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Editorial Note

A journal of interdisciplinary literary studies which has been christened *Interlocutor* has its objective stated in the name itself. The Department of English, The Bhawanipur Education Society College, has undertaken to publish this annual journal which, we believe, will complete the pedagogical pyramid by providing a thriving platform for the highest praxis of academia: questioning.

As we publish the first issue of the journal, it is our earnest hope that we will be able to encourage a spirit of constructive, equable debate which will not falter in injecting new life into old topics, or bring new areas of reading and reflection to the forefront. We look forward to publishing well researched and well-argued articles by young, as well as older scholars, which will introduce the readers to upcoming domains of literary studies.

The review section has been introduced in order to bring to attention new creative, critical and theoretical works, as well as narration through the performative arts.

We would be happy to receive readers' responses to the articles, which will definitely help us to keep improving the future issues. The editors will use their discretion in publishing or sharing selected comments with the readers.

The first issue comprises articles on a wide range of topics. The diversity of subjects in this issue is an apt reflection of the various avenues of research which have lately been incorporated into what used to be the more classical areas of literary studies. We expect such multi-disciplinary approaches to become more central to Departments of English in this country, as they will equip students with a Liberal Arts approach, able to appreciate diverse viewpoints originating from different life experiences.

The literary strategies adopted by different writers, across various genres, to enervate the imagination and create a world which 'worlds' in the minds of readers or spectators is a central creative concern. It is what sets literature apart from literary studies. The contributors of this volume have used critical discourses to illustrate the workings of ideology through the pleasures of the imagination.

Spaces:

Representation of unfamiliar or fantastic locales in theatre which combines spectacle and imagination is the subject matter of Kaitlin Culliton's *The Tale of Herne the Hunter: Lanndscape, Stagecraft and Fictional Worlds in 'The Merry Wives of Windsor'*. The essay examines Shakespeare's expansion of the theatre space into a metatheatrical one which is conjured up by the imagination, transporting the audience to places inaccessible to the common man, or existing only in fantasy. Shakespeare's deft conjunction of physical presence and fictional locales in the performance of the 'merry wives', according to Culliton, is an example of the metadramatic performance of folklore.

Edward Soja's book, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (1989) has turned scholarly attention "to see spatiality with the same acute depth of vision that comes with a focus on *durée*." The potential reconfiguration of spatial imagination in literature has involved the interpretation of spaces and their representations in contemporary works, as well as a rethinking of imaginary spaces in early modern works. Buchi Emecheta's treatment of community spaces, and their transformation in newly adopted lands and cultures is examined by Jashomati Ghose in *Voices in the Compound: Celebration of Female Identity in Buchi Emecheta's London Based Novels*. The essay deals with the postcolonial writer's journey towards a voice which has been muffled by colonial practices and the conjoining of the oral and written practices of storytelling, followed by the emergence of the library as a communal space which nurtures marginalised voices.

Keeping gender and alternative sexual identities as the formative structure of her argument, Srijit Saha explores the rippling effect of power in parallel space through a careful study of Suniti Namjoshi's novel in her article called *A Quasi-Queeristan: An Analysis of Suniti Namjoshi's The Mothers of Maya Diip as a Lesbian Heteropia*. Saha shows how Namjoshi's Maya Diip, which almost begins as a promise of a lesbian utopia, only to gradually dissipate into a space of parallel power structures embodying a heterotopia, finally degenates into a dystopia. The article debunks the idea of a lesbian 'we' and interrogates the possibility of homogenizing sexual experiences in Namjoshi's novel.

The carnivalesque world of nonsense:

Srimoyee Roy's *Wonderland, Cats and Hiji bij bij*, is a comparative study of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* (1868) and Sukumar Roy's *Ha Ja Ba Ra La* (1921). Through an examination of the two Roy reiterates the carnivalesque nature of nonsense literature which upends the ordered adult view of the world by disrupting linear trajectories of time and the rationally mapped sense of space. The 'othered' space of the rabbit hole, the entitled tone of the talking cat which dismisses the failure of the narrator to comprehend the irrational – both are delightful subversions of accepted wisdom, enabled by deliberate nonsense masquerading as children's literature. The distance of time and location between the two texts illustrate this subversive impulse as a recurrent impulse in works of the imagination.

Dialogic voices:

Sayantani Sengupta's consideration of opposing pulls in the plot of *The Deterministic World of the Polyphonic Texts: Pirandello's Puppets in 'Six Characters in Search of an Author'*, shows how the external completeness of the text and the internal freedom/open-endedness of the characters who demand to be given the right of a closure which has been denied to them, is based on Bakhtin's interrogation of the life of fictional characters in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1963) "…constructed not as the whole of a single consciousness, absorbing other consciousnesses as objects into itself, but as a whole formed by the interaction of several consciousnesses, none of which entirely becomes an object for the other..."

Reorienting Postcolonial perspectives

Shirsendu Mondal's *Resistance Denied: Things Fall Apart and Ruptures Within*, revisits the heroic saga of Okonkwo, the protagonist, and his final failure at leading a violent mass upsurge against the coloniser. Mondal contends that this inability cannot be read only as the failure of an individual due to his flaws and shortcomings; rather, it represents the transitional stage of the fragile Igbo society in its movement from collectivism to individuality. He asserts that if the colonial power succeeded in crushing the upsurge, the reason behind it was not only the hegemonic submission to the coloniser but the internal fault lines of the social matrix which enabled the colonists to succeed in breaking apart an attempted collective struggle at a flawed moment. Mondal's article complicates the simple binaries of the coloniser-colonised constructs by turning the focus on the internal politics and fragmentations of Igbo society , rather than the machiavellian strengths of the Europeans.

Peripheries in the focus

Soumyosree Banerjee's *Psychotic or Psychedelic?: Reinterpreting 'Madness' in Alan Moore's Killing Joke* invites the reader to look beyond what seems to be the surface reality in the graphic novel *Killing Joke* (1988). The Joker who was intended in popular culture to introduce an antithesis to Batman, Banerjee argues, testifies an overlap of psychodelia and psychosis. She provides a detailed study in the representation of the Joker by placing the novel against the context of the Counterculture Movement and the use of psychedelic therapy in criminal asylums. The article explores the possible connotations of 'madness' as seen in the Joker against the discursive domains mapped by Nietzsche and Foucault in this context.

In Voice of the Voiceless Exploring the treatment of Maidservants in Ismat Chughtai's Select Short Stories, Mahamadul Hassan Dhabak explores the intersectionality of power equations across the issues of class and gender. While it is well-known how important Ismat Chughtai is as a writer in Urdu literature, writing during a timespan when the literary arena was predominantly masculine in its articulation of passions and desire, Dhabak's article provides a study of select short stories to demonstrate the individuation that the maidservants - who are treated as no more than commodities to appease the cravings requirements of the ruling class within a feudal social structure, attain in the hands of Chughtai.

Re-interpretations:

While literary works are rooted in their own times and contemporary realities which enable an evaluation of the same from the perspectives of historical criticism, new perspectives imposed on them at later stages of literary estimate may lead to a plethora of re-interpretations where the same work yields different meanings - almost in a poststructuralist order, where gaps invite the readers to ascribe new associations.

Viral Porecha attempts a radical reinterpretation of Andrew Marvell's poems in his article called *The Apollonian and the Dionysian Aspects in the Poetry of Andrew Marvell*. He argues that the development of art which Nietzsche famously associated with the Apollonian and Dionysian duality in *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872), may also be found well-represented in select poems of Andrew Marvell which could be reinterpreted as a brilliant synthesis of the Apollonian and the Dionysian principles.

Film Review:

The connection between popular culture and larger philosophical discourse is no longer a contested territory. The inclusion of pop-culture in English Literature syllabi and the emergence of Film/Cutural/ Performance Studies departments in India indicates academia's acceptance of forms of narratives beyond the printed text. A cross-disciplinary review of Kamaleshwar Mukherjee's 2016 film, *Khawto*, by Soumyajit Chandra, applies Bakhtinian concepts to interpret a film which is not strictly classified as an art-house film, but does indeed raise questions about authorial agency even within the format of a psychological thriller. Chandra's review explores the porous boundaries between popular entertainment and art house intellectualism.

