosexual love. By analysing this work, the paper attempts to explore the idea of homosexuality and the representation of same-sex love in the 20th century.

Keywords: Rainbow, Homosexual, Lawrence, Emotions, Queer**Introduction:**

David Herbert Lawrence was born in 1885 in Eastwood, Nottinghamshire, was fourth of five children born to a miner and his middle-class wife. He went to Nottingham High School as well as Nottingham University College. His debut work, 'The White Peacock,' was published in 1911, only a few weeks after his mother died. At this time, he finally ended his relationship with Jessie Chambers (the Miriam of Sons and Lovers) and became engaged to Louisa Burrows. His career as a school teacher was ended in 1911 by the illness which was ultimately diagnosed as tuberculosis. In 1912, Lawrence eloped to Germany with Frieda Weekley, the German Wife of his former modern language tutor, when they returned to England in 1914, they married. Lawrence was now surviving solely from his work. His two most famous books, 'The Rainbow' and 'Women in Love,' were published in 1915 and 1916, respectively. The former was banned, and he was unable to find a publisher for the latter. After the war Lawrence began his 'savage pilgrimage' in search of a more fulfilling mode of life than industrial Western civilization could offer. This took him to Sicily, Ceylon, Australia and, finally, New Mexico. The Lawrences returned to Europe in 1925. Lawrence's last novel, 'Lady Chatterley's Lover', was banned in 1928, and his paintings confiscated in 1929. He died in Venice in 1930 at the age of 44. Lawrence spent most of his short life living. Nevertheless, his output was both prolific and diverse including novels, stories, poems, plays, essays, travel books, translations, letters, paintings and literary criticism. According to Diana Trilling, among the major writers of the first half of the twentieth century, D.H Lawrence elicited conflicting emotions from readers. She went on to say that the challenge with Lawrence's

work was distinguishing his sheer literary skill, the force of his communication, from what was overheated and overdone even as poetic assertion.

Lawrence was rejected by some as a sex-crazed, gay fascist after his death in 1930, while others embraced him for similarly erroneous reasons. T.S. Eliot, of all persons, was one of the most powerful anti-Lawrence voices. 'He had no guidance but the Inner Light, the most untrustworthy and deceitful guide that ever presented itself to wandering mankind', Eliot wrote.

E.M. Forster was not convinced. In his obituary, he dubbed Lawrence 'the greatest imaginative novelist of our generation' and commended his "irradiation of the universe and the objects that compose it. Later scholars concurred, and Lawrence is today regarded as a significant modernist intellectual.

Lawrence's preoccupation was with essence. In 'Women in Love' Birkin says to Ursula, 'I want to find you where you don't know your own existence, the you that your common self denies utterly.' All else is 'persiflage,' he claims. 'I shall change the world for the next thousand years', he claimed to his wife, Frieda. After finishing 'Women in Love,' he stated that the book scared him because 'it is so end-of-the-world.' Lawrence believed that individuals like himself and the characters he invented were ready to reject traditions and understandings that had previously been associated with civilisation and sanity. This end-of-the-world, this plunge into the future, was a free fall, a jump out of faith rather than into it. It was as if he wanted us to carry our sins back into a defoliated Garden of Eden and build a desperate utopia there.

F.R. Leavis, who put D.H. Lawrence in the 'great tradition of the English novel,' had a huge impact on Lawrence's public image, depicting him as a writer of spontaneous originality and brilliance. To begin, Leavis challenged two famous critics of the 1930s: J.M. Murry's *Son of Woman* (1931) and T.S. Eliot's *After Strange Gods* (1937). (1934). Murry was chastised by Leavis for treating Lawrence's artistic and creative writing as evidence of 'Lawrence's personal case and inner history', and for being preoccupied with 'the difficulties resulting for Lawrence throughout his life from the relation established with him in childhood by his mother.'

'His thinking, in fact, is so much better to what is normally considered thinking,' Leavis claimed. Although Eliot portrayed Lawrence as a man of 'insights or 'intuition', Leavis considered Lawrence to be 'the great creative genius of our century, and one of the greatest personalities in English literature', because 'genius in Lawrence was, among other things, superior intellect.' It is significant that Leavis defended Lawrence's reputation as a creative artist and a brilliant writer from the scathing opinions of Murry and Eliot, who said that Lawrence was a sexually sick individual and an intellectually illiterate heretic despite his strong sensibility. While there is no dispute that F.R. Leavis had a significant part in Lawrence's current popularity, his rating of Lawrence's works has not always had a positive influence on subsequent examinations of his writings. Apart from 'The Rainbow' (1915) and 'Women in Love' (1920), which Leavis considers to be Lawrence's 'two best masterpieces', the other 'exploratory and experimental' novels that followed, such as 'Aaron's Rod' (1922), 'Kangaroo' (1923), and 'The Plumed Serpent' (1926), were discarded as minor books.

After Lawrence's death Frieda wrote:

'What he had seen and felt and known he gave in his writing to his fellowmen, the splendour of living, the hope of more and more life...a heroic and immeasurable gift.'

As an author who foresaw both the adversities and opportunities that lay ahead, D.H. Lawrence's work gave rise to new possibilities of critical agency, not just in literature, but also

in politics, society, and culture. Lawrence's works of homosocial desire remain significant in the Western literature canon for the future of queer studies and explorations of the social changes in which they participate. I would like to preface the major discussion of the current research; with contention how, the brain is an androgynous organ.

In her essay 'A room of one's own', Virginia Woolf discusses the idea in detail, first being used by Coleridge.

'If one is a man, still the woman part of his brain must have effect; and a woman also must have intercourse with the man in her, Coleridge perhaps meant this when said that a great mind is androgynous. It is when this fusion takes place that the mind is fully fertilized and uses all its faculties.' (Pg 87)

Woolf's views would be interesting to take into account when considering the fluidity of the brain itself or the concept of 'Ardhnarishvar' found in Indian mythology. According to Virginia Woolf, Coleridge's statement about an androgynous mind does not mean a mind that is sympathetic to women. It does not mean a mind that takes on their causes or devotes itself to their interpretation. It may be that the androgynous mind is less likely to make distinctions than the single-sexed mind. Virginia Woolf's says,

'Androgynous mind is resonant and porous; that it transmits emotions without impediment; that it is naturally creative, incandescent and undivided. In fact, one goes back to Shakespeare's mind as the type of the androgynous, of the man-womanly mind.' (Pg 88)

I believe, over the century, critics have largely labelled Lawrence, a writer who 'wrote as a woman would write' (Anais and Lawrence, 1964). Mostly, Lawrence "sought the help from women in order to verify his portrayal of female psychology" (Hilary and Lawrence, 1982).

As a result, much of *Sons and Lovers* is based on Jessie Chambers' story, just as much of *The Trespasser* is based on Helen Corke's. Mable Dodge Luhan asked Lawrence to speak since he was so good at portraying the feminine perspective. 'Understand things for me. To take my experience, my material, my Taos, and to formulate it all into a magnificent creation...' (Alfred and Knoff, 1975 cited in Lawrence, 1980).

Further, Lawrence did not depict the female character as the other novelists of his age did – to give an account of their physical acts; he dealt with the totality of their experiences. Hence, sexual experience also becomes an important aspect of his writings. "It is fair to say", writes Rosalind, "that he was the finest novelist to achieve a specifically and exclusively sexual focus in his presentation of female character; he began the intense interest in women's sexual emotions and needs what has burgeoned in our times into a little sub-species of the novel of its own" (Rosalind, 1987). Women's experiences are frequently central in Lawrence's writing, and he is vulnerable to the charge of misogyny levelled at many of the male modernists, but as Marianne DeKoven observes, 'this masculinist misogyny... was almost universally accompanied by its dialectical twin: a fascination and strong identification with the empowered feminine' (Levenson ed., 1999: 174). It is interesting to conceive of Lawrence in this way, who both adored and raged against the feminine, but who, as is seen, recognised the importance of a female spirit at work in his own writing.

Furthermore, in 1915, E. M. Forster recommended a friend to read 'A Poem of Friendship,' considering it 'most beautiful.' Using his own experience of Lawrence, Forster was certain that Lawrence was oblivious of how others would label the emotions depicted: 'The whole book is the queerest product of subconsciousness that I have yet struck—he has not a

glimmering from first to last of what he's up to.' Forster sees the work as providing an insight that the author was not aware of on a conscious level. Moreover, the underlying meditation of 'Study of Thomas Hardy' deals with the creative potential of conflict, either within the individual (the artist) or between individuals (usually between men and women). The book defines creative conflict as the natural struggle between 'male' and 'female' principles that co-exist inside the individual. Along with this exploratory meditation, a debate on human relations, men and women, and, in particular, the idea of achieving a balance between male and female principles (represented by the metaphors of 'Law' and 'Love') as a means of enabling the reborn individual self to 'come through' (see Look! We Have Come Through!) This is expressed in the revised 'The Rainbow', where it informs and develops from Lawrence's marital meditation. 'Study of Thomas Hardy' is an eccentric exploration of several themes: artistic, philosophical, and personal. (Becket, Fiona 2002).

This can be used as a hypothesis, to explore the works of D. H. Lawrence. The 'man-womanly' mind which Woolf's propounded, can be well attributed to the Lawrence's mind, as it put him in the same league of Shakespeare and S.T. Coleridge. The current research explores two seminal works by D.H. Lawrence, 'The Rainbow' (1915) and 'Women in Love' (1920). In both novels, sexuality and repressed emotions are prominent themes. In this study, the bathing scene in the novel 'The Rainbow' and the wrestling scene in the novel 'Women in Love' are analysed and deconstructed. Various literary critics, philologists, and authors over the last century have interpreted and labelled the 'Other kind of love' in both of Lawrence's works, but they have consciously or unconsciously ignored - the obsession with labelling sexuality - how sexually fluid the characters in Lawrence's works are, and how it cannot be compartmentalised under social constructs of sexuality. In Lawrence's writings, homosexual love was as natural as heterosexual love. By analysing these two works, the paper attempts to explore the idea of homosexuality and the representation of same-sex (other) love in the 19th century.

Discussion:

The Rainbow

'The Rainbow' (1915) was stimulated by the years leading up to World War I. It was banned within two months of its release in the United Kingdom, and the publisher, Methuen, was charged under the Obscene Publications Act of 1857. Lawrence's work was only published after much modification and rewriting, and it went through several revisions, the first of which was titled 'The Sisters.' It was changed to 'The Wedding Ring,' which, like 'The Sisters,' foreshadowed much of the material of 'Women in Love'. Finally, 'The Rainbow' was published and it was Lawrence's first modernist novel in a radically new language, and it established Lawrence's 'impersonal' aesthetic.

He re-presented character in it, addressing the continuity of human experience in the generations of the Brangwen family at Marsh Farm, as well as the progression toward individuation in the figure of Ursula Brangwen, the modernist woman, who would also appear in *Women in Love* (1920). As with *Women in Love*, *The Rainbow* reflected Lawrence's growing interest in unconscious functioning, albeit his definition of 'unconscious' differed greatly from the defining idea of Freudian psychoanalysis. Although Lawrence shared Freud's interest in the instinctual life, he rejected the scientist's beliefs. Indeed, the books that followed *Sons and Lovers* demonstrated Lawrence's thinking on male-female relationships in ways that challenged popular 'Freudism.'

Lawrence's investigation of sexual and family ties continues in *The Rainbow*, with a renewed emphasis on marriage. The narrative follows three generations of the Brangwen family as they grow up, establish themselves in adult relationships, and pass the torch to the

next generation. Tom Brangwen, farmer and inheritor of Marsh Farm (he is the one who dies in the flood), is the novel's focus on the first generation. Lydia Lensky, a widowed member of Poland's displaced gentry with a revolutionary past, is his bride. Dispossessed and alone in England, she makes him the stepfather to the toddler Anna, whom he raises as his own alongside his marriage's children. This marriage is the novel's first extensive way of examining the genesis of feeling in circumstances where the primary protagonists have no cultural common ground. It is a study of the good and bad forces of nearly wordless communication and stasis, and it presents Lawrence's comprehensive and nuanced critique of marriage as a method of relating to the 'untranslatable' other while maintaining the self apart and alive.

In the following generation, Anna's infatuation with, and marriage to, her cousin Will Brangwen offers her with a way out of the tightly knit family community of Marsh Farm. Will, an uncomfortable, self-conscious adolescent redefining himself in his newly married surroundings, takes centre stage. He is an autodidact who is passionate about early English church building, an eager student of Victorian revivals of Renaissance artists, and a craftsman in his own right. If Tom Brangwen is 'nature,' inextricably linked to his original land and people, Will Brangwen is 'culture,' more estranged from his roots than Tom. Lawrence transforms him into a draughtsman, a conservator of church furniture, and a drawing master - an artisan who balances successful moments of unconscious creation with successful moments of conscious creativity with hours of frustrated over conscious labour.

Will and Anna are the parents of Ursula and Gudrun Brangwen, the sequel's 'women in love.' The Rainbow's third generation is centred around Ursula. Lawrence, like Tom and Anna, the first father-daughter coupling, portrays the girl's intimate contact with her father in her early years, as well as the required shift away from his beliefs and authority later in life. Lawrence, maybe indicating a movement in himself toward greater sympathy for dads, likewise heightens Anna's oppressive maternalism in *The Rainbow* when Ursula enters puberty and maturity and begins the quest for her own voice. Lawrence pushes Ursula to a variety of family, sexual, and professional situations, causing her responses to frequently contradict established societal mores. Sexual experiences were mentioned as causes for *The Rainbow*'s censorship in Britain, with 'Shame,' a chapter that recounts Ursula's sexual love for her schoolteacher, Winifred Inger, causing a particular frisson. Other events with her boyfriend, the soldier Anton Skrebensky (including debates about duty to nation and empire that Ursula despises during his time in South Africa fighting the Boers) also aroused alarm and condemnation.

However, Ursula's experiences go far beyond the sexual. As a 'new woman,' she attends a university institution and 'the man's world,' where she works as a schoolteacher, first cheerful until becoming dissatisfied with unheroic reality. Ursula's fate is determined by Lawrence's critique of English society at the time, and she suffers as a result of testing various 'roles' within it. However, it is her vision of spiritual rehabilitation, which transcends the personal to encompass a community experience, that brings the novel to a close. The final chapters of the book, with their profound lyrical intensity, explain the regeneration of Ursula's spirit triggered by the imagery of the rainbow, which also speaks for Lawrence's devotion to his new method of writing. The last chapter, titled 'The Rainbow,' depicts Ursula at home in Beldover, persuaded in her heart that she is carrying Skrebensky's kid and experiences hallucinations resulting in her miscarriage.

CHAPTER XII SHAME – BATHING

The main bathing scene in Lawrence's novel 'The Rainbow' is in Chapter XII titled 'Shame'. It involves Winifred Inger and Ursula Brangwen in it.

‘It is to me most exciting-when you have the blank canvas and a bigbrush full of wet colour, and you plunge. It is just like diving in a pond- there you start frantically to swim. So far as I am concerned, it is like swimming in a baffling current and being rather frightened and very thrilled, gasping and striking out for all you’re worth. The knowing eye watches sharp as a needle; but the picture comes clean out of instinct, intuition and sheer physical action. Once the instinct and intuition gets into the brush-tip, the picture happens, if it is to be a picture at all.’ - Lawrence

The closeness shown in Lawrence's bathing scenes like Cyril Beardsall and George Saxon in 'The White Peacock', Paul, Gertrude, and Walter Morel in 'Sons and Lovers', Winifred and Ursula in 'The Rainbow' and Gerald and Birkin in 'Women in Love' pushes the reader to see beyond their preconceptions and judgements in order to get a fresh viewpoint or understanding. Readers are sometimes muddled by the interactions between the same sex characters or are unable to connect with the imagery depicted as a result. Various moralities that condemn same-sex connections or stigmatise them as gay restrict the possibility of organic settings and relationships. Lawrence's works and his characters give the reader a new experience of morality that takes them beyond the safe, suspended imagery with which one can easily identify. It takes the reader to a sort of middle ground where it tantalises the social constructs of sexuality, giving the character and the reader an initially alien experience. To put it simply, what Lawrence does to the characters in his novel is the same as what happens to the reader after reading Lawrence's depictions of and conversations about same sex relationships. Instead, the character as well as the reader finds themselves in a situation which “all moves. And nothing is true, or good, or right except in its own living relatedness to its own circumambient universe: to the things that are in the stream with it.” (167).

As well as adopting a more serious tone, Lawrence's bathing scenes serve a different purpose: there is a much less sense that the participants are having a good time. The intimacy they experience with each other transcends sexuality and eroticism. We can draw comparisons between Cyril and George's bathing scene in 'The White Peacock' and Ursula Brangwen and Winifred Inger's openly critic-labelled 'lesbian relationship' in 'The Rainbow'. A chapter entitled 'Shame' by Lawrence discusses this. In describing Winifred and Ursula's relationship, Lawrence invokes a similar connotation as he uses this word to depict George's self-degeneration. In this case, he opposes female homosexuality if one follows the title of the chapter, but with the Uranians, shame has a positive connotation, which means homosexual love. It can be found in a poem by Lord Alfred Douglas, the 'Bosie' of Oscar Wilde's trail. In 'Two Loves,' Douglas describes a dream in which heterosexual and homosexual love are represented by two young people.

I fell a-weeping, and I cried, 'Sweet youth,
Tell me why, sad and sighing, thou dost rove
These pleasant realms? I pray thee speak me sooth
What is thy name?' He said, 'My name is Love.'

Then straight the first did turn himself to me
And cried, 'He lieth, for his name is
Shame, But I am Love, and I was wont to
be Alone in this fair garden, till he came
Unasked by night; I am true Love, I fill
The hearts of boy and girl with mutual flame.'

Then sighing, said the other, 'Have thy
will, I am the love that dare not speak its name.'

His poem, *In Praise of Shame*, also invokes a similar theme when he concludes, 'of all sweet passions, shame is loveliest.'

In order to understand Winifred and Ursula's lesbian association, certain elements must be distinguished from the intimacy experienced by men. It is critical to note that Ursula's attraction to Winifred does not transcend or extend an existing heterosexual relationship. Instead

'It was after Skrenbensky had gone that there sprang up between themistress and the girl that strange awareness, then the unspoken intimacy that sometimes connects two people who may never even make each other's acquaintance. '(346)

(McCauley, Kyum 1993) The attraction between Ursula and her schoolmistress is evident during her swimming class. This contrasts with the rural splendour of Lawrence's rural setting for his male interaction (Cycil and George) which is instead paired with the clinical image of an indoor swimming pool in which 'The water was glimmering pale emerald –green, a lovely, glimmering mass of colour within the whitish marble-like confines. Overheard the light fell softly'

The appearance of Winifred and Lawrence's references to Diana and Grecian perfection, in turn, recall the Uranians' use of classical imagery to describe their admired subjects. Yet they seem out of place in the artificial, unnatural environment of an indoor pool: 'Miss Inger came out, dressed in a rust –red tunic like a Greek girl's tied round the waist, and a red silk handkerchief round her head. How lovely she looked. Her knees were so white and strong and proud, and she was firm bodied as Diana.'

Finally, they bathe in the natural environment, but it is at night, without the symbolic masculine presence of the sun. It is substituted with 'ice cold' rain. Winifred carries Ursula into the water where 'the elder held the younger close against her, close, as they went down, and by the side of water, she put her arms round her and kissed her.'

Ursula's reaction was not only pleasurable, but also

'Made her cold, and a deep bottomless silence welled up in her, as fbottomless darkness were returning upon her. So, the head vanished away, she was chilled, as if from waking up. She ran indoors, a chill, non-existent thing, wanting to get away... wanted to lose herself among natural surroundings.' (351)

The next day, she channels her feelings and starts to yearn for Winifred's touch as she says:

'In the morning, however the love was there again, burning, burning She remembered yesterday, and she wanted more, always more. She wanted to be with her mistress. All the separation from her mistress was a restriction from living... she sat down and wrote a burning, passionate love letter: she could not help it.' (351)

According to McCauley, the theme of homosexuality seems to be borne out in Lawrence's fiction, as well as in his letters that condemn it as unnatural. Ursula's refusal of Winifred is evidence of this:

'The fine, unquenchable flame of the younger would consent no more to mingle with the perverted life of the elder woman. Winifred knew it

would come. But she too was proud. At the bottom of her was a black pit of despair. She knew perfectly well that Ursula would cast her off.' (354)

The way McCauley puts it; however, I disagree with it. The milieu in which Lawrence wrote, was unaccepting of homosexuality, as evidenced by the way his book was handled upon publication. However, D.H. Lawrence condemned it, and I still believe there was a deeper meaning behind it. In order to avoid being openly branded as homosexual and shunned away, the artist played it safe by the gallery. Ursula rejected (in a way that is not directly referenced in the book, only she rejects the proposal to go to London) Winifred, because 'a sort of nausea was coming over her. She loved her mistress. But a heavy, clogged sense of deadness began to gather upon her, from the other woman's contact. And sometimes she thought Winifred was ugly, clayey.' (354)

The fact that Ursula soon overcame her relationship with Winifred can be established with a degree of certainty

'No, I don't want to go to London, I want to be by myself' (354)

There was an end to Winifred and Ursula's relationship, or friendship, as one may wish to label it, because she was no longer herself. This was evident from her feeling alien, as I described earlier in the discussion. Among the reasons for Ursula's failed relationship with Winifred, Lydia Blanchard makes the following points:

'The reason for this rejection of Winifred is more complex than shame about single sex relationships, however although the episode does show Lawrence's hostility towards lesbians, that hostility is not, in fact, significantly different from Lawrence's attitude towards homosexuals. The relationship fails because Winifred is corrupt; she wishes both to serve Ursula and also to impose their will on the younger girl. Such a power relationship in which one or the other stronger, is always destructive in Lawrence, whether it involves a man and a woman, or two men, or two women.'

'Lawrence's bathing scenes transcend the wider narrative genre established within the period at that time. Instead of glorifying homosexuality, they are used especially in Ursula and Winifred's case, as a condemnation.' (McCauley, Kyum. 1993). As a matter of fact, if one follows the title of the chapter, it can be seen as a condemnation, although we must keep in mind how much havoc the publication of 'The Rainbow' caused, ultimately leading to its banishment. Lawrence must have done this purposefully to condemn reaction as well as to conform to the praxis of the day. As I mentioned earlier, Lawrence puts both the character and the reader in an alien environment, which is the natural and organic response of Ursula to Winifred after the pool incident. In the midst of 'shame' and 'alien' emotions she experiences, she longs for nature and for things in nature.

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02**Divakaruni's *The Palace of Illusions* :
Mythological Studies on Sexual Deviance****Mr. Anu.R**Research Scholar, Dept of English
Noorul Islam Centre for
Higher Education, Kumaracoil**Dr. P. Deepa**Assistant professor, Dept of English
Noorul Islam Centre for Higher Education,
Kumaracoil.**Abstract:**

Hindu mythology that many deities have changed genders, appeared in different genders, or combined to become hermaphroditic entities. Often, gods shift sex or incarnate as the other sex in order to promote sexual confluence and equality between all genders. The Mahabharata is told from Draupadi's point of view in *The Palace of Illusions*. Through Draupadi's point of view, Shikhandi's life is presented in this novel. Shikhandi plays a significant role in the Kurukshetra war. To exact revenge on Bhishma, Princess Amba was reincarnated as a Shikhandi. Defending her own cause in an effort to obtain justice for her previous life as Princess Amba. The story of Shikhandi, a lady who transformed into a male, is one of numerous queer references in Hindu mythology. The gender of Shikhandi is a contentious issue because men are portrayed in epics, particularly *The Mahabharata*, as strong warriors who are resilient and full of masculinity. Shikhandi, who is a forgotten member of society in the novel, is a remarkable figure in the great epic due to his or her flexible and fluid queerness. Inequality and social injustice against gender treats the other gender as a subaltern or an alien.

Keyword: Mythology, Gender Change, Subaltern, Queer, Revenge, Puranas, Epic, Marginalization.

Introduction

Legends of heroes and monsters, romance and tragedy, death and rebirth have been shared by peoples throughout history. Mythology is the influence of all. Hindu mythology worldview has always been accepting of different ways of being, what appears unnatural is also accept as natural. Various combinations of genders, or hermaphrodite creatures, claim that numerous deities have changed genders. In order to advance sexual confluence and gender equality, gods change sex or take on the form of the other sex.

The subject of gender changing known as "queer theory" is multi-layered and fairly complicated. In severe cases, the term "queer" is used to attack homophobic people. Recently, this phrase has been utilized to both construct discourses surrounding the developing theoretical model that emerged primarily from more traditional queer studies that incorporated the term "LGBT" and to serve as an umbrella term for a coalition of sexual identities that are culturally marginalized.

Sex, gender, and sexual identity all refer to a person's genitalia, whether they are male or female; whether they identify as a man, woman, both, or a different gender; and their sexual orientation, such as whether they are heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, etc. These gender identities, sexual preferences, and sexual orientations are diverse.

Annamarie Jagose's Queer Theory: An Introduction: "Queer theory focuses on the "mismatches" between sex, gender and desire which prominently associates with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT). Unknown to many, Queer is in association with more than 'LGBT' like Cross-dressing, Inter-sex, Hermaphrodites, gender ambiguity and gender-corrective surgery" (Jagose, 56).

The Palace of Illusions is one of the best novels of Divakaruni, but it totally different from others. Because all other novels of Divakaruni deals with her own plot and story setup. But this novel based on Indian famous epic *The Mahabharata*. This novel is rewriting/ retelling/ re read of *The Mahabharata* in Draupadi's point of view. Divakaruni presented the male centre myth story into female centric novel *The Palace of Illusions*. She follows a new way in Indian English fiction, re writing the old myth and history in different perspective.

Shikandi is one of the important characters in the novel, she is born as female, later changes her sex into male for taking revenge on Bheeshma. Dhai Ma says, "Sikhandi, who was born a woman, was now a man!" (45). Sikhandi transfers her gender from female to male. She is considering as rebirth of Amba, princess of Kasi. Amba character faces many struggles, Sikhandi (Amba) is portrayed as feminine struggle identity crisis and establishment of self-respect, strongly echoes throughout the novel.

Amba is a victim of injustices in male dominate society. Through Sikhandi the tragic story of Amba is narrated thus: "... We three sisters, princesses of Kasi, were to marry. My father arranged a swayamvar, inviting all the kings of the land, so that we could choose our husbands. I already knew the man I wanted: King Salva, who had wooed me for a year. The garland for Salva was in my hands when Bheeshma descended on us like a plague. He forced the three of us onto his chariot and took us, terrified, to Hastinapur, to marry us to his younger brother." (47-48)

There is no respect for woman, and all the codes of swayamvara is neglected to woman. The oppression and marginalization of woman is clearly seen in the character of Sikhandi. Everything is only favour to the power centre. Amba says, "...I told him, i love Salva. I can't marry your brother. The brother said, A woman who has embraced another in her heart is not chaste. I do not wish to marry her....when I went to him, Salva said, Bheeshma has taken you by the hand. You've been contaminated by his touch. You belong to him now." (48)

In Indian society people never give important for human emotions. Salva once loves Amba but now he rejects her because she is taken by Bheeshma without her wish. He considers after the touch of another man woman will become impure. In our society men have many affairs even many wives but he is never considered as impure. The social justice is too partial.

In the society, women's voice is totally neglected and suppressed. She faces insults because of someone else mistakes. The words of Amba express as her innocence, she seeks justice, "If someone grasps my hand against my will, how does that make me his?" (48). The voice of Amba aoes thus: "... I would die. Now I discovered that a woman's life is tougher than a banyan roots, which exists without soil or water" (48). Even after facing much humiliations from her lover, she saves her self-respect and honour. She demands Bheeshma to marry her: "I told Bheeshma, my happiness has crumbled into dust because of you. Marry me so that at least

my honor can be saved” (48). Even after he rejects, no one came forward to help her. Amba says, “[a]bandoned and Shamed, I went from court to court” (48). She was rejected by her lover, and her family, no one is there to help her. But she is not ready to give up. At last, as per the words of Lord Shiva “...god Shiva himself had promised me that in my next life I would kill him...” (47). Sikhandi is Abma’s reincarnate, and Sikhandi change her gender into male to fulfil her birth purpose. Sikhandi waits a long time to she waits forever “Remember that, little sister: wait for a man to avenge your honor, and you’ll wait forever” (49). Divakaruni portrays that woman should fight alone to get her justice.

Through Shikandi, views about previous birth Amba she seeks help from other male to take revenge for her honor but none stands for her. So Shikandi to take revenge she changes her gender into male. Divakaruni focuses women meet injustice when they oppose male. In *The Ramayana* and *The Mahabharata* men are portrayed as courageous and brave and women are portrayed as weak and inferior in status in many myths but Shikandi prove it wrong and got her own justice.

There are few more sub plot stories and country folk about the gender changing also we can find mythology. Aprit Koolwal talks about changing sex: “The Hindu mythology makes reference to queerness almost constantly. There are tales of men turning into women, women turning into man...”(90). According to the Tamil version of Mahabharat, there is a sub plot before the beginning of the Kurukshetra War, a sacrificial ritual named "human sacrifice" was performed. This ritual required the sacrifice of a valiant warrior on the battlefield to ensure victory in the battle. Krishna, who was a friend and advisor to the Pandavas, planned such a sacrifice and devised a plan of his own to perform the sacrifice ahead of the Kauravas. Krishna discusses this idea with the eldest Pandava, with Sharon recommending he offer the sacrifice to mother Kali as a part of the procedure shortlists for candidates who are the most suited to being offered for the sacrifice; they name Shalya, Arjun, or Krishna himself. It is said that Krishna first offers himself to be the sacrificial victim, but Aaravan volunteers to replace Krishna in human sacrifice. Krishna agreed to the human sacrifice to enable the bigger vision of the war to take place for the victory of Dharma over Adharam. Aaravan requests Lord Krishna to grant him three wishes as his first wish. He requests Krishna to grant him a heroic death on the battlefield at the hands of a great hero because Aravaan will not get to participate in the war. He did not want to deprive himself of the title of meaning heroic death. His second wish was to see the full battle field incident report even after his death. His final wish was to be married before his death, as marriage would entitle him to the right of cremation and funerary offerings because an unmarried man would be buried and not cremated. Krishna agreed to all the three wishes of our event but was unable to find a woman who wanted to marry Aaravan just to leave the rest of her life as a widow. Aaravan, the enchantress, married Aaravan after spending the night with him. While some people believe this marriage was consummated, others see a strong contradiction that the morning abruptly departs after the marriage, thus signifying that the marriage was not consummated. In any case, all Tamil texts agree on what follows after Aaravan requested and was granted his wishes. Aaravan was sacrificed in the Kurukshetra War.

At the death of Aaravan, it is from our lineages after its association with Krishna's female form that the transgenders are sent to be born, and that is why transgenders are also called aravanis in Tamil. That is why certain parts of southern India have an 18-day festival which is mostly held by the transgender community. During these 18 days, they enact the story

of Aaravan as a play. Aravanis married to Aaravan as his pride, and when Aaravan's was sacrificed, they all became widows.

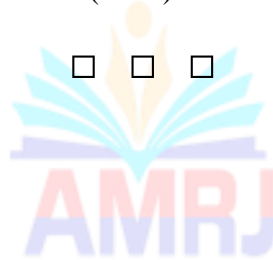
There are two more situations in the Puranas when Vishnu changes his gender into a woman named Mohini. In the first situation, Necro is rescued from Asura and given to Deva, who grants them immortality. Shiva did not notice her during the first, when the Devas and Asuras exchanged the Nectar of Immortality. So he requests Vishnu to show him his female form. Ayyappa was born as a result of Shiva and Mohini's encounter.

Conclusion:

Divakaruni focuses on SIKhandi character through Draupadi's view point women meet justice when they oppose male. But sacrifice for it her sexual identity, the revenge of Amba finally fulfilled by the fall of Bheeshma. In *The Ramayana* and *The Mahabharata* men are portrayed as courageous and brave and women are portrayed as weak and inferior in status. Chitra Banerjee Divakuni portrayed everyone equal as strong and powerful.