Putting together the first volume of *Interlocutor* has been like the beginning of a journey where the goal is known but the possible paths are many. The variety of the articles included in this volume indicate this exuberance of commencement. We look forward to a journey that will be enriching and even unpredictable, so that the journal may carve a special niche for itself at a time when there are a number of erudite publications in circulation.

Finally, a heartfelt thanks from the editors to the members of the Advisory Board for their invaluable guidance, the Editorial Team for the hard work that they have put in, the peer reviewers who have gone through the articles meticulously, and the management of The Bhawanipur Education Society College for extending their support to this venture.

Members of the Editorial Board:

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Voices in the Compound: Celebration of Female Identity in Buchi Emecheta's London based Novels

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> All I ever wanted was to tell stories from my home, just like my big mother Nwakwaluzo used to tell stories in her very own compound with her back leaning against the *ukwa* tree.
>
> — — Buchi Emecheta, *Head Above Water* (242)

Buchi Emecheta is remembered diversely as a Black British writer, a Nigerian novelist and a Feminist committed to the cause of 'feminism with a small "f"". Being brought up in a family where most women were gifted story-tellers, Emecheta's penchant for stories as she mentions it in her autobiography, seems only natural. What this confession from an immigrant, Anglophone Nigerian novelist deliberately simplifies however, is the implicit dialectics of oral and scribal narrative conventions that inevitably shape her identity as a story-teller; a dialectics that does not present itself in case of her big mother's beloved renditions in her village compound. The taste of letters introduced by the British imperial education and the subsequent migration to the former empire itself had entailed a metamorphosis of the Igbo 'story-teller' into an Anglophone, Britain based Nigerian novelist. Through ascribing the power of the written word or 'logos' to the enchanting voice of the story-teller, Emecheta claims to be able to bring women's voices to a larger audience beyond that consisting of her native women in Ibusa. It is the urge to reach out to a wider international audience that characterises the ambition of the migrant woman writer, who while writing, suffers a triple burden of being Black, female and a migrant separated from the comfort of a natal home. Emecheta makes this struggle to find an authorial identity on the part of the female immigrant the very cornerstone of her two autobiographical novels, *In the Ditch* and *Second Class Citizen*. The concern however is shared implicitly by all her London novels, irrespective of the vocation of her female protagonists.

Emecheta's oeuvre beginning with the documentation of her own lived experiences comprises today, a body of vividly dialogic narratives (autobiographical and fictional) on the nature of women's struggles for self-definition in various social settings. In an interview conducted by Oladipo Joseph Ogundele in 1994 Emecheta recognizes her own mission as first and foremost, that of a story-teller committed to telling 'the world our part of the story while using the voices of women'(449). The vivid dialogism of her novels clearly derives from this interface between writing and orature, as well as from the liminality of her own position as a Nigerian woman writing in Britain. Writing as a Black

immigrant woman in Britain, she asserts her identity in an alien world by weaving together strands of fragmented stories, memories, myths and everyday experiences. The unique contribution of her novelistic oeuvre, as this paper argues, is to translate the dialogic character of the African 'compound', a site of social gatherings, story-telling, debates and discussions into the dialogic medium of the Bakhtinian novel.

1. **The Compound as a Space**:

Traditionally, West African villages had a compound comprising a cluster of houses built around a large space. Individually, the size of a family's compound or 'obi' indicated its wealth. Chinua Achebe for instance, mentions Okwonko's large compound or 'obi' as a mark of prosperity and respectability in *Things Fall Apart*:

> Okonkwo's prosperity was visible in his household. He had a large compound enclosed by a thick wall of red earth. His own hut, or obi, stood immediately behind the only gate in the red walls. Each of his wives had her own hut, which together formed a half moon behind the obi (10).

The spatiality of the compound, however, is more fluid than that suggested by Achebe's description of a place surrounded by huts owned by the patriarch of a polygamous family. In *Head Above Water,*Emecheta's own memories of her aunt's fascinating stories told in Ededemushe's moonlit compound shows the vibrant dialogism of this site in a communal culture. Elleke Boehmer, in her discussion of Nigerian novelist Flora Nwapa's works, emphasises the oft-ignored 'vocality' of the 'women's side of the compound' which transcends the confines of traditionally endorsed gender roles. She writes: "This vocality, rambling and seemingly unstoppable, pulls against the confinements of the women's lives – their market rivalries, their anxieties about husbands, families and children" (98). In West African villages thus, the compound used variously by men, women and children as the site for informal gatherings, nocturnal story-telling sessions and as children's playground becomes a potently dialogic site, a diametrically smaller and more informal version of the bustling 'marketplace'. At the compound as in the marketplace, the world comes together and rewrites itself through strands of stories, songs and anecdotes.

2. **The ditch-world**:

In *In the Ditch*, Emecheta's first novel, the 'compound' presents itself as a physical locale, that is, an open space more commonly known as the 'courtyard' featuring at the centre of 'Pussy Cat Mansions', one of the Council houses where Emecheta had stayed for a brief while in her early life. In the novel the author's fictional surrogate Adah, a single mother raising five children on her own, takes up residence in one of these Council flats to ensure safety and security for her family. While Welfare housing frees the protagonist from being subject to the whims of exploitative, racist landlords, the novel shows how it obliges her as a State beneficiary to a greater degree of subjection. Not long after her arrival thus, Adah learns that her newly acquired 'independence','freedom' and 'peace of mind'(19) will be under strict State supervision at the Mansions. The design of the Mansions too, is apt to accommodate this need with respect to every resident family. The 'Pussy Cat Mansions', a block of nearly one hundred and forty flats built around a large courtyard, is strategically designed

by the State for housing its deviant subjects. The position of the flats, along with the central location of the social worker Carol's office in the 'compound' enables the authorities to exercise a bureaucratic regimentation of space, ensuring thus, a constant supervision of its tenants, the so-called 'problem families'. In this way the Mansion's 'compound' apparently functions in a manner which is totally antithetical to the manner in which the village compound functions in pre-colonial Igboland. A comprehensive reading of the novel however, allows the reader to simultaneously reimagine the Mansion's 'compound', not as a surveillance centre, but as an alternative 'third space'. Existing neither as a replication of the spatiality of the West African 'compound', nor as the materialization of a State Panopticon, it is seen, rather, as a transformation of both spaces into what Homi Bhabha terms as a "'newness' of migrant or minority discourse", a newness that is not part of the "'progressivist' division between past and present, or the archaic and the modern" (325).

This new space, termed as the 'ditch world' where Adah and her creator Emecheta had found themselves in their early lives, redefines London's metropolitan life from an alternative lens. The ditch-world, beyond its utilitarian function of housing the city's troublesome 'others'(the poor, the invalid, immigrants and broken families) evolves into a constellation of social relations that disrupts the original plan of the authorities by generating what John McLeod in *Postcolonial London* calls new 'affiliative' networks. Such networks inevitably cut across the 'filial' networks that bind individuals to a totalizing structure in a condition of abject dependency (95). The ditch-dwellers, mostly single mothers raising families with state aid, are a heterogeneous group comprising Irish, Caribbean and Nigerian immigrants as well as British women and those of multiracial origin born in Britain. In essence, they present a microcosm of London's multicultural tradition that was increasingly threatened by racist and segregationist policies in Post War Britain. This forgotten image of London as an inclusive urban space provides a resistant counter-narrative to the popular essentialist models of belonging based on class, race, ethnicity or gender that Emecheta's personal experience always made her suspect.

In contrast to the compartmentalised urban spaces encountered by Emecheta and her fictional counterpart, the ditch-world is fluid, open-ended and ceaselessly dialogic. This unique spatiality undermines on the one hand, any possibility of order, stability and perfection, while on the other hand, it develops a creative scope for dialogic exchanges among its users and inhabitants. In the ditch, the women, divided by race and nationality gossip, abuse each other and banter in a lowly English that at first shocks Adah. She soon learns in course of her occasional interactions with the officials, however, that fancy words, like fancy clothes, do not agree well with the authorities who want the tenants to look and sound lowly and destitute on all accounts. Vulgar abuses, verbal intimidation and blackmailing are the universally acknowledged passwords for better state entitlements. Gentle words on the contrary bring no hope. As Whoopey, one of Adah's close friends in the Mansions advises her:

> You have to whine all the time, and make song and dance of the fact that you're unsupported. The more trouble you make, the more grant you get. If you want to be la-di-da and ladylike with them, you'll get nothing. We are poor, and the bastards want us to look poor (54).

Whoopey's advice that one must use poverty as a tool against itself is reflected in the individual practices of all ditch-dwellers who find consolation in abusing, over-eating, alcoholism or bearing more and more children in defiance of the state's implicit eugenics. While their collective abuse of state aid, both physical and verbal, admits little positive change, it definitely offers dispersed channels of resistance and gratification to individuals living in the community. The dialogic invitation to abuse authorities, share problems and exchange scandal becomes one of the most engaging rituals of the ditch-dwellers who gather daily over endless cups of free coffee at the social worker's office, located in the Mansion's open courtyard. As Emecheta writes: "The little group talked, gossiped and laughed; all were happy. They found joy in communal sorrow" (61).

In the shared space of the ditch, everyone's dreams, like details of their daily lives, become the property of public knowledge; scandals lose their bitter edges and succeed only to entertain. These instances are narrated repeatedly in connection particularly to Whoopey and the widow Mrs Murray, humorously nicknamed 'princess' because of her nostalgic longing for a glorious past. Both Whoopey and Mrs Murray harbour escapist dreams about 'fancy men' (60) and fairy-tale weddings as a way of overcoming the gloomy reality of their lives. In listening to their wildly extravagant fantasies, other women too experience vicarious pleasure and amusement. 'Empty plans' and 'empty dreams' are not out of place in the Mansions' compound, nor are jokes against the same considered unwelcome. Other than sharing empty dreams, jokes and scandal, the ditch-women also stand by one-another in times of crisis. The 'compound', other than serving as a place for idle banter also becomes symbolic of the women's group solidarity. The novel shows ample instances of women being brought together by their common concern over children's well-being. There is for example the episode where Adah and Mrs Ashley help 'Papa Jaja' an old Nigerian man to put his unruly children to bed after his young British wife leaves him in the middle of a cold winter night. When Mrs O'Brien leaves Carol's office to fetch her children from school, she directs her plea of keeping an eye on her youngest child to no one in particular, knowing in her heart that someone or the other would do the needful. Such examples show how inhabitants of the ditch-world, though divided so radically along lines of nationality and race, can come together in times of need. For Adah in particular, the 'affiliative' community of mothers further presents the image of an imagined pre-colonial Igbo community in the heart of England; one where the creative, procreative and nurturing roles of women as mothers, story-tellers and care-givers were accorded high importance. An intimate female space, the ditch-world thus allows its members to coexist in a condition of mutual interdependence, furthering, as Omar Sougou points out in his citation of Nancy Chodorow, "a relational model of feminine selfhood" (34).

3. **Voices: The author and her community:**

On a personal note, Adah's experiences at the Pussy Cat Mansions are conceived as a necessary prelude to Emecheta's next novel, featuring the phase prior to the 'ditch chapter'. The breaking up of the ditch community proves challenging for the protagonist whose infantile dependence on the community becomes in one way rewarding and in another, inhibitory for her high aspirations as a Black writer in Britain. Adah, unlike some veteran ditch-dwellers, finds her tongue weighed down by the burden of her skin colour and her immigrant status. While the other women swear, bully and defy the officials at ease, Adah finds herself in the ambivalent position of 'young nations seeking

independence' (92) from foreign powers. Although Ogunyemi calls it "ditch of dependence, immaturity, poverty and inferiority" (236) detrimental to a writer's individual identity, she simultaneously pays a tribute to its contribution in Emecheta's journey as a writer 'from invisibility to public gaze'. Adah's emergence as an individual seems complete at the end of the text, in an episode where she defies the racist gestures of a fellow tenant in the community's wash-shed through a bold willful counter-gesture and earns the support of other women in chastising the offender (104-106). This individuation is celebrated as a verbal victory over the opponent, as in countless cases narrated earlier in the text. This verbal victory lays no doubt, the foundations of the individual authorial voice, a voice that would continue beyond the pages of this text into those of Emecheta's subsequent works. This 'voice' that the protagonist discovers at last through the mediation of a plurality of other voices in the novel, finds a more distinctly literary manifestation in her next novel *Second Class Citizen*.

With her second novel *Second Class Citizen*, Emecheta attempts to form a background to the autobiographical experiences narrated in the first novel. This autobiographical novel, bearing ironic echoes from Western bildungsromans like Dickens' *David Copperfield* and sentimental novels like Richardson's *Pamela*, replete with maxims, platitudes and Biblical quotations, seems more self-consciously literary than its predecessor. The singular focus on Adah's pursuit of her dreams, her trials and hardships as a Nigerian immigrant in London, her conjugal problems and her final realisation of her vocation as a writer, makes way for the predominance of the protagonist's voice at the cost of marginalising alternative voices. Amongst the novel's five 'compositional stylistic unities' mentioned by Bakhtin namely, 'direct authorial literary-artistic narration', 'forms of oral everyday narration', 'forms of semi literary (written) everyday narration', 'literary but extra-artistic speech' and finally, the 'stylistically individualised speech of characters'(262); this novel shows a predominance of the first and the fourth components. Whereas the first novel, written from the viewpoint of a sociology student, demonstrates an abundance of what Bakhtin calls 'skaz'('forms of oral everyday narration') and the 'stylistically individualised speech of characters'; the second novel prioritises a singular narrative voice that is ironic, patronising and at times, overtly sentimentalised. It replaces *In the Ditch's* community of women with Adah's nuclear family and her small group of middle class colleagues.

In the novel, the reader encounters an oddly self-contradictory Adah; one who is petulantly class conscious and naively idealistic, one who condemns patriarchy and yet harbours misogynistic notions. This duality often creates an ironic gap between Adah and her author, even as it merges them in other instances. The divided consciousness of Adah, reflecting the cultural binaries internalised by her author, is resolved at last through the realisation of her vocation as a writer. It is at this climactic point that the novel ties together two important motifs that were only hinted at in the first novel: the quest for an identity and the fulfilment of the creative urge to tell stories through the medium of the novel. It is at this juncture when Adah discovers her creative talent with some encouragement from her colleagues at the Chalk Farm Library that she is able to translate her memories, experiences and opinions from the oral medium to that of the written text. In writing what she terms 'my brainchild' (166), Adah, like her author, feels like "someone talking, talking fast, who would never stop" (165). The emphasis on the spoken word seems to bring the novel, her 'brainchild' very close to Emecheta's memories of stories born orally in the village compounds, amidst a bustling

community of storytellers, listeners and participants and not indeed, in the isolation of a 'room of one's own'.