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03

A Kind of Rapture : Queer Moments and the Power of the Closet in *Mrs Dalloway*

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Abstract

Virginia Woolf's 1925 novel Mrs Dalloway contrasts two very dissimilar characters: the eponymous Mrs Clarissa Dalloway, a wealthy older woman who is preparing for a party, and Septimus Smith, a young soldier who is contemplating suicide. Throughout the novel, these two characters both struggle with their recollections of past queer moments which disturb their present (straight) lives, while they attempt to find identification with other people. Woolf frames both characters within the novel as parallels, despite their different social classes and backgrounds. Both characters exist in a perpetually closeted space which requires them to conform to heteronormativity, or the assumption and need for straightness. Septimus's and Clarissa's attempts at connection are marked by past queer moments which juxtapose their past selves with their present selves, disrupting the flow of time and breaking through the walls of the closet, if only momentarily. These queer moments disrupt heterosexual performativity within the text and dramatically alter the lives of both Clarissa Dalloway and Septimus Smith, bridging the gap between their differing social classes to create a single moment of queer understanding through action. These moments of homosocial recognition serve both to reorient the heterosexual performativity necessitated by the closet away from a straight destiny and to dramatically alter the lives of both Clarissa Dalloway and Septimus Smith, serving to breach their closeted existence through action. Through the action encapsulated by the queer moment, Woolf decentres and calls into question the stability of the heterosexual marriage through juxtaposition with the homosexual reality. In this paper, I will first delineate how the queer moment exists within the closet, how the queer moment traverses outside the closet in the moment of action to create potentiality for recovery in the case of Clarissa, and how the closet limits such action in the case of Septimus through the added stress posed by heteronormative masculinity.

Key words: Queer moments, homosocial, heterosexual, homosexual, heteronormativity.

Virginia Woolf's 1925 novel *Mrs Dalloway* contrasts two dissimilar characters as parallels: the eponymous Mrs Clarissa Dalloway, a wealthy older woman who is preparing for a party, and Septimus Smith, a young soldier who is contemplating suicide. These two characters both struggle with heteronormativity and their place in it. While attempting to find comradely with other people, both fall short, unable to fulfil the roles which heteronormativity has foisted upon them. Woolf mirrors both Septimus's and Clarissa's attempts at connection and action within a chaotic and changing world. Woolf's stream-of-consciousness narration is episodic, located within a closely focalized third person which chronicles the heteronormative lives of Septimus and Clarissa.

This episodic narration serves to document queer moments, or past moments which have the potential to disorder the present; these moments continue to haunt Septimus and Clarissa. Like ghosts, queer moments trouble their lives and disturb the closet's sway, and thus such communicative moments alter and disrupt the present (straight) temporality of the characters. Due to the seclusion of the closet, it is painful for both characters to live in a heteronormative world. These moments of homosocial recognition serve both to reorient the

heterosexual performativity necessitated by the closet away from a straight destiny and to dramatically alter the lives of both Clarissa Dalloway and Septimus Smith, serving to breach their closeted existence through action.

Throughout *Mrs Dalloway*, Woolf examines the heterosexual framework with which the characters must contend. Woolf's writing style creates a series of interlocking moments, some of which allow for the juxtaposition of two different perspectives, as in the case of Clarissa recalling her feelings for Sally, while denying that she still experiences those feelings. Sara Ahmed defines queer moments as being made of "the intellectual experience of disorder" (4), and due to Woolf's associative style, these queer moments take on another meaning, that of time. This disorder casts apart both Clarissa and Septimus in time so that their two narratives are adrift, separated from linear time. Their personal histories, once anchored in straightness, deviate from a normative pattern.

Other critics have interpreted the characters of Clarissa and Septimus as homosexual, though not necessarily within the concept of the queer moment as a means of defying the totality of the closet. Alex Zwerdling broaches the topic of Clarissa's "revulsion from heterosexuality" (170). James Schiff comments, "Clarissa Dalloway, whose sexual orientation would appear to be largely toward women, ends up in a rather chaste, heterosexual marriage that crushes her soul," but he does not explore the reasons which compel Clarissa to stay within her heterosexual relationship (368).

Dirk Schultz sees the critical portrayal of heterosexual marriages within *Mrs Dalloway* to be a sign that the whole novel is "sceptical of 'true' communication and stable identities" (125). Through the action encapsulated by the queer moment, Woolf decentres and calls into question the stability of the heterosexual marriage through juxtaposition with the homosexual reality. Meanwhile, for Tonya Krouse, Septimus Smith is trapped within a discourse of sexual pathologization as Woolf "evaluates characters in terms of sexuality and diagnostically situates characters along a continuum of sexual experiences and pleasures" (15). Krouse identifies Septimus's place within the pathologies view of homosexuality which the medical discourse of the 1910s presented. However, Krouse focuses on the way Woolf's narrative "diagnoses the homosexuality of the individual," while I centre my understanding of Woolf's narrative within the traumatic experience of the closet.

Heteronormativity, the assumption and need for straightness, is the mechanism by which the closet forces silence upon queer characters throughout Woolf's narrative (16). Gay Wachman interprets *Mrs Dalloway* "as a survey of suppressed lesbianism (or homosexuality in the case of Septimus) whose motive force was Woolf's growing interest in Vita Sackville-West" (349). As an alternative to her biographical approach, I situate the force which suppresses homosexuality as the closet, operating through the silence and fear imposed by heteronormative; the queer moment extends outside of and beyond this closeting, to create harmony between queer characters who have never met across time. Finally, the temporal nature of Woolf's stream-of-consciousness narration is constructed of many moments.

Kate Haffey argues that these queer moments are queer because of the way they constitute a specific temporal disorder: "These moments that Clarissa describes are ones in which Clarissa is able to break through the temporal divides between past and present in order to experience pleasure and desire across them" (141-142). These queer moments disrupt traditional heterosexist narratives. The idea of a "breaking through" allows Clarissa to, in a sense, time-travel: she is able to revisit her old memories over the course of this novel. For Haffey, this breaking-through is the means through which the queer moment operates, but for the purposes of this essay, this queer moment finds its most potent form within and as a

resistance to the tyranny of the closet, a bursting of closet doors, a resistance even within the closet. In this way, I argue such a queer moment can be more than potentiality; it can take form through physical action.

Evans represents the masculinized image of the soldier, but Woolf implies his affection for Septimus may have been homosexual, crossing from the homosocial into the realm of the erotic. Woolf describes Septimus and Evans as having a kind of playful affection for each other: “It was a case of two dogs playing on a hearth-rug; one worrying a paper screw, snarling, snapping, giving a pinch, now and then, at the old dog’s ear...They had to be together, share with each other, fight with each other, quarrel with each other” (*Mrs Dalloway*73). David Dowling points out how this pleasant image reverses after Septimus returns home from war and must deal with the trauma which the war has given him; as a result, this image of the dead Evans “is monstrously inverted” (93).

Septimus denies any feelings for Evans shortly before he notices the figure of Evans staring at him from behind the railings: “There was his hand; there the dead. White things were assembling behind the railings opposite. But he dared not look. Evans was behind the railings!” (*Mrs Dalloway* 21). This moment may be a queer moment, though not one of a joyous flow, but of a grating discord. To Septimus, the spectre of Evans is just as real as his hand in front of him. He fears to lift his head and look. He cannot even turn away but sits with his legs crossed, immobilized despite the fact that Evans is beyond the railings, which we might read as the barrier between life and death which Septimus cannot yet cross. Evans’s specter defies time in this moment: Septimus utterly believes that Evans is there beyond the railings, looking at him, as he did before his death.

While Evans is dead, he still haunts Septimus, a homosexual specter that reminds him of his shortcomings: his failure to save Evans, and his feelings for Evans which may have passed beyond the homosocial. In this way, Septimus has broken the rules of the homosocial: while one may enter into close male relationships, any erotic charge must exist between a man and a woman, not between two men. Septimus insists that his feelings for Evans were barely realized, even as friends. In fact, he takes pride in his reaction to Evans’ death:

“Evans was killed, just before the Armistice, in Italy, Septimus, far from showing any emotion or recognizing that here was the end of a friendship, congratulated himself upon feeling very little” (73).

While Septimus and Evans’ relationship may have crossed from the homosocial to the homosexual, Septimus’s reaction is an attempt to deny any possibility of homosexual feelings. Instead, he takes refuge in masculinity, repressing any feelings so that his reaction is an appropriately manly one. He denies his past outright. He attempts to act, but cannot move, paralyzed by his need to conform to normative masculinity.

In a reflection of this need for masculine conformity, Septimus battles with Dr. Holmes, his psychiatrist, throughout the narrative. Though Septimus attempts to hide his feelings regarding Evans, he cannot act in a way that expresses proper masculinity. Dr. Holmes compares Septimus with his own conduct and finds Septimus lacking:

“Dr. Holmes examined him. There was nothing whatever the matter, said Dr. Holmes...When he felt like that he went to the Music Hall, said Dr. Holmes. He took a day off with his wife and played golf. Why not try two tabloids of bromide dissolved in a glass of water at bedtime?” (77).

Dr. Holmes does not take Septimus’s mental trauma seriously: he only prescribes exercise, time with his wife (which implicitly includes having sex with her) and bromide, which, at that time, was used as a sedative. Septimus’s suicidal urges are brushed aside by Dr.

Holmes as a failure of manhood, easily solved by some masculine exercise and sex. According to Sedgwick, there is a third component to homosociality: “‘obligatory heterosexuality’ is built into male-dominated kinship systems, or...homophobia is a necessary consequence of such patriarchal institutions as heterosexual marriage.” (Between Men3).

At every chance possible, Dr. Holmes highlights the fact that his masculinity does not fail him: he suggests “the music hall,” and play[ing] cricket, boasting that he never falls “half a pound below eleven stone six”, and is described as “large, fresh coloured, handsome” the perfect image of English masculinity, unlike the frail Septimus with his fearful eyes (*Mrs Dalloway*77). To Dr. Holmes, it is inconsequential whether Septimus’s feelings for Evans ever crossed from the homosocial to the homosexual. Septimus suffers as a result of Evan’s traumatic death, and such vulnerability does not properly reinforce Dr. Holmes’ idea of masculinity. In this way, Dr. Holmes and Septimus’s relationship reflects the toxicity of patriarchal homosociality, especially in the way in which Dr. Holmes uses Septimus’s shortcomings to enforce masculinity over Septimus. Septimus is imprisoned within this cage of expectations which also prescribe how he must act, and thus he cannot breach the prison which the closet creates

Though Clarissa is currently married, her thoughts still turn to her past, and to her past actions which reached beyond the closet. As Clarissa shops for flowers, her thoughts turn to her girlhood friend Sally Seton, who made an impression on her during their summer at Bourton:

“Her feeling for Sally... had a quality which could only exist between women, between women just grown up...But the charm was overpowering, to her at least, so that she could remember standing in her bedroom at the top of the house holding the hot-water can in her hands and saying aloud, ‘She is beneath this roof... She is beneath this roof!’ No, the words meant absolutely nothing to her now.”(*Mrs Dalloway*29).

Clarissa entertains an agreeable frisson at the idea of Sally: the thought of her is captivating. She recalls the “charm” Sally brings with her as a moment of overwhelming excitement and happiness, though she says she cannot force herself to revisit that feeling at the thought of Sally attending her party. The juxtaposition of her past feelings for Sally and her present feelings for Sally are at war with each other. While she might be happier if she had never encountered the possibility of other diverging ways of life, Clarissa constantly recalls her memories of Sally within the text. Her subsequent reaction to her thoughts of her girlhood friend and her protest that the old feelings “meant absolutely nothing to her now” seem like exaggeration. If these feelings truly meant nothing to her, would she remember them in such erotic detail? The erotic aura which surrounds her memories of Sally is, in fact, missing from her mundane heterosexual existence with her husband, as she acknowledges when she returns from her shopping expedition: “She could see what she lacked... It was something central which permeated; something warm which broke up surfaces and rippled the cold contact of man and woman” (45).

Joseph Allen Boone argues that Clarissa’s life with Richard motivates her to construct “an identity that is necessarily provisional, always shifting to accommodate both the pressures of the external world and the demands of inner need” (185). Clarissa’s heterosexuality is constructed of her need to exist within the closet, and she upbraids herself for her lack of sexual reciprocation towards her husband. Thus, Clarissa’s feelings for Sally are a chaotic element--they challenge Clarissa’s current marriage to Richard Dalloway. Her life has been altered by her previous feelings for Sally. Throughout Clarissa’s memories of Sally, one common thread holds sway: the fear of marriage, recalling Clarissa’s distaste towards her title of *Mrs Dalloway*.

“It was protective, on her side; sprang from a sense of being in league together, a presentiment of something that was bound to part them (they spoke of marriage always as a catastrophe)”

“She could remember going cold with excitement and doing her hair in a kind of ecstasy (now the old feeling began to come back to her, as she took out her hairpins, laid them on the dressing-table, began to do her hair)” (*Mrs Dalloway* 29). Her physical actions provoke the memories of the past. In this case, she remembers the sensation of doing her hair in a rush so that she could run down and meet Sally. She does not think of her husband when she dresses: the motions do not remind her of her heteronormative obligation to him, but of the passion she once had for Sally.

Her actions are able to recall those old feelings, in an “ecstasy,” or stepping outside of herself. Patricia Smith depicts this moment as a “vivid meditation of female homoerotic pleasure, culminating in an orgasmic exclamation of *jouissance*, before returning to the reality of her sterile room” (45). Her memories of Sally transport her into erotic pleasure, a near out-of-body experience. Reminiscent of Munoz’s definition of queer temporality, Clarissa’s memories of Sally evoke a moment which challenges her current linear temporality. She may have been moving through life in a linear fashion, but now, her recollection breaks this linearity. In this way, the past recalls and forces Clarissa’s present self to confront the fact that she has been utterly changed, just by tasting the possibility of another life, one which does not fall within the lines of straightness, but outside, a queer life.

Both Septimus and Clarissa struggle with the force of compulsory Heterosexuality, which compels them to remain within the closet. Woolf’s overlapping narrative encourages the queer moment, subverting the boundaries of order and time. Through the breaching of linear narratives, the action of the queer moment opens up the possibility of non-straight narratives. For Clarissa, her previous feelings for her friend Sally stir dissatisfaction at the hollowness of her current marriage to Richard Dalloway, and distaste in the way she is only known as *Mrs Dalloway*, and never as Clarissa; have these moments of her past altered her actions in the present. Meanwhile, Septimus fears the specter of his friend Evans, whose ghostly presence is both an echo of the horrors of World War I, and a constant reminder of Septimus’s failure to conform to the patriarchal and homophobic standards of homosociality.

Septimus’s suicide is not dramatic, but understated, a reaction to the toxic masculinity of Dr. Holmes. Clarissa is the only character who understands why Septimus killed himself. Septimus’s and Clarissa’s shared experiences of compulsory heterosexuality and closeting span the gap between their socioeconomic backgrounds and ages in acts of its order and insight which breaks through closet doors. This queer moment allows for sympathetic communication through this breach, fostered by temporal ecstasy.

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Transforming Sexual Identities : Select Texts of South Asian Diasporic Women

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Abstract

Postcolonial feminism has generated the innovative paradigms related to female sexual identities in the contemporary texts. A literary text has become an object of serious debate related to the concepts of postcolonial identity, self, gender, sexuality, body and changing cultural norms. It has created the wider scope for queer studies across the globe. These theories has provided multiple aspects to investigate a literary text such as linguistic, cultural, feminist and psycho-sexual aspects. That's is why, the present research paper purposes to explore the concepts of changing sexual identities in the select texts of South Asian diasporic women who have been living in England. It endeavours to investigate Meera ^{Syal's} Anita and Me (1996), Monica Ali's Brick Lane (2003) and Kamila Shamsie's Home fire (2017). The paper adopts the interdisciplinary methodology to analyse the select texts as it draws material from various disciplines such as sociology, history, literary theory, anthropology and literature. It traces the development of women's identity in the multicultural society of London after migrating from their native land. Meera Syal has articulated the impacts of migration on the life of Meena and her physically sexual incubation. She points out her psycho-social and cultural proliferation in adopted land. Monica Ali has narrated the life of South Asian diasporic woman through the character of Nazneen. She delineates the transformation of her gender identity from innocence to experience. Shamsie explores the cultural and gender identities of South Asian woman through the character of Isma in the location of England and America. So, it examines the sense of cultural fragmentation, sexuality, body, otherness, belongingness and rootlessness in the thematic development of select texts.

Key Terms: Sexuality, Diaspora, Identity, gender, Culture, Multiculturalism

Introduction:

The socio-political paradigms of postcolonialism and philosophical dimensions of deconstructive movement have laid out a great impact on the narratives of history, sociology, anthropology, psychology, linguistics and literature across the world. It has, quite explicitly, changed the process of pedagogy, andragogy, and heutagogy. It has transformed the traditional analytical methodology of a text. A text is not read merely from the perspective of aesthetic pleasure but is considered a serious object of debate. Multiple paradigms are investigated in a literary and non-literary text. A literary text can be examined from cultural, historical, linguistics, diasporic, and feminists perspectives. In the recent times, academic scholars have endeavoured to explore the multifarious narratives in the texts such as postcolonial feminism, postmodern feminism, ecofeminism, queer feminism, lesbian feminism, Marxist feminism, historical feminism, psychoanalytical feminism, postcolonial diasporic feminism to interrogate the aspect of gender. These schools of critical thought have engaged with the question of patriarchy, male domination, female subjugation, domestic violence, gender discrimination, and inequality in the society. Through the lens of postmodern feminists, Sands and Nuccio, utters that: it seeks to analyse any notions that have led to gender inequality in society. Postmodern feminists analyse these notions and attempts to promote equality of gender through critiquing

logocentrism, supporting multiple discourses, deconstructing texts, and seeking to promote subjectivity”(Sands and Nuccio, 1992:489). Further in the similar way conceptualizing the dichotomies of gender asserts Rosemarie Tong in *Feminist Thought: A Comprehensive Introduction*: “Postmodern feminists are accredited with drawing attention to dichotomies in society and demonstrating how language influences the difference in treatment of genders” (Tong, 1989:217).

So, the narratives of gender have changed with the changes of time and context in the contemporary world. Different ideas emerge in different times in the theoretical and thematic narratives of gender. It has drastically been influenced by the process of migration, globalization, multiculturalism and digitalization. It puts double impacts on the identity of women across the world. In the present cosmopolitan world, diasporic women have generated an authentic literature of their own through their experience of migration from one nation to another. They have grappled, quite realistically, with cultural, psychological, and social issues in the hostland. They engage with the problem of alienation, sense of exile, emotional fragmentation, identity crisis, domestic responsibilities, and sense of otherness in the foreign countries. They explore the issue of language, education and professional life through the narratives of diasporic consciousness in the hostland. They have witnessed female subjugation because of the gender differences by their husband and family in the diasporic location. Apart of this, they have endeavoured to establish themselves in the socio-political surroundings of foreign land. They have explored their liberty and potential by adjusting in the alien world by learning new languages and way of life. These narratives have been proliferated in the fiction of Meera Syal, Monica Ali and Kamila Shamsie related to the representation of women and their gender in the foreign location of England and America. But this paper traces the representation of gendered diasporic identities in England.

These South Asian Women Diaspora have delineated their first hand experience as an expatriate in the foreign location. Their creative writings have articulated their sensibilities related to history, home and nation. They have faced subjugation and sufferings after migrating into new land. They have been treated as supporting person by their husband. Although they are treated affectionately by their husband, they have not been considered as the intellectual partners. Meanwhile these diasporic women have generated new opportunities for themselves by adopting the culture and language of the foreign land. They have constructed their own strapping identities by the dint of their intellectual juggernaut. They develop the skills to adjust within the recent cosmopolitan world. All these elements have been disseminated by Monica Ali through the character of Nazneen in the novel *Brick Lane*. Ali writes the condition of Nazneen just after migrating to London from Bangladesh with her husband—Chanu: “She has finished the house-work. Soon she would start preparing the evening meal, but for a while she would let the time pass” (*Brick Lane*, 2003:6). In the beginning of the novel, she is treated as a “good worker” for her husband (10). But when the novel reached to the climax, she has explored her own identity and liberty. She becomes independent from dependent by exploring her limitations in the new world of England. Meera Syal has created the women diasporic characters of Meena and Daljit in *Anita and Me* (1996). Daljit is Indian born British and her daughter—Meena is British born Indian. Through the characters of Meena, Syal articulates the psychological trauma of a diasporic girl who finds herself as divided and fragmented in the socio-cultural surroundings of London. Meena’s obstacle is two deal with two cultures. She finds Indian culture, language, and values in her home. But she encounters with different culture, language and way of life out of her home in London. She feels double suffering being a diasporic child in foreign location. Conceptualizing the concept of diasporic home through the

narrative of Meena, Syal describes it as: “I felt strange that he used that word ‘home’ so naturally, did that mean that everything surrounding us was merely our temporary lodgings?” (*Anita and Me*, 1996:263). After encountering many cross-cultural encounters in the adopted land, Meena learns the skills to deal with the issues and assimilates herself with the culture of foreign land. Both Meena in *Anita and Me* and Nazneen in *Brick lane* reflect the powerful female gender in the diasporic location. Kamila Shamsie in her *Home Fire* (2017) lays out the female diaspora through the character of Isma and her family. Shamsie has explored the problem of education, assimilation, identity, alienation, and divided-self of diasporic women through multiple narratives. Like Syal, Shamsie puts forward the problems of second generation women diaspora in the socio-political territory of London and America. But a large part of the novel is located in England.

Rational of the Study:

The present research paper endeavours to investigate an on-going debate on the aspects of migration, identity and gender in the select texts of South Asian diasporic writers in England. It holds out a report on the life and culture of South Asian diaspora who have been living in England. It engages with the complex questions of self, psychology, thought process, acculturation and assimilation in diasporic location. It deals with the sense of homelessness, exile, separation, habitation, and otherness. By analysing the texts of different locations of South Asia in England, it seeks to add a fresh dimension to the spectrum of comparative diasporic fictions as the writers belong three different socio-historic-cultural backgrounds.

Research Objectives:

As has already stated earlier that the objective of this research paper is to engage with the representation of South Asian diaspora in England. It tries to put forward the changing aspects on the process of migration and its impacts on the identity and gender of immigrants in hostland. It attempts to explore the narratives of women in the strange land and locality. It deals with the process of hybridity and assimilation in the streets of London. It lays out the complex issues related to individual identity, national identities and cultural identities in foreign locations. Keeping the notion of assimilation and acculturation of identity, contemporary aspects of movements, displacements and dislocation from the sites of travel, migration and immigration are to be observed in the select texts.

Research Question and Hypotheses:

The present research paper attempts to investigate following research question:

- Identity and gender in Select South Asian texts.
- Tracing the aspects of gendered diasporic identity and self.
- Transforming Sexual Identities.
- Themes of otherness, acculturation, assimilation and dual identity.
- Narratives of migration and psychology of immigrants.
- Literary articulation of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh.
- Exploring the life of diasporic women in contact zones.

Research Methodology:

The primary methodology in the research paper is to analyse the select texts critically in a comparative, historic-political and socio-literary framework. It explores the representation of gendered diasporic identity, culture, belongingness, alienation, language, and transformation of women’s self in the adopted land. It adopts interdisciplinary approaches in the process of textual analysis since the paper uses the relevant material drawn from literature, history, sociology, philosophy and cultural studies. It make use of postcolonial and feminist lens to

conceptualize the select texts. It looks at the sense of unity and diversity; conflict and harmony in the select texts. It uses relevant theorists from all the discourses.

Transforming Sexual Identities in Select Texts:

The social and cultural theories have invented various innovative aspects to study the concept of gender. They have tried to disseminate the difference between sex and gender. Sex is a human instinct. Gender is a socio-cultural construct. It is divided into male and female gender to highlight the biological differences between the two sex. Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949) is undoubtedly considered of one the greatest benchmarks in the process of conceptualizing the difference between sex and gender. It opened up the new scope to interpret the concept of gender in the proliferation of feminist thought. It anticipated many new paradigms related to sex, gender, sexuality, and male/female which was later developed by other feminist theorists. It interrogated the treatment of women throughout history. It was considered as the beginning of second-wave feminist thought which influenced intellectual people across the world. She explored the sensitive issues such as virginity, marriage, motherhood, pregnancy and age of adolescence. All these aspects related to gender have been explored by the writers in select texts.

Meera Syal lay out the social, cultural and sexual behaviour of Daljit and Mr Kumar in *Anita and Me*. She deals with the question of virginity and sexual desires of adolescent girls through the characters of Meena and Anita. Anita is a British girl representing the western way of life. Meena reflects mixed up culture—Indian and British. When Meena realizes herself as a teenage girl, she starts to contemplate about her gender. She tries to enhance her beauty through the use of beauty products or by consulting beauty parlour to attract male partner. In the similar way, Monica Ali has investigated the complex sexual and social relation between Chanu and Nazneen. Nazneen migrates to England after getting married with Chanu from Bangladesh. She experiences pregnancy by giving birth of two daughters and a son in London. She is impressed by the medical facilities available in England. Ali has portrayed the psychological and emotional condition of a women in the hostland. Like Beauvoir, Ali has highlighted how women is considered other and second in the patriarchal societies and families. Unlike Ali, Shamsie has delineated the contemporary issues of women such question of liberty, security, and education in the hostland. She deals with the gendered diasporic identities of women in the foreign location. She has highlighted how women is mistreated during the process of migration from one nation to other. Shamsie has laid out the political conflict related to women in the adopted land.

All the three women diasporic writers are from different cultural, linguistic, social, political and constitutional backgrounds. Apart of having multiple range of issues, they share many in the development of their diasporic female gendered narratives in the foreign land. They find themselves alien and other in the new socio-political surroundings. They hold out their double inner—gendered and diasporic—sensibilities through their creative works. This sense of double migration transforms their native female identity into new diasporic gendered identity in the alien world. Conceptualizing such double marginalization of women writing process, Elaine Showalter states in her prominent essay “Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness”: “women writers are not. . . inside and outside of the male tradition; they are inside two traditions simultaneously” (Showalter, 1981:202).

Historically, women were denied from the process of learning literature and other discourses in many countries. Anthropological researches put forward the reports that women are still denied from process of education and learning in many parts of Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi patriarchal and matriarchal societies. Further highlighting various levels of women's progress

in terms of writing skills Vietnamese-born critic and film maker Trinh T. Minh-ha in her famous work *Women, Nature, Other* utters: learned women have always been described in terms one might use in describing a thief. Being able to read and write, a learned women robs a man of his creativity, his activity, his culture, his language” (Basset, 2014:10). Stefania Basset states that Trinh conceptualizes this process as: “she who steals language” (10). Basset further argues that Trinh explores “women in exile with herself”(10). In this regards, Syal has reflected her sense of exile in through her fiction and films. Syal is British born Indian whose parents had migrated to England before her birth from India and settled there permanently. She has faced identity crisis in the multicultural world of England. That’s why she has narrated problems of her life through the character of Meena in fictional way. Similar experience related to sense of exile, otherness and alienation has been depicted by Monica Ali as she is Bangladeshi born British writer. Her family migrated to England when she as merely three years old. Unlike Syal and Ali, Shamsie is Pakistani and British writer. She was born in Pakistan. But she divides her time in Pakistan and England. She has grappled with the problem of identity, loyalty towards hostland, cultural assimilation and female Muslim identity. Therefore, all the three writers engage with the gendered diasporic identities from different socio-politico-cultural perspectives developing their individual knowledge and skills to communicate through creative writings. They have subverted Trinh’s idea of stealing language. They received their education from convent English medium school. They have enhanced their talent, aptitude and attitude gaining multiple experiences in the “contact zones”(Pratt, [1992]2008:8). They have emerged as the powerful voices who are leading their younger generations into new directions by showing globalized opportunities. They have created their cosmopolitan identities by negotiating with multiculturalism in the recent global and digital world. These diasporic writers have constructed a platform for their writings as Elaine Showalter has predicted about women writings about gender identities: “a few years ago feminist thought we were on a pilgrimage to the promised land in which gender would lose its power, in which all texts would be sexless and equal, like angels... The land promised to us is not the serenely undifferentiated universality of texts but the tumultuous and intriguing wilderness of difference itself” (Showalter, 1981:205). This is what has been narrated by Syal, Ali and Shamsie in their writings about female gender. They have interrogated the complex questions like female desire, love, emotional need, sexuality, and puberty. Syal has portrayed many working women who work in school and factories to reflect female gendered identities. Daljit, Meena’s mother, works in a English medium school being South Asian diaspora in London. She has established herself among the Whites who always consider non-white as other and outsider. Syal writes: These women were commonly known as The Ballbearings Committee as they all worked at a metal casings factory in New Town, an industrial estate and shopping centre and our nearest contact with civilization (*Anita and Me*, 1996:19). Further exploring the British man-women relationship, Syal represents women not as a second sex but independent who manages their families financially: “They do. They work so their husbands can eat” (20). Through the character of Tracey and Anita, Syal explore the gendered identities of teenage girls. She writes: “Anita was blonde and pale, Tracey was dark and pinched, the silent totting shadow whimpering at her big sister’s heels, swatted and slapped away as casually as an insect” (46). Meena is influenced by her white neighbours—especially by Anita. Anita represents Western cultural values. She was also teenage girl but older than Meena. She becomes aware about her sexual desire and needs. She starts to explore her sexual feelings and desire. She makes boyfriend and spends night with her. Being a friend of Anita, Meena is influenced by her liberty and way of life. She also becomes aware of her sexuality and body.

She starts to explore the magazines which can help her out to enhance her beauty so that she can impress boys of her age. In this regard, Syal delineates in detail conceptualizing the gendered identity of Meena in London:

Then I began wondering if any boy would ever notice me, the way that they always noticed Anita. I turned to my oracle for an answer, Jackie magazine I knew would tell me what to do. I feverishly scoured the Cathy and Claire' column to see if any of the other readers shared my dilemma. The Jackie problem page was a revelation and somehow a relief; I had no idea there was so much suffering out there. But after a few weeks, during which I could not find one letter specific to my particular dilemma, I decided to write in myself. I composed the letter in our bike shed—I did not want Anita to know anything about it—helped myself to an envelope and stamps from papa's supply which he kept in a carrier bag under the record player, posted it off all the way to London, and then waited (145).

Syal has explored the gendered diasporic identity through the character of Meena. She points out how Meena is influenced and amazed by the liberty of western culture and way of life. She tries to assimilate herself with western world. But she is always considered stranger by the Whites. Western people do not accept non-white in their community. That is why; Meena is considered outsider and other in the socio-political surroundings of England. This is what makes her feel displaced and dislocated in western community. This treatment creates her identity and gendered diasporic identity.

Like Syal, Monica Ali has explored the aspects of gendered diasporic identity when she lays out the sexual and emotional life of Nazneen in the streets of London. Nazneen migrates to England after getting married to Chanu. But when she explores her gender identity, she finds herself unfulfilled with her husband. When she gets chance to explore her outer world and limitations, she desires for love and emotional satisfaction. She develops an extra-marital love affair with Karim. Ali depicts the two sides of life of Nazneen. Firstly, she is represented, meek, mild and subordinated to her husband. Then, she emerges as a new woman in the socio-cultural environments of England. She is influenced by the British way of life and adopts that way of life. Conceptualizing the gender identity and desire of Nazneen in the diasporic location which constructs her gendered diasporic identity:

She tightened the muscles of her pelvic floor, afraid all of a sudden that she would wet herself. If she stayed here, then what alternative would she have but to marry Karim? The thought flooded her with so many conflicting emotions it was a wonder she retained control of any of her bodily functions. She tried to single out a thought, any thought, and take charge of it. The children. How could she present the girls with a new father like that? How terribly it would scythe at their young minds, one question repeating itself over and over. By what means did our mother ensure this boy?

Major Findings:

To conclude the paper it can be stated that the three writers belong to three different socio-cultural and political environment from South Asia. But they have shared many elements related to gender identity in diasporic location. Although they have been mistreated and seen outsiders in the foreign country, they have tried to establish themselves amongst the people of different religion, culture and faith. They have different stories of migration and sense of belongings. They emerge as a strong female characters in the adopted land. That's why, their abilities and creativity to hark into the future generated their strapping female gendered diasporic identities in the multicultural world of England.

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05**Gender Fluidity and Intersex people : critical analysis
of the selected works of Judith Butler from the
perspective of Queer Theory****Seema Devi**(Research Scholar)Department of English
Maharshi Dayanand University Rohtak**Abstract :-*****“Love him and let him love you. Do you think anything else under heaven really matters?” – James Baldwin***

In his famous book Giovanni's Room, gay writer James Baldwin talks about the powerful opinion about love. He declares openly that sex and gender don't make a difference; all that is important is that two people love each other. Nothing should live in their way if they have love in their souls. These messages resounded in thousands of people who felt like their feelings were worthless because of the gender of the matter of their love. With this quotation, Baldwin convinced them that it didn't matter because love is love. The belief considering the division between sex and gender has been criticized throughout the 20th century by Western feminist scholars and thinkers . Certainly, if women want to be liberated from their supposed fates formed by the masculine regard, it implies it is also paramount to concentrate on biology and the accepted normalcy of sexes too. There are lot of cases where sex is also constituted and formed by destructive biases resulted by the medical body: for example, it is relatively familiar for prosperous Indian families to pay for an abortion if the baby is a girl in order to not bring up a child who will cost money and pay a dowry later for a marriage . People put social intentions on sex, and that is mainly why sexism - the assumption that the members of one sex are less reasonable and skillful than the other one - is perpetuated. People therefore emphasis on genitalia in order to find out the 'true nature' of a person. The main aim of this research paper is to analyse gender discrimination and sex-role through a critical analysis of the selected works of Judith Butler.

Keywords:- Sex, Gender, James Baldwin Feminism, Queer studies, Judith Butler, Gender discrimination

Introduction:- Queer theory is about to analyze and challenge how scholars, activists, cultural texts, and the media perpetrate gender- and sex-based binaries, and its purpose is to unlock structures and battle against social inequalities. Due to disagreement about the description of queer, comprising whether the word should even be interpreted at all or should be left gradually open-ended, there are many differences and often paradoxes within queer theory. In fact, some queer theorists, like Berlant and Warner and Butler, have instructed that interpreting it or conceptualizing it as an educational area might only lead to its unavoidable misconception or devastation, since its whole objective is to critique academia relatively than come to be a traditional educational realm itself. Fundamentally, queer theory does not establish or protect any special individuality, but rather, rooted in post-structuralism and deconstruction, it helps to energetically critique heteronormativity, uncovering and cracking conventional beliefs that sexual and gender individualities are supposed to be heterosexual or cisgender. The term “queer theory” came from Teresa de Lauretis’ 1991 book in the feminist cultural studies journal discrepancies named “Queer Theory: Lesbian and Gay Sexualities.” She clarifies her term to

imply that there are at least three complementary programs at play within this theory: rejecting heterosexuality as the standard for sexual constructions, a challenge to the assumption that lesbian and gay studies is one single element, and a strong focus on the numerous ways that race forms sexual prejudice. De Lauretis develops that queer theory could influence all of these surveys together and provide rise to it feasible to reexamine everything about sexuality. The theorist most generally specified with surveying the established awareness of gender and sex is Judith Butler, who brings out much from Foucault's notions but with an emphasis on gender.

Judith Pamela Butler is one of the most famous American philosopher and gender theorist whose books has impacted political ideology, principles, and the areas of third-wave feminism, queer theory and literary theory. Butler is best recognized for her texts *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990) and *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (1993), in which she disregards traditional beliefs of gender and formulates her theory of gender performativity. This theory has had an important impact on feminist and queer theory. Her books are frequently surveyed and debated in film studies courses promoting gender studies and performativity in discourse. In *Gender Trouble*, Butler does accomplish using the term "queer". Although she arranges her books within the area of feminism, she is significant in its major drafts. Later, however, Butler's perspective transitions so that she no extended specifies rapidly with feminism, but nor does she formulate an opportunity to feminist impression under the sign of "queer". While the two terms, "feminism" and "queer", are significant classifications for Butler and include specific areas of research and political activity, in Butler's books the connection between these two phrases is very complicated. She asserts that gender, like sexuality, is not a crucial truth attained from one's body but something that is acted out and characterized as "reality". She contends that the rigorous notion that there is a "truth" of sex makes heterosexuality the only reasonable consequence because of the coherent binary created of "feminine" and "masculine" and thus establishing the only reasonable consequence of either being a "male" or "female." Butler gives rise to the case that gender performativity could be a technique of opposition with examples such as drag, cross-dressing, and the sexual nonrealistic characterization of butch and femme individualities that poke fun at the laid out gender norms in society. In her famous book, *Undoing Gender*, Butler brings it apparent that performativity is not the similar as performance. She clarifies that gender performativity is a repeated procedure that eventually builds the topic as a subject. Butler's work gives rise to light the achievement of gender questioning the rigidity of the hierarchical binaries that prevail and is what makes her work valuable in queer theory. In *Bodies that Matter* (1993) that she initial evaluates on the notion, significance and speculative area of "queer". The word itself seems a few times in the book and the entire last chapter is devoted to its deliberation. In no other book by Butler does the term "queer" seem so frequently or hold so many academic significances. Up to the last chapter of the book Butler utilizes the word "queer" without formulating any particular significance for the term. It is rather that the context in which the term is used prescribes its connotation. To me, it appears that around 1993, the notion of "queer" was already employed in educational works as an indication of a recent type of strategy to sexuality studies. In the beginning to *Bodies That Matter*, Butler writes

This text is offered, then, in part as a rethinking of some parts of *Gender Trouble* that have caused confusion, but also as an effort to think further about the working of heterosexual hegemony in the crafting of matters sexual and political. As a critical rearticulating of various theoretical practices, including feminist and queer studies, this text is not intended to be programmatic. (Butler 1993, xii)

Butler does not illustrate any particular significance or restrict the citations of the word “queer”. Probably she determines that the meaning, or at least the usage of this word in U.S. academia, is already somehow formulated and there is no requirement to examine it in depth. From these two sentences in the beginning, which comprise the manifestation of “queer studies”, one can discern that the term “queer” was correlated with an analysis of heterosexual hegemony as well as with some recent theoretical methods of evaluating sexuality. It is also fascinating that at the beginning of *Bodies That Matter* Butler only partially observes what she names “queer studies”. For instance, nowhere has she asserted that her text is a work within queer studies or is about the notion of “queer”, though she does say that it “includes queer studies”. The manner “queer studies” is never clarified throughout the whole book. In another paragraph from *Bodies that Matter* Butler writes

Although the political discourses that mobilize identity categories tend to cultivate identifications in the service of a political goal, it may be that the persistence of dis-identification is equally crucial to the rearticulation of democratic contestation. Indeed, it may be precisely through practices which underscore dis-identification with those regulatory norms by which sexual difference is materialized that both feminist and queer politics are mobilized. (Butler 1993, 4)

Conclusion:-

Judith Butler’s research in gender and queer theory has been of high impact as she was prepared to deal with the experiences of gender non-conforming individuals, such as drag, intersex, non-binary or trans people. Her deviating awareness of gender and sex enables us to completely comprehend specific particular overwhelming ordinances within patriarchal communities and persuades us to be more crucial of presumed biological gendered characteristics. Virginia Woolf’s quote in *Orlando* seems to exemplify Judith Butler’s assumption of gender performativity relatively reasonable. Certainly, the two personalities are often authorizing their genders and earning them seem natural in order to immortalize specific normalized acts. Woolf’s novel and Butler’s theory both concert that people’s personalities are far more complicated than the binary criteria assessed on them and that women are not a centralized organization with reliable feminine traits. Sex is not the biological meaning of gender and is already socially established by standards, just as gender is an ongoing accomplishment.

Through her books Butler brings about us conscious of the underlying mean that fuel specific patriarchal inducements and nourishes our significant understanding of binary classifications, established on presumed natural masculine or feminine characteristics. Contrarily, people’s particularities should be esteemed and complexities with queer contributions to point to the assortment of gender identities.

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06**Exploring the Queer' in Jewelle Gomez's Don't Explain'**

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Abstract

Up till 1980's it was generally recognized that the western culture and its organizations were mainly constructed on three main axis – race, class and gender. All the critical enquiries in various disciplines in social science and humanities revolved around these constructs. In 1980s lesbian and gay studies brought in a fourth major category of analysis in literary and cultural studies – sexuality. Simultaneously, over the period of it gave rise to Queer theory. The theory has turned 'Queer' - a term which traditionally disparages homosexuality - into a proud banner. For Queer studies, human sexuality is always dynamic, fluid force. It's always changing and growing, and its boundaries are not always rooted in any one rigid definition or category as such. Jewelle Gomez is a one of the influential American writers and LGBTQ activists whose works have thrown light on the issues of LGBTQ women, especially the women of colour in America. 'Don't Explain,' a story by her that provides us some positive images of lesbians and a truthful depiction of some of the hardships they face in a heterosexual world. The present paper attempts to explore the term 'Queer theory' and in literary and cultural studies and the 'Queer' in Jewelle Gomez's story 'Don't Explain'.

Exploring the 'Queer' in Jewelle Gomez's 'Don't Explain'

Jewelle Gomez is a very influential American lesbian author. She has a prolific writing career as a short story writer, novelist, poet, critic and playwright. She has a vast experience of working in public television, theatre, as well as public activism and philanthropy. Her writing—fiction, poetry, essays and cultural criticism—has appeared in a wide variety of platforms, both feminist and mainstream. Her work focuses on women's experiences, particularly LGBTQ women of colour. She has authored seven books, among them the double Lambda Award-winning novel, *The Gilda Stories*. Apart from her writing career, she has been a very prominent activist for the rights of LGBTQ communities in USA, having served on various public bodies working in this field. She is also considered to be the “Aunt” of Afro-Futurism.

The present story for analysis is taken from her book *Don't Explain*, a collection of short fiction published first in 1998. In this collection of stories Gomez touches upon themes such as class race, gender hierarchy, racial and sexual identity, acceptance of Black lesbians in society, and eroticism. Gomez challenges what is considered to be 'normal' dominance in society in her stories with characters who overcome judgements and accusations by society and ultimately accept themselves and embrace their own identities. The story *Don't Explain* by her gives us positive images of lesbians and a realistic portrayal of some of the difficulties and hardship they have to face in a heterosexual and heteronormative world around them. The story is set in Boston, one of the cities in the northern states of USA in 1959. It is a simple tale of a middle-aged lesbian woman Letty who tries to come to terms with her sexuality but has difficulties to achieve so, because of the factors like 'internalized homophobia', compulsory heterosexuality and homophobia prevalent among the people around her. But, with the company of and in the community of some other lesbian women whom she encounters at the end of the story, she finally does seem to overcome this internalized homophobia about her sexuality. 'Don't Explain' throws light on the lives of lesbian characters a decade before the Gay Liberation

Movement, which had started in 1969, began organized political activities to gain civil rights for gay people in USA. At that time lesbians in America were given few or no civil rights. They could be beaten with little chance of protection from the police or the law system. In USA heterosexual individuals still often deny LGBTQ people some basic civil rights without having to worry too much about the law coming forward to stop them. The story, though portrays the picture of some sixty years ago, is still relevant to the present times because its exploration and positive portrayal of the lesbians for the better understanding of what we now call the Queer theory and the LGBTQ community issues.

In addition to being an interesting story 'Don't Explain' offers us an affirmative picture of lesbians—represented by the characters of Letty, Delia, Terry, Terry's friends, and the real-life character of legendary singer Billie Holiday—living in a heterosexual world. In order to analyze how Gomez's story fulfills this task, we shall try to examine: (a) its portrayal of lesbian isolation in a heterosexual world; (b) its positive depiction of lesbian characters free from the myths and stereotypes attached to it; and (c) its focus on the significance of lesbian community for the provision of emotional prop needed for an individual to come to terms with one's sexuality. In this analysis we shall be using some basic concepts from Queer theory like compulsory homosexuality, Homophobia, Homosocial activities, the women-identified women concept, Homoerotic imagery etc.

Lesbian Characters' isolation in a heterosexual world:

The events in the story are told through the eyes of Letty, the main character. She is a middle-aged unmarried woman of about thirty-five. Principally, she is a country girl of colour, from a village Burkeville in southern state Virginia. She has migrated to Northern part of America

– to a big city – Boston in 1952 for work. There she has been working in a bar as a waitress ever since. 'After Letty's mother died there has been no family to go back to down in Burkeville.' She is a person without a family. Though she has been working at the bar 411 Lounge for seven years, she doesn't seem to have any close friends as such, despite the fact that she works with women she likes and with whom she has a good deal in common. She is apprehensive and feels affliction and guilt about her sexual orientation and doesn't want to think about her past when she lived with lover Maxine. Letty clearly suffers from internalized homophobia, the self-hatred some LGBTQ people experience since, during their growth through adolescence into adulthood, they have 'internalized' or taken into themselves, or the homophobia pressed upon them by heterosexual and heteronormative culture (Frost and Meyer). She thinks she should not have the sexual feelings she has. This is evident when she, at the workplace, during a break is listening to her favorite song 'Don't explain' by Billie Holiday and she,

'Closed her eyes again for the few remaining minutes. The song was back in her head, and Letty had to squeeze her lips together to keep from humming aloud. She pushed her thoughts onto something else. But when she did she always stumbled upon Maxine. Letty opened her eyes. When she'd quit working at Salmagundi's and come to the 411 she'd promised herself never to think about any woman like that again. She didn't know why missing Billie so much brought it all back to her'(Gomez 11).

Taking into consideration Letty's internalized homophobia, she has reason to fear the women she thinks might be lesbians, as they might bring to the surface her own sexual feelings, which she is trying very hard to conceal. Worse still, they might come to know her non-heterosexual orientation, which she is trying to hide. On the other hand, she has reason to fear heterosexual people because if they learn about her secret, they will probably discard her, and

she might have to lose her job too. So, whether Letty thinks another woman is a lesbian or a heterosexual, she has reason to be wary and cautious about her dealings with them. That's why when she is invited by Delia, her colleague at the workplace, to her house to spend time at a get-together with her cousin and her friends she initially hesitates and tries to decline the invitation politely.

Even when Letty is by herself, she is afraid of her thoughts about her past and her former partner. The song 'Don't Explain' by Billie Holiday, whom Letty identifies as a lesbian and draws inspiration from, brings to her mind her hidden thoughts about her sexuality, 'She felt silly when she thought about it, but the melody gripped her like a solid presence. It was more than the music. Billie was her hero. Letty saw Billie as big, like herself, with big hungers and a hard secret she couldn't tell anyone. Two weeks before, when Letty had heard that Lady was dead, sorrow had enveloped her. A door had closed that she could not consciously identify to herself or to anyone. It embarrassed her to think about. Like it did when she remembered how she'd felt about Maxine'(Gomez 13).

The heterosexist society teaches a person that she must be heterosexual regardless of what she feels about her. It results into a compulsory heterosexuality (Rich 632). So is the case with Letty. If there wasn't such a pressure from the heteronormative society Letty would never feel the embarrassment about her liking and living with a same sex person. She perhaps might never have left Maxine so this compulsory heterosexuality has caused her alienation from Maxine as well as from her other would-be acquaintances.

Letty has attraction towards Billie Holiday, whom she meets one night when the singer visits the 411 bar with her band.

'She'd watched and listened, certain she saw something no one else did... Letty found reasons to walk up to the front—to use the telephone, to order a drink she paid for and left in the kitchen—just to catch the scent of her, the scent of sweat and silk emanating from her' (Gomez 13).

Letty believes that if she had made friends with Billie that night, it might all have been different. As she 'could have loved her enough to make it better' (Gomez 14). The death of the singer, with whom she could identify herself and 'the closing of the door' thus intensify her isolation from the society.

Delia and Terry, the cousins who have same sexual orientation as that of Letty, have to be careful about revealing their sexual identity as they are aware of the heterosexual world in which they live. Both women live together; Terry sometimes drops and picks up Delia from her workplace in her car. Letty never has a thought that they might be lesbian though she often travels with them in their car. Terry - 'She never spoke much. Not that she wasn't friendly. She always greeted Letty with a smile'(Gomez 13). Though the women evidently believe that Letty is a lesbian—that's why Terry asks Delia to invite Letty to meet their friends at their home—they also have reason to be apprehensive about allowing Letty into their secret. This is the reason they kept themselves isolated from her in a way and didn't invite Letty earlier. We see can see this in Delia's nervousness about inviting Letty to the get-together at her apartment. 'All the way uptown Delia explained that the evening wasn't a big deal and cautioned Letty not to expect much. "Just a few friends, hanging around, drinking and talking" (Gomez 15). Here we see Delia tries to make things, actually the homosocial activities, appear 'normal' Thus, the compulsory heterosexism and homophobia in the society are responsible for lesbian characters' isolation in the story.

Positive depiction of lesbian characters:

It has been more than forty years into the Gay and Lesbian studies. But some negative myths about lesbians that used to be generally accepted as truth and that still could be found circulating in our heterosexual society today include the false belief that lesbian people are somewhat sick or evil or both, abnormal with unfounded hatred of men, and that the primary force that drives them in life is the hunt of other women for the purpose sexual gratification only. The queer theory has disrupted such myths and beliefs. Many lesbian theorists argue that lesbian identity is not restricted to the sexual linings but also can consist of devoting the big chunk of one's attention and emotional energy to other women and having other women as one's primary source of emotional prop and psychological support. Looked at from this perspective, a lesbian is a woman-identified woman. In other words, a woman who identifies exclusively with women and whose principal relationships (which may or may not be sexual) are with women (Radicalesbians 4). The "woman-identified woman" defines herself without reference to male-dominated societal structures (Gianoulis 1). In the story we find this concept at work, as Letty's her emotional bonds are primarily with women (Maxine, Billie), and that women proves to be the primary source of her emotional support. (her new friends she encounters at the party.) With this we do find a positive depiction of story's lesbian characters—Letty, Delia, Terry, Terry's friends, and Billie Holiday—who combat the stereotypes leveled against the non-heterosexual people through their behaviour and action.

All the lesbian characters in the story are portrayed as human beings and not as sexual predators. Of course, their sexual urges have not been concealed, like that of Letty's for instance when she sees her idol Billie Holiday, ' She'd watched and listened, certain she saw something no one else did. Vulnerability was held at bay, and behind that, a hunger even bigger than the one for food or heroin' (Gomez 13). Here the hunger doesn't mean only of sexual urges, but it is also a social hunger, hunger of homosocial bonding, where the sexual orientation of the participants is of secondary importance. The humanness of lesbian characters in the story can be seen in the area of their attitude toward others, personal interaction with others – customers, owner of their bar, other workers, and their attitude toward their job. We find that Letty and Delia are enthusiastic waitresses who do their job with energy and treat customers with care. They are no men haters. Even at the get together the five women already gathered are playing cards and reveling in gossiping and laughter. It is just like any other social gathering and we don't find a single word of misandry.

We see many instances in the story of kindness and comradeship performed by the lesbian characters. For instance, the singer Billie Holiday after her performance in the bar 411 leaves a tip, not just for Henrietta, the head cook but for each of the waitresses and the bartender. The experienced Letty trains the young newcomer Delia 'how to balance plates, how to make tips, and how to keep the customer's hands on the table.' She did it voluntarily. She even gives cautious advice to her about how not to get into the mesh of the pimp Tip. She did all this not because Delia was a lesbian (it was only at the end of the story at get-together does Letty come to know that Delia is also of her kind), but because she was her fellow human being. Delia's cousin Terry has no qualms about giving Letty a ride home sometimes. The lesbian woman at the gathering engages in a lively conversation with Letty, a total stranger to her, about music of Billie Holiday. Sexual predators are not known for their acts of kindness, for their genuine sensitivity to the needs of others, or for their ability to be a good friend. So, all the acts of friendship, heartfelt kindness, and sensitivity toward people we see performed by Letty, Delia, Terry, Terry's friends, and Billie Holiday present a representation of lesbians that

gives a striking contrast to the image perpetrated by the false belief that lesbians are sexual predators and their primary aim is to prey upon women sexually.

The significance and need of community for lesbian individual:

Letty, Delia, and cousin have all migrated from the conservative south states of America to the relatively liberal north, from the country to the city. Letty from Virginia and Delia from Anniston. One possible reason for such a move was high employment opportunities northern cities usually provided to working-class women of colour. Another dimension was probably the women's non-heterosexual orientation. A new, relatively anonymous city life would give them an opportunity to live as they chose, though not overtly in society. The larger, more diverse population improved the chances of finding other lesbians with whom they could relate, make friends and form a community of their own. The gathering of lesbian women at Delia's house explains the vital role lesbian community plays for the emotional sustenance and psychological support for these individual lesbians. This fact is well illustrated by Letty's transformation of internal homophobia into embracing her sexuality among the company of other lesbian women at the gathering.

'She poured slowly as the reality settled on her. These women were friends, perhaps lovers, like she and Maxine had been. The name she'd heard for women like these bursts inside her head: bulldagger. Letty flinched, angry she had let it in, angry that it frightened her. "Ptuh!" She blew through her teeth as if spitting the word back at the air' (Gomez 16).

these lines tell us that this change is positive in Letty. She feels 'at home' in the company of these women who are engaging themselves in homosocial activities like playing cards together, drinking, listening to music at gathering. Thus, the story illustrates that the homosocial activities, one of the basic concepts from the queer theories is at play in this transformation of individual. Homosocial activities are merely same-sex bonding activities. Like Going to the theatre, playing cards, repairing the car, cooking in kitchen, or any other shared leisure or work can be a homosocial activity if it is performed by two or more members of the same sex. The sexual orientation of the members is irrelevant in homosocial bonding. The important thing is the sharing of experiences that makes one feel closer to –'at home'– with members of one's own sex (Tyson 176). By means of a subtext beneath its heterosexual plot, this story does suggest that being a woman-identified woman is an emotional dimension that plays a vital role in women's lives irrespective of their sexual orientation.

Lastly, the song 'Don't Explain' by Billie Holiday, whom Letty and other lesbian characters in the story consider to be a part of their community, becomes kind of an emblem of lesbian community. It strengthens their bond of friendship and belongingness. This is a favorite song of Letty through which she always felt a strong emotional bond with the singer. And at the gathering she gets to hear this song, as a woman sitting on the sofa is listening to the song playing on record, with her eyes closed, just like she herself like to listen to this song,

'Letty stood in the doorway a moment before the tune began: Hush now, don't explain
Just say you'll return I'm glad you're back Don't explain ...

Letty was stunned. She realized the song sounded different among these women: Billie sang just to them...' (Gomez 17).

Thus, the words of the song acquire symbolic meaning for Letty, whom it speaks of her return to the community and asks her not to explain it to anyone, as it not necessary. The last line of the story ' They listened to Billie together, for the first time' (Gomez 17). shows that the song has

helped create a bond between the two women, who hitherto were stranger to each other.

Conclusion

The story 'Don't Explain' sheds light on the lives of lesbian women in the sixties in America, using some elements from the Queer theory. It tries to combat negative stereotypes prevalent in society about lesbians through its positive depiction of lesbian characters. Letty, Delia, Terry, and Terry's friends have overcome obstacles to survive and prosper. They have accepted their sexuality and Letty too, at the end of the story, comes to terms with her sexuality and embraces her identity with a sense of self identity in the community of her fellow lesbians. They must continue to overcome still more hurdles if they want to survive and live respectfully in a world that oppresses and exploit them not just on the basis of their race, class, and gender (considering all the lesbian characters in the story are women of colour who belong to working class) but also on the basis of their sexual orientation as well. Surely, the emotional support and moral sustenance they've found in one another as a small community will continue to help them in their struggle to live respectfully in a dominant heterosexual and heteronormative world.

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07**The Chasm of Violence, Queerness and Disability
in Mahesh Dattani's *Tara*****Miss Balraj Kaur Hanspal**

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Abstract

This article posits the notion of normalcy to be a chimera, by locating queerness or psychological and physical anomalies in the characters of the play, Tara. The paper draws upon the notions from queer studies, disability studies, gender and feminist studies and psychology and its related approach-psychoanalysis. It explores various forms of violence or abuse endured by the characters and the manner in which these are combated. It accentuates the practice of labelling or taxonomizing and its repercussions on the characters under scrutiny. This essay focuses on the ideas associated with abjection, gender performativity, restoration of the normal body, paternalistic dominance, objectification of the female, heterosexuality and the resistance to it. This article highlights main models of disability and unravels different allegories in theology, which denote queerness or disability.

Abuse can take various forms under the rubric of violence such as verbal or oral, physical or sexual, psychological or emotional. The present study speculates on how these are linked to the characters epitomizing queerness and disability and will interrogate the way in which these characters are as normal or as abnormal as the able bodied or heteronormative characters. The text under scrutiny in this article is Mahesh Dattani's play, *Tara*.

Not all the disabled are "queer". But the ordeals they go through and the relentless tribulations and hindrances they encounter in the trajectories of life, as well as the act of labelling, remain the same, even though the labels may vary due to the nature of abnormality. This notion can be understood from the following excerpt:

"Left criticism has devoted itself to the issue of the body, of the social construction of sexuality and gender. Alternative bodies people this discourse: gay, lesbian, hermaphrodite, criminal, medical, and so on. But lurking behind these images of transgression and deviance is a much more transgressive and deviant figure: the disabled body (...) [or] the mutilated (...) body" (Leonard J. Davis, qtd. in Samuels 67-68).

The act of labelling is reflected in the character of Roopa, who is an epitome of the society. Her opprobrium and slanders are quite stark even though she is a flat character. Her verbal violence reveals itself in brutal statements: "*We don't want freaks*" (Dattani 378) or "[Y]ou one-legged thing!" (Dattani 369). Her character subscribes to the "Social Model" (Kothari 31) of disability, which represents ego. If the process of labelling continues to be indoctrinated in a negative way, then it leads to the process of counter-labelling by the offended individual.

Furthermore, Roopa seems to be trapped within the matrix of Longhurst's notion of "abjection" which posits the body as the "close spaces" (Apelmo 44). This notion and the resistance to the process of taxonomizing is reminiscent in the way Tara handles Roopa. At one point Roopa accuses Tara's brother Chandan of having been indecent and calls him a "rapist". Tara intervenes in support of Chandan. Constantly reviled by Roopa for her disability, she counters: "Tara: An imbecile with uneven tits. (...) [A]sk Nalini and Prema to come here (...). They are going to look at your tits the same way they looked at my leg! Let me see how you can face themogling at you!" (Dattani 369)

The queerness in Prema, Nalini and Tara is apparent through their transgressive behaviour. Patheek Roy observes about Tara's disability and resistance: "Because it is disability produced in relation to our cultural norm, Tara confronts the male gaze and undermines its potency by refusing to be framed by its discourse. This refusal empowers her and she uses her body as a

medium of political reassertion. Interestingly, the ‘empowered’ Tara now used the phallogocentric discourses of the construction of the feminine to disempower Roopa” (Roy 290-92). The kind of rhetoric the character deploys is striking. For instance, the reference to imbecile indicates the “mental illness” (Kothari 45) of Roopa, Prema and Nalini.

The queerness in Tara is explicit from her intelligence, autonomy and sensitivity which connote the masculine and feminine attributes of male and female in her. These qualities endorse her as being non-binary. Tara is marvellous at playing cards, we are told:

“Chandan: You can take Tara. She’ll make a great business woman. (...) Because you always cheat at cards!

Tara: (...) Just because I win doesn’t mean I cheat, okay!” (Dattani 328)

Tara’s erstwhile conjoined twin Chandan’s “queer” sexuality also calls for comment. His effeminacy through his “performativity of gender” (Butler 177) can be inferred from the extract below: “Patel: What are you two doing?

Chandan: Mummy’s knitting and I’m helping her sort out her mistake. Patel: Let Tara do it” (Dattani 351)

Chandan’s queerness alludes to the view of “the de-masculinization of disabled men, (...) [who are] lumped together with women, children and the elderly in the realm of abject and dependent bodies” (Samuel 65).

Patheek Roy observes, “Tara is, perhaps, more intensely conscious of her body” (Roy 290). Spaces affect her corporeality in acute ways. At one point she says “Sorry, new places slow down my peristalsis” (Dattani 325). Her desire to be restored to bodily autonomy is poignant and deep. Her yearning for normalcy is perceptible in the following conversation with her brother: “Tara: I would wish for both of them.

Chandan: Two Jaipur legs?

Tara: No, silly, the real ones” (Dattani 362).

This desire for the miraculous ‘restoration’ of the healed and whole body points to a crucial issue in disability studies. As Rosemarie Garland-Thomson points out, the ideology of “cure” or

“restoration” focuses on changing bodies imagined as abnormal or dysfunctional rather than on changing “exclusionary attitudinal, environmental or economic factors” (Garland-Thomson 14). Long treated as an “abject” body, Tara’s resistance is paradoxically articulated through the body itself. As Roy observes, “[c]onsequently, when she bares her artificial limb to Roopa and her gang, it is an action that distrusts, questions and subverts the ‘heterosexual matrix’, that grid of cultural intelligibility through which bodies, genders and desires are naturalized” (Roy 290).

“After a while, she is slowly lifts the leg of her trouser to reveal her artificial limb. She laughs in an ugly way” (Dattani 332).

Tara seems to transcend and refute Longhurst’s notion of “abjection” which indicates the body as “close” and “closet” space, (Apelmo 44) that could trap her within the “heterosexual matrix” (Roy 290).

The politicization of the body as a mechanism of resistance and sensitization of sexuality and anomalous corporeality is the common factor between the crip and the queer.

The allusion to the “male gaze” and “the ‘leg’s project’ of socialization [and] sexualisation” determine the queer nature of those characters which can be associated with the “Social Model” of disability such as Roopa, Prema, Nalini, and the society at large. The “male gaze” referred to here is an act of “voyeurism” (Ross 397). Julia Watt Belser observes, “As Rosemarie Garland-

Thompson emphasizes (...), disability is fashioned in large part through the observer's stigmatizing gaze" (Belser 17).

The play explores the possibility of the female corporeality being perceived in the following way by the male counterpart through the characters of Chandan and Roopa respectively: "The body is seen as a site of *jouissance*, a native ground of pleasure, the scene of an excess that defies reason, that takes dominant culture and its rigid, power-laden vision of the body to task" (Samuels 68).

The status of disability can be seen as analogous to that of being a woman in a heteropatriarchal society, in so far as physical attributes (such as breasts) or physical 'imperfections' become the focal points of women's objectification. The kind of objectification, a subtle form of violence, can render even an able female body 'disabled',

Yet the way in which Roopa entices Chandan prior to accusing him of being a rapist alludes to the view that, "cultural systems of compulsory heterosexuality and able-bodiedness work together to produce and enforce social norms that regulate bodies and minds into set systems of living and loving" (McRuer *et al* 2).

Bharati, Chandan and Tara's mother in the play, is complicit in patriarchy. She becomes a reason for gender-based violence committed on her children. When the conjoined twins, Chandan and Tara are surgically separated, she decides to provide the third leg to Chandan instead of Tara even though it is compatible to her. She does this under the influence of the patriarchal leverage of her father, causing the leg to be useless leading to both of them being disabled for life. The way Bharati's allegiance to patriarchy causes the surgical separation of her children for which Dr Thakkar connives with her, is an allusion to "the medical model of disability" (Kothari 30).