In his book *The Dialogic Imagination* Bakhtin defines the novel as a "diversity of social speech types (sometimes even diversity of languages) and a diversity of individual voices, artistically organised" (262). The novel *The Bride Price*, seen as a debut venture of both the fictional Adah and her author seems to approach this condition of dialogism at the time of its genesis. Although the manuscript in both cases was burnt by the vindictive husbands, it plays an important role in fashioning Adah or Emecheta's identity as an immigrant Nigerian writer. *The Bride Price,* Emecheta's first attempted novel appears in Adah's story to have its genesis in diverse narratives; both oral and written, biographical and literary. It is shaped as such, by the conditions of orality as well as the more formal literary conventions of the written 'text'. That it is not an easy venture to try and write something in 'English' which is African in spirit, is made conspicuous in Adah's dilemma:

> She could not write in any African language, so it must be English although English was not her mother tongue. Yes, it was the English language that she was going to use. But she could not write those big long twisting words. Well, she might not be able to do those long difficult words, but she was going to do her own phrases her own way. Adah's phrases, that's what they were going to be. (166)

In her attempt to master the language of the coloniser to the purpose of using it as a tool to express her own perspective of the world and its people; Adah mentions the Bible and Shakespeare as two simplest sources. While she never ceased to be fascinated by Shakespeare's literary contributions, as a child she had been simultaneously trained to learn the words of the Bible by heart. She acknowledges the role of her beloved Pa in teaching her how to read the Bible. The memory of words however, goes beyond the domain of a literate culture and points towards the popular oral tradition of Bible recitations and hymn singing among the Igbo people way back, ever since the early days of European colonisation. The memory of the Bible, as much as the shape of its printed words, exist alongside Adah's memories of her own childhood. Literary output however, depends as much on the immediacy of the lived world as on the remembrance of things past. Unlike the figure of the story-teller, the modern writer thus, cannot solely depend upon memory and eloquent communication skills to achieve eminence amongst her audience, comprising oddly heterogeneous people scattered across the globe, unlike the compact audience of the story-teller or the minstrel. The novelist must not only reflect the voices of real people, but also integrate them aesthetically into her vision of the world. As Adah muses about the correct discipline that 'teaches people about people'(167), citing psychology, anthropology, history and finally sociology, the reader gets an early impression of the immensely dialogic scope of Emecheta's novels which celebrate the variety and multiplicity of women's voices in diverse social settings. For Adah in both novels, as it is for a writer, self-knowledge and self-fulfilment can only be made possible through a persistent awareness of the existence and the contribution of 'others' in one's life.

An evaluation of the creative potentials of Adah's unpublished 'brainchild' becomes more relevant, when read in the context of Emecheta's dedicatory lines in *Second Class Citizen*. As in the case of the fictional Adah, Emecheta claims to have written her novel listening to the 'sweet

background noises' of her children, without which the book may not have been possible. Through her reference to background noises of the children, her potential adult readers-in-making, Emecheta's dedication draws the attention of her readers to one of the most important requisites for a writer, that is, the presence of a community of listeners without whose nurturing role the 'brainchild' can never be brought into the world. In *Second Class Citizen* this nurturing, maternal role is offered by Adah's colleagues in the Chalk Farm Library who encourage and provide her with valuable feedback, giving her the strength to hold fast to her dream. Contrary to Francis who destroys the book that poses a threat to his authoritative position as the patriarch, the Canadian Bill provides encouragement to Adah. It is he who first gives the name 'brainchild' to the book that Francis dismisses as 'rubbish'. It is the Chalk Farm Library, more than any other space in London, that provides Adah the double benefits of financial security as well as recreation. John McLeod observes that the library becomes an alternative postcolonial space which exists at an interface between the 'concrete and the invented' (101). The library brings Adah in touch with writers like James Baldwin, Flora Nwapa and Karl Marx. It is here at this heterotopic locale that Bill, a White Canadian introduces Adah to James Baldwin, a Black American writer whose works further make Adah aware of the idea that 'Black was beautiful' (152), giving her the courage to write her own story as a Black woman. Although that story is eventually burnt to ashes, her awareness of being a potential author cannot be destroyed at the end. The library with its liberal ideals, its vivid dialogism and its nurturing transcultural affiliations becomes an alternative to the nostalgically remembered village compound and its rich oral community lost in transit. Its immense contribution to the author's successful self-fashioning as a Black British woman writer is indicated in the following lines: "Librarianship was to her simply a stepping stone to bring her nearer to the books she dreamt she was going to write in the future, when she was forty"(168). It indicates much more than a desire for passive consumption of bookish knowledge. What it embraces rather, is a penchant to voice forth the female 'self' and its stories to the world.

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The Tale of Herne the Hunter: Landscape, Stagecraft, and Fictional Worlds in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*

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The Merry Wives of Windsor is, in many ways, a play concerned about a specific time and place. The play was first performed, as far as has been ascertained, in 1597 and is set in a roughly contemporary year.[1] The play depicts the town of Windsor and its local inhabitants getting ready for, and gossiping about, the garter ceremony. In the play, the popular character Sir John Falstaff lecherously pursues the wives of two wealthy burghers, Ford and Page. Aware of and repulsed by his would-be seduction, the two wives contrive a series of humiliating tricks against him. In one instance, they convince him to climb into a buck basket and dump him in Dachet Mead with the washing, in another trick, they convince him to disguise himself as the witch of Brentford, which gets him beaten and thrown from the house by Ford. The setting of the play reflects the actual world of early modern England as it would have been recognizable to its original audience. Throughout the play, landmarks and locations present in the actual town of Windsor are mapped onto the space of the stage, offering a reflection of contemporary middle-class life. However, in the final trick the wives recruit the help of the local townspeople to enact the tale of Herne the hunter. They lure Falstaff to Windsor Forest where they disguise themselves as fairies and pinch him, making him believe he is haunted for his unchaste desires. While the trick works to restore domestic order both in stopping Falstaff's advances and in tempering Ford's jealous behavior toward his wife, the scene momentarily departs from the sense of contemporary English locality that has hitherto governed the world of the play. Instead, Falstaff is immersed in the Tale of Herne the Hunter, convinced "in spite of the teeth of all reason" that he has been abducted into a fairy realm. Although he eventually sees his error, what momentarily emerges is the complete and ontologically distinct fictional world created by the wives. I argue that the landscape of Windsor Forest takes an active role in the creation of this fictional world, both serving as a setting and performance space for the masque-like fairy procession that is the wives' third and final trick. The wives utilize the landscape in this scene to create a believable fictional world that operates with entities and structuring principles that are unique from the rest of the play. In doing so, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* demonstrates the power of landscape in the creation of fictional worlds, even in or perhaps particularly in performance, and perhaps raises questions about its own performance on a relatively bare Elizabethan stage.

From its opening lines, the play is set in and revolves around the daily lives of Windsor citizens. The setting of the play in Windsor had a unique relationship to the actual geography of the

[1] All quotations are taken from Shakespeare, William. *The Merry Wives of Windsor. The Norton Shakespeare*, edited by Stephen Greenblatt, Norton, 2008, pp. 1255-1320.

borough town of Windsor as Shakespeare's audiences would have known it. While the titular wives orchestrate the central plots against Falstaff, their trickery is integrated into the daily activities of the community, most notably the town's concern over the marriage of Page's daughter Anne. Anne's dowry has attracted the attention of the foolish Abraham Slender and the ridiculous physician of the French court, Doctor Caius. Anne prefers the poor nobleman Fenton, but her parents disapprove, Mistress Page favoring Caius and Page favoring Slender. This plot interconnects the characters, who are intertwined in the local business of Anne's marriage. The only two foreign characters Doctor Caius and Sir Hugh Evans, audibly marked as outsiders from the accents written into the text, are embedded within the community, although their foreign-ness is the subject of attention and derision. Sir Hugh Evans is a parson and school master in Windsor, who supports Slender's suit for Anne. Caius seeks Anne for himself—hoping to secure himself both a sizable dowry and a connection to the prominent families of new Windsor wealth.