The text that has been selected for this analysis is a key intervention into queer and disability discourses. There are sundries of allegories in religious scriptures alluding to the queer or the disabled and their 'abnormal' unions, such as "Ardhanariswar" (Bhuyan 79), "Dionysus" (Bolen Ex127 L22), "Lord Ganesha" for "the slight detriment of his figure" (Cartwright Ex36 L8) and Lord Ayyappan, a popular Hindu deity worshipped in South India. Ayyappan is believed to have been born out of the union between Lord Shiva and Vishnu (in the female form, as the mythical enchantress Mohini (Pathak Ex5 L6-8)). These may resonate with some of the characters in the play, for instance, Tara and Chandan. Such religious scriptures are placed at a high pedestal. But an individual having such traits is relegated to the realm of abnormality. Whereas, such an individual should at least be considered a natural creation of the divine, if not the divine Himself. These allegories would imply that the Almighty has taken these forms to indicate to mankind the possible variations in human existence and that any person having such qualities should be respected and not discriminated against. These are the claims which the mankind seems to disavow and ignore. Irrespective of the conundrums related to abnormality or normality,

"normalcy" remains a chimera or an illusory construct. Thereby, one must value the naturalness of an entity, more than anything else.

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08**Navigating a Realistic Presentation of Queer Community
in Indian Culture, Literature and Cinema**

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Abstract

The term 'Queer' is applicable to the LGBT community including Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people. The history of the human race exposes that this community is a stigma for society. The unnatural sexuality and unusual behavior of these people are unacceptable in the society. LGBT people face discrimination in all walks of life. They are also rejected by their families due to their belonging to the sexual minorities. In Indian context, these people are considered more religious as they have chosen this life for the sake of service to God. The literature explores the harsh reality of the existence of the LGBT community in society. Due to literary depictions it is possible to understand the need of the allocating a social status to the transgender people. Gay and Lesbian people are also portrait in movies to show the battle of their survival and existence as a human being. The wave of social revolution has also changed the mindset of normal human beings to change their social status with the help of laws. Present paper tried to find out the correlation between the harsh realities of LGBTQ community reflected in Indian literature and movies for a positive change in the attitude of people regarding queer community.

Key Words: Male, Female, lesbian, gay, transgender, third gender, queer, marriage, sexuality, social status, literature, cinema

Introduction

"Love him and let him love you. Do you think anything else under heaven really matters?" – James Baldwin

In this world, human beings are biologically categorised in two distinct types that is male and female depending upon the sex organs. According to human tendency, there is an attraction among the people of opposite sex which leads to sexual reproduction. Marriage system makes this union pure and helps to evolve a family with the procreation of children. Every society has strong norms of the marriage system with some rules and regulations to keep its purity. Healthy marriage expects security, support, unconditional love, sexual affinity and strong sense of attraction, emotional attachment, responsibility of parenting and selfless commitment to live the entire life together with great contentment from each other. They have dreams, desires, ambitions and aspirations for their children and family.

Beside this biological classification of human beings, we cannot deny the existence of transgender community. Generally transgender people are mostly neglected and an unacceptable part of the society. In Indian context transgender people are called as 'Chakka', Kinnar' or 'hingra'. Third community is considered as an abuse to society. A transgender person is a normal human being having all rights and duties as a citizen of a country. The scientific reason behind the transformation of any person in transgender is the hormonal imbalance. The male adolescent who carries the feelings, desires and womanly attitude falls under the third gender category. The ill attitude of the society towards such people forces them for gender

identity. Social activists fight for the social rights of LGBTQ community. The Indian Supreme Court has given the historical verdict to repeal the act 377 for the rights of LGBTQ community. It is a major step to change the social status of this community.

Queer Theory

Queer is an umbrella term and an alternative label for LGBTI community of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex kind of people. The term derogatory depends upon the class, race, generation and also their personal experience. The sexual behavior of these people is not acceptable according to established expectations. Heterosexuals have recently used the term 'Queer' to define themselves. In the framework of queer theory unstable identities regarding gender, sex or sexuality are suggested. Queer theory is an academic discourse that has replaced the gay or lesbian studies. The term first coined by Teresa De Lauretis in a conference on theorising gay and lesbian sexualities held at the University of California, Santa Cruz, in February 1990. The theory encompasses a whole range of issues and problems concerned with these sexual orientation and gender identity. The French Philosopher and historian, Michel Foucault is the proponent of Queer theory. The literary authors like Derrida, Lacan and Freud have also given significant contribution to this theory depending upon their experiences in the western culture. Sexuality gradually assumed a new status as an object of scientific and popular knowledge at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Queer in Indian Literature, sculpture and Art

The Indian literature reveals the fact that though queer community is neglected in the contemporary literary tradition but in traditional literature the third gender characters and unnatural sexual behavior is explored from mythological works. Devdutta Patnaik, a famous Indian English mythological writer has collected the mythological stories with same theme of Queer representation and published in his collection of short stories '*The Man who was a Woman and Other Queer Tales from Hindu Lore*'. Gender metamorphosis and sexual transformation is a common thread of all stories. The stories are collected from religious epics like *Ramayana and Mahabharata*. The stories from these epics have become the most integral part of Hindu society. The third gender characters in these stories Devdutta Patnaik has shown the dominant Hindu attitude towards sex, pleasure, gender and fertility.

In his another work with same theme *Shikhandi and Other Tales They don't Tell You*, Devdutta Patnaik has shown queer undertone through thirty stories from Indian mythology. Shikhandi became a man to satisfy her wife; Mahadeva became a woman to deliver his devotee's child; Chudala, became a man to enlighten her husband or Samavan became the wife of his male friend. The vast oral and written tradition in Hinduism has around two thousand years old literary history. These tales are heart touching but sometimes disturbing. These stories reveal the unique way of exhibiting sense of queerness when compared with western literature. The Mythologist Devdutt Pattanaik says about his work with the theme of queerness,

“Patriarchy asserts men are superior to come, Feminism clarifies women and men are equal, Queerness questions what constitutes male and female. Queerness isn't only modern, Western or sexual.”

Devdutt Patnaik has encompassed ancient Indian stories with the emphasis on the third sex, the hijaras, in Hindu scriptures. According to the observations of the scholars and academicians in homosexual Studies, in ancient India alternate sexuality has always considered as a way of life but the country became dishonest towards homosexual matters under the harsh British rule. Intersex identity, third gender, hijaras or eunuch community has been traditionally a part of South Asian Culture. LGBTQ relationships are featured in myth, Temple art, scriptures and literature from centuries. Sexual representation in Indian Sculptures depicts the

society of ancient history. Ajanta caves, Temples, Buddhist Stupas, Chaityas, and Viharas are the historical monuments built around 2500 years ago. The sculptures in these ancient monuments reflect the queer desire with romance and homosexual advancements.

The beginning of the reflection of gay characters in Indian Literary tradition started in the period of 1970s to 1980s. In India 'The World of Homosexuals' is the first study on homosexuality written by Shakuntala Devi in 1977. The well-known playwright Mahesh Dattani in his plays *Seven Steps around Fire* and *Dance Like a Man* exhibited Indian hijara community. *Same Sex Love in India: Readings in Indian Literature* is an anthology edited by Ruth Vanita and Saleem Kidwai in collaboration in 2001. The anthology depicts the history of queer literature from ancient mythology consisting epics such as Mahabharata, Kamsutra to the contemporary literature. Ruth Vanita is a director of Global Humanities and Religion in the University of Montana. She has also written the works on Lesbian theme such as *Society and Loves' Rite: Same Sex Marriage in India* and the *West and Queering India: Same Sex Love and Eroticism in Indian Culture*.

Novelists such as Manju Kapoor, Anita Nair, Shobha De, Mayur Patel, R. Raja Rao, Rahul Mehata, Ghalib Shiraz Dhalla etc. have reflected lesbian themes in their works. It is noteworthy to mention that so many contemporary authors have also contributed in Queer Literature by introducing gay characters in their works. Kamala Das in her poem *The Dance of Eunuchs* represents the barrenness in the life of Eunuchs though they are trying to hide it while dancing at religious events. According to her Eunuchs are 'Poor creatures' their external appearance reveals the inner anguish of helplessness, barrenness, homeless and loveless life.

"They dance, oh; they danced till they bled... There were green
Tattoos on their cheeks, jasmines in their hair, some
Were dark and some were almost fair. Their voices
Were harsh, their songs melancholy; they sang of
Lovers dying and or children left unborn...."

It can be observed that the themes of all these works are related to the violence against queer community by the society including inhuman treatment such as teasing, harassment, bullying, physical assault etc. which leads to suicide-related behavior in them.

Queer perspective in Indian Cinema

Homosexuality is not a topic of open discussion in Indian society despite of the Legal advancement for the development in social status of the LGBTQ community. Cinema is a powerful medium to represent society with all real aspects. As Queer community is the part of existing Indian society, many filmmakers have attempted to represent the stories of queer community. The sexual minorities are now getting a valuable place in Hindi cinema. Characterisations of gays, lesbians, trans genders, bisexuals, hijaras and eunuchs are considered as 'queer' in films with a positive impact upon the Society. Initially there was a strong opposition for the film's based on queer theme but now due course of time some positive changes are happening in the society. Movies like *Badhaai Do*, *Fire*, *Bomgay*, *I am*, *My Brother Nikhil*, *Bombay Talkies*, *Aligarh*, *Kapoor and Sons*, *Margarita with a Straw*, *Dostana*, *Ek Ladki Ko Dekha to Aisa Laga*, *Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan*, *Chandigarh Kare Aashiqui* etc. The plot, theme and main character in all these movies represent queer aspects.

The existing realistic negative social attitude and expected positive changes in social behavior towards the transgender people is depicted in all these movies. Still many people are afraid of exposing openly about the sexual orientation and gender identity due to the fear of social discrimination in India. The Cinema is playing an active role in highlighting the plight and social challenges of LGBTQ people in the mainstream society. Though some directors

have tried to touch the issues of gay community still so many things unexplored. The authentic and realistic screen representation of queer community in Cinema is bringing them into the mainstream of the society.

Conclusion

The Queer community is an integral but neglected part of contemporary Indian society. The present research throws a light on the presence of this queer community from ancient India. They had equal status in ancient history. The sculpture, mythology, art, literature, media and cinema expose the existence of the homosexual people in the ancient society. All these works force us to rethink about the existing social and economic norms related to the LGBTQ people and the necessity to develop the social status of this community by conferring human rights as a normal human being. The modern Indian society is changing the mindset of the people towards the attitude to look at the third gender community.

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Falsity of Fixity: Querying Queerness in Devdutt Pattanaik's *The Man Who Was a Woman and Other Queer Tales from Hindu Lore*

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Abstract –

*This article uncovers queer theory's core concept of falsity of fixity of gender by swimming through the pages of Devdutt Pattanaik's book *The Man Who Was a Woman and Other Queer Tales from Hindu Lore*. Queer theory, which highlights the fluidity of sexuality and gender, tries to destabilise the fixedness of sexuality into the constructed gender-binary of masculine and feminine. This idea of indeterminacy of gender and sexuality in queer theory can be excavated by making an in-depth analysis of the lores that Devdutt Pattanaik narrates in his book titled *The Man Who Was a Woman and Other Queer Tales from Hindu Lore*. This book is an ocean of queer myths which presents the fluid stories of women who turned out to be man, emperors who became pregnant, people who have cross-dressed, wo/men who were castrated and the genderless people. As Pattanaik's book is as vast as a sea, the researcher dives into it and picks out a few oysters-like myths and break it open to expose the pearls-like queer concept of fluidity it contains. The myths of Avikshita, son of King Karandhama, who thinks of himself as a woman, Shikhandini who becomes a man, Hindu King's daughter who became his son, Queen Cudala who transformed herself into a young male priest named Kumbhaka, Sariputra who turned to be a woman, Two queens who conceived a child and Followers of Rama who were neither men nor women are chosen from this book to show the fluidity of gender and sexuality as propounded by queer theory. Most of the beliefs in the society are formed from the mythology. If that is the case, the myths told in this book invite the audience to broaden their mind to accept fluidity of gender and embrace queer people without discrimination.*

Key Words: Mythology, Queer Theory, Fluidity, Fixity, Destabilisation

This paper unearths the concept of fluidity of gender and sexuality in the light of Devdutt Pattanaik's book *The Man Who Was a Woman and Other Queer Tales from Hindu Lore*. Pattanaik's book successfully draws the picture of characters in the myths who are examples of queers. In the words of David Halperin, "queer is by definition whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant" (62). Queer people or non-heterosexuals are at odds with the normal as they do not stick to the gender binary constructed by the society. The characters Avikshita, son of King Karandhama, Shikhandini, Hindu King's daughter, Queen Cudala, Sariputra, Two queens and Followers of Rama in Pattanaik's book are queer or is at odds with the 'normal'. The faith of most of the societies are deduced from the myths prevailed. So, the researcher, by proving the existence of queerness in the myths, appeals to the consciousness of the people to accept the queer people as 'normal' and to let them to have a dignified life in the society.

An Indian doctor who became a best-selling author and mythologist, Dr. Devdutt Pattanaik (born 1970) focuses his work on mythology, religious traditions and contemporary society. He is also a speaker, artist, and illustrator who specialises in mythology. He focuses on

the current social importance of mythology. *Jaya: An Illustrated Retelling of the Mahabharata, Ramayana Versus Mahabharata: My Playful Comparison, Shikhandi: And Other Queer Tales They Don't Tell You, Myth = Mithya: A Handbook of Indian Mythology, and The Book of Ram* are only a few of his well-known publications. According to him, myths are an important part of society and help to unite people. His critical, inventive, insightful, and motivating perspectives on mythology, commerce, politics, and sexuality are a source of inspiration. Queer aspects may be found in all of the stories in this collection.

According to Morrison “The term (queer) is inclusive of the myriad of sexualities without being essentialist...allows for seeing sexuality, especially gender, as socially constructed and therefore capable of being “deconstructed” and “reconstructed”” (132). Queer theory tries to destabilise gender binary system. Zianne Cuff states that “Western culture has come to view gender as a binary concept, with only two fixed options: male or female. Because of this, gender fluidity is quite possibly one of the most controversial topics in present society” (18). The acceptance of fluidity of gender and sexuality will help the deconstruction of gender binary. Lisa M. Diamond is of the view that “Sexual fluidity has been defined as a capacity for situation-dependent flexibility in sexual responsiveness, which allows individuals to experience changes in same-sex or other-sex desire across both short-term and long-term time periods”(1). Sexuality is one of the central claims of queer theory. Linn Sandberg states that “Sexuality as well as age is not static but changes over the life course, which could be seen as a central claim of queer theory” (118). The notion of fluidity opens up possibilities. Arka Chattopadhyay holds the view that “This notion of sexual indifference opens up the field of gender as a performative playground where there are only possibilities and no fixed anchoring points” (190). Seven tales from Pattanaik’s book are analysed to exhibit the falsity of fixity of gender and sexuality.

The first myth is of King Karandhama’s son Avikshita whom many women wanted to marry. He rejected them all since he believed himself to be a woman. Princess Vaishalini wanted to kill herself as Avikshita rejected her, but a celestial figure promised her that she would give birth to a magnificent monarch. She went to the jungle to fast till her luck changed. Vira, Avikshita's mother, fasted and vowed to get her wish (the marriage of her son). Avikshita, on his journey to the jungle, boasted that he would grant anyone's wishes. Father said, "Give me a grandson, please." Avikshita heard a lady screaming in the jungle as a monster snatched her. He saved her. It was Vaishalini and she gave birth to Marutta. Pattanaik states that “Avikshita believes himself to be a woman. Nevertheless, his mother wants him to marry and his father wants him to produce a child. Even the woman who wants to marry him is unconcerned about his self-identification” (23). This is how the society responds to queer people. Instead of letting them to be what they are, heteronormative society forces them to follow heterosexuality.

In the second myth, Drupada has a daughter. Believing in Shiva’s promise, Drupada raised his daughter Shikhandini as a boy. Shikhandini learned all skills set apart for men. She was married. The bride went to her father in horror when she found her spouse was a woman on the wedding night. King Hiranyavarna of Dasarna promised to attack Panchala to revenge his daughter's insult. Drupada knew he had to show his “son” was a man to rescue his kingdom. It was impossible, he realised. Shikhandini felt guilty for the disaster when she discovered her womanhood. She went to the wilderness to kill herself and encountered yaksha Sthuna. This woodland ghost felt bad for Shikhandini and offered to swap sexes for one night. Shikhandini seized the yaksha's manhood and returned to Panchala to establish her masculinity. Hiranyavarna's courtesans gave a good report. Hiranyavarna apologised to Drupada for his daughter's mistake and sent her home. Shikhandini, now Shikhandi, fulfilled his wife’s husbandly obligations. The obedient yaksha was chastised by his ruler Kubera for changing his

sex and doomed to remain female. Kubera was so impressed with Shikhandi's honesty that he let him stay a man for life. Because the yaksha gave up his sex for a good purpose, Kubera said he'd receive it back after Shikhandi died. Pattanaik indicates that "The sexual transformation of Shikhandini to Shikhandi is a motif common in many Indian folk tales that deal with female to male transformation" (28). It is an affirmation of the presence of gender and sexual fluidity in individuals

The third legend concerns the transformation of a Hindu Raja's daughter into a male. A Hindu monarch disobeyed tradition by refusing to give his daughter to the seraglio of his feudal master, the Sultan of Delhi. The king's daughter sought sanctuary in a temple dedicated to a goddess when the sultan's army was dispatched to fetch her by force. The temple door was shattered by the sultan. His biggest shock came when he entered and saw that the female had changed into a male. He left her and went back to Delhi. The Hindu king was so appreciative and ecstatic that he had several temples constructed in the honour of the goddess. In this story, "the honour of the princess, and by extension, that of her father's family, is protected when the goddess changes the sex of the child" (Pattanaik 28). Here, gender change is seen as an honour for which people are to grateful.

The fourth myth is about Cudala, who assumed male and female forms. King Shikhidhvaja loved his wife Cudala but never praised her knowledge. She was an enlightened woman with magical talents, including the ability to change her form. The king renounced his empire to seek true wisdom in the jungle. Cudala was not invited by king. She ruled the country. Cudala saw her husband 18 years later taking the form of a monk named Kumbhaka. Shikhidhvaja became friends with Kumbhaka. Shikhidhvaja listened to Kumbhaka's advice. Kumbhaka wanted to make love to Shikhidhvaja without revealing his identity. Kumbhaka told the king that a sage has cursed him to become a woman every night. Kumbhaka transformed into Madanika before the king that night. The king let Madanika sleep in his hermitage but didn't seduce her. Every day, the monarch listened to Kumbhaka's wisdom and slept with Madanika. Kumbhaka, who lacked sexual attraction, replied, "I sleep with you as a lady every night. I want female pleasure. Please make love to me like a husband. You've overcome desire, so this won't invalidate your austerity." Shikhidhvaja agreed and married Madanika. He listened to Kumbhaka's wisdom every day and made love to Madanika every night. Kumbhaka tested the king's dispassion one night. His wizardry created an illusion of Madanika making passionate love to a handsome stranger. The king ignored them and told Madanika to find a lover. Madanika evolved into Cudala after learning the king was immune to lust and rage. Shikhidhvaja was so enthralled that he returned to his kingdom with his teacher-lover Madanika and ruled the kingdom for ten thousand years with Cudala. "Cudala is capable of taking both male and female forms". Pattanaik is of the understanding that "Shikhidhvaja does not mind having sex with Madanika even though he is fully aware that Madanika is in essence male. The homosexual drift here is pretty obvious" (36). It can be seen as an example of homosexuality.

The fifth myth concerns Sariputra, who accepts his gender transitions. Sariputra was changed into a lady by a goddess. He didn't employ magic to change back into his manly form. What happened to your female form, the goddess inquired after changing him back into a man. The knowledgeable Sariputra said, "What occurred to the male form before, happened to the female form later—it changed." I didn't create it or alter it. "Reality is thus viewed as a series of transformations. Nothing is static. Truth is illusory" (Pattanaik 39). There is no such thing as male or female in anything. All identities, including gender and sex, are thus indeterminate.

Sixth myth is of Rama's neither-men-nor-women followers. King Dasharatha crowned his eldest son Rama king and retired to the jungle. On the night of the coronation, Dasharatha's

young wife Kaikeyi called him to her chambers and sought two boons he'd promised her years before, when she saved his life on the battlefield. Let Bharata be king and Rama remain a recluse for 14 years. Dasharatha exiled Rama on his promise. Ayodhyans were devastated when they learned about the incident. They followed him into exile. Rama turned back as he reached the river separating his father's realm from the forest "Men and women, wipe your tears and return to my brother's land, if you love me. After fourteen years, we'll reunite." Ayodhyans obeyed Rama and returned home. Non-heterosexuals didn't know what to do. Neither Rama nor Ayodhya could be reached. They waited on the riverbanks for Rama for fourteen years. Rama rewarded them and made them rulers in Kali Yuga. Pattanaik substantiates the point that "By remaining true to the spirit of the epic, the retelling empowers the Hijra community" (122). Rama approves the existence of genders other than gender binary too.

The tale of King Dilip's two queens makes up the seventh myth. Dilip, the King, had two wives but no offspring. In order to get his wives pregnant, he thus asked sages to create a mystical elixir. Sadly, he passed away before the potion could be used. The two widows devised a scheme since they didn't want to squander the mystical fluid. The elixir was consumed by one queen, while the other made masculine-style love to her. Planning paid off. Nine months after becoming pregnant, the queen merely gave birth to a lump of meat. The sages ascribed this to the lack of males in the conception ritual. The sages then used their abilities to correct the error. In this story "same-sex intercourse serves as a poor substitute to cross-sex intercourse" (Pattanaik 117). It can be cited as an example of lesbianism.

This research looked for queer themes and tried to disprove the idea that gender and sexuality are unchangeable in Devdutt Pattanaik's book *The Man Who Was A Woman and Other Queer Tales from Hindu Lore*. Pattanaik's book offers a voice for the silenced queer community. Queerness has been there from the dawn of time, which is why myths include it. Queer characteristics may be seen even mythical gods. Beauty is made of differences. It is time to stop treating people differently based on their sexual orientation and start treating everyone as human beings with dignity.

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The Shift in Representation of the Queer Culture in the Indian Writing Traditions

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Abstract

The paper gives the detailed account of the postcolonial and colonial archive of Indian queer text. It throws light on several possibilities for authenticating the queer identity and claiming the history of acceptance which some conservative homophobic mindset wants to wipe out. It is a survey of Queer culture in textual form in India. It will throw a light on the ideas in the written traditions of India about the love between women and love between men. Some historians prefer to analyse women's experience separately from men's because of the male-dominated societies. Experiences of men loving men and women loving women are necessarily different since men had greater freedom, mobility, resources and power than women. The paper covers both the categories throughout the broad time period. In modern Era, writing on such topics is discouraged by the strong taboo against any form of sexuality that is outside the limits of heterosexual norms. And the inadequate representation of the queer culture on the mainstream side. Queer references are either found in the writing wholly devoted to the subject or in the parallel world of art and literature. It is hardly found in general writing which is meant for general readers. But the paper throws light on the ancient and medieval writing traditions and the societal references in it. In which the queer culture has got more liberal and spontaneous representation. It shows that the Indian culture from the very beginning of the writing traditions is more of liberal in the case of queer culture and seems to be showing the acceptance towards it. The idea of homophobia is enforced in India from the arrival of Britishers, when Lord Macaulay brought the act of criminalising homosexuality in India. To understand this relation, the paper attempts to find out the references in the Indian Texts.

Keywords: Queer culture, Homosexuality, Same-Sex Love and Homoerotic etc.

Introduction:

India is a land of Kamasutra. The word 'kama' is a connotative, and has a layered of meanings. In the present context, it means 'making love,' and the word 'sutra' is a denotative word which means 'principle.' I think the word might have been uttered after the god called 'Kamadev'. So calling India is a land where sex education used to be imparted in the first century. India had given a seminal book "Kamasutra" on sex to the world. But the country has forgotten the value of the book under the name of conservative values, morals and rituals preserved by the quack Indians.

The Indian Law Commission, presided over by Lord Macaulay, introduced the colonial anti-sodomy statute, Section 377, into the Indian Penal Code on October 6, 1860 in British India. The incident in Indian history initiated the emergence of homophobic and discriminatory nature of the Indian Culture.

The present paper has been divided into three sections – ancient, medieval and modern texts in queer culture. The ancient running from the Vedic period to the eighth century AD, the medieval up to the establishment of the British rule in the late eighteenth century and the modern from then to the present. Though these terms are loosely divided, it will help us for a better understanding of the texts in a different era.

Ancient India:

The texts selected for this section are from the epic, classical, and early Puranic periods. The representation of the emergence of same-sex attachment in ancient India writings, these are friendship as life-defining, sex change and cross-dressing; moving beyond gender, rebirth, and same-sex love. The Rig Veda Samhita (ca.1500 BC) presents an ideal friendship as a very sacred relationship; this presentation of friendship continues in the epics. Krishna and Arjuna are maybe the most popular pair of male friends in ancient Indian writings. Krishna and Arjuna are frequently referred to as 'the two Krishnas'. The mystical oneness of Krishna and Arjuna in eternal form is used to explain their love for one another. Krishna makes many declarations of this love, like, telling Arjuna:

"Thou art mine and I am thine, while all that is mine is thine also! He that hateth me as well, and he that followeth thee followeth me! O thou irrepressible one, thou art Nara and I are Narayana or Hari... O Partha, thou art from me and I am from thee!"

(Vana Parva XII)

In these lines, Krishna expresses his feelings for Arjuna. In other lines, Krishna clearly states that Arjuna is more important to him than anyone else. His love for Arjuna surpasses all other loves:

"My wives, my kinsmen, my relatives' none amongst these is dearer to me than Arjuna. O Daruka, I shall not be able to cast my eyes even for a single moment, on the earth bereft of Arjuna. . . . Know that Arjuna is half of my body"

(Drona Parva LXXIX: 153)

The friendship of these two legends can be read in a queer perspective with lots of incidents and dialogues. Despite the close friendship between men, in the ancient age, we find miraculous births: the birth from virgins, from human-divine intercourse or a single parent, male or female. The forms taken by these miraculous births are significant for understanding a culture's changing readings of gender and sexuality. All of these kinds of births appear in ancient and medieval Indian texts, showing openness to different possibilities. In this case, we see, Saudyumni who drinks the consecrated water meant for his wife and gives birth from his thigh. (Mahabharata, VanaParvaCXXVI), the birth of Kartikeya and Ganesha, Another example is that of Harihara, son of Vishnu and Shiva.

We also find some incidents of sex change, cross-dressed and the undoing of gender. The best known of this in ancient Indian literature is that of Amba into Shikhandin,^[1] men of doubtful sexuality.

The most famous work on sexuality is the Kamasutra by Vatsyayana. It defines KAMA as the mental inclination toward the pleasures of the senses. To the reference of same-sex relationships sutra, is significant because it describes a male-male sex act as *sadharana*. It describes as *sadharanaa* mutual act of oral sex performed by two male friends on another.

These are some traces of the existence of homosexual, homosocial and homoerotically inclined behaviour in ancient Indian writings. Though these terms occurred later in the modern world, we can find the applications of the terms in the long back.

Medieval India:

During the period from approximately the eighth to the eighteenth centuries AD, Islamic culture took root in the Indian subcontinent. Various regional and religious cultures including the Muslim, Buddhist, Jain and Hindu intermingled during this period.

We see that there are a few scattered references to same-sex love in the early medieval period while in the late period a huge number of literary pieces on same-sex love developed. In the tenth-century armed migrants began to come into India from west of Hindkush mountains like

Sultan Mahmud, the new rulers established their kingdoms ruled by Muslims in India. They carried Perso-Turko-Arabic cultural traditions into India.

Homoerotically inclined men are continuously visible in Muslim medieval histories. Medieval poetry depicts romantic and erotic interaction between men across class and religion. In Mir's ghazals different male youths, including the sons of Sayyids, Brahmans, Mughals, Turks are included among the 'bazaar boys'. Mir's narrative poem *sbola-i-Ishq* is an example of a love affair between two males, one Muslim another Hindu. There are some references of the love affairs of mystic poets Madho Lal Hussayn, Ras Khan, and Sarmad with Hindu boys.

The Shariah, the law of Islam defines homosexuality as a crime. 'No man should look at the private parts of another man, no women should look at the private parts of another woman, and no two men sleep under one cover and no two women sleep under one cover.' There are several punishments for homosexual sodomy. But compared to Christian Europe, trials and punishments for homosexuality are rare in the history of Muslim people in medieval times. Homoerotically inclined Muslim males have been visible within the community. These Muslims who migrated to India were inheritors of a literary tradition. '*The Thousand and One Nights*' and a large body of literature wherein male beauty and love between men were celebrated. Despite literature, in political discourse, relationships between rulers and their male lovers had been treated as a matter of practical politics. In Akbar's reign love between two men was described as 'a wicked one'. Even though Akbar disapproved homosexuality his son Emperor Jahangir kept 'little boys' for 'a wicked use.' Another Muslim Rulers and nobles are, AlauddinKhalji, who was enamoured of Malik Kafur. A Mughal nobleman, Mira Nathan, was enamoured of a couple of eunuchs and besotted by a beautiful one called Khwaja Mina. Adil Shah, ruler of Bijapur also had acquired two beautiful eunuchs. These kinds of homosexual and queer relationships were frequently seen in Muslim ruled period. These relationships were reflected also in literature. In Sufi literature, the relationship between divine and human was often expressed in homoerotically inclined language. Persian and Urdu poetry has been seen to be influenced by Sufi tradition.

Early Urdu contains a large body of homoerotic poetry. According to one critic, Urdu poetry was franker in its expression. A large number of homoerotically inclined poets can be identified individually and collectively; from the Dargah Quli Khan's travelogue, it is clear that homosexually inclined men were well integrated into the cultures of cities, such as Delhi. (136) Among those whose poetry represents homoeroticism Abru and Mir Taqi Mir is the most prominent. They were mostly described as 'boy worshipers.' They openly discuss their attraction toward men. They narrated events that may or may not be autobiographical but are rich in detail.(137)

Najmuddin Shah Mubarak, who used the pen name 'Abru' was among the earliest well known Urdu poets of North India. I think the way he chose his pen name shows some indication about the shame culture persistently India has grown up with 'abru' honour or Sharam, shame. It would be better to quote some of his poetic lines from "Masnavi" which depicts his 'romantic temperament and worships of homoerotic beauty.'

*"All at once, I saw a real beauty-
I lost my heart to him instantly."
How shall I paint his picture- with what art?
He was the dream to subjugate the heart.
Those eyes, those browses, that softly glowing face-
Each part of him has a captivating grace.
His body soft, his face smooth and pure,*

Magnetized me with a strange allure. (184)

Shaikh Mahmud ibin Muhammad Pir's father was a companion of Shah Hussayn, and he was a close attendant of Hussayn's close companion Madho, a brahmin youth. Shaikh has narrated about Hussayn and Madho's love life. It would be more beneficial to quote that extract to understand and correlate Aligarh with Medieval Islamic homoerotic relationships.