While these characters are not based on actual Windsor citizens or allegorically related to actual members of the court, the setting of the play—the stable geographic category that embraces the entire text— reflects the actual geographic territory of Windsor at a roughly contemporary time to its performance. The town itself occupies, both in the play and in actual early modern England, a very limited area, best known perhaps for the Queen's summer residence, Windsor castle. Contemporary artistic representations of Windsor are understandably castle-centric. One of the earliest surviving depictions, Joris Hoefnagel's "Windsor Castle seen from the North with figures in the foreground" c. 1568, depicts the buildings, walls, chapels, and gates of Windsor Castle with fairly accurate details across the entire background of the sketch (Hoefnagel). Hoefnagel's view of the castle was the basis of at least two other depictions, including Marcus Gheeraerts the Elder's engraving of Queen Elizabeth in Procession with the Knights of the Garter, dated 1576.[2] The castle has always, it seems, loomed large in early modern imagination and in the background of nearly every artistic depiction of Windsor

Despite the fact that this seat of monarchical power was both ideologically and physically central to the town, Windsor Castle, or even the word castle, is not referenced in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* until Act 3, scene 3 when Page turns to Ford accusing him of jealousy saying, "I would not ha' your / distemper in this kind for the wealth of Windsor Castle" (3.3.182-3). The castle finally appears in Act 5, as the characters slowly encroach into the space setting up the final plot against Falstaff. Page describes the location for the audience: "Come, come; we'll couch i' the castle-ditch till we see the light of our fairies" (5.2.1-2). And later Mistress Quickly disguised as the fairy Queen ushers the fairies throughout the interior of the castle: "About, about; / Search Windsor Castle, elves, within and out: / Strew good luck, ouphes, on every sacred room" (5.5.54-6). And even though the castle is invisible throughout most of the play, the events that the play describes circulate throughout the streets of Windsor and the landscape immediately surrounding it.

[2] The other is a woodcut included in the 1570 edition of Foxe's Book of Martyrs, 1570. The primacy of this view of the castle in various artistic depictions is outlined in the Royal Collection Trust's online commentary. See Hoefnagel, Joris. "Windsor Castle seen from the North with figures in the foreground, c.1568." Royal Collection Trust. https://www.rct.uk/collection/912936/windsor-castle-seen-from-the-north-with-figures-in-the-foreground.

The setting in this immediate area, both in terms of landmarks and spatial relationships, reflects the actual geography of early modern England. Narratologists such as Marie Laurent Ryan, have helpfully distinguished between setting, and what they term "story space" or "all the spatial frames plus all the locations mentioned by the text that are not the scene of actually occurring events" (25). The off-stage story space of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* is uniquely undistorted. For example, when Doctor Caius has challenged Sir Evans to a duel, the Host of the Garter appoints them "contrary places" to meet. As Doctor Caius waits in a field outside of Windsor, the host and various other "witnesses" continue to misdirect the duelers.

> HOST. And, moreover, bully,--but first, master guest, and Master Page, and eke Cavaleiro Slender, go you through the town to Frogmore.
> *Aside to them*
> PAGE. Sir Hugh is there, is he?
> HOST. He is there: see what humour he is in; and I will bring the doctor about by the fields. Will it do well? (2.3.66-71).

Waiting in Frogmore, Sir Hugh Evans hears from his search party that they have looked for Caius, in "the pittie-ward, the park-ward, every way; old Windsor way, and every way but the town way" (3.1.5-7). Of course, the town way is the way that Shallow, Page and Slender are coming to Frogmore. Frogmore is only about a kilometer away from Windsor Castle, and it takes the whole 26 lines between the time Caius leaves the field outside Windsor for Shallow, Page, and Slender to appear. In other words, the story space of the play adopts and prioritizes the integrity of actual spatial relationships. Audience members who have a knowledge of the area can garner further amusement, understanding like the characters do just how narrowly Evans and Caius miss each other.

More than a simple knowledge of Windsor's geography, Windsor locals are marked by their familiarity of the landscape and its everyday use. As the wives plot against Falstaff for the first time, they convince Falstaff to rendezvous at Mistress Ford's house, telling Falstaff that Ford is away. Mistress Ford details the plot to fool Falstaff to her household staff, saying:

> Marry, as I told you before, John and Robert, be ready here hard by in the brew-house: and when I suddenly call you, come forth, and without any pause or staggering take this basket on your shoulders: that done, trudge with it in all haste, and carry it among the whitsters in Datchet-mead, and there empty it in the muddy ditch close by the Thames side. (3.3.7-13)

The trick goes off smoothly, even though Ford does return early, but the plot relies on the wives' knowledge of local geography and demonstrates, at least on some level, the wives' intimate knowledge of the layout and places of Windsor: where to wash laundry and where to pretend you are washing laundry but instead dumping Falstaff in mud.

Local knowledge, demonstrated through the play's various references to folklore, further creates a sense of place in the *Merry Wives of Windsor.* Mistress Ford and Page know, for instance, that

Ford "cannot abide the old woman of Brentford; he swears she's a witch; forbade her my house and hath threatened to beat her" (4.2.78-80). While Ford is the only character who refers to his wife's aunt as a witch, Falstaff consults with a wise woman from Brentford in Act 4 scene 5.

> FALSTAFF. There was, mine host, an old fat woman even now with me; but she's gone.
>
> SIMPLE. Pray you, sir, was't not the wise woman of Brentford?
> FALSTAFF. Ay, marry, was it, mussel-shell: what would you with her?
> SIMPLE. My master, sir, Master Slender, sent to her, seeing her go through the streets, to know, sir, whether one Nym, sir, that beguiled him of a chain, had the chain or no.
> FALSTAFF. I spake with the old woman about it.
> SIMPLE. And what says she, I pray, sir?
> FALSTAFF. Marry, she says that the very same man that beguiled Master Slender of his chain cozened him of it. (4.5.22-35).

Falstaff claims her advice is supernaturally wise and has taught him wit, marking him as a credulous outsider. Falstaff's consultation with the wise woman of Brentford comes immediately after he is "beaten black and blue" by Ford for his impersonation of her as he tried to leave Ford's house in disguise in the second trick. Slender's active search for the wise women to help him locate a chain—referring to the folk belief that some people were supernaturally gifted in finding lost items (Willard 493)—and the hosts warning against her comes too late to save Falstaff from Ford's beating. This series of allusions to characters who are known by reputation to Windsor locals on the periphery of the play's main plot adds local color and creates a fully realized depiction of Shakespeare's Windsor.

The tale of Herne the Hunter is the most predominate piece of local folklore in the play. The town locals all exhibit knowledge of local folklore, citing this knowledge of landscape and tale as something handed down from generation to generation. The interaction between Mistress Page and her husband details the town's familiarity with the tale:

> MISTRESS PAGE. There is an old tale goes that Herne the hunter,
> Sometime a keeper here in Windsor Forest,
> Doth all the winter-time, at still midnight,
> Walk round about an oak, with great ragg'd horns;…
> You have heard of such a spirit, and well you know
> The superstitious idle-headed eld
> Received and did deliver to our age
> This tale of Herne the hunter for a truth.
> PAGE. Why, yet there want not many that do fear
> In deep of night to walk by this Herne's oak:
> But what of this? (4.4.27-39).

While Page expresses doubts that Falstaff will be fooled into a rendezvous a third time, his wife simply responds with the start of the Herne the Hunter tale, which is realized in the final act. She establishes, in the face of her husband's incredulity, the basic world of the story she and Mistress

Ford will bring to life for Falstaff. The setting they propose for this third trick is not inside Mistress Ford's home, as the previous two, or in the town of Windsor itself, but rather the space on the other side of Windsor Castle, in Windsor Forest, part of the extensive "little park" used for the monarch's hunting grounds.

As the final trick progresses, the stable recognizable depiction of the actual world of early modern England that has been upheld with cartographic precision on stage begins to break down. As Helgerson notes "as the performance develops, it takes on a generic aura well removed from local practices and particularities" (176). The street names eclipse into Windsor Park as the characters physically descend into ditches surrounding Windsor Castle. This movement across and into the landscape creates the believable fictional world of Herne the Hunter. As Falstaff takes on the likeness of Herne, Nan Page, the children dressed as fairies and Sir Hugh Evans also take on the properties of their fictional world identities. As they are "all couched in a pit hard by Herne's oak," Mistress Ford asks Mistress Page, "Where is Nan now and her troop of fairies, and the / Welsh devil Hugh?" Sir Hugh Evans, previously described as a Welshman or Welsh soul-curer becomes a "Welsh devil" as he waits dressed as a hobgoblin, physically obscured by the Windsor landscape (5.3.13-14; 11-12).