*Hussayn and Madho sat together in one room,
Together they laid aside the sorrows of separation.
Hussayn was kneeling in respect,
his eyes and his heart focused only on Madho.
Madho took from his hand a glass of deep-hued wine-
He drank from it, and Hussayn kissed his wine sweet lips.
Then Madho gave a glass filled to the brim,
And kissed Hussayn in an answer on his reddened lips.
Holding his hand, Madho sat down, crossing his legs,
His face illumined with bright joy.*

This extract simply connects us with the movie, where there is a scene when Siras kisses his boyfriend. Identically I see a correlation between the above mentioned extract. One of the important things is that Madho and Irfaan can be compared with each other to the fullest extent. It seems to me that both of them are shown, in an extract and movie respectively, as if beloved. We find a term used for homoerotically inclined men that is 'amardparast'.^[2]

Modern India:

Ruth Vanita and Saleem Kidwai in their thoroughly researched book have stated some factual data. As a researcher, I have relied on the text. They have written a special section on 'Introduction: Modern Indian Materials' where they have clearly stated and collected some pieces of write up from a wide range of span and authors. The sources have been quoted from various writers. Vijay Tendulkar's 'Mitra's Story' sees homosexuality though to some extent I suspect, in a bad light. But it has been given credit as it stood a source of homoerotic passages in Marathi. Moreover, it is perhaps the first play in a modern Indian language with a lesbian protagonist. Mitra stands for a female friend. We do not need to trace the word 'Mitra.' It is very obviously a suffix of the Marathi name- *Sumitra*. Much has been quoted from Urdu such as, Rekhti poetry: Love between Women, and Ismat Chughtai's 'Terhi Lakeer' and Firaq Gorakhpuri's 'Poet vs. Critic' I still remember Ismat Chughtai's short story 'Lihaaf' which has a detailed picture of a lesbian love relationship. It has been said that Ismat Chughtai had been charged with obscenity for her Lihaaf published in the journal *Adah i-Latif* in 1942. The story depicts a sexual relationship between a neglected wife and her female servant. One of the crucial parts of the story is that a voyeuristic gaze of a girl narrates the story for us. I agree that this story also has shed a light on homosexuality which at a point seems negative. Let me quote a sentence, 'the married woman's husband is interested only in boys.' To me, it seems like an artistic flaw of the story, because homosexuality of husband has been considered a unified responsibility towards his wife, which he is not able to fulfil. On the contrary, it has been shown that the homoeroticism of the wife and her maidservant has got the right way to have. It will be appropriate to talk about 'rekhti poetry' as it has depicted sexual love between women. With a Hoshang Merchant's poetry, I would end this survey of Queer culture in Indian texts. Hoshang Merchant, born in 1947, teaches English at the University of Hyderabad.^[3]

*"If I had to paint him
I'd paint a blob of drooling white
on his lap*

*And the mirrors can make
an endless quotation
in an empty colonnade.”[4]*

In the given poem we can easily notice that poetic persona is passionate to paint his boyfriend. As has been openly dedicated to Vivan; we can guess that poetic persona expresses his conditions. ‘If I had to paint’-shows a conditional activity. And the rest extract makes us aware of a blob which means indistinct shapes or spots. ‘A blob of drooling white’ this line has transcended the entire meaning of the poem. It simply means the spots of saliva would make an endless quotation in an empty colonnade. The desire of the body has been very tactfully described in the quoted extract.

Thus we see the references of homosexuality from the ancient to the modern period. It shows that we have a large number of Homoerotically inclined Indians throughout history. And they were the honoured and successful members of the society who have contributed in various fields. They were not regarded as shame or something wrong in them even if they were not ashamed of what they feel and what they are. These days we see them living a happy life and achieving their aims freely. I think making these relationships unnatural and unhealthy is very recent thinking.

Many tend to think that homosexuality is imported from foreign countries, its origin is outside. But in my opinion, it is not homosexuality that is brought from foreign but the terms like ‘unnatural’, ‘unhealthy’ and ‘immoral’ are brought to India from them. Now the thing is that they, the inventors of these terms have accepted homosexuality as natural and healthy as we consider heterosexuality. But we have stopped looking back in our histories. The need of the time is to look at things with an open mind and open eyes. That would lead us to the right point of view about the so-called ‘queer relationships’. And we would stop calling it queer rather we would include it in a normative circle.

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1. Pattanaik’s ‘Shikhandi and other tales they don’t tell you. New Delhi: Zubaan-Penguin, 2014.
2. Ruth Vanita& Saleem Kidwai’s Same-Sex Love in India where they have stated- amardparsat is an Urdu word which refers to boy lovers.
3. Ruth Vanita and Saleem Kidwai’s Same-Sex Love in India. They have discussed Hoshang Merchant’s ‘Poems for Vivan.’ Page-402.
4. An extract is quoted from Same-Sex Love in India, a poem by Hoshang Merchant, dedicated to Vivan.

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Abstract:

The LGBTQAI has always been looked with prejudice. The people from LGBTQAI community have been imploring for their identification in society since the Vedic era. But the feminine males or masculine females are not accepted by the heterosexual sect. This paper is a sincere attempt to open up the existential crisis and the gender transformation seen in Chitra, a classical dance drama written by Rabindranath Tagore. The drama is based on the story of Chitrangada, the mythological princess of the Kingdom of Manipur and one of the wives of Arjuna according to the Mahabharata. In Chitra, gender does not exist as a predetermined idea. Chitra has been raised by the King as a son with art of war and governance. Chitrangada represents feminine power. She represents man-woman equality. She is neither the woman who shades tears in silence nor a goddess to be worshipped, nor the thing of pity to be brushed aside.

Key Words: LGBTQ, Heterosexual sect, Subaltern sensitivity and Gender identity,

Introduction: Rabindranath Tagore is a legendary Indian writer. He was a Nobel laureate. Tagore won the Nobel Prize for Geetanjali in 1913. Tagore wrote poetry, novels, essays, short stories, travelogues, dramas, and thousands of songs. His works are often recorded for their musical, positive and poetic nature. His work is grappled with history, linguistics, and spirituality. Influenced by the western romantic poets and maintaining an Eastern characteristic of sensibility, Tagore developed a new kind of romanticism.

Gender Fluidity in Rabindranath Tagore's Chitra: Chitra is a play by Rabindranath Tagore. It was originally written in Bengali in 1892. It was translated into English by Tagore himself. Chitra is a musical play. It is a translation of Bengali work, Chitrangada (1892). It is based on the love story of legendary prince of Kuru clan, Arjuna, and Chitrangada a princess of Manipur. The play is divided into nine scenes and the characters are Madana, (God of love), Vasanta (God of Spring and eternal youth), Chitrangada, Arjuna and villagers. It is set in the Vedic period. Its locale is the forest around the state of Manipur in Aryawarta (now India).

In Chitra, Tagore portrays Chitrangada as a brilliant and brave warrior princess of Manipur. She was the daughter of Chitravahana, the King of Manipur. The King was blessed by Lord Shiva. After the birth of Chitrangada, her father decides to raise her as a man, a warrior. Doubtless, she is a great warrior and a hero in spite of being born as a woman, but has never had any chance to truly live like a woman or learn how to use "feminine wiles". Chitra clarifies that she had met the warrior, Arjuna in the forest. During a hunt, she trapped in love of good-looking Arjun. Arjun was, at that time in exile for twelve years. She is attracted with him but is afraid that Arjun would reject her since she is masculine. Chitra's narration of her first sensuous love with Arjuna is the best example of erotic love. She describes it in the poetic words as:

"Heaven and earth, time and space, pleasure and pain, death and life merged together in an unbearable ecstasy."

Hence, Chitrangada appeals Madan, the God of Love, to make her more feminine and beautiful. Moved by her pleas, the god gives her not just one day but an entire year to spend with Arjuna. Madana, the God of Love endows her with "beauty" for one year with which she can win

Arjun. Arjun breaks his vow of celibacy with the passage of time and fall in love with her. She meets Arjun in the new transformation, and Arjun is infatuated with her beauty.

Chitra says:

“ That, indeed, is her greatest misfortune. When a woman is merely a woman; when she winds herself round and round men's hearts with her smiles and sobs and services and caressing endearments; then she is happy. Of what use to her are learning and great achievements? Could you have seen her only yesterday in the court of the Lord Shiva's temple by the forest path, you would have passed by without deigning to look at her. But have you grown so weary of woman's beauty that you seek in her for a man's strength?

With green leaves wet from the spray of the foaming waterfall, I have made our noonday bed in a cavern dark as night. There the cool of the soft green mosses thick on the black and dripping stone, kisses your eyes to sleep. Let me guide you thither”.(Scene VIII)

When Manipur is attacked, the people call out for the warrior-princess. Arjun gets to know about her for the very first time. He attempts to see Chitrangada. But Chitrangada start conflicting with her duality of self. She feels burdened with the borrowed beauty. Chitrangada asks Madan to return her to her earlier identity, and Arjun falls even more in love with her. Arjun admires Chitrangada for who she is, not what she pretends to be.

“I am Chitra, the king's daughter. Perhaps you will remember the day when a woman came to you in the temple of Shiva, her body loaded with ornaments and finery. That shameless woman came to court you as though she were a man. You rejected her; you did well. My lord, I am that woman. She was my disguise. Then by the boon of gods I obtained for a year the most radiant form that a mortal ever wore, and wearied my hero's heart with the burden of that deceit. Most surely I am not that woman.

I am Chitra. No goddess to be worshipped, nor yet the object of common pity to be brushed aside like a moth with indifference. If you deign to keep me by your side in the path of danger and daring, if you allow me to share the great duties of your life, then you will know my true self. If your babe, whom I am nourishing in my womb be born a son, I shall myself teach him to be a second Arjuna, and send him to you when the time comes, and then at last you will truly know me. Today I can only offer you Chitra, the daughter of a king. (SCENE IX)

The play concludes with his holding her in his arms in her original form, “Beloved, my life is full”, he says. The tale of Chitrangada is the finest example to recognize gender variability. In this play, Chitrangada seems a fusion of the feminine charm and the feminine grace. One feature of her personality is the illusory feminine beauty with which she fascinates and wins the heart of Arjuna.

Chitra: Western Representation of a Eastern Woman: Feminism attempts to explore a social order of traditionally gendered role-playing .Woman has always been projected as a secondary and inferior human being. Feminism denotes the movement for women's equality, legal rights and about women living on equal terms with man. The modern western feminist movement has three 'waves'. Each wave deals with distinctive aspects of feminism. The first wave movement consists of 19th to early 20th century. It dealt with suffrage, educational rights for women and their working plights. The second wave starts from 1960's to 80's. It dealt with the role of women in society and the inequality of laws. The third wave starts in late 1980's to early 1st decade of 21st century. It is seen as both the continuation of the second way of celebrating and asserting womanhood and feminine experience.

Tagore has portrayed Chitra as a woman struggling for self expression and gender equality. She brings up queries of “otherness”. She challenges the place of female in a male's world. The setting of the play is Epic India, where most of the warriors were men. In this

context, Chitra is a lone female warrior, crossing boundaries, breaking stereotypes and challenging gender inequality. She is as strong as man is. She is skilled in horse riding, hunting, and war. When Arjuna in the forest rejects her, she tries to show her strength and power by gaining perfect beauty from Madana.

Tagore's Chitra expresses her sexuality within cultural parameters. She is not repressed. She expresses herself, in a highly articulate manner. Tagore breaks the male parameters that conceptualize female sexuality. The sexual opposition between Chitra and Arjun both in love and war is also highlighted. The Arjun-Chitra relationship in the play is a highly complex one. Initially, Chitra is the anti-thesis of the masculine stereotype feminine beauty and sexuality. But when she meets Arjun, she seduces him with her borrowed beauty. Here, Tagore visualizes a feminist Chitra, whose desire "speaks the same language as man's" (Irigaray: 355).

Conclusions:

There are innumerable tales in Indian mythology regarding gender identity, gender expression, gender fluidity, and sexuality. The tale of transformation and transformed personalities disrupt patriarchal notions. Indian literature has told for ages about heroes/heroines who broke the binary gender system. Chitra widens the fluid possibilities of gender and alternate sexual identity. Chitra is described as "...in valour she is a man, and a woman in tenderness." Chitrangada's transformation revitalizes our cultural history. Tagore admires not only the beauty in women but her strength of physique, soul and intellect. She is not a product of hegemonic discourses. Tagore's Chitra resist patriarchal authority within her cultural framework.

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**Cinematic Analysis of Queer Psychology
in *Love, Simon* (2018)****V. Heymonth Kumar,**

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Perundurai, Erode, Tamilnadu – 638052.**Abstract**

This research paper throws light on the role of queer psychology by the cinematic analysis of the American film, Love, Simon (2018). The film is directed by Greg Berlanti who contributes for homosexuality through his films and web series. This film is based on the novel, Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda (2015), by Becky Albertalli. This paper relates the prominent aspects of psychology, particularly queer psychology, with cinema. It expresses the role of cinema in portraying queer psychology to the global audience. This paper has the testimonials of David M. Halperin, Jen Giesecking, Victoria Clarke, Elizabeth Peet, Sonja J. Ellis, and Damien W. Riggs on LGBTQ psychology. Queer psychology deals with the psychology of queer people to advocate for their fundamental human rights. It works for a kind of reformation in the social system by removing discrimination in all the spheres of life. This paper attempts to prove the presence of queer psychology in the film, Love, Simon, by analyzing the plot of the film as well as its main characters: Simon Spier, Martin Addison, and Ethan. It has some notable dialogues of the aforementioned characters in this film to project the psychological state of Simon Spier, who is a homosexual person but he does not reveal it to the society. His mentality questions the acceptability of heterosexuality and unacceptability of homosexuality in the society in a profound manner. The act of protagonist struggles to normalize his true sexual orientation as a gay, but the act of antagonist holds the key to ridicule him for being who he is. Simon Spier has his own reasons to hide his sexual identity and queer psychology allows him to state those reasons in his own style. To normalize both the sexual orientations of people, queer theories and queer psychology spread through cinema because of its aspect of mass communication. This research paper aims to depict the inner feelings of Simon Spier by the psychological perspective in this cinema, Love, Simon. It attempts to provide equality for LGBTQ community in the society.

Keywords: Queer psychology, Psychological state, Homosexuality, Human rights.

Introduction:

Love, Simon is an American film directed by Greg Berlanti. It plays for one hour and fifty minutes. This film was released on 16th March 2018 in United States by 20th Century Fox. This film is based on the novel, *Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda*, by Becky Albertalli. This novel was published on 7th April 2015 in United States. This film was produced with seventeen million dollars and it earned sixty-six million dollars worldwide. This debut novel was featured on the National Book Award Longlist as well as it held its position in *Wall Street Journal* as one of the best young adult novels in 2015. It got William C. Morris Award in the category of Best Young Adult Debut of the Year.

Greg Berlanti is an American filmmaker and television writer. His full name is Gregory Berlanti. He is the director of the film, *Love, Simon* (2018). His famous television series are *Dawson's Creek*, *Everwood*, *Brothers & Sisters*, *You*, *Riverdale*, and *Political Animals*. He received Norman Lear Achievement Award in 2022 and the Television Showman of the Year

Award in 2019. Becky Albertalli is the pen name of Rebecca Albertalli. She is an American writer and psychologist. Her novel, *Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda*, has adapted into a film. She received German Youth Literature Prize for her aforementioned work in 2017.

Queer Psychology and Cinema:

Psychology and cinema require the participant as an observer. Both of them get the complete attention of the audience. So, they hold vigilant analysis as their mutual aspect. This kind of analysis is called as cinematic analysis. An ordinary viewer merely watches a film whereas a critic analyzes the film by segregating it into several pieces of a literary work. It is the same case in the field of psychology in which a subject is being observed by the psychologist.

Cinema has wide range of subjects to portray morals for its audience. Showcasing the psychology of queer people is one of the prominent works of cinema. While projecting the situations of queer people, the role of the actors is more important than any contributors of a film. Because, the actor must appreciate the queerness before he or she engages in acting LGBTQ characters. Understanding the word, queer, is necessary for academicians and researchers to be familiarized with queer psychology. David M. Halperin from University of Michigan states,

“Queer is such a simple, unassuming little word. A word that was once commonly understood to mean strange, odd, unusual, abnormal, or sick and was routinely applied to lesbians and gay men as a term of abuse, now intimates possibilities so complex and rarified that entire volumes are devoted to spelling them out” (Halperin 339).

The word, queer, can associate with various words to form different meanings. Queer theory is one of the terms of it. According to Jen Giesecking, “Queer theory is a part of the field of queer studies whose roots can be found in women’s studies, feminist theory, and gay and lesbian studies, as well as postmodern and poststructuralist theories” (Giesecking 1). Now-a-days, there is a sudden rise of people who contribute to queer theory in both education and entertainment areas. It encourages queer people to become writers, researchers, filmmakers, and actors in their own field.

As LGBTQ commonly stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer, LGBTQ psychology means the psychology that understands the mentality and behaviors of LGBTQ people. Based on the research of Victoria Clarke, Elizabeth Peet, Sonja J. Ellis, Damien W. Riggs, “Although LGBTQ psychology is concerned with sexuality, it has a much broader focus, examining many different aspects of the lives of LGBTQ people including prejudice and discrimination, parenting and families, and coming out and identity development” (Clarke & Peet & Ellis & Riggs 3).

Queer Psychology in *Love, Simon* (2018):

The film, *Love, Simon* (2018), has the characters: Simon Spier (protagonist), Jack Spier (father), Emily Spier (mother), Nora Spier (sister), Leah Burke (best friend), Abby Susso (friend), Nick Eisner (friend), Ethan (friend), Abraham Bram Greenfield (lover), Ms. Albright (teacher), and Martin Addison (antagonist). By the cinematic analysis of this film, it is possible to apply queer psychology with flexibility to the dialogues in the film. The character, Simon Spier, is the prominent subject whose thoughts and behavior represent queer psychology.

In the beginning of the film, the camera focuses on Simon Spier who lives in Atlanta, Georgia. Simon Spier begins the film with his dialogue, “I’m just like you. I have a totally, perfectly normal life. Except I have a one huge secret” (00:02:02). In this dialogue, his huge secret refers that he is a gay, but he does not reveal it to anyone including his family members. He feels insecure to reveal his true sexual identity. Through the window of his room, he gazes a

man who is working near his house. He pretends to do his homework when his father, Jack Spier, enters into his room. He knows that his father always ridicules gay characters in films and television series, so he maintains his true nature as a secret.

Queer psychology denotes that the stage of feeling insecure in the family is the primary stage of queerness. Even though Simon's family is friendly to him and spending time with him regularly, Simon hides his true sexual orientation for four years. His insecure feelings make him to find someone who is similar to him or someone who listens his words. So, he visits many websites in his laptop and finds a person whose user ID as well as pen name is Blue. He reads the post, "Sometimes I feel like I'm stuck on a Ferris wheel. One minute I'm on top of the world, and the next, I'm at rock bottom. Over and over, all day long. Because a lot of my life is great, but nobody knows I'm gay - Blue" (00:11:37).

When Simon reads this post, he feels some kind of attachment to the person, Blue. Because, he thinks that they have many similarities. He tries to log in with a new user ID as well as a new name, Jacques. He shares his secret to Blue through mail that he is also a gay. He tells about his family to Blue, because of his similar sexual orientation. Revealing the true sexual orientation to a person who has same interest is one of the behaviors of queer people, because they want to expose their feelings to reduce the burden of their secrets. Queer psychology explains the psychological state of Simon as the stage of constructing a new sexual identity. Whenever Simon uses the name, Jacques, in his mail, he loses himself as Simon and he lives as Jacques. In this way, he creates his own freedom to express his inner feelings comfortably even to a stranger.

Simon likes Blue more than his family members. He uses his mobile phone in the classroom and he waits for Blue's mails all the day. He looks his mail account while driving his car and he reduces spending time with his friends--- Nick, Leah, and Abby. He fears that his friends will not accept him as a gay, so he does not reveal it even to them. The state of avoiding heterosexual people for connecting with LGBTQ people is a kind of psychological socialization that leads them to form their own community. Simon feels secure with Blue and he feels insecure with the others. It makes them as a community. Even though they are strangers physically, they are friends or people with similar interests psychologically.

One day, Blue mails Simon whether he told his secret to anyone. Simon replies, "No, Blue. I haven't told anyone. And, honestly, I can't even really explain why. Deep down, I know my family would be fine with it. My mom's about as liberal as they come. And my dad isn't exactly the macho type. I mean Creekwood's resident out-gay kid seems to be doing just fine" (00:19:43). He mentions the Creekwood's resident out-gay kid that refers to Ethan who exposes himself as a gay to the society. Simon logs into his mail ID, Jacques, in the school computer and forgets to log out. One of his classmates, Martin Addison, plays the role of the antagonist in this film. He says that he has screenshotted Simon's emails to Blue and he blackmails him to make Abby Susso, Simon's friend, as his girlfriend.

Simon tries everything to help Martin, because he does not want him to post his true sexual orientation in CreekStories website. Later, he deals with his own thoughts. Simon texts, "Dear Blue, so one of my friends likes the other, and he has no idea. I guess we all have secrets. Anyway, I've been thinking about why I haven't come out yet. Maybe it's because it doesn't seem fair that only gay people have to come out. Why is the straight default?" (00:45:35). He misunderstands that Leah loves Nick, but Leah loves Simon by not knowing him as a gay. Simon thinks that why people accept heterosexuality as a normal or an acceptable sexual norm and homosexuality as an abnormal or unacceptable sexual norm. He thinks of several contexts whereas homosexuality is an acceptable sexual norm.

Queer psychology breaks the stereotypical concept of the relationship between body and sexual orientation of a person. It states that a person may be a male in his sex and woman in his gender, and a person may be a female in his sex and man in his gender. A person can be a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Transgender based on this concept. Simon questions the heterosexuality for making homosexuality as an odd behavior and irreligious sexual thought. Queer psychology attempts to normalize both homosexuality and heterosexuality with fundamental human rights of equality. Simon Spier has the same mindset on normalizing both the sexual orientations by questioning the society for accepting heterosexuality as its default.

During the night after a party, Simon Spier takes Abby Susso, his friend, in his car. While driving Abby to her home, Simon says, “Abby. I’m gay. You can’t tell anyone though” (00:56:45). Because, he feels comfortable when he expresses his secret to her. Trusting someone is always difficult for queer people when they are being afraid of humiliated by the society. Simon trusts Abby even though she came to that place only six months ago. This kind of trust cannot be formed with parents or elders easily. Simon has expressed his secret to her because she is aged as well as him. It is psychologically called as peer group involvement in normalizing LGBTQ sexual variations.

Teens or high schoolers get warmth and true feelings in their peer group which is built of mutual trust and respect. They feel happy when their emotions are valued and their decisions are respected in the society. Parents are always failed to respect the decisions of their children which paves way to building a sense of mistrust. The society values socialization rather than individualism. It does not encourage people to be who they are. This is the common problem that is analyzed by psychology, particularly in queer psychology. In this film, Simon Spier reveals that he is a gay to Abby only other than to Blue with his pen name, Jacques.

At some time, Martin leaks the secret of Simon in a website called CreekSecrets. Martin writes, “Dear fellow Creekwood students, Simon Spier has a secret male pen pal. Because he’s gay. Interested parties may contact him directly...” (01:12:02). This post is seen and read by the whole town including his high school. Simon’s sister, Nora Spier, comes to Simon and askshim about that post. Without any chance, Simon accepts himself to Nora by saying, “It’s true. I’m gay” (01:12:51). Simon gets angry on people around him and he thinks of how people will treat him after his secret is leaked. He is going mindless and his emotions start to collide with each other.

When Nora suggests Simon to deny the anonymous post of Martin, Simon asks her, “Why the hell would I deny it, Nora? I’m not ashamed of it” (01:13:04). For the first time, Simon is not ashamed of being a gay, a homosexual person, just like Ethan. Gradually, he comes out of his mental cage of what the world will think of him. He wants to be who he is and he knows that it is not an easy thing to face the same people in his life with his true sexual orientation. He strongly believes that there is nothing wrong in him and he accepts himself completely.

Simon Spier reveals his true nature to his parents and waits for them to process the truth which they have not expected. He says his secret to his parents, “Actually, I did want to talk to you guys about something. I’m gay. And I don’t want you guys to think anything different. I’m still me” (01:14:47). The sudden outburst of feelings allows any person to accept all the right and wrong things in or around him, because feelings are always stronger than knowledge. Feelings make people to act immediately and it is what happened in the case of Simon Spier. Even though he thinks very much of the bad social outcomes by his true sexual identity, he cannot control his true nature anymore. Queer psychology calls this process as the process of expressing one’s self after or during the transformation of sexual orientation.

When Simon goes to his school and he is bullied by his classmates, he starts to react with anger. Because, his three friends, Nick, Leah, and Abby, have stopped to speak with him as an effect of his minor plots that make them to feel uncomfortably. Ethan, who is also a gay, tells Simon, “You know what they say, one gay’s a snooze, two’s a hilarious hate crime. You could’ve told me you were gay” (01:22:44). So, Simon builds his friendship with Ethan. Helping each other by understanding the nature of one’s identity is the important goal of any LGBTQ communities. In this film, Ethan encourages Simon to find his boyfriend whose pen name is Blue. He makes himself as a good companion for Simon until Simon gets his three friends back.

It takes time for Martin Addison to understand that blackmailing Simon and revealing his secret are not fun. So, he understands that his acts are wrong and he must owe an apology to Simon. When Martin apologizes Simon for posting his secret in the website, Simon gets angry and says, “I’m supposed to be the one that decides when and where, and how and who knows and how I get to say it. That’s supposed to be my thing! And you took that away from me” (01:24:53). Simon cannot forgive Martin for what he has done, so he walks away. Simon says the main reason of hiding the fact from Leah Burke to her. Simon tells her “And I knew that if I told you, that everything was gonna be different. I really wanted things to stay the same” (01:31:43). He does not want any different kind of treatment from his friends.

At last, Simon has confidence to express who he is to the whole school. He announces in the website, “Dear students of Creekwood High School, As anyone with a half-decent data plan already knows a recent post on this very website declared that I was gay. The delivery left something to be desired, but the message is true. I am... gay” (01:35:19). He really portrays him as himself to everyone without any hesitation. This helps Simon to win back all of his friends. The aim of queer psychology is making queer people to be who they are by letting others to understand them correctly. Undoubtedly, this film serves best to show the role of queer psychology with the story revolves around the protagonist, Simon Spier.

The film ends with the words of Simon about his own thoughts on not revealing his secret which he is a homosexual person. Simon states, “For a long time, I was killing myself to hide that fact. I had all these reasons. It was unfair that only gay people had to come out. I was sick of change. But the truth is I was just scared. At first, I thought it was just a gay thing. But then I realized, no matter what, announcing who you are to the world is pretty terrifying because what if the world doesn’t like you? So, I did whatever I could to keep my secret” (01:35:35). In the end, everyone accepts Simon as who he is. Simon is respected by his family, valued by his friends, and appreciated by his schoolmates. He finds his boyfriend Blue whose real name is Abraham Bram Greenfield who is also studying in his same class. This is how Simon Spier fits into the society with wholehearted expression of his homosexuality.

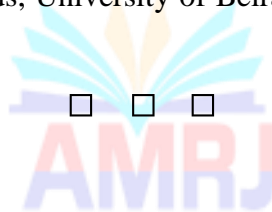
Conclusion:

To conclude this research paper, cinematic analysis of queer psychology in *Love, Simon* (2018) projects the mentality of a gay person in the society. It shows the mistrust and difference of thoughts of him because of the heterosexual social norm. Normalization of LGBTQ people is a process that needs queer theorists and queer psychologists to work hand in hand for making people understand the needs and thoughts of LGBTQ community. According to Henrique Pereira, “The homosexual identity has been called the third sex, antipathetic sexual instinct, perversion, inversion, homosexuality, homosexual outlet, homosexual orientation or preferences, and more recently, the gay or lesbian lifestyle and the socially constructed gay identity” (Pereira 158).

In this world, non-reproductive sexuality is considered as an anti-social behavior. Commonly, people treat non-heterosexuals and non-genderists poorly by considering them as psychologically unstable people. It promotes the necessity of queer psychology, a particular branch of psychology for queer people. There is a growing need of LGBTQ psychology or queer psychology, because psychologists often consider being a LGBTQ is a kind of mental illness. So, queer psychology has the potential to reform their views by allowing them to understand the mentality of LGBTQ people. It is essential for every society to provide equality for all the genders without any kind of discrimination to promote fundamental human rights.

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Queer and Porn Studies : Exploring Misrepresentations and Fetishizing of Queer Community in Mainstream Porn Productions

Anugrah Ryan Joshy

Abstract

Queer is a general term for people who are not heterosexual or are not cisgender. Queer, originally meaning "strange" or "peculiar", came to be used disparagingly against those with same-sex desires or relationships in the late 19th century. The word was reconditioned as a deliberately provocative and politically radical alternative to the more assimilationist branches of the LGBT community in the late 1980s. Porn Studies is the critical academic study of pornography and its associated industry. Porn studies take as their object of research pornography itself, its visual artifacts, cultural role, controversies, and influence on the public as well as the manner of porn production. History shows us that erotic depictions have been created by nearly every civilization. Early cultures associated the sexual act with supernatural forces. In Asian countries, representations of sex and erotic art have specific spiritual meanings interlinked with native religions. The ancient Greco roman art and decoration are erotic, much of it is integrated with their religious beliefs and cultural practices. In the present era of virtual reality, billions of people are streaming porn online. Even though it influences and shapes contemporary culture and relationships, it is not studied or even acknowledged with much-deserved attention. This article examines the negative depiction of the queer community in mainstream porn and its adverse effects. It also highlights how it could be positively used as a healthy tool for the exploration, expression, and celebration of different sexual and gender identities.

Keywords: Queer studies, Porn studies, Gender studies, LGBT, Sexual Wellness

Introduction

Entering the English language in the 16th century, queer originally meant "strange", "odd", "peculiar", or "eccentric". It might refer to something suspicious or "not quite right", or to a person with mild derangement or who exhibits socially inappropriate behavior. The Northern English expression "there's nowt so queer as folk", meaning "there is nothing as strange as people", employs this meaning. Related meanings of queer include a feeling of sickness or something questionable or odious. In the 1922 comic monologue "My Word, You Do Look Queer", the word is taken to mean "unwell". The expression "in Queer Street" is used in the United Kingdom for someone in financial trouble. Over time, queer acquired several meanings related to sexuality and gender, from narrowly meaning "gay or lesbian" referring to those who are "not heterosexual" to referring to those who are either not heterosexual or not cisgender (those who are LGBT+).

In the 21st century, queer became increasingly used to describe a broad spectrum of non-normative sexual and/or gender identities and politics. Academic disciplines such as queer theory and queer studies share a general opposition to normativity and a perceived lack of intersectionality, some of them only tangentially connected to the LGBT movement. Queer arts, queer cultural groups, and queer political groups are examples of modern expressions of queer identities.

Porn studies are the critical academic study of pornography and its associated industry, typically in the broader rubric of the field of sexuality studies. Porn studies take as their object

of research pornography itself — its visual artifacts, cultural role, controversies, and influence on the public — as well as how pornography, is made.

Queer Movements and Porn Studies

Porn studies is an often neglected field of research when it comes to understanding the collective as well as the individual despite playing an active role in shaping modern society. Every single aspect of the global culture is being pornified as we live and breathe. There are numerous studies conducted on how films and literature influence the lives of individuals. Religion, literature, philosophies, ideologies, science and technology, wars, etc. were forces that brought changes in society. Right now pornography is transforming the world. Most people today are ignorant of this fact but all are influenced, directly or indirectly.

In the past, people were under the tight restraint of religion and social conventions. Enjoying sex or exploring one's sexuality was considered a horrible sin. But this was not always the case. In ancient Indian culture, people were in touch with their inner nature and respected and understood one other deeply and profoundly. The Khajuraho temples of Madhya Pradesh stand as a solid proof of their glorious awareness of the unknown. There was no repression and people lived with full dignity and sexual freedom. Contrasting it with the present world, we get an entirely different picture. If there was an open and uninhibited sexual expression in the past, people in our generation act like they are infallible saints in public but secretly indulge in porn to live out their fantasies. What generated such a massive scale of pornography and hypocritical behavior is the unnatural repression of the natural desires of human beings.

Queer movements across the world were one of the first to attack the bedrock of this repression. These movements battled using different mediums like art, music, films, literature, etc. The notion that only one type of relationship is natural and the rest are unholy was shattered by its advocates. It was the realization of the depths of their inner nature that animated these people to rise and battle against the traditional gender roles assigned to them without their consent.

There are so many things in common between queer movements and pornography. Both are reactions against repressive social conventions which stigmatized the natural state of existence of individuals that forced them to mask themselves and live unfulfilled lives. But a fundamental difference is that pornography has become a billion-dollar media industry whereas LGBTQ+ is a people's movement. Like every industry, porn producers are also motivated by profit. The content generated by the porn industry affects the next step of the sexual evolution of humanity and the balanced existence of multiple gender identities. The queer movement has an active role to play in ensuring that these profit-based porn companies depict the relationships of minorities as truthfully as possible. This could be done by studying pornographic material and vehemently critiquing and weeding out its wrongful expressions and tendencies. Queer movements and porn studies must go hand in hand.

Misrepresentations of Queer Communities in Mainstream Porn

People turn to porn as a source of information when it comes to sex and the body. Studies show that most young people are exposed to porn by age 13. Pornographic material today is specifically crafted and powerfully convincing. Despite having a reputation for being pro-LGBTQ+, the mainstream porn representations of LGBTQ+ individuals are inaccurate and more interested in profit-making. No one should be allowed to dehumanize, abuse, fetishize or exploit people for the sake of entertainment. Mainstream porn producers and sites often do this and get away with it. Porn directors who themselves do not belong to queer community distort

and misrepresent queer individuals and relationships, promote derogatory terms, and produce works that primarily cater to the cisgender, heterosexual individuals.

Lesbian is one of the most popular search terms on porn sites for the past few years. But the majority of the viewers are cisgender, heterosexual men. Exaggerated and inaccurate depictions of female same-sex relationships are the focus of the objectifying fantasy projected through porn. These scenes misrepresent what lesbian relationships are truly like. Many women who identify themselves as lesbians point out the ridiculous fake fantasies of the genre. Some of the common storylines found on popular porn sites include lesbians seduced by the right guy, lesbians trying to seduce their straight family members or roommates, etc. These plotlines perpetuate harmful beliefs like lesbians are predators and female sexuality is not to be taken seriously or lesbians will get corrected by the right man etc.

A similar situation could be found in the case of gay porn although sites like Porn hub brand gay porn as a separate unit and dedicate entire sections to discussing gay porn in their annual reports. They capitalize on toxic stereotypes and misrepresentations. Gay men are pictured as coercive sexual predators who prey on hesitant, unwilling, shy, or even straight men, Straight men were even one of the top viewed Porn hub gay categories in 2019. Gay porn also features problematic racist tropes like Black, Japanese, and BBC categories in their searches. Such portrayals do not humanize or invite respect for gay men in our culture.

Transgenders are also victimized by the porn industry. There are entire sites specifically dedicated to the abuse, humiliation, and degradation of Transgender. Many videos are clearly about inflicting punishments and humiliation using painful sexual acts using highly derogatory and offensive terms.

Adverse effects of Misrepresentations in Porn

Mainstream porn is made and marketed primarily to make generate money. They showcase extreme violence and abuse to maximize profit. This corrodes the minds of people with unrealistic fantasies and false expectations that cannot be satisfied. In turn, it creates apathetic people who have no concern or respect for themselves and others. Such people lose touch with reality and end up with distorted belief systems regarding human relationships. Marginalized individuals are portrayed in specific ways or made out to be objects of fetish. They are not shown as real people who deserve love and respect.

Every time a line is crossed in other entertainment industries like films, there will be harsh criticism. But such restraint cannot be found in the porn industry. Queer individuals are humiliated, violated, and abused in many porno films. These types of content are sold because of an existing demand which again normalizes the existing harmful stereotypes. Porn in many ways reflect the concepts that are prevalent in social consciousness and homophobia and anti-LGBTQ+ sentiments are behind such barbaric depictions.

Sexual minorities are the most affected when it comes to misrepresentation. They are already cast away from mainstream society and are at odds with it and themselves. Instead of integration and acceptance, queer people find themselves more confused and humiliated. Their sexuality and gender gets distorted. They end up feeling more marginalized. This could perpetuate self-hatred and stir up severe mental health issues that could harm them and others.

Conclusion

There is no denying of the fact that Pornography is transforming the world. Its consumption is rising in previously sexually closed-off countries like India. Porn stars like Sunny Leone are worshipped by millions of fans as their sexual emancipator. People of the past were afraid of sex and sexuality. Porn has made them realize that sex is just a natural part of existence. It is therefore performing the sacred function of making people more self-aware and

independent and has helped them to break out of false societal restrictions. But those people who run porn studios are mostly concerned about profit and bear no social responsibility. It is therefore high time to recognize the relevance of porn studies to avoid misrepresentations to create a healthy and inclusive socio-sexual environment. A major challenge in front of the queer community is to ensure that their identities are properly depicted in porn. It is their time to battle for the transformation of porn as a useful tool that could lift people who are oppressed instead of stamping them down further.

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Queering the Routes: An Appraisal of the Malayalam Movie ‘Sancharram’**Dr. Aparna Ajith**

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Abstract

Cinema plays a quintessential role in the daily life of an ordinary human being. Film as a multi-dimensional medium, with great potential to inform and educate has extensive power to play with a man's psychology. Being the cultural artifact of human life, it has carved a niche of its own by depicting the eternal verities which are universal. It has become the rich heritage of man and we see the recordation of the heartbeats of the entire human race in celluloid form. The paper endeavors to give a glimpse of lesbian life and the transgressive desires of women on screen through the Malayalam film, ‘Sancharram’ (The Journey) released in 2004. The story unfurls the life of Kiran and Delilah, who decide to break the shackles of religion, sex and gender for the sake of their love for each other. Although homosexuality is perceived as an aberration in the society, the film boldly addresses same sex love, and how grounded sexuality is in the daily ways of life. The movie directed by the Indo- American director, Ligi J. Pullapally is a path-breaking film focusing on the travails and traumas of love making that is forbidden or ‘abnormal’ in a heterosexual society.

Keywords: Lesbian, Identity, Matriarchy, Gender, Lovemaking**Introduction**

Cinema plays a quintessential role in the daily life of an ordinary human being. Film as a multi-dimensional medium, with great potential to inform and educate has extensive power to play with a man's psychology. Being the cultural artifact of human life, it has carved a niche of its own by depicting the eternal verities which are universal. It has become the rich heritage of man and we see the recordation of the heartbeats of the entire human race in celluloid form. The rapid advancement of the Indian cinema led to the culmination of the silent era of the talkies. Movies no longer were limited to the periphery of entertainment; they became the potent instruments to portray the contemporary society. The paper endeavors to give a glimpse of lesbian life and the transgressive desires of women on screen through the Malayalam film, ‘Sancharram’ (The Journey) released in 2004. The story unfurls the life of Kiran and Delilah, who decide to break the shackles of religion, sex and gender for the sake of their love for each other. Although homosexuality is perceived as an aberration in the society, the film boldly addresses same sex love, and how grounded sexuality is in the daily ways of life. The movie directed by the Indo- American director, Ligi J. Pullapally is a path-breaking film focusing on the travails and traumas of love making that is forbidden or ‘abnormal’ in a heterosexual society. The concept of family, gender and sexuality gathered a new definition in celluloid medium as well. Let's have a glimpse of the debut Malayalam film that overtly addressed lesbian love as its thematic underpinning.

‘Sancharram’ (The Journey) tells the tale of lesbian relationship that ignited between two female teenagers who know each other since their childhood days. The film served a sensual resonance simmered in an Indian context while also scooping itself out of the patriarchal prevalence and the matriarchal lineage of the Kerala community. The Indian film making culture somehow still appears confused towards forming a universal opinion about

projecting homosexual desires as well as characters. The Chicago-based, South Asian filmmaker, Ligi J. Pullapally was one of the directors to come up with a film that openly dealt with homosexuality. Albeit the movie revolves around the motif of lesbian love making, it hints on issues like gender, body, sexuality, male hegemony, matriarchal legacy, religion etc. existing in the socio-cultural fabric of Kerala. 'Sancharram' set in the backdrop of a lush green village in Kerala narrates the coming to age love story of Kiran, a Hindu Nair girl and Delilah, a Catholic Christian girl. They are neighbours, childhood friends, classmates and their affection slowly and steadily takes the form of a romantic and sexual bonding.

The two childhood friends, Delilah and Kiran are attracted to each other. Delilah is lively and mischievous whereas Kiran is a potential poet with a quiet temperament. Kiran returns to Kerala with her parents to live in her ancestral home and Delilah is shown as her neighbour who is a visible presence in Kiran's daily life. Their affection gradually takes the form of love although Delilah does not accept it at the onset. Though Kiran loves Delilah deeply, she is hesitant and scared of expressing her feelings. Love at first sight also gets a shake with the introduction of queer aesthetics. Here in the movie, Rajan has madly fallen for Delilah and he is unable to express his feelings to her. He discloses his love for Delilah to Kiran and takes her help to know her likes and dislikes. He in fact asks her to help him by writing love letters for Delilah. Kiran agrees and writes letters. This act of writing love letters to Delilah is an expression of her repressed and romantic feelings untold hitherto. Later on, Delilah gets to know Kiran has written those letters for the beloved she identifies in Delilah.

The lesbian look of exchange and female bonding are vulnerable to heterosexual structure. The lesbian discourse places the heterosexual conceptualised notions of romantic love in contrast with homosexual love. The movie for instance depicts a scene in which Rajan and Kiran are looking at Delilah standing in front of her courtyard. Rajan and Kiran are standing outside the wall of the house and both are gazing at Delilah. When Kiran gets to know that Rajan has seen her observing Delilah, she dashes from there. Moreover, it is Rajan who informs Delilah's mother about her 'abnormal' relationship with Kiran. This scene can be read as Rajan's vengeance for Kiran as she is the one chosen as lover by Delilah over Rajan who badly loves her. The failure of a 'normal' love affair between their classmates Sabiha, a Muslim girl and a Hindu boy is also exposed in the film. Their elopement is not accepted by the society as they created shame for both the families. This occurrence unravels the fact that some heterosexual relationships transgressing the barriers of religion and caste are not accepted in the society.

A patriarchal society like ours suppresses the voice of the female of the third gender and expresses itself through the male model which remains dominant. Although Kiran wishes to play football, her father dissuades her by saying "playing with balls is only for boys". Hence, she moves on to the path of creating writing. When teacher asks Kiran regarding the content of Sugathakumari's love poetry, she answers it as the loneliness of love and the hell created by it. In a way, it reveals Kiran's inner conflict of her love's intensity and the loneliness emanating from it. The film also discusses the inescapability of male-female unions prevalent in the society. Though Delilah is brought up by her mother and grandmother, she is tuned to become a wife in future. Her mother often reminds her to marry and become a wife rather than becoming independent in life. Dr. Prajitha P and Aleena K Noble in their research paper opine:

All the characters except Kiran and Delilah try to maintain the status quo of male power. Open defense of a sexuality prohibited for women puts Kiran in a crisis. Even her father who supported her in everything, admonishes her on this issue. Society views them in another perspective, since the relationship between the girls have become known. Rajan who once

loved Delilah takes revenge on her for rejecting his love by informing every one of their relationship. The parish priest brought in by Delilah's mother, advise profusely on sins and good deeds. At last, unable to condemn religious faith, Delilah agrees to forego her relationship with Kiran and to accept a routine marriage. Even though she hints that their relationship will continue secretly, it appears that the popular notion that a male support will protect a woman has been inflicted on her too. That is why, as a fatherless girl, she is compelled to get married and to relieve the burden of the family (Prajitha and Noble, 83)

Delilah who is passionate about shadow plays is spotted with dolls during her study hours. During their combine study one night, power fails due to heavy lightning and thunder. Kiran and Delilah begins the shadow play where in Kiran plays the male role and Delilah in female role. Kiran's body language resembles a man. She wishes to wear plain dress and likes to cut her hair short if her parents agree. She does not cry when Delilah pierces her ear. Rajan screams in front of his friends as he gets to know about Delilah's wedding whereas Kiran faces the heart-breaking news with a strong heart.

There is an absence of public spaces in the film. The whole story travels through the confines of the homes, courtyard, school, pond and their scenic cum romantic ambience. On one side, there is Kiran's ancestral home boasting of the grandeur of the matriarchal ancestry whereas on the other side, there is Delilah's home where in she is accustomed to become a woman and wife. Even though her grandmother senses Delilah's relationship with Kiran, she does not treat it as abnormal or try to evade her from that unlike other family members. There is a resonance of Partha Chatterjee's classification of 'ghar' and 'bâhir' in Kiran and Delilah:

Applying the inner/outer distinction to the matter of concrete day-today living separates the social space into ghar and bâhir, the home and the world. The world is the external, the domain of the material; the home represents one's inner spiritual self, one's true identity. The world is a treacherous terrain of the pursuit of material interests, where practical conditions reign supreme. It is also typically the domain of the male. The home in its essence should remain unaffected by the profane activities of the material world – and woman is its representation. And so one gets an identification of social roles by gender to correspond with the separation of the social space into ghar and bâhir. (Chatterjee, 624)

Kiran lives in the bâhir (outside), as she makes phone calls to her uncle from a telephone booth, pawns her jewelry and makes money, purchases clothes from the town, and courageously ventures into Delilah's room on her pre-wedding night to call her to lead a life with her. Kiran wishes to break the barriers and come out of the societal norms whereas Delilah is confined to the room and forced to accept the decisions taken inside her home. She asserts that her ultimate place of existence is the interior. Delilah even says Kiran "there is nothing more between us" Kiran and her masculine disposition represents her domain over Delilah, her submissive and womanly counterpart.

The social structure is still subjected to the structured normative patterns of heterosexual society. The intricacies of the female bonding are not accepted or welcoming in a hetero-normative domain. The climax of the movie signifies the dependence of the queer factors towards the non-queer factors. Delilah is forced to go back to the normative structures of the sexual identities and duties ascribed by the society. The movie ends with an optimistic note as Delilah runs out of the church during her wedding ceremony and Kiran decides not to commit decide. Kiran comes out of her female assertions by cutting the hair and walks forward. She embarks a new journey of self-discovery without the fear and favour of the societal norms.

The very name of the movie, 'Sancharram' denotes journey. It is a journey in search of 'fresh woods and pastures new'; a journey to discover one's self, identity and independence. Delilah and Kiran are yearning for a new journey satiating their physical, mental, emotional and sexual needs. Although Delilah succumbs to her family's desire of marrying a man of their choice, she promises to continue the relationship with Kiran. Still, Kiran confesses that she can't marry anyone else and she will find their share of happiness somehow. The movie culminates in an optimistic note where both the heroines get ready to undertake a new journey by shattering the shackles of societal chains. Delilah runs out of the church where as Kiran keeps on walking after having cut her hair. It's time to start afresh a new journey in both their lives. The movie at the outset introduces a fortune teller who predicts that Kiran will love early and it will be as strong as the bond between Shiva and Parvati. She exhorts: "Above all, know thyself! Without which in shadow dwells all else, Lord Muruga!". The movie ends with the unruly laughter of fortune teller watching Kiran. In a way, her prediction has come true and Kiran initiates a new journey to know herself, a journey without the shadows of conventions and traditions.

There are moments of genuine intimacy between Kiran and Delilah. Kiran's mother tells the story of her great grandmother who fell in love with a poor soldier man. He first gifted her a glass bangle as a token of his love and she treated it as the greatest possession of her life. When Kiran's mother ask her to choose ornaments from the jewellery box inherited by her, Kiran goes only for the old glass bangle and starts wearing it. In a moment of physical intimacy, she hands over the glass bangle to Delilah as a symbol of their unison in life as counterparts. Later on, the bangle is seen broken while Delilah is beaten up by her mother for her 'promiscuous' and 'abnormal' relationship. The breaking of bangle alludes to the breaking/ending of their relationship. Their bond and love is authentic albeit they know their relationship will never be accepted by their families and society. The female bonding is deep and while consoling Delilah, Kiran exhibits her defiantly strong nature to fight against the norms of society to win her love, Delilah. She is misunderstood and misrepresented even by her family members. Though her father supports her in all her endeavours, Kiran fails to convince her love to him. Her father also can't get rid of the societal 'normalcy' and the ways attributed to a woman. Kiran's mother strongly holds the view that women are the guardians of tradition. "Once your children will also be born and brought up here. And our tradition will continue through you". Her mother's words echo the obligation of a daughter in continuing the family heritage. Delilah is forced to agree for maintaining the tradition and the duty of procreation by being in an arranged wedlock:

Delilah is thus recuperated back to heterosexual normalcy, even though the film does not conclusively close in on her ultimate decision. Just before she succumbs to the "divine promise" of marriage, she is seen running out of the church screaming Kiran's name. However, her family and the church authorities follow her, probably indicating her journey's (emphasis mine) dead end as the wife of a heterosexual man. Quite surprisingly, Delilah's grandmother -who dotes on her and who is visibly shaken by the discovery of her relationship with Kiran- assumes a liberated stance by asking Delilah's mother to do what makes Delilah happy, instead of dragging her into a forced marriage only to convince the society. However, she does not voice her opinion in public, and does her duties during the wedding ceremony as the eldest member of the family. She may be considered as a representative of the generations of women who had been conscious of the suffering they bore under the overbearing clutches of patriarchy, unlike Delilah's mother who internalizes hegemonic patriarchy (Arya, 65)

Through the mouthpiece of teenage girls, the movie raises voice against the hardships faced by women who wishes to trespass the forbidden barriers of gender, love and sexuality. The film,

‘Sancharram’ is symbolic of the rocky road that Indian lesbians are forced to travel in a traditional culture that frowns upon homosexuality and continues to employ arranged marriages as a matter of course for its daughters. Our society is too harsh on women especially if she breaks stereotypes. Society has rules for a reason. In spite of all the scientific and technological advancements, we survive in such a society where the needle of the watch decides the character and morality of a female. As normal and ordinary human beings, it is quite natural and normal for the woman folk having a desire to materialise their whims and fancies. Likewise, they wish to soar in their imaginary sky with their viewless wings of a butterfly. The flight of these butterflies are clipped and curtailed by the society in the name of morality, hetero-normative structure, social status, etiquette, decorum and what not. These fetters in reality restrain the light of a woman’s sustenance.

The film, ‘Sancharram’ hints on the reality that women should never be downgraded as “weaker” or “fair” sex. Despite the role of wife of mother, they too have a life which is often rejected by the patriarchal hegemony. Trying to manage a home is not a child play at all. They wish to have a home of their own with their choice of life partner. Many women find better counterparts in women themselves. They are of the opinion that it is not necessary to find a man always for sharing the physical, mental and emotional spaces of one’s life. “One is not born rather becomes a woman” (Beauvoir,30). Both the characters Kiran and Delilah are in the process of becoming ‘women’ accepted by the society by renouncing their likes, desires and love for each other. Homosexuality attained a legal sanction in India. Still, the mind-set of Indians are not willing to sanction the desires of same sex. The notion of a third gender is still treated as an abnormal one rejecting the truth that true love knows no gender. “RanduPenkuttikal” (1978) was Malayalam cinema’s first prominent encounter with lesbian relationships, and was followed by Padmarajan’s “DeshadanakiliKarayarilla”(1986) . “Sancharram”(2004) will remain unique for its daring depiction of lesbian love as its central theme. The film ensures the visual possibilities and limitations of lesbian relationship at its zenith. Hence no age and custom can stale the inevitable love life of same sex made immortal by the celluloid medium for a message highlighting a clarion call in the humanity.

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**A Queer Reading of Shashi Deshpande's
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Abstract

*In a patriarchal society, women are assigned domestic duties in the roles of daughter, wife, and mother. They are expected to be homemakers and caregivers. A woman is taught to be meek, and she is expected of her to be passive and unselfishly submit to the whims and desires of the male. In the same way, men are also expected to be the breadwinners, providers and protectors of the family. They are expected to be active decision-makers. They are expected to be ideal fathers, husbands and sons. In these ways, gender roles are imposed on both men and women. A person experiences some threats such as isolation, othering, and being cast out of society if he/ she does not fit into all these norms that are imposed on them. **This article titled "A Queer Reading of Shashi Deshpande's A Matter of Time"** aims to find out the queer aspects of the novel. This article uses the "performativity" concept which was proposed by Judith Butler as its theoretical framework. Through an analysis of the principal characters Sumi and Gopal, it is found that both of them perform the gender roles of being a good wife and good husband. But when they deviate from the gender stereotypical roles and perform the gender roles which are not expected in a man and woman, they look queer to the society. In this way, it is noted that the patriarchal society does not want anything to be queer in its realm.*

Keywords: Gender, Sex, Stereotypes, Queer, Butler

Shashi Deshpande is an Indian English Novelist who quickly distinguished herself among the Indian women who write Indian English novels. She is aware of Indian culture and has sincerely attempted to depict it in her novels along with the country's shifting social structure. Shashi Deshpande's keen psychological insight into the nuances of the human mind and society gets reflected in her novels. She wrote many novels and short stories. In Shakespeare's play *As You Like It*, Jacques delivers the famous line: "All the world's a stage, /And all the men and women merely players." (Shakespeare 2.7.139-140). When this statement is viewed from the gender perspective, it puts forth many questions such as whether men and women are forced to perform the gender stereotypical roles of masculinity and femininity in the patriarchal society. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and other sexual orientations are all referred to as being queer. Beyond sexuality, the term "queer" is also used to describe people who do not conform to society's expectations of gender roles for men and women. Both the fixed biological definition of sex and cultural notions of gender do not match their gender identities or the way they embody and perform gender. This article titled "**A Queer Reading of Shashi Deshpande's A Matter of Time**" tries to find how the major characters Sumi and Gopal become queer by moving out of the prescribed gender roles.

In February 1990, Teresa De Lauretis initially coined the word "queer." The idea covers a wide variety of comprehending concerns about gender identity and sexual orientation. Queer theory is heavily inspired by the writings of French philosopher Michel Foucault. Along with Foucault, the important theoretical references include the writings of Derrida, Lacan, and Freud. As an interdisciplinary field, Queer Studies focuses not only on LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual,

and trans) lives and communities but more broadly on the social production and regulation of sexuality and gender.

In 1990, Judith Butler urged people to challenge the binary conceptions of sex, gender, and sexuality to cause "gender trouble." Her main point is that gender is a repeatedly performed act that is founded on society standards and is not an intrinsic, biologically determined trait or an inherent identity. Rather than actually being women or men, people pretend to be those genders to define the categories of women and men. Additionally, if they don't do their gender correctly, there will be obvious bad effects. Judith Butler in her book *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* defines "performativity not as the act by which a subject brings into being what he/she names, but, rather, as that reiterative power of discourse to produce the phenomena that it regulates and constrains" (2). Keeping this as the theoretical framework, this article analysis how Sumi and Gopal become queer when they don't perform expected gender role performance.

Ann Oakley distinguishes between the terms 'sex' and 'gender' in her work *Sex, Gender and Society* as follows:

Sex is a biological term: and gender is a psychological and cultural one. Common sense suggests that they are merely two ways of looking at the same division and that someone who belongs to, say, the female sex will automatically belong to the corresponding (feminine) gender. In reality, this is not so. To be a man or a woman, a boy or girl, is as much a function of dress, gesture, occupation, social network and personality as it is of possessing a particular set of genitals. (115)

Beena Agarwal in her book *Indian Women Novelist: Shifting Modes of Paradigms and Paradox*, gives the difference between the terms sex and gender which is as follows:

Gender identity and biological distinction have been instrumental in giving a way to human consciousness and thought. Sex is assigned based on the anatomy of a person, while gender is assigned according to the sexuality of a person. Gender is essentially constructed by cultural, political and economical forces, which influence on balance of social behavior of men and women. Human creative and constructive imagination has been also subordinated to sexual politics. (19)

Work is divided according to a person's gender or sex in patriarchal countries. It means that society's expectations of what men and women ought to do and are capable of doing determine the various roles, responsibilities, and jobs that are assigned to them. After that, boys and girls, men and women, are given distinct tasks and obligations based on their gender roles rather than necessarily on their performances and capacities. While doing so, the choices and preferences of individuals are completely disregarded because the social institutions' influence on establishing gender stereotypes is too great for a person to be able to resist or oppose. There are undoubtedly many options and opportunities on the political and economic fronts right now, but society institutions have not undergone a matching liberalization or democratization. Thus men and women frequently struggle to contrast the two worlds and hence feel anxious and tense.

Gopal teaches in the history department. He lives a typical life with his wife Sumi, and children Aru and Charu, and they are all members of the middle class. Even though Gopal comes from a Brahmin family, he does not place much value on his caste. According to the story, Gopal's parents died in an accident when he was only eight years old. He was raised by his sister Sudha and her husband P. K. He no longer longs for his parents' affection because his sister has lavished him with tremendous love and affection. He marries Sumi and lives with her and his daughters happily until one day he tells his wife that he is leaving them.

She tells her daughters that Gopal has left them. On that day Sumi's daily routine is normal when the daughters are horrified by Gopal's abandonment (10). Even though the daughters are perplexed, "Sumi's calmness, her normality, make it possible for them to think – 'it was only a quarrel'; it makes it possible for them to hope- 'he will come back'" (4). Kalyani, Sumi's mother, sobs like "an animal in pain"(12) since Sumi had experienced the same issue as she did in her marriage. In this article, the researcher examines Sumi's queer behavior after her spouse leaves her. She exhibits none of the typical emotional expressions of a housewife rather she is undisturbed by his desertion.

Gopal's choice to leave the house was not made on the spur of the moment. Because he has "never wanted to hide the fact from anyone" (40) and is aware that everyone will ask him about his actions, Gopal is very clear that he wants to tell the family members before departing. He thinks: "I had prepared myself to this question, I had rehearsed my answers before I spoke to Sumi, I had been ready to counter my arguments..." (41). He reasons himself for the question of why he has left his family. The first reason is he has "*stopped believing in the life*" (41) because it has "*seemed unreal*" (41) to him and decides that he "*could not go on*" (41) in this way. He further feels guilty for not sharing the turmoil inside him. He feels that he has "not been fair to Sumi. He also regrets that he "should have spoken to her earlier, given her some hint of what was happening" (41) to him. The other reasons which he reasons out for himself are "*I heard a voice*" (8), "*It's kind of illness, a virus perhaps, which makes me incapable of functioning as a full human being, as a husband and father...*" (44). All these reasons suggest that he cannot continue his role of a provider and protector of his family anymore.

He is unable to divulge the true cause of his deed to Kalyani, his mother-in-law, but he does say, "I thought of everything before I took this step. Do you think, Amma, I haven't?" (48). He also makes it very clear to Kalyani that he is not departing because of Sumi. Because Gopal cared more about Sumi than she did. Kalyani finds it difficult to accept the reality that he has abandoned her daughter. Thus, she questions him as follows:

When Sumi married you, she was too young; but I was not anxious for her, yes, you did. I can still remember how you scolded me for being angry with her when she refused to nurse Seema. She can't help it, Amma, you said to me, she isn't depriving the baby of milk on purpose. How can you change so much Gopala?'.... I know she was careless, she says, I know she didn't bother too much about her home, 'But, Gopala,' and now she hesitates, 'how could she have known what being a good wife means when she never saw her mother being one? I thought her nothing, it's all my fault, Gopala, forgive me and don't punish her for it. (46)

After hearing this, Kalyani forbids Gopal from speaking, preventing him from reaching a compromise or providing her with appropriate answers. But anyhow he tells her that "he has nothing against Sumi, he tries to convince her that he never expected her to create for him the world he wanted, that he did not make her responsible for giving him all that he wanted in life" (47). In addition to being financially stable, a man must also be physically fit and well-connected with society to safeguard his family from dangers of all kinds. Man has been taught since an early age that women and children are weak and they need masculine protection. Since Gopal exhibits weakness and emotions, his family reacts to it.

The researcher shows that Gopal is not a male chauvinist to his wife and kids. He is leaving the house because he has internalized mental traumas that he was unable to discuss with his wife, kids, relatives, and friends. The conversation Sumi and her husband had in which they both agreed to let the other be free highlights the queer decision by them in their marital life. She utters the words "Our life, yours and mine, was complete" (222), On hearing this, Gopal

feels happy and thinks: “She’s setting me free, she’s giving it to me, what I wanted so much, the dream which I had locked into myself for so many years, the dream of being totally free” (222). He further thinks that “If it is indeed true that we are bound to our destinies, that there is no point struggling against them, even then this remains – that we do not submit passively or cravenly, but with dignity and strength. Surely this to some extent, frees us from our bonds?” (246)

Siddhartha Sharma in his book *Shashi Deshpande’s Novels: A Feministic Study* comments the following on the heroines of Shashi Deshpande’s fiction: “Caught between patriarchy and tradition on the one hand, and self-expression, individuality and independence on the other, her protagonists feel themselves lost and confused and explore ways to fulfill themselves as human beings.”(119) Thus Sumi does not react too much when her husband leaves whereas Gopal easily gives away the role of being the provider and protector of the family. In the book *The Indian Man: His True Colours*, Sandhya Mulchandani concludes: “Entangled in changes that have not been at their call or initiative, forced to make changes that go against the grain of masculine tradition, [Indian] men are increasingly caught between what they recognize as being politically correct and their own self-interest” (177).

Though the characters go against the prescribed gender roles, the family members take efforts to take them back to the prescribed gender roles but they fail in it. Gopal and Sumi serve as an example of a couple who defy gender roles which serve as a hindrance in their march towards self-actualization. Men and women are “actors” when it comes to gender according to Judith Butler, thus believe so implicitly that their gender belongs to their nature that they forget they are actually playing a role and that their gender is actually made up of different acts that seem natural but partake in a construction. Butler maintains that gender is an imitation that is brought into play through repeated performances. There cannot exist a stable sexual or gender identity.

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16**A Study of Multiple Threads of Homosexual and Gay Relations in R. Raj Rao's *The Boyfriend*****Banasode Ramadas Shamarao**

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Abstract:

LGBT in English Literature has occupied a new corpus and radical identity especially in the postmodern literature. For Indian English literature, the area of LGBT is new and at some level, it is considered as alien and taboo subject, but R. Raj Rao has delineated realistic and radical picture of LGBT society of Bombay's gay culture in his literary oeuvre. The novel, *The Boyfriend*, explores multiple threads of homosexual and gay relationships with prime focus on social reality of LGBT class and Bombay's gay culture. The present research paper also explores the emotional rapport of gay relationship between Yudi and Milind with multiple facets of the world of gay people, gay society and gay life in the metropolitan cities like Bombay.

Key Words: Gay culture, homosexuality, radical and political identity, social realism, queer studies.

Introduction

QUEER Studies is also known as the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) studies. Sexuality in English literature has occupied a new corpus and typical identity especially in the postmodern era. Teresa De Lauretis is the name who coined this term 'Queer' in the conference at the University of California in 1990. The prime theme of the conference was the study of gay and lesbian class. The queer theory consists of the prime themes like sexualities and identification or representation of sex in the society. Homosexual has been a common term in the current society. Therefore, in literature, it has a new status with new identity. It can be stated that the Queer Theory is born out the Gay and Lesbian studies. Every physical identity is biological not social. Therefore, LGBT class has a core and essential identity. Here, sexuality is also a constructive identity. The terms like language, queer, LGBT, gender, culture and society are key semantic domains in the study of queer literature.

The present research paper explores multiple threads of homosexuality and gay relations in the novel *The Boyfriend*. R. Raj Rao's *The Boyfriend* is one of the first gay novels in English literature that "captures the mixed-up and messy reality of being gay in Bombay." (The Statesman, 2003) The novel is considered as one of the first considerable literary works in the field of Indian queer literature in English. It is the remarkable story of a gay journalist named Yudi, a freelance reporter. Yudi (Yudhister) is a well-educated and affluent rich Bramhin protagonist who is gay in the novel. The novel, *The Boyfriend*, is the story of gay relations between Yudi and Kishore Mahadik (original name is Milind Mahadik). Yudi is a "journalist...reporter....a freelance journalist...write for different newspapers and magazines." (Rao, 2003: p.15) Kishore Mahadik belongs to lower class of society. He is in search of job and his family belongs "to the working class." (Rao, 2003: p.29) Yudi does not like the love of Gouri. She is in love with Yudi but he rejects the advances made by Gouri and her love. Here, the interest of Yudi is not in opposite sex but in same sex and that is homosexual relation. It means, Yudi is an openly gay young man whose advances with boys like Kishore underscore his gay identity. The separation between Yudi and Milind makes to realize Yudi that he is in love with Milind Mahadik.