The world that the wives create here is separate and linguistically distinct from the rest of the play as well. The fairy spell in Act 5, scene 2 breaks from the neat iambic pentameter that as pervaded most of the play and falls into the descending patterns of trochaic and dactylic metrical feet:

> Pinch him, fairies, mutually;
> Pinch him for his villainy;
> Pinch him, and burn him, and turn him about,
> Till candles and starlight and moonshine be out. (5.5.99-102)

Falstaff's reaction speaks to the world's believability, and he tellingly falls to the ground, crouching into the landscape for protection. The "contemporary, domestic, and non-aristocratic feel" of the play that Walter Cohen identifies is suddenly transformed into a believable and separate fictional world (1255). The world that unfolds in the fairy trick is a space "that is outside of the town proper" (Theis 59). The fairy masque mirrors the world of Windsor, but is neither subject to its social norms, nor its geography.

For Falstaff, being in a landscape that is seemingly less subject to social strictures signals an opportunity to participate in fantasies of an erotic nature. He takes his cue for his fantasy from the landscape wherein the wives have chosen to meet. The text remains ambiguous about what the wives have offered Falstaff as a means to "devise to bring him thither" (4.4.26). Likewise, when Mistress Quickly brings their letter to Falstaff, Quickly convinces him to "let me speak with you in your chamber you shall hear how things go, and, I warrant, to your content," and the rest of their conversation takes place offstage (4.5.115-7). Whatever the suggestion given in the letter, the result is clear: Falstaff arrives in Windsor Forest wearing deer antlers, praying to the "hot blooded gods" Jove and Jupiter, who likewise took on animal forms to seduce their lovers (5.5.2). Several scholars have noted the manner in which Falstaff's disguise is reminiscent of the legend Actaeon, a huntsman who

came across Diana when she was bathing with her nymphs and was consequently turned into a stag (Stephen 735; Steadman). In renaissance iconography, Actaeon is typically depicted as a stag from the waist up, recalling Falstaff's antlers and his invocations of classical deities for virility. In local Berkshire legend, Herne was Richard II's favorite huntsman, and it is clear that Falstaff is trying to position himself as a "hunter" of the Windsor wives (Theis). Regardless, Falstaff sees the woods as a place where erotic fantasies can be played out away from the preview of Mistress Ford's husband.

However, Falstaff's knowledge of Windsor's lore ends at a cursory understanding of its erotic undertones (or perhaps he remains willfully ignorant of the endings of such stories.): In Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron* (1351), Herne hung himself because of his love's continuous rejection, and his ghost was doomed to continuously relieve his final gruesome hunt, chasing down his love and disemboweling her only to have her spring up and flee again. In the Actaeon myth, Actaeon was transformed into a stag by Diana as punishment for his voyeurism, and he was consequently torn apart by his own hounds (Stephen 733). Falstaff alludes to this tale ironically when he tells the wives to "divide me like a bribed buck" (5.5.23). Instead of the Jove or Jupiter seduction myths in which Falstaff fantasizes himself as role playing, Falstaff has walked into a story that the *wives* have created. Falstaff is correct in interpreting Windsor Forest as "a communal site of ceremony and release from norms that govern the village" (Barber 35-57). However, legally this park under the jurisdiction of the monarch—and it is Elizabeth on the throne. This world that Falstaff has submitted himself to is world of old wives' tales come to life, created from a landscape that is under the jurisdiction of the fairy queen—an epithet for Elizabeth herself.[3] If the storyworld the wives have created is a fantasy realm, it is the fantasy of female sovereignty, a world in which wives can be merry and honest too. In this landscape, Anne Page also uses the fairy trick to elope with her choice of husband, Fenton, despite the favoritism of her father and mother toward ill-matched suitors.

As the fairies begin to pinch Falstaff, Mistress Quickly begins to lead the fairies in song; the fairy song evokes the interior spaces of Windsor Castle for the first time in the play. Mistress Quickly beckons the fairies to "search Windsor Castle, elves within and out. Strew good luck, aufs, on every sacred room" (5.5.53-6). This departure from the quotidian streets of Windsor town to the evocative descriptions of the interior of Windsor Castle is a tantalizing view of what might have been something of a fantasy for Shakespeare's original public audience. The first audience of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* was exclusive to the Queen, her knights, courtiers and clergymen, and therefore as Katz observes:

> A public performance would have served as a metatheatrical realization of the relationship implied within the play, of courtiers arriving to attend a Garter ceremony (and by extension the production of Merry Wives embedded in that ceremony) […] In other words, the popular audience received the play itself as a thing produced for the court and, accordingly, went to the theater to see what the court *saw*. (90)

[3] For more on the trope of old wives' tales and their connection to Elizabeth see Diane Purkiss, "Old Wives Tales Retold: The Mutations of the Fairy Queen." *'This Double Voice': Gendered Writing in Early Modern England*, edited by Danielle Clarke and Elizabeth Clarke. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000, pp. 103–22.

The fairy masque gives playgoers the satisfaction of a glance at the interior workings of the garter ceremony. However, while the play reflects the landscape of early modern Windsor, in the original performance for the queen in the year 1597, the garter ceremony did not actually take place in Windsor Castle as the play depicts. The ceremony was moved to Whitehall or Greenwich after 1572. Anachronistically, the play depicts the garter feast presently occurring as it was, and in the place it was famously held.

Just as the wives utilize the landscape to build a fictional world that tempts Falstaff's willing suspension of disbelief, they likewise tempt Shakespeare's original audience with an evocation of the interiors of Windsor Castle. Like Falstaff, members of Shakespeare's public playgoing audience were outsiders to Windsor and the garter festivities, developing a sense of its main players by hearsay and recalling the lore of its customs. To the average early modern English citizen, the garter festivities probably resembled something of a fairy realm, steeped in ritual and otherworldly extravagance. Mistress Quickly as the fairy queen describes the perceived similarities, telling the children "nightly, meadow-fairies, look you sing, / Like to the Garter's compass, in a ring:…And 'Honi soit qui mal y pense' write / In emerald tufts, flowers purple, blue and white" (5.5.65-70). And like Falstaff who, when given the opportunity to participate, imagines a world steeped in antiquity, Shakespeare's audience clearly was willing to suspend disbelief, ever immortalizing the garter ceremony in popular imagination in Windsor Castle, a place where it had not been held for some time. The wives' on-stage creation of the fairy masque is a metadramatic description of how to effectively create and perform folklore, even as Shakespeare offers the same to his early modern audience. Like the early modern theater itself, Windsor Forest offers a performance space that can be tailored to its immediate audience.

Tale and landscape are inextricably linked. This construction of the fictional world of Herne the Hunter is inspired and rendered believable by the Windsor landscape, and the landscape takes on new potential when imbued with the magical qualities that the tale perpetuates. Thus, even for its first courtly audience, the Tale of Herne the hunter in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* is all the more about the power and presence of landscape even when not physically powerfully present.

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Voice of the Voiceless: Exploring the Treatment of Maidservants in Ismat Chughtai's Select Short Stories

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Abstract: Ismat Chughtai is regarded as a harbinger of feminism in the Indian subcontinent. *The Outlook* remarked in the blurb of Chughtai's autobiographical novel *The Crooked Line* (*Terhi Lakir*), "long before feminism and Simone de Beauvoir were available to women writers here (in India), Ismat Chughtai had her finger on the pulse of a changing cosmos". With the Progressive Writers' Movement, which Chughtai was a part of, infusing a new wave of thinking and reformation in India, the short stories became a weapon to fight out inoperative ideologies and introduced new and egalitarian ones. This paper aims to explore how maidservants are exploited and used by the feudal social system. Besides, the notions of identity and body of the maidservant in the heteronormative structure of society are also emphasised. This paper examines four short stories, "Tiny's Granny," "Scent of the Body," "The Quilt," and "Gainda."