The present novel explores multiple threads of gay relations. While going to the flat of Yudi's mother in South Bombay, close by New Marine Lines, "Yudi put his finger to his heart and then to his lips." (Rao, 2003: p.18) When Yudi and the Boy (Kishore Mahadik) reach at the flat of Yudi's mother in South Bombay, Yudi asks him "Shuru Karen? Shall we beging?" (Rao, 2003: p.11) Here, the words 'shall we begin' indicate the beginning of homosexual relationship between Yudi and Kishore. Yudi is about forty. As a gay, he is always in search of homosexual relation with boys. Yudi's homosexual and gay relations with strangers had been since many years. He had experience of many years with strangers as "Whenever Yudi picked up strangers and took them home, he gladly offered them the active role in the bed." (Rao, 2003: p.11) Yudi never thinks of society. He is free from any social or religious shackles and restrictions. He never minds if someone calls him as Hijra. Yudi never worried about what people talk of him as "Yudi didn't mind it if his lovers thought of him as a hijra." (Rao, 2003: p.12)

The novel opens with the first homosexual penetration between Yudi and Kishore. The minute details of Yudi's homosexual relationship with Kishore at the flat (Yudi's mother in South Bombay, close by New Marine Lines) explores multiple threads of homosexuality in the present novel. Mahadik is nineteen who is gutkha addict but Yudi does not like the smell of Mahadik's mouth during the sex in the flat of Yudi's mother in South Bombay as "This boy, however, was a gutkha addict; though the strong, sweet smell gave him a headache, it was preferable to the foul odour of fish or onions." (Rao, 2003: p.12) During sex with the boy (Kishore Mahadik), Yudi does not like the speaking of Kishore. The boy named Kishore Mahadik was a novice in the art of penetration, so he frequently questions Yudi, but Yudi does not like this as "Yudi hated it when his partners spoken during the sex." (Rao, 2003: p.12)

In this way, Yudi, a man of 40, is in love with the boy named Kishore Mahadik, a boy of 19. The novel prominently explores the gay relations between Yudi and Kishore. The boy named Mahadik is nineteen years old, but still he didn't have a beard yet when Yudi asked this question, he gave an amazing reply as "Because when I was a kid, I used to eat my food straight from the tava." (Rao, 2003: p.45) Kishore Mahadik is from "Khed Taluka, Raigad district." (Rao, 2003: p.13) At the end of novel, there is the reunion of gay relation between Yudi and Kishore (Milind) as "A speechless Yudi welcomed his Milya with open arms. He wasn't at all bitter about the manner in which Milya had dumped him. He was too old for self-respect, and too much in love. Tears flowed down his cheeks. His heart was full of gratitude and joy, so that when his prodigal lover complained about how long he had walked," (Rao, 2003: p.125)

Overall, multiple voices of homosexuality and whirlwind romance between the two gay men prevail in the present novel that explores the complex and dark sight of Bombay's gay culture. Another striking aspect in the gay relationship of love between Yudi and Milind is that it lacks emotional love. It is remarkable and thought-provoking that the novel dismantles the hierarchy of caste and class in the metropolitan city- Bombay. It is also important to note that R. Raj Rao has openly depicted the life of gay in novel which is only hinted by other writers in Indian English Literature. Rao appears to be radical in talking about homosexuality in the city life and realities of gay culture. It is also significant to note that R. Raj Rao is also India's leading gay right activists in the present time. In this connection, Oliver Ross comments "The Boyfriend presents Yudi's Brahminism as one of the ineluctable constituents of identity that coexist and overlap syncretically with his self-consciously Westernized homosexual orientation and preclude its ideal embodiment." (Ross, 2006: p.107) The novel is replete with several threads of politics of representation, ineluctable gay relations with the impact of westernized

homosexual orientation with open radical gay identity of Yudi and homosexual relationship between Yudi and Milind.

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Abstract

Western canon has always talked about the queer people or the people with alternate sexual identities better to be called choices. The present paper explores how this idea of queerness has been created and whether this queer behaviour is actually queer or a response to traumatic situations created by neocolonial forces that tend to destabilize economies and nations. It also tries to establish that western hegemony has created an alternate discourse by creating queer attitudes, subduing it with punitive measures and at the same time celebrating it as a rebellion from the mainstream. There is an underlying idea that what is often considered queer maybe the only normative measure for the people leading a particular life style, having psychological traumas, made to bear a societal setup that suppresses and oppresses. For the purpose of the paper, poems by Ocean Vuong have been discussed in detail and certain theorists have been included to support the claim. Set up in the background of racial and military encounters of the Vietnamese and American populace, his books explore the themes of mixed identities, exploitation of women, racial and language differences, charity and forgiveness, ideology and military adventure and above all erosion of human rights by violence and atrocious behaviour.

Keywords: queer, gay, trauma, conflict and individual choices.

Transgenders are naturally born human subjects in all ages and climes. There is nothing queer or strange in their heterogeneity or their biological differences. Indian *Upanishadic* philosophy embodies on *Advaita* where there is no other in terms of gender, caste, religion or even in the binaries of organic or inorganic forms of matter. Lord Shiva himself gets manifested as *Ardhnarishwara* which symbolizes that both masculine as well as feminine traits are present in individuals. Some of these dominate to produce and determine a particular sex or sexual orientation. Taking cues from Indian mythology, human race always had different kinds of individuals which included men, women, *yaksha*, *Gandharva*, *rakshasha*, *kinnar*, *pishacha* and *bhoot* etc. Excluding women, other are male entities, the corresponding female ones are *yakshani*, *pishachini*, *dakini*, *Shakini* and so forth. Most of the Ancient Sanskrit texts talk about these forms of humans having different faces and attributes and inhabiting different places on earth. Mahabharata, the greatest Indian epic showcases *Shikhandi* the transgender, who is also indirectly responsible for the death of *Bhishma*. The same effect also mentions brief stay of Arjun as a transgender in the king of Virat's Palace due to a curse by Urvashi. In a Shloka in Bhagwad Gita, Lord Krishna talks about *Klaibyam*—a eunuch and chides Arjuna for not displaying a behavioural trait appropriate for a Kshatriya warrior. This validates that the transgenders are a norm in the society since ages. It automatically means that there can be no queerness associated with these individuals. It also certifies that the creator had some purpose in procreating different types of individuals. In Greek, Latin or other ancient mythologies, similar forms have always existed.

If the primitive societies supported alternate sexualities then the question arises where does the idea of queerness then come from? Who decided the normalcy in sexual choices? Who created the binary of gender as male and female only with every other category as a deviation?

How has society developed punitive measures to punish alternate identities and celebrate marriage as a sacred entity between the heterogeneous genders? Why have societies propagated taboos around certain behaviour patterns? Why should heterogeneity stay as the normative? These are the questions that every society in all geographical climes must try to answer. Once researched, these will help create harmony amongst individuals, will establish equality and mutual respect for all irrespective of their personal choices.

All eminent western theorists agree the human mind is a tabula rasa. If it is so, our behavioural patterns or sexual choices are determined by the circumstances in which we live, the societal patterns which we follow, the people who we observe around us and the psychological responses to conditions and conflicts. Alternate sexualities, erotic desires, normative or deviant orientations, marrying for pleasure or satisfaction therefore cannot be equated with transgression as the later generates punitive measures demanding for coercive steps.

Lacan theorised that reproduction is a pre-requisite for existence of any species where matrimonial or social alliances are secondary. For him, gender is a signifier for sexual reality (The Four Fundamental Concepts, 151). Whereas Freud linked the unconscious with desires for forbidden objects that recur as hallucinations, sometimes traumas trigger up these suppressed fears and anxieties as erotic behaviour. Foucault finds problematisation in conjugal pleasures in Greek society where polygamy was frequently practised and marriage was only for progeny or political alliances (The Use of Pleasure). In Part IV, he reiterates that pleasure is irrespective of gender. A young boy or a concubine could ensure pleasure for a male. Quoting from a dialogue between Critobulus and Socrates, he projects that in case of argumentative duets, the prize of winning debate was a kiss from a boy and another from a girl. Citing numerous Examples from Greek texts, he advocated that young boys are far better partners for gratification of erotic desires as no continuous maintenance or conjugal liabilities were required and the partner could take a fugitive passage anytime (199).

Ocean Vuong had a traumatic childhood. To live in a refugee camp at the age of 2 clearly indicates what kind of social security and stability was available to the kid. The child who learnt to read at an age of 11 must have had an altogether different scenario in a country where education is a fundamental right of all. His mixed descent with a Vietnamese grandmother and an American grandfather who later on deserted his wife is an underlying theme of his poetry collections. Being raised by several women, the child had fantastical imaginations of his father. These nostalgic reminiscences find a recurrence and an echo in several poems.

Queer theory in literature dates back to 1930s with the seminal work of Mildred Berryman– 'the psychological phenomenon of the homosexual'. Since then many queer practitioners as LGBTQ have been incorporated in the mainstream literature. Judith Butler, Michel Foucault etcetera have discussed in detail the strange behavioral norms and choices of these individuals.

Annamarie Jagose in her book 'Queer theory: an introduction' highlights that "identity is the natural property of an individual" and it is meant for political intervention that helps people get their fundamental rights as human beings. Ocean tries to naturalize his identity as a gay through his poems. There is no stigma attached. It's a normal choice owing to the peculiar conditions he was born and raised in.

The Pacific Ocean that helped the military adventurers sail over into other innocent , vulnerable and promising territories gave him his name. This ocean is a signifier of his identity and a symbol of postcolonial exploitations in the name of war carried out for the betterment of humanity. In the poem 'Aubade with Burning City' that centres around 'the Fall of Saigon' in

1975, the writer mocks the Christian charity: 'The city so white it is ready for ink.' Here white is for the innocence and purity of Vietnam whereas ink is for the gun shots and blood stains throughout the city streets. 'May all your christmases be white' is a strong metaphor to juxtapose the white Christmas, the motives of peace, the snow covered area, the mission of charity with a military truck carrying shrieking children, crossed legs of a dog, white snow on the tanks and gun fire shredding the snowflakes. The American soldier, an image of dozens like his grandfather during the war makes a fake, politicized and lusty assurance to a Vietnamese woman, "Don't worry... My brothers have won the war" (Time is a Mother).

In another poem 'On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous' another native laments: "How we're wrong enough to be forgiven." The poem problematizes and deconstructs images of the forgiver and the forgiven. The woman who is being exploited learns 'that a man in climax was the closest thing to surrender'. She has not committed any crime but her saviour was her molester who impregnated and deserted her to leave behind a progeny of mixed descent with a traumatised and troubled childhood with no filial love or security. The identity crisis is proclaimed in another poem 'Toy Boat' where the boat has 'no shores now to arrive -- or depart'. As it was 'oarless', none could decide its destination. This signifies that the molested women are made to drift to an unknown future after being played with as toys and being utterly helpless, they get drifted to the land of molesters to work for menial jobs and to raise their young ones to an unpredictable future as single parents. The poem focuses on an image of migrating birds where 'sparrows pierced by their own names symbolise agonies of identity crisis projected through names, language and cultural recognition. Latest collection "No" has personal, intimate and frozen memories where the writer proves that "to live is the greatest punishment' and that 'memory means perpetual death'. This signifies the personal trauma many of his age mates have to bear throughout their lives.

The nostalgia of a lost father refigures in the poem detonation:

So I ran into the night.

The night: my shadow growing

toward my father (Poetry, Feb. 2014)

Again in "Someday I'll love Ocean Vuong" the poet cries out in pain:

Your father is

only your father

until one of you forgets.

The erotica finds mention in certain images in his poems like "two moons in a lake" and in poems like Someday I'll love Ocean Vuong in the phrases 'the man's arms to gather you, 'torch between his legs to find your hands' and 'here's a room... you will wake and mistake these walls for skin.' McNay observes that erotic activity is an innate urge –a substitute for isolation and discontinuity from the continuum of human progress, civilization, bonding and brotherhood. It helps in generating an emotion of 'profound continuity' (Foucault: A Critical Introduction, 40). He further mentions that eroticism is a ladder to ascend to the height of life till death ends the course of it. Like a chthonic poet, Vuong frequently refers to the images of death but at the same time, he is much livelier with a sense of human dignity and faith in life. The writer feels lonely due to his strange individual choices but he is not an escapist. He understands that "Loneliness is still time spent with the world". Everyone has to secure a place and an identity as long as one lives.

In an interview with PBS Newshour he assures that language must be reclaimed to create wonder. It's a way to come out of your trauma. He feels that a blank page is the only space over which he can exercise control and therefore advises disillusioned people to find joy

and wonder instead of grieving over refuge, survival and migration. In another interview with 'The Guardian' he talks about Russian invasion in Ukraine and finds that such displacements of human beings are normal things. For the survivors of trauma, time heals like a mother. Distressed over deaths due to the opioid epidemic and addiction at large, he tries to create a little space for those 'outcasts and outliers' that can be 'erased off the map' anytime. Substance abuse in the US is another outcome of broken homes, shattered identities, racist remarks and deprived childhood. Vuong himself admits that he could take any white powder. Drug abuse is also a transgression from the normal and the natural. Transgressive behaviour is 'limitless reign of the limit' and has an 'unspoken potentiality'. It's an activity where language tries to dominate, strives and struggles for space, fails and then falls silent. Vuong uses the same language as a metaphor to voice his desires. He punctures the protective coat of English with Vietnamese phrases to secure a place in the dominant and hegemonic language space. In a poem 'The Last Dinosaur' he asks:

Emperor of language, why didn't you master No without forgetting Yes? (32)

It's an appeal to all those orientalist who fall victim to oppressive forces where one country exercises military power to erase other lands off the map and leave footprints of traumatised childhood on young minds that can be put on sedatives like cocaine. Back home, the family histories of extinct individuals (like dinosaurs), need to be traced. The fossilized ants (Vietnamese people) have crossed a white desert (Dear Sara, 26). These ants carry the burden of haunted memories 5000 times that of their mass (Dear Rose, 82). The 'green voices' of his people cry in a 'room called America' and the writer is sure that 'the door is not invented yet' that can take them back to dig up fossils and regain cultural identity (Old Glory, 21). The lost identity survives somewhere 'in photographs and corpses'. During attacks by American soldiers, people visit morgues to identify their kith and kin and there 'a morgue is also a community centre' for a race, an ethnic group, a country, a tribe (Not Even, 47). The beautiful landscape painting of Vietnam suffers from a knife wound as an American soldier. These traumas need to be understood in larger context of terror and violation of human rights by the great powers. The writer is aware that such unnatural displacements are a regular feature in some part of the planet— be it Iraq, Palestine, Syria or Ukraine.

America exercises economic control over our daily needs. It has a track record of our groceries, bills and requirements over Amazon. In a powerful poem (Amazon History of a Former Nail Salon Worker) that traces how we are losing our privacy to the corporate dragon, the writer makes a list of clothes, groceries and beauty products ordered by a Nail Salon Worker over a year. The poem is not to be read only as an account of the beauty industry created by America, beauty pageants given to Asian women, chemicals being inhaled by those in menial jobs but also as a testimony how we are losing economically to a giant and contributing to a homogenous culture.

In response to the violence and atrocities by Americans he utters in the 'Night Sky with Exit Wounds': I hold the gun/ and wonder if an entry wound in the night/ would make a hole wide as morning. For the future of the immigrant he pronounces:

Yes, you have a country.

Someday, they will find it

While searching for lost ships (To My father/To My Future Son, 57.

When they ask you

where you're from

tell them your name

was fleshed from the toothless mouth of a war- woman (Headfirst, 20).

The toothless mouth has clearly lost the power of speech as the suppressed, the molested and the tormented creature. Vuong is not toothless. Infact, he developed wisdom teeth at the age of 2. He has understood that western canon has created a discourse of masculinity. The American soldier, the rugged tomboys of American fiction, the vagabonds of America and the western authors in American libraries are symbols of masculinity. In a drastic turn to 'The Western Canon' Vuong tries to recentre the ordinary Asians, the working-class labourers in the larger context of 19th century masochism. For him Moby Dick was queer because it originated from the intellect of Herman Melville who knew nothing of alternate sexualities or other working class people that were brought to America by its neocolonial forces. The language of their books gives no place to people with different sexual orientations. The terror affected immigrants have no precursor in their works. Their pain and agony has to be voiced. American machine guns can not add cacophony to rhythmic tunes. He is equally aware that writers like him are celebrated in America and are awarded with several honours. They are treated like 'ambassadors from a country that no longer exists./ It is the country of sons' (Kunstlerroman, 57). During these award ceremonies, the identity crisis resurfaces. The writer fails to leave a legible autograph, his name evaporates as the language fails to articulate his identity that is lost, fossilized and extinct. He tries to create a literary drag from the Greeks and the 19th century intellectuals who celebrated masochism and the American dream respectively.

This again substantiates my viewpoint that being queer is how the Western theory puts it otherwise queerness is a normal course of life for these traumatised individuals. Vuong himself says that the queer imagination comes out of the need to create something safe. For him masturbation provides relief from tormenting memories and it acts as a substitute for violence (Dear Peter, 13). The gay desires are rampant in American societies. These exist everywhere—on streets where bulls with blue eyes (a pun on masculinity and racial superiority) put butterflies on fire. 'So I let him kiss me for nothing' and 'the fall would/ kill me/ but it only/ made me real' (Dear Peter, 19). The gay desire is echoed in many poems. 'The rabbits are lovers or sisters sometimes/ it's hard to tell gender' (You Guys, 24). The love between boys is termed pure love as 'we're just two boys lying in the snow& You know we'll only live once this time (Dear T, 39).

It is quite clear that the boys make true love as a response to violence carried out by soldiers and other masculine forces that leave a trail of traumatised lives behind. The memories of gun fires, mass burials, people fleeing in terror, green landscapes being turned to smoke and debris, peasants from conflict zones turning to menial jobs in America and the young lives on substance abuse trying to assert their identity from scratches are heart rendering. In an era where reproduction is overpowered by technological wonders like test tube babies, bots and human cloning; where surrogate mothers can easily be hired from a great chain of immigrants entering America every day; where a new celeb culture has surfaced that adopts babies of other races to showcase charity it's no wonder that pleasure comes first before reproductive rights or a pure bred and legitimate progeny. After all, the ultimate human desire is to stay away from agonies and pain and refuge in pleasure even if it's forbidden. Voicing one's orientation is a victory in the land of liberalism that guarantees liberty of every sort while snatching it at the same time.

To conclude, Ocean Vuong uses scathing images to expose masochistic violence and finds love as a recluse from a world torn with strife and military pursuits. His poems meant for thousands like him can actually heal other traumatised souls by voicing their concerns. The global society must seriously take this articulation as a 'No' to violence.

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**Mapping Queer Minds Through Interior Monologue
in Abha Dawesar's *Babyji*****Dr. Amita Kamat**

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Abstract

*Narration or story telling can be considered as the soul of fiction writing in literature, especially novels. Modern novelists decided to distance themselves from the romantic and Victorian style of writings as it failed to enthuse readers. Moreover, the destructive World Wars, industrialisation and related modernization led to gradual disorientation of the human minds that led a “turn [inwards]” in arts (Micale 2). Hence early 20th century experienced a shift in literary writings from representing social realism to psychological realism i.e., characters’ inner life through literary modernism. Literary modernism also challenged the conventional techniques of linear narration. It opened the avenues to experimenting different styles of narration that entailed non-linear writing, blended imagery themes, absurdism, and stream of consciousness and internal monologue to the literary writers. This literary technique of internal focalization helped the writers in appropriating protagonist’s feelings, emotions, and states of mind. It also helped in exploring the sub consciousness, complexity of human minds and their related sexuality in fiction. This technique of writing greatly helped in developing queer literature, a branch of cultural study that rejects traditional trajectories of gender and sexuality. Queer sensibilities were found to be accurately represented through this form of writing. The present paper aims to explore the mind of Anamika Sharma, a lesbian in the narrative *Babyji* by Abha Dawesar while she deals with her lesbian partners i.e., Tripta Adhikari (India), Rani and Sheela to understand the mesh of queer minds with the help of interior monologue as a narrative technique.*

Key words: Interior monologue, queer mind, stream of consciousness, literary modernism

Main paper:

Literary circles have often observed a studied silence preserved by Indian academic intelligentsia on homosexuality. Until recently they have been found dispelling the myth of alternative sexual orientation as being a western idea, thus challenging the queer sensibilities. The queer community remains largely misconstrued due to the complexities associated with their carnal orientations which are found barring binary conventions. Henequen theory required an in-depth scientific, hereditary, and genetic inquiry into understanding their inner world. These queer inner worlds if aptly represented in literature would in turn aid in avoiding disregard of this community at the hands of cisgendered institutions. To address this complexity of related issue, various narrative styles were developed during the twentieth century.

It was found that through the character’s recollections, affiliations, sentiments, and expectations events could be passed on to the reader effectively. This technique was called internal monologue; monologue (from Greek: 'speaking alone') is a speech presented by an individual, with or without an audience, most frequently to reveal mental considerations. The interior monologue became the equivalent fictional exertion of the stream of consciousness - a psychological descriptive process as it “does not intervene with narrative explanations, but leaves the memory itself to resonate for us” (Showalter, 2011, p. xix). Internal monologue

portrayed the process of consciousness where the author can display non-verbal elements as sense of perception, mental pictures, feelings and certain aspects of thought only by changing them into a few sorts of verbal comparable (Martin and Hill 345).

Interior monologue emerged as a literary technique that articulated the thoughts of characters in a more associative way. It followed grammar and syntactical arrangement of ideas required for an inner dialogue with oneself hence is more precise in terms of chronological association of ideas which may or may not be uttered by the character in the external world.

Interior monologue further entails direct and indirect monologue. Direct interior monologue presents thoughts of characters by internal focalization i.e., first person singular point-of-view is used by the characters to express his/her inner thoughts and feelings (King 3). Gerard Genette, a literary critic in narratological studies introduced the term "focalization" as a replacement for "point of view". The term focalization dismisses the bafflement of the questions who sees? and who speaks? Genette formulates three types of focalizations: zero focalization, internal focalization, and external focalization. Internal focalization, according to Genette, says only what a given character knows (Genette, 1980, Pg.189). These internal focalizations reveal characters' inner thoughts.

Edouard Dujardin states that the purpose of using direct internal monologue is to introduce the reader directly to the inner life of a character, without the interference of the author by interpretation or comment (King 117). Whereas indirect monologue refers to:

Indirect interior monologue is then, that type of interior monologue in which an omniscient author presents unspoken material as if it were directly from the consciousness of a character and, with commentary and direct description guides the reader through it. It differs from direct interior monologue basically in that the author intervenes between the character's psyche and the reader. The author is on-the screen guide for the reader (Humphrey pg.7).

In all, the characteristics of interior monologue such as - writing in first person, not addressing to the reader and raw state of thought or speech helps in finer interpretation of the thought process of queer characters in a fiction. The present paper uses direct interior monologue technique to scrutinize *Babyji* that walks the reader through the inner life of protagonist Anamika Sharma, a lesbian, born into a sophisticated brahmin family. It is a coming-of-age novel where Anamika, a prodigy in school explores her sexual placements with Tripta Adhikari whom she calls 'India'. She also explores bodily comfort with a housemaid named Rani, who is a victim of domestic abuse. While in school, she gets physically inclined towards Sheela, her classmate. Throughout the narrative, she is found juggling with these three different women finding sexual refuge into their companionship.

The narrative begins with the first chapter named 'Unbuttoning Lady X' which prepares the readers to dive into the mind of Anamika. Her character is founded with the help of her inner monologue that defines her as a homosexual being: "I unbuttoned her blouse several times in my head and tried imagining the two scenarios—waxed or not." (Dawesar 10). Here the inner ideas may never find a place in the real world but she enjoys the liberty of speaking to herself through direct interior monologue. Further the details of her sexual orientations are explicitly found through her inner dialogue while she fantasizes about women who wax underarms:

If I could get her type down I'd know which parts of her body she depilated. Or if I knew which parts she depilated I could get her type down. The hostess announced dinner while I was busy unbuttoning lady X. I took the general movement around the room as an opportunity to strike up a conversation with her. In a minute I discovered that she read no

books, went to the beauty parlor for pedicures, and didn't work. I lost interest in her. The inquiry was complete. She did indeed wax and was predictably bourgeois. (Dawesar 10) Anamika's introduction immediately opens up her inner world with these explicit details of her sexual proclivities. The internal focalization sets the tone of the narrative thus preparing the reader to explore the world of homosexuals.

Anamika decides to read Vatsyayana's *Kamasutra*: "The Kamasutra that I force-fed myself seemed completely of another world, alien and absurd. After I read it, however, magical things started to happen." (Dawesar 6) This begins the journey of Anamika, where she introduces the readers about the hormonal changes her body undergoes. Further she meets Tripti Adhikari, while she comes to school for a parent-teacher meet. She experiences some change in herself in her first encounter with Tripti:

I felt my heart overflow with some kind of knowledge I could not immediately identify. I had imagined so many times how Newton must have felt when the apple dropped on his head and the weight of gravitational forces clicked into place. I fancied I felt that way, that a great discovery had just been made and all I had to do was write down its formula. I wished a simple object like an apple had been involved, something tangible that I could contemplate and hold, smell and bite." (Dawesar 7)

Anamika discovers her love for women irrespective of social strata they belong to. She explores components of sexual appeals in women around her. This can be seen in one situation in the narrative while she tries to return from Tripti Adhikari's (India) home. She catches the sight of a random woman peeing around near the *jhuggi* of workers from where she takes a short cut on her bike towards home. The gaze of the woman also incites some feelings into her mind: "I spent the day feeling restless. I thought about India and about the other woman's dark skin and bloodred sindhoor." (Dawesar 13)

While Anamika is on her next visit to India's place, she becomes restless and wishes to express her feelings towards India. The entire commotion of ideas and the difficulties that she faces while expressing can be very well noticed: "I excused myself and went to the bathroom. I said to the face in the mirror, Look, she's going to laugh, she'll never want to see you again, what do you know about love? You're just sixteen. She sees a kid when she sees you." (Dawesar 24)

Anamika establishes a relation between herself and India and Rani while sitting in a Physics class and learning about wave-particle duality: "I had fantasies about India and Rani. I mixed them up in my head till Rani was articulate and well dressed and India sensuous and earthy. If particles could be waves and waves photons then India and Rani could be each other. All sense of reality escaped me." (Dawesar 22)

Dawesar rightly presents the moral discourse on lesbian fidelity while she takes us through the mind of Anamika, who wishes to remain loyal with a single partner. This could be seen in a situation where Anamika while on her visit to Tripti's place, talks to herself about indulging with two women simultaneously: "I had still not kissed her. I wanted to now, but I had just kissed Rani. I didn't want to kiss two women on the same day. I thought it would mean I wasn't deep." (Dawesar 29)

Anamika's relationship with Rani also brings certain class discussion which homosexuality could be in a position to address: "It made me sick to my stomach to see that on one level I had a functional relationship with her in which she was very much my servant. Was it even possible for two people to entirely forget their status and just be human beings with each other? I had always believed it was, but now with Rani I had a real-life situation to test it with." (Dawesar 35) In school, while Sheela is inclined towards Anamika, she had been hinting Anamika on her inquisitiveness on physical encounters that Anamika had engaged with. While both engage into

physical proximity, Anamika tries to impress Sheela to attract her more towards herself: “I wanted to tell her more things about myself to impress her, but I couldn’t think of anything.” (Dawesar 47)

Anamika compares the presence of three women in her life to a chaos that she likes. She calls it a chaos theory and is thrilled by the way this theory has been working in her life: “I saw the beautiful fractal diagrams in the book and could see Sheela and India and Rani inside one of those diagrams, getting smaller and smaller, the pattern repeating endlessly. I closed the book feeling sure I was doing the right thing with my life.” (Dawesar 58)

Anamika often sees herself to be the man in a relationship. Hence, she is often fantasizes about protecting her lesbian partners. She also wishes to marry them:

I could easily imagine coming home from work and Sheela opening the door to welcome me. I could also imagine having a little son like Jeet walking from room to room, picking up objects and asking questions. I would earn a lot of money, and Sheela would take care of the house. She’d press my feet when I got home. I’d be working on a top secret nuclear physics project. Or on sending Indians to Mars. I’d have girls after me, but I’d be devoted to Sheela, who would be the perfect wife. (Dawesar 125)

Thus, then arrativeunfoldscomplex discussion on the layers of homosexual identity associated with Anamika, which entails not only sexual predilections of two similargenders, but also certain characteristics related to association between homosexual partners i.e., allegiance, fidelity, gender switching, defying social consortiums and being liable to name a few. The interior monologue helped in revealing the world of lesbians aptly that would help in enriching the literature and sensitizing the readers and society at large.

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Abstract:-

Queer theory or queer sexuality in the world (Especially in Asian countries) has always been a burning issue of debate and discourse. Queer identity always raises the question of existence (to be or not to be). Queer literature creates a reflection on gender and sexuality, concentrating on novel kinship, psychoanalysis and the incest taboo, homosexuality fear, social violence on queer questioning, and the task of social transformation. Queer theory is an umbrella term or a constructive term that covers all burning issues of gender trouble. The main argument is to trace a lineage of queerness in India both in terms of its representation in literature by analysing "The Housewife" (1891) by Rabindranath Tagore, "Lihaaf" by Ismat Chughtai, "Kari" by Amruta Patil, "A married women" by Manju Kapoor, "Don't Let him Know" by Sandeep Roy, "Red lipstick: The Man in my life" by Laxmi Narayan Tripathi and many more authors offering a literature review by building a connection in between the ancient & contemporary India. Queer theory is committed to critiquing and problematizing previous ways of theorizing identity. Queer theory is a discourse model that destabilizes the assumptions and privileges of secure heteronormative models of study and politicizes and acknowledges the fluidity and instability of identities. Queer theory is a part of the field of queer studies, whose roots can be found in women's studies, feminist theory, and gay and lesbian's studies, as well as postmodern and poststructuralist theories.

KEYWORDS:- Queer, LGBTQ, Gender Dysphoria, Subaltern, Hindu Mythology, Ismat Chughtai, Indian Cinema, Rabindranath Tagore,

QUEER THEORY: Its Origin, Nature, and Scope

Queer theory, its nature, and scope can be understandable by its synonyms of "homosexual", gay, "Transgender", bisexual or Asexual. Traditionally, it has been used in a highly saturated sense and has been seen as a classic expression of homophobia.

The queer theory considers the Phenomenon of being stable or mysterious in a way Homosexuality refers to the Physical and sexual satisfaction of two people of the same sex living together. Attraction to the opposite sex and getting physical sexual satisfaction is a natural process. On the contrary, homosexual means the physical and sexual attraction of a man to a man and a woman to a woman which is quite uncomfortable, unnatural, and unacceptable to Society. In the last decades of the twentieth century in the USA many civil rights movements took place on the basis of cultural politics, whose goal was to legally implement the new social order by changing many laws prevalent in the society from a constitutional point of view.

Many barred, deprived, exploited, and marginalized people who were not even allowed to come can also give them, the right to set foot on earth. The queer theory raises the question of the gender identity of individuals. Homosexual people have been victims of brutal repression till now. In this context, the ideology or theory of queer came as a medium for the neglected. It focuses on the distinction of sexual desires. Sex is centred on the biological body, but gender changes according to sexual desires. So queer is an enduring topic for discussion. In this context "the queer theory" must be indebted to its critical use of fragmentation and post-structuralism, which project the meaning created by language.

Italian feminist Teresa De Laureates first used the term in 1990 at a conference at the University of California. He elaborately informed the whole world the central theme of queer is "the difference between sex, gender, and desire". This theory is influenced by the HIV/ AIDS movement of the 1980s and feminism of the 1990s. This theory talks about socially marginalized people.

Queer theory with post-structuralism developed as a stream of feminism. Women protested the political, religious, and social pressures that were applied to them. She was making herself "masculine". That masculine woman was called male identity in the 1970s. There are genders according to their desires, such as lesbian, gay bi-sexual, transsexual, transgender, etc.