Keywords: Maid-servant, identity, body, victim, patriarchy, tradition

Woman…woman…woman…

Very good, disloyal, loyal, this and that, and god knows what else.

--Ismat Chughtai

Introduction

Ismat Chughtai (1911- 1991) is regarded as a harbinger of feminism in the Indian subcontinent. The *Outlook* remarked in the blurb of Chughtai's autobiographical novel *The Crooked Line* (Terhi Lakir), "long before feminism and Simone de Beauvoir were available to women writers here (in India), Ismat Chughtai had her finger on the pulse of a changing cosmos". She enters the literary arena of Urdu literature which was predominated by men with a great force and shows women as victims of exploitation by men or other women in the patriarchal social structure. In her contemporary time, she was one of the major radical feminists in India. Ismat Chughtai in her stories

explores the dominant and remorseless patriarchy and its hypocrisy in Muslim society. She shouts a clarion for all social awareness, inequality and change. In most of her writings, women are represented as the prominent voice. Her short stories were translated and published in English by Tahira Naqvi and M. Assaduddin in two separate volumes. This paper aims to explore how maidservants are exploited and used by the feudal social system. Besides, focus will also be given on the notions of identity and body of the maidservant in the heteronormative structure of society.

Objectives of the Study

The characters of Chughtai's stories are taken from the sphere she knew intimately and she presents each character with a different style but in a convincing way. She acknowledges the hierarchical social framework within Urdu speaking Muslims in Agra, Aligarh, Delhi and Bareilly and addresses the vulnerability of the servant class in "Dust of the Caravan", "There isn't a class of people more unfortunate and helpless than domestic servants. This is particularly true of India where unemployment and poverty have forced a large number of people to act as slaves to their small class that rule over them" (*A Life* 2). Class conflict and cultural hegemony are predominantly reflected in her stories. It must be noted that Chughtai's stories are set in "the period of decline of feudalism and depict the moral degradation that was a result of economic backwardness and the consequent cultural decline of the north Indian Muslim families" (Kumar and Sadique 224). North Indian Muslim families are explicitly Urdu speaking Muslims in Agra, Aligarh, Delhi and Bareilly. However, the objective of the study is to focus on the vulnerability of maidservants in the contemporary time of Ismat Chughtai who are subjugated and hegemonised by the upper class and upper middle class Muslim society. Identity is not a stable phenomenon. It is produced, reproduced and configured in the context of social, cultural and political situations. The political influence of Muslim feudal families had sharply declined during the colonial period. But the influence and authority of these families strongly impinge on the servant class. The social framework was heteronormative and patriarchy shaped and influenced value, morality and religion. This article will be analysed from feminist perspective. Chughtai was regarded as one of the forefront feminists during her time, therefore, her perspectives will also be used.

Body and Bodily Performativity

Nivedita Menon in *Seeing Like a Feminist* examines the social, economic and hierarchal positions of the servant class both in old feudal social order and modern capitalist framework. She states, "The polite term 'domestic help' that has replaced the word 'servant' in public usage is perniciously misleading. Make no mistake these are servants. They are treated as less than human, less than pet animals. Apart from facing physical and sexual abuse-which is common-domestic workers perform heavy unrelenting toil, for they have no specific work hours if live-in; no days off or yearly vacations if part-time" (Menon 18). The hierarchy of the classes as well as hierarchy of the bodies are visible where maid servants belong at the bottom of the hierarchy. Like Menon, Scott Wilson also traces the lowest ladder of the hierarchy:

> Servants, slaves, and workers are generally defined as something less than their masters, owners or employers who provide moreover the measure of what is noble or dignified, of

> what is more or less than human. There is something unsettling inhuman about slaves, something, from the point of view of an aristocrat [master] even a little uncanny about them, since they resemble their masters yet are of quite another nature. (Wilson 182)

In her short stories, Chughtai represents both ugly and beautiful maid servants. In "The Quilt", Rabbu is a maidservant of Begum Jan. Begum Jan is a fair and beautiful lady; on the other hand, Rabbu is a very dark woman, "Her face was scarred by smallpox. She was short, stocky and had a small paunch. Her hands were small but agile, and her large, swollen lips were always wet" (Chughtai "The Quilt" 16). So Chughtai represents the ugly physical features of a maidservant. In "Scent of the Body", Sanobar is a maid servant who is brought for the older Sahibzada. She is a 'beautiful child'; she possesses "small bones, taut body, tiny hands and feet, pearly teeth, and the large eyes of a goddess" (Chughtai "Scent of the Body" 131). Halema is another maidservant who is also beautiful, and for this reason Chhamman has chosen her for him. Lajo in "The Homemaker" is also an attractive maid. However, though maid servants are beautiful or ugly, they are regarded as 'maid' which is their only common identity and sometimes, they are regarded as identity less slaves. The physical appearance of the maid servants is not a matter of concern to the master; rather the master class regards them as commodities and uses them to satisfy their sexual appetite.

Judith Butler in *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* states sex, gender and desire are culturally constructed. Foucault sees sexuality in relation to power. Both power and sexuality are considered binary oppositions. The question is how Chughtai depicts maid servants' bodies, gender and sexuality in the relation of power. The cultural hegemony of the feudal class legitimises their dominant position and subordinates their servants. Female body and male body of the servant class are distinguished by their performativity. Sexuality of the maid servant is constructed, reconstructed, justified and popularised by the dominant patriarchal framework. Women in the feudal class or the upper caste are used as mechanisms of patriarchy. The notion of chastity is a patriarchal notion and religious rituals act as tools of patriarchy. The maid servants are identified only by their bodies and sexuality. Their bodies and sexuality are seen as a threat to male members of the family. Often maidservants are represented as a seductress. This presentation of the maidservants' loose morality serves as a substitute for the texts in constructing the "chaste" identity of upper and middle class women. Maidservants, particularly the young ones, are suspected to be the biggest threat to morals of the male members of society. Ismat Chughtai's story "Scent of the Body" shows how maids are appointed for the sexual initiation of the sons of aristocratic families. In this story, Halema, a maidservant, is sent to Chhamman Mian's room ''to rub his feet'' by Nawab Begum (Chughtai "Scent of the Body" 128). Chughtai's representation of Halema draws the sympathy of the reader; she is not the daughter of a maidservant; she is brought into the palace after her father's death. She is a novice in this profession and when she is sent to the room of Chhamman, she feels humiliated. In this room, "Halema's face contorted, lips trembled. She sat down on the carpet, buried her face in her hands, and burst into tears" (Chughtai "Scent of the Body" 128). The vulnerable and voiceless maid servants are manipulated, controlled and subjugated. Their bodies are only used as a site of penetration and pleasure. Halema being a maidservant bears the physical torture and the young Nawab considers her an instrument to play with. Nawab Bahu's ten or twelve years old son, Jabbar used to beat her to a pulp. Sometimes he "touched a pair of red hot tongs to her soles,

squeezed an orange peel into her eyes or thrust a pinch of snuff up her nose. For a long time, Haleema sat patiently and sneezed like a toad, while the household collapsed with laughter" (Chughtai "Scent of the Body" 129). In "Gainda", the narrator depicts how the body of Gainda, a low caste maidservant, is used and exploited. Gainda who is hardly fourteen years old is impregnated by the narrator's Bhaiya and for punishment of this act "she was beaten up for months together" (Chughtai "Gainda" 11). The social hierarchy, the religious sentiment and the patriarchal judiciary do not consider this act as legitimate- consequently she becomes the victim. When she delivered a baby, she was beaten and abandoned without food. In this crucial situation, she survives somehow. Chughtai depicts the existing social hierarchisation where the privileged class gets all the advantages and the servant class is always exploited. Here, Gainda's exploitations are two folded, firstly as a servant and secondly as a woman. The master class, perhaps, gets a sadistic pleasure by torturing the servant class. Foucault considers that power is dynamic and Chughtai sees power as hierarchical. The privileged class along with gender sustains its dominant position by penetrating and controlling bodies of servants. During the colonial period of India, the White masters tortured the native people and got sadistic pleasure. Even in the post-Independence period, the same ruthless and cruel torture is faced by the underprivileged sections based on their gender, sexual, caste, class, religion and ethnic identities.