A feminist and supporter of queer theory, Attiyen Rich focuses on mismatches between sex, gender, and desire, despite a feminist, she declared herself a lesbian in 1976. In her book "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian existence". In 1980, she stressed the need for a new language by coining terms such as 'absolutely opposite sexism', lesbian identity, and 'lesbian Continuum'. He expressed his strong hatred of Political, religious, and cultural attempts to force the opposite sex on people. According to him, gender, the biological Sexual and physical components also express sexuality through gestures and acts of conversation.

The concept of queerness widens their self-identity and their diversity of experience. It is a recognition that unites a "community". In the Classical era and even at the beginning of the modern era, there were many tendencies of Kama more than the Atman tattva.

Judith Butler is an American academician, whose theories of the performative nature of queer theory are influential. In her best-known work, "Gender Trouble: feminism and the Subversion of identity" (1990) and its sequel, "Bodies that Matter: on the Discursive Limits of 'sex' "(1993), Butler built on the familiar cultural- theoretic assumption that Gender is socially constructed rather than innate, and traditional notions of gender and sexuality serve to uphold the traditional domination of women by men and to Justify the oppression of homosexuals and transgender individuals.

It also attempts to broaden the definition of gay and lesbian Politics to include bisexuality which is often viewed with suspicion by gays and feminists alike. It has been influential in literary studies, post-colonial theory, and some areas of sociology.

Gender ideology emerged in the 1990s when the Roman Catholic family council warned against the idea of gender as a threat to the family and to biblical authority although one can trace its origins to the family council documents. It has travelled in ways that track the political power of the Vatican as well as its newly formed alliance with the Evangelical church in Latin America. Gender theory incites rage and fear across many communities across the globe. They also linked especially through internet petitions and newsletters that constructed gender as a threat to the family and to the distinct values of masculinity and femininity in society.

Queer studies question this heteropatriarchy and look at boundaries of gender. Gender is boundaried construct and if there are ways in which we could think beyond such limits?

According to Simon de Beauvoir "A dualism" is an intense, established, and developed cultural expression of such a hierarchical relationship constructing central and cultural concepts and identities, so as make equality and mutuality literally unthinkable?

The concept of Masculinity:

Masculinity as much as femininity is constructed through culture in very particular ways and many have argued that much as masculinity appears powerful, it also depends upon similar construction of power to make ONE kind of masculine hegemonic at the cost of different kinds of maleness in male bodies that gets subsumed within this definition.

Sexuality plays a prominent role in the construction of social identity "Gay and lesbian studies" suggest that the patriarchy that feminism contests are Heteropatriarchy.

Homosexuality Census in India

The report shores that 3% of the Indian Population identify as homosexual, 9% identify as bisexual, 1% as pansexual, and 2% as asexual. "Bombay Dost", India's first registered magazine for the LGBTQ community. It was founded by Ashok Row Ravi in the year 1990. The aim of the magazine was to mobilize the gay community and articulate the rights of gay people.

"Humsafar Trust" Bombay-based organization works in around 29 Cities and promotes different community initiatives in the country. The major objective of it is to provide health care and support services and to work towards the sexual gender issues and the human rights of the LGBTQ community. In the year 2015, Bombay Dost and Humsafar Trust initiated a project named "LIKHO". The objective of the project was to inspire and train the aspiring new generation of the LGBTQ community to put forth their news on issues related to homosexuality and medical problems like HIV.

When a non-profit organization appealed Delhi high Court against section 377 of the Indian Penal code. The matter became more contemporary focusing on the Policies and Politics that will create a bigger change. In 2010, for the first time, Bombay Dost featured the identifiable queer people by using their own names on the cover page of the magazine opposing the celebrity support for the cause.

Imran Khan, chef Vikas Khanna, a woman actress Kalki Koechlin, Manoj Bajpayee, and Celina Jaitley supported gay rights in India.

Despite their support, India's Adoption Policy Discriminative against LGBTQIA + Same-sex marriages are not legal in India, therefore homosexual couples are not allowed to adopt a child together.

Queering literature / Art / Cinema

Literature and cinema are greatly influenced by each other in fact we can say that they both go hand in hand. It is known through cinema that those Challenging or queer issues are raised which are normal society never wants to accept.

When members of the LGBTQ+ community get cast in stereotyped and negative roles in films, it simply reflects the existing hatred in the real world.

Indian filmmaking culture still appears Skeptical about forming a universal opinion about portraying the gay characters. Deepa Mehta was one of the earliest Indian directors who spoke openly about homosexuality. "Fire" in 1996 tells the story of a homosexual relationship that ignites between two people facing similar problems with their spouses. The film served an erotic resonance in an Indian context while exposing itself to patriarchal vogue.

"There is no word in our language to describe what we are or what we feel for each other," tells Sita to her lover Radha in Deepa Mehta's film 'Fire'. Question is, who created this gap and why does it still exist. People say oh! He is a gay, this shows their dissociation from homosexual people.

Anjali Gopalan, the founder of Naaz Foundation and the Petitioner against Article 377, pointed to an aspect seen in the film. In an interview with the Indian Express, she said: "What can be more challenging to Patriarchy than women saying they don't need men?" "The issue of lesbian hasn't been accepted like male homosexuality unlike men who are gay, women who see themselves as lesbians are still at the bottom of the totem pole. The film helped because a lot of people who were thinking of rights got together to talk about inclusiveness.

In 1981, the love ballad came between two college girlfriends Late Marathi Playwright Vijay Tendulkar wrote Mitrachi Gostha (A friend's story) a controversial drama dealing with LGBT

issues, the relationship between two friends, Sumitra, and Nama. The drama focuses on a homosexual relationship, and this causes a crisis in someone's life.

Vijay Tendulkar's "A friend's story" represents individuals be vulnerability before society's rigid norms and traditions. Due to the shackles of society's tradition people committed suicide just as Mitra did. Her feeling for Nama is a sin for Bapu's family & the existing society. The social mindset as Bapu tries to construct her life in the conventional paradigms (Aggarwal 168) Urdu writer Ismat Chughtai's 1942 short story 'Lihaf' explored homosexuality subtly, while Hindi writer Pandey Bachan Sharma's 1924 short story "chocolate" examined homosexual desires.

'The Married Woman' by Manju Kapur the story revolves around an educated middle-class married woman(Astha) whose carefully crafted world begins to unfold when she meets another woman (Pipee), a widow who pursues a gentle romance. But the question is: with this extramarital affair, is she foolishly risking everything - or Is Aastha finally letting go of the fear and cowardice instilled in her by her parents, her husband, and her social class?

Opinionated, Aastha's sexual liberation and reawakening set her free from the shackles of fake society.

"Cobalt Blue" by Sachin Kundalkar, tells the story of two siblings, a brother, and a sister, who fall in love with a mysterious young man living as a paying guest at their home. They both develop feeling for him personally without knowing each other. Kundalkar has wonderful nature and explored the hazy nature of human crimes and the aspirations of the middle class.

Kari by Amruta Patil is an LGBTQ+ graphic novel. It raises the question of the sexuality of a person, Urban lifestyle, skin colour, the worth of life, and lesbian relationships in heterosexual society.

'Kari' is the eponymous protagonist and her boyfriend; Ruth attempts suicide by drowning. They both survive but are separated by the incident, which results in deep damage to Kari's psyche. Her sexual orientation is kept blurry and stands out against the ultra-heterosexual scene of the city she lives in.

It is an exploration of feminine subjectivity, and how society fosters heterosexuality to stifle unbridled gender expression among women. The artwork is visually arresting, and the predominantly monochromatic palette completes the story brilliantly.

'RED LIPSTICK: The men in my life' written by Laxmi and Pooja Pandey - A brave and remarkable book accountable for her remarkable life with ebbs and flows. It is a sensational story of sexual awakening and self-acceptance, which depicts her journey from an ordinary child to a living symbol. Lakshmi Narayan Tripathi, popularly known as Lakshmi, is an activist and classical dancer from Mumbai. Assigned to the male at birth, she adopts a 'Kinnar' identity for herself. Lakshmi is the first transgender person to represent the Asia Pacific at the United Nations and she was also a participant in Big Boss. Baby Ji, Abha Dawesar, won many literary awards including "The Lambda Literary Award" for Lesbian fiction, she picked the most controversial and scandalous issue of a 16-year-old girl's sexuality.

Anamika enjoys quantum physics and often engages in various acts of parental rebellion, such as sneaking into the garage to read the Kama Sutra. She is a precocious child, not a perfect hero. Her actions are infused with teenage recklessness and irrational thinking, even as she stands on the verge of adulthood.

Despite advances in LGBT rights and policy, major obstacles still face the LGBT community such as employment prohibition based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Politicians and administrators are working to undo some LGBT-friendly policies, In the U.S., 1,50,000 transgender people are banned from military service. Another proposed policy could seek to

define gender as being determined by one's genitalia at Birth. Researchers are addressing LGBT health and policy issues. In the U.S., one group tried to repeal a law that allows transgender people to use public restrooms and locker rooms that reflect their gender identity.

In an essay by Sevick, "How to bring your kids up gay", gay and lesbian young people are concerned about the rising suicide rates and are concerned about the resources to raise queer children.

Queer movement in India: Section 377 & Politics

The Indian queer movement in the early 1990's mobilized mainly through activism for legal reform. The criminalization of sodomy prevented the LGBT community from freely mobilizing in public places, reporting acts of violence and harassment, and coming forward to be tested and treated for HIV/AIDS and was, therefore, an obstacle to their health and wellbeing. LGBT rights groups challenged the constitutionality of section 377 on the grounds of violation of the right to equality (Article 14), non-discrimination (Article 15), liberty (Article 19), Land life, and privacy (Article 21). But the decision was challenged in the supreme court by conservative and religious groups for going against social norms and promoting homosexual practices that would increase the spread of HIV / AIDS. Despite all these sorts of objections, finally, the supreme court of India declared that section 377 is constitutional and applies equally to all persons.

Subsequently, the Supreme court passed three other decisions that directly affected section 377: It expanded rape laws under section 375 of the IPC to include the non-vaginal act of the penis (2013), and the transgender community was granted legal rights in the form of a non-binary third gender (2014) and established the right to privacy.

The stand-in perspective of the ruling party, the Bhartiya Janta Party, on LGBTQ rights is unclear. Now homosexuality was decriminalized in India still BJP MP Subramanyam Swami stated, "Homosexuality is not a normal thing, we cannot celebrate it. It is against Hindutva. We need to look into medical research to see that. Invest if it can be fixed"

Legalizing queer sexuality positive step forward, yet considerable legal reform is still needed. The LGBT community still lacks civil rights such as marriage, child adoption, tax benefits, inheritance, protection in the workplace, etc. Queer literature needs to reach the community as well as the general readership in their own language and through positive representation.

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**Reflection of Queer Trauma in Nemant Sadat's
Novel *The Carpet Weaver*****Madhuri Subhash Pawar**

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Abstract

Nemant Sadat, a US based Afgan-American Gay writer. He is well known activist and journalist whose debut novel *The Carpet Weaver*, is an incredibly ambitious novel, and depicts the life of Gay people who are always abused, neglected and killed by the society. The writer himself considers as a gay in the Afghanistan who first publically came out as a gay in the world. His aim is to develop empathy for LGBTQIA+ by showing what it means to be a gay person and how to live a fake life that corrupted by a hypocrisy and secrets in a repressive society. And the present novel is a best example of Queer Literature. The novel unfolds around the life of the central character Kanishka Nurzada who seems to face the problem of identity crisis trapped in religious and social conflicts. The Afgan society is enjoying this homosexuality but social acceptance is strictly prohibited. The novel is set in the backdrop of war during the time of Sour Revolution in 1978s. But the author has developed the novel from the beginning by telling the protagonist's true identity which is known to his family and society what he is. In this way, the novel successfully articulates the traumatic lives of gays and their struggle towards survival.

Key Words: Queer, Trauma, Identity Crisis, Gay etc.**Queer Trauma:**

There is strong connection between queer and trauma theory. So to understand the connection between these two terms, we need to study these two terms in detail and to analyze the novel in connection with these terms and it helps to prove the novel as a gay novel. the novel reveals both aspects through the characters who face the stress and hurdles when they come out of their closet.

Queer:

Queer is an umbrella term which denotes sexual identity within a particular community. It is made up of people who identify as a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and others. Some of them are homosexual or changed their gender or their instinct. It is used to denote deeply personal identity and define political perspective to the individual who has sexuality other than heterosexuality. It is disparaging term first to describe homosexual in West. Now it becomes a name for a community and movement. It encompasses multiple desires and identifies. It discards two prime established things of the society: that are primacy of heterosexuality and patriarchal family set up. It captures identities and desires of same sex people. Along with sexuality of same sex people, it tries to understand politics of sexuality that inevitably connected with class, gender, cast and religion. Queer and trauma are linked with each other that describe events and circumstances which are physically, emotionally, socially, life threatening and harmful to these community. On 1990 onwards the study of these people are increased. Even in India, we can see that there is a prejudice about these people. This community is always neglected, insulted and rejected. Society sees them in a very different

way. They never allow them in any social phenomenon. As a result, they face immense difficulties in their life causes to frustration and death.

Trauma:

The term Trauma is a complex issue that always faced by the LGBTQIA+. It is not often linked to single events but a bulk of incidents and events. It is a response to a deeply distressing or disturbing event that overwhelms an individual's ability to cope, causes feeling of helplessness, diminishes their sense of self and their ability to feel full range of emotions and experience. Originally, the word Trauma is derived from the Greek word 'Traumatizo' which means 'wound'. It is a piercing of the skin, a breaking of the bodily envelope" (Garland, 1998. P.9). Then Freud describes trauma as a mental disturbance of survivors of devastating events which involve in a risk of life, such as railway disasters, accidents or the terrible war which just ended (Freud, 1990, p.104). The term trauma has also become a key term in cultural criticism and literary theory. Cathy Caruth, one of the most innovative scholars on trauma theory, defines trauma as " the response to an unexpected or overwhelming violent event or events that are not fully grasped as they occur, but return later in repeated flashbacks, nightmares, or other repetitive phenomena" (Caruth. 1996, p. 91)

About Author:

Nemant Sadat is a well known Gay scholar, prominent Activist and journalist, human Rights Activist and a Former Professor of Political Science at the American University of Afganistan. He is one of the first Afgans to have openly come out as a gay in the world and he started campaign for LGBTQIA+ and rights, gender, freedom and sexual liberty in Afganistan.

Aim:

The present paper tries to prove that how protagonist is trapped under the hardships of the Civil war and Saur Revolution and he come out of this stigma to survive in the society.

About novel:

The Carpet Weaver is one of the best Queer and Gay novel. It is also known as a debut and historical novel set in Afganistan in 1970. It depicts the love story of the same sex which means shaming and death penalty. It is about homosexuality, religious intolerance and political upheavals in Afganistan.

Plot of the novel:

The present novel is a brutal story of love and betrayal in the time of war. It is a heart-break story of two young friend of having same sex in the Afgan. It explores the life of 'Kuni'(gay) who are neglected, abused and killed by the hypocritic society. The author has very skillfully portrayed the life of gay people through the character of Kanishka Nurzada, a son of affluent carpet seller. He is the protagonist of the novel and the whole story unfolds around the life of him, whose life is trapped in religious conflict and horrifying aspects of human world. The book illustrates the traumatic and miserable life of gay in Afgan community and paints the real picture which is not pretty because these homosexual men are being labeled as shunned, kuni, gay and experiences hardships of violence physically as well as mentally.

The story begins happily with the celebration of the 16th birthday of the protagonist, named Kanishka at the ballroom. At the beginning he faces the problem of identity as a gay and finds difficulty in coming out in front of his parents and his society. He hides his true identity of being gay from everyone in the society due to fundamental rules of the country. He falls in love with his close friend, Maihan, having same sex and same age. He doesn't bother and loves continuously.

The author has created a very sensitive character of the novel, Kanishka Nurzada, a young boy and son of carpet seller. His father has his independent shop. He belongs to a Moist group where he works secretly to eradicate the current President of country. Another character of this novel is a Rustam, a friend of his father was also a gay who hides his sexuality for the sake of his family and for himself in the normative, constructive society. Kanishka tries to impress his father by telling lie that he has deep feelings for Maihan's cousin Lampa. On the contrary he falls in love having with same sex, his friend Maihan and both keep the secret of their relationship even from their close friend Faiz but they had doubt on them.

During the time of Saur Revolution, it shows there is a break in their teenage love and it takes unexpected turn in their lives due to aftermath of war. Every person has to face their personal life with political upheavals, hardships of revolution made their lives miserable. They suffer a lot the social stigma of being a gay in the traditional customs of Afghanistan and Muslim society. They became a prey to this injustice and faced internal, interpersonal and societal level of conflicts. Their condition became so worse and suffered mentally and physically which comes to an end. During the same time Kanishka's father was arrested and tortured mentally and physically because of being a member of Moist group. When Kanishka and his mother knew about him, they were enquiring about him every day. They were in illusion that one day his father will release soon. But when the official list of dead people came in their observation that time they come to know about his death. It was very heart touching and terrifying stigma for his family. It was unbearable situation for him because unexpectedly, unfortunately his father was killed in detention camp. This made his family to suffer and went into depression.

Later, Maihan's mother gets to know about the secrets of their relationships through letter read by her which was written by Kanishka for his father, kept in his pocket. She visits the Kanishka's house and talks about this affair and warns Kanishka's mother not to see him around Maihan. The family was already disturbed and depressed due to familial loss. So she takes a decision of leaving this country and shift to Pakistan. But unfortunately, they again trapped in Toofan Khan who sells them to detention camp in Pakistan where they are forced to make carpets. His childhood knowledge helped him to make designer carpets to survive. Then he finds Rustam there and with the help of him, he made a plan of killing Taur Gaul, but he failed in his plan and succeed in escaping from the camp.

Finally, Maihan changed his decision and married to Lamba due to social pressure and has no desire to be in the hands of men but secretly indulge in gay relationship with other men. The dual life of gay men makes Kanishka to reveal his identity and makes him to live life honestly and independently. Finally, he goes to New York where he can live peaceful life.

The Carpet Weaver as a Queer Trauma:

The homosexual novel resolves around the central character Kanishka, a gay young that is surrounded by many people but not happy towards society who is ruling. As a gay boy he struggles in a conservative society to survive war, identity crisis, war, starvation and intense family loss. He confronts constant struggles of his personal life that deals with aftermath of war, politics and his sexuality. It is a love story of two young friends who caught in Saur Revolution of 1978s. It depicts the story of these characters who hide their identity for better life and betray their nation. He faces painful struggle to overcome these hurdles. Here same-sex love is prohibited and threatened with violence during revolution, in spite of which Kanishka keeps his love for his friend Maihan which blossoms in deadly secrets. His family believes in the concept of man-woman relationship but Kanishka was totally opposite character that falls in love with opposite sex.

In the beginning of the novel, the protagonist faces the problem of identity crisis when his father's friend Rustam makes an adult jokes on him and insults him by telling everyone that he is a gay man but Kanishka's father didn't like it. The dream of their family is based on their children's position but Kanishka leave the business of his father and starts his own designing carpet. The idea of becoming a lawmaker became incomplete. At that time, Afganistan was shrouded in war and his father was arrested by police and family was totally unaware of his condition whether he is alive or not. At that time, they came to know his father killed and died. He had faced the trauma of losing his father .

"Each night, I abruptly awoke from more nightmares, heart thumping and my face beaded in cold sweat. Eventually I would drift back to sleep as image of him, abused and stripped of his resolute spirit, flashed through mind. (P.141).

This emotional trauma haunts him and has captured him mentally doesn't stop him in a nightmare which flashes continuously in his mind. He had faced the trauma of losing his father.

After his father's death, the protagonist goes through a lot of trauma in his life. The trauma of being a gay deal with their emotions, feelings, their identity and they face all these difficulties when they lose safety, trust, choice and the novel is the best example of it because the protagonist seems to be facing every kind of situation, harshness which is worse than normal people. The novel explores this kind of harassment through the friends who were teasing protagonist as gay 'kuni'. He was in fear after losing his father that his identity will come out to the society and they will spoil his family. So he tries to take some steps to compromise himself for the sake of his family. But he is very strong enough to overcome such trauma of rejection. It doesn't affect on his mind hearing the death of his father. In the novel, it shows how the protagonist is facing such a terrifying situation every time. Because the family left him alone without a proper person and being a gay, he was unable to handle the situation. As a result, this trauma haunts him in his own dream that he was responsible for his father's death.

"They declared, 'You must be punished for your sons depravity.

One man yelled, this is your punishment for raising a Kuni!" (P. 142)

This death of his father continuously runs in his mind and disturbs mentally that he was not able to overcome the lust on men. Then we can see that how Kanishka and Maihan meet up at Café secretly to exchange words of their past and present lives. During their conversation, Maihan avoids him and informs that he is going to marry Lamba and asks him to forget the past. It was difficult for Kanishka to overcome all these obstacles without Maihan and living life without him was a deep sorrow for him which haunted him in dream. The novel portrays the miserable life of this gay man. Another prominent character to be seen after kanishka, was Rustam, handsome man. He keeps secret of his own identity from the society and never want to judge by anyone for being a gay. We see that how Rustam chats about a Gay and criticizes him and tries acting as if he is out of box. But in real life, he is a gay and beholds his secret for the sake of himself and family. He was very clever enough and not true for himself due to his religion. In Kanishka's part, he was betrayed by his own friend in the school and treated as a waste and punished for being a gay. In the whole novel, the humiliated, abused and insulted. From the beginning to till the end, the novel tries to point out the troubles, struggles and miserable things that one has to go in his life and even though they have become sucesful in coming out of it. The author brings out these incidents through the character of Rustam who was witnessed. It explores the reality of the sexual identification of the characters, their struggles and compromising their emotions to the goodness of the family.

Conclusion:

The present research paper explores the queer trauma that reflected in the novel *The Carpet weaver*. It discusses about the trauma is faced by the queer person in Afgan community. From the beginning, the trauma traced the protagonist from his self- realization of being a gay and the obstacles he faces to come out to his parents and survive in the society. But this trauma didn't help him at all and while growing, it only haunts him in his dream. The author himself is a gay and the protagonist has been by the author. He also developed some more characters who also are gay and accepted their opposite gender to change their identity. These people are afraid of coming out to the society, who lived disguised life. In this way, the author raises the social issues, Islamic Community, religion and trauma very skillfully. Thus , the novel articulated the atrocities that are committed on people after Saur Revolution that changed the course of life of the characters and author became successful deliberately elaborating the details of these community.

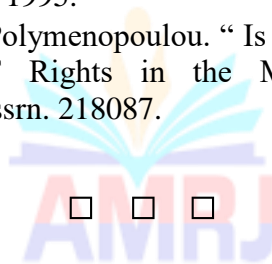
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21**Contesting Heteronormativity in the Music Industry :
A Reading of 'You Need to Calm Down' by Taylor Swift****Anupama P J**

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MG University Kottayam Kerala**Abstract**

Today, the music industry, like most of the other genres of artistic expression, has started to reveal concerns regarding gender equality and inclusiveness. Heteronormative ideas of sexuality that had governed its very existence are being questioned by sexual minorities through movements like #powertothepolls, and #heisshe. These movements attained more momentum when many celebrities stood up for the cause publicly. Songs like 'The Greatest' by Sia and 'Born this Way' by Lady Gaga were composed to register resentment against such inequalities. Taylor Swift's song *You need to Calm Down*, from her album 'Lover' published on 14 July 2019, is playful in nature, yet projects a very clear political message. The music video has many secret messages and intertextual references built into its frame. Swift, through the visuals, tries to question the homophobic community against conservative notions regarding sexuality and gender roles. The song also calls out in protest against the religious traditionalists' slogans like 'Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve'. Many queer stars show themselves in the video, exposing their sexual identities. There are pop stars, designers and even sports champions involved. The proposed paper tries to analyze the song *You need to Calm Down* as an attempt to contest the heteronormative tendencies in the music industry through a dialogic engagement of multiple narratives regarding sexuality from different space and time frames.

Introduction

Queer theory emerged as gay and lesbian studies in the 1990s. Queer theory's origin is quite hard to define, since it came from multiple critical and cultural contexts, including feminism, post-structuralist theory, radical movements of people of colour, and the gay and lesbian movements. This theory also looks at the history of the cultural representatives of the gay and lesbian community. Queer theory moves between literary analysis when dealing with cultural texts. The 'music industry' is a general term for all the parties involved in the creation, performance, recording, promotion, and managing the profitable business of music. Taylor Swift's song *You need to calm down* contests the ideas of Heteronormativity and homophobia that prevails in society even in the modern era.

The queer community's voice or music is understood as powerful and awesome as something with a particular potential to call its listeners into a peculiarly intense relationship with itself. There are many songs on the same topic. Demi Lovato's 'Really Don't Care' shows the pride march in West Hollywood and Sia's 'The Greatest' is about the issues LGBTQ community has to face. The issues only worsened over the years

Feminist scholars like Judith Butler talks about the performative nature of gender that destabilizes notions of natural interconnectedness between sex and gender. Gender has been an issue that concerned the music industry, just as it did in the other arenas of public interaction. In the past, music videos had been used as a way to depict LGBT relationships, even when the lyrics of the music didn't explicitly discuss them. Although gender has always been an issue to be dealt with, recently it gained more space in the musicals. Homophobia still is a reality in all

the different communities, and the song is an outcry against the discriminatory ways in which the sexual minorities are treated. The Queer community, Trans community, and people of color are inherently outside of the demands of Heteronormativity. Heteronormativity is a system that works to normalize behaviors and social expectations that are tied to the presumption of heterosexuality.

The song *You Need to Calm Down* is a polyphonic narrative that weaves in different historical moments, spatial entities and personalities into one frame. The song was released on 14 June 2019, as the second single from her seventh album, *Lover*. Taylor Swift wrote and produced the song with Joel Little. She addresses homophobia in the song while simultaneously voicing her support for the LGBTQ+ community. In the song, advocates of drag, trans and women's rights join in to create a colourful palette.

Taylor Swift is best known for the hidden messages embedded into her songs. In this song, both the lyrics and video have numerous intertextual references. The first scene shows some dice on the left side of the screen which add up to thirteen. In the next scene there is a table with six pieces of chocolate on it. Thirteen is the date on which she announced the release of her album. The number six can be a reference to the sixth month that is June. The album was released on June thirteenth. The month of June was selected as LGBT Pride Month to commemorate the Stonewall riot. The Stonewall riot is also referred to as the Stonewall uprising or Stonewall rebellion. This incident happened on 28 June 1969 when a group of policemen raided the Stonewall Inn, a gay club located in Greenwich Village in New York City, where the gay community used to meet. Warrant or any other documents were not shown for the raid. The raid sparked a riot among the bar patrons and neighborhood residents, as police roughly pushed employees and patrons out of the bar, leading to six days of protests and violent clashes with law enforcement outside the bar on Christopher Street, in neighboring streets, and in the nearby Christopher Park. This incident is considered as the first Gay Rights movement and the month is celebrated as the Pride month. Many pride events are held during the month to recognize the impact LGBT people have had in the world.

The first part of the music video focuses on the advocacy of women's rights. Activists have utilized a wide assortment of media to spread their messages. There is a painting on the wall with beautiful flowers and a quote by Cher which says 'Mom, I am a rich man.' Cher is an American singer, actress and television personality. Commonly referred to by the media as the Goddess of Pop, she has been described as embodying female autonomy in a male-dominated industry. In the song, she sings 'You need to just stop, like can you just not step on my gown.' This is a warning against people who barge into other people's private matters unnecessarily. In *You need to calm down*, we see Taylor Swift throwing away her phone because of the haters in social media. The singer is finally over with all the drama her phone has caused. She is directly addressing the critics or haters who oppose the idea of LGBTQ. She sings about the LGBTQ community while namedropping the organization GLAAD (The Gay and Lesbian Alliance against Discrimination). Swift signed a petition supporting the Equality Act that would protect them from being discriminated against because of their gender.

In the next scene, Swift is seen setting fire to her trailer which shows she does not care about her past anymore. As we see the inside of the trailer burn, she sings 'snakes and stones never broke my bone' – a reference to the people who had called her a snake. She is seen with the tattoo of a snake and butterflies flying. The snake imagery is used to embrace and also combat the negativity surrounding her and is embracing all things beautiful, colorful, and positive. This tattoo also matches the opening scene of the music video 'Me!'

At the entrance there are pride flags and a sign which says '16th avenue,' a street known as the 'Music Row' district of Nashville, Tennessee. This video presents a lot of celebrity representatives from the LGBTQ community. The first celebrity cameo is Dexter Mayfield who is a Gay plus size model. He speaks on the importance of positive representation, the underlying racialism in the gay body. YouTube comedian Hannah Hart is seen holding a boom box. She also stands up for her rights.

Fences are seen in abundance throughout the video. The Trump wall, commonly referred to as just 'the wall', is a colloquial name for a proposed expansion of the Mexico–United States barrier during the U.S. presidency of Donald Trump. At the next trailer in the background we can see a sign with the word 'Rent' on it. This might be an intertextual reference to the Rent that is a rock musical with music, lyrics, and book by Jonathan Larson, based on Giacomo Puccini's opera *La Bohème*. It tells the story of a group of impoverished young artists struggling to survive and create a life in Lower Manhattan's East Village in the thriving days of Bohemian Alphabet City, under the shadow of HIV/AIDS. The musical also spoke about the LGBTQ community and also about the racial discrimination in the society. The next cameo Laverne Cox is a transgender American actress and LGBTQ+ advocate. In this scene, she is with Chester Lockhart, who is a gay actor, singer and recording artist.

Taylor Swift is then seen with the co-producer Todrick Hall who is a gay singer and song writer. Gay pop star Hayley Kiyoko also appears on screen. The video goes on to show protesters holding up anti-LGBTQ signs that are misspelled. For example 'moron' is spelled as 'moran.' This might be her way of saying that the homophobic people need to educate themselves. The whole song tells them to be calm, because the protesters usually were rude and used to harass the community.

The next scene we see is the wedding of the actor Jessie Jesse Ferguson and his real life husband Justin Mikita. We see another sign that says 'Adam and Eve not Adam and Steve' which is a saying used by the conservative Christians. Then we have the queer cameo Tan France who is a designer and a television personality coming in. The singer then have tea with the stars from the Netflix 4390 'Queer Eye' cast. If you notice the tea they have are of different colour.

Different types of people coming together. The cast consists of different people with different occupations. Antoni Porowski, food and wine expert; Tan France the fashion expert; Karamo Brown the culture expert; Bobby Berk the design expert; and Jonathan Van Ness the grooming expert. The next cameo is Olympic figure skater Adam Rippon. He was the one of the first skaters who revealed his sexual orientation as being gay.

Lesbian TV star Ellen DeGeneres made a short appearance with Adam Lambert. She seems to be getting a tattoo which says 'Cruel Summer' which could be a reference to the 1983 hit 'Cruel Summer' by the Bananarama. This is another song which deals with queer issues. It mainly shows women working as mechanics, breaking the stereotypical notions regarding femininity.

The iconic Billy porter walks in front of the protesters as Taylor Swift sings 'don't step on his gown'. This might be the reference to the rights of the drag community. We see many drag artistes lined on the stage as different celebrities. The singer then switches from LGBTQ pride to feminist pride. In this scene is shown a pop queen pageant starring RaPaul who is an American popular drag queen. This is when Taylor sings 'We all know now we all got crowns,' affirming their pride in what they are. Then the drag queens started to dance with the trailer park residence. Katy Perry makes an entrance dressed as a burger, and Taylor Swift who is a French fry starts dancing with her. While this is happening, we can see Ryan Reynolds painting

the Stonewall building with a ruined building as his model. This might be an attempt at showing that there is hope in rebuilding that community.

The song You need to calm down can be considered as a polyphonic narrative where multiple voices are brought to perform within a single frame. By letting voices from different spatial and temporal realities interact within this work, Taylor Swift has provided the viewers/ listeners with an account of how the Heteronormativity system of sexuality was challenged in multiple ways historically within the sphere of media, especially with regard to music industry. People who belong to various spheres of human activity like TV shows, musicals, modeling, and sports are brought together to provide a comprehensive outlook on the issue, while also pointing at the heterogeneity of the experiences concerned.

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