Compartmentalisation and the Mahal Tradition

Ahmed Ali's *Twilight in Delhi: A Novel* (1940) set around 1911 to 1919, provides a comprehensive description of the changing social, political and cultural spectrum. In this novel, Ali elaborately describes the compartmentalisation of upper class Muslim households. Like Ahmed Ali, Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain in *Sultan's Dream* (1905) also delineates the separation of the space in Muslim household that is zenana and mardana. The zenana, the inner part of the house, is the only space for women and mardana is considered a space for men. Both Rokeya and Ali provide this description for the early part of twentieth century in Indian Muslim household. Ali provides a picture of the zenana in the contemporary orthodox Muslim family:

> In the zenana things went on with the monotonous sameness of Indian life…Mostly life stayed like water in a pond, with nothing to break the monotony of its static life. Walls stood surrounding them on all sides, shutting the women in from the prying eyes of men, guarding their beauty and virtue with the millions of their bricks. (Ali 39)

A similar picture is reflected in the stories of Chughtai. In "The Quilt", Begum Jan is imprisoned in the zenana and she becomes a victim of this claustrophobic atmosphere. However, maid servants remain in the zenana and become a part of collective subjugation and control. Women are regarded as an honour of the family, therefore, patriarchal framework hides them and makes them invisible.

The concept of tradition is a complex phenomenon. Social, religious and cultural practices and rituals are created, formed and repeatedly practised in a specific time period which in a specific situation becomes a tradition. Tradition is not a stable conception, rather, multiple traditions can exist in a family, society and religion. The mahal tradition, what Chughtai notes, is a patriarchal tradition in the upper class Muslim household. Chughtai depicts such a type of tradition in "Scent of the Body". In this tradition, every young Nawab gets a maidservant according to their choice and uses her as a

tool of pleasure and enjoyment. The rivalry among the young Nawabs for dividing maid servants becomes public at times, and "to prevent rivalries between brothers, the elder Begum made a just division of flesh" and having done that, "they were assured that each would respect the other's property rights" (Chughtai "Scent of the Body" 134). In "Scent of the Body", Sanobar, a maidservant, is brought and the Mahal has arranged a fake marriage of Sanobar and Hashmat Mian, a young Nawab. Fourteen-year old innocent Sanobar thinks it as real and "within the year she became pregnant" (Chughtai "Scent of the Body" 132). In the pre-pregnancy period, she has received much love from him, but after the pregnancy "he began showing the first signs of revulsion" (Chughtai "Scent of the Body" 132) and unfortunately, the pregnant maids have no place in the palace. The narrator describes the Mahal tradition:

> The Mahal tradition was that when cattle became heavy with calf they were dispatched to the village. … Pregnant ones were packed off to the village. There they delivered the brat and there it was left to grow or die. They returned, empty-handed, to the Mahal so that the Begum would not to disturbed by the sound of crying babies. (Chughtai "Scent of the Body" 132)

Sanobar does not want to give birth in the village, so she asks Bahu, the maid of maids, not to send her there. Bahu hates all maids, hates her own existence; she has seen too much of life and perhaps has a streak of love somewhere, therefore, she does not send her to the village. But the existence of Sanobar "kept souring Hashmat Mian's mouth" (Chughtai "Scent of the Body" 132). One day she suddenly became angry, and started lashing out at him. For this reason, Sahibzada's blood boils and his "exasperated kick landed squarely on her stomach and Sanobar was thrown into a running drain" (Chughtai "Scent of the Body" 132). To call a doctor for her would have been unthinkable; on the third day, "in the darkest corner of the servants' quarters, Sanobar took her last few tormented breaths" (Chughtai "Scent of the Body" 132). Chughtai's representation of maid servants is not morally loose; they are the victims of their fate and social hierarchical order, class and caste system. Chughtai examines the sufferings and helplessness of maid servants and portrays the pity and pain of maid servants.

Vulnerability

Chughtai in her short stories, discusses maid servants who have no specific names and have no specific identity. In the story "Tiny's Granny", Granny has been shown as a maid servant through her whole life, but in the story, her name is not mentioned, "God knows what her real name was. No one had ever called her by it" (Chughtai "Tiny's Granny" 146). Again, Tiny is appointed as a maidservant when she is merely a child of nine years old. Tiny cannot be the name of anyone; the name is given because she is a small child. Throughout her whole life, perhaps, Tiny is called 'Tiny' which is not her real name. In society, servants are seen as a separate section who bear a collective identity of 'servant'. A similar sense of identity is also reflected in Mulk Raj Anand's *Coolie* where Munoo is employed as a domestic servant in Babu Nathoo Ram's house. Just like Tiny and Granny of Chughtai, Anand's Munoo is not identified by his real name. Any random survey of Indian fiction in English or Urdu would assure that the servants are generally mentioned not by their names but by their masters and the narrative alike.

Chughtai draws pictures of the torture, the victims, the helplessness, and the bitter truth in her short stories. Maidservants are not regarded as human beings rather they are presented as sub-humans in feudal society. High commercialization of human beings is depicted here; the maids are recognized as a commodity to fulfil the lust of young Nawabs. Chughtai discloses the young Nawabs who are morally loose and have not the slightest touch of humanity, though Chhamman Mian is exceptional. Krishan Chander states that Chughtai "is concerned about the lives of people around her and does not weave imaginary fantasies. She tempers reality with incisive observation, and creates characters that are true to life. The reader applauds her astute analysis and laments the bitter reality of his own society" (Kumar and Sadique 176).

In "Tiny's Granny", Tiny is nine years old and recruited as a maidservant in Deputy Saheb's house. One day when the house is empty, the master is sleeping and Tiny is appointed to move the fan. When the fan stops moving, the master wakes from sleep and his "sexual appetite was whetted, and Tiny's fate was sealed" (Chughtai "Tiny's Granny" 148); and the nine-year old Tiny becomes the victim of rape. After the incident, she suffers rape-traumatic syndrome and she is leaning in a corner against the wall like "a wounded bird" (Chughtai "Tiny's Granny" 148). This is not the only one incident, she is repeatedly raped by deputy Saheb and "there was nowhere she could safely set foot anymore" (Chughtai "Tiny's Granny" 150).

Chughtai portrays the helpless condition of Tiny and Granny. Being poor, they have no voice, no social status and no value in society. There is no one in society to whom they could complain against the deputy. The narrator describes the reason;

> If the deputy's son had done it, then perhaps something might have been said. But the deputy himself…one of the leading men in the mohalla, grandfather of three grandchildren, a religious man who regularly said his five daily prayers and had only recently provided mats and water vessels to the local mosque- how could anyone raise a voice against him? (Chughtai "Tiny's Granny" 148)

Chughtai represents herself as the voice of the voiceless people. She shows that the class division is as dangerous as the gender division for society. She portrays the lower class people who have no home, no shelter, no security for life and leading a decent life is totally prohibited by society. Krishan Chander examines, "the sexual desire and feelings of lust, which society tries to conceal beneath false layers of culture and religion, has been exposed by Ismat's various stories" (Kumar and Sadique 176). She exposes the double standards and hypocrisy of society. Her satiric tone pierces through the reader's heart.

Swapna Banerjee states, "in the case of the male employer engaging with the maid, the maid was always the temptress, the fallen woman. On the other hand, when the mistress had a relationship with a servant, she herself was always portrayed as the aggressor, the seductress" (189). The sexual relationship between master and maid servant is not only for the gender difference, rather class division is crucially important. Chughtai portrays maids in different perspectives; sometimes maid is actually actively engaged in a lesbian relationship with Begum Jan in "The Quilt"; sometimes maids

are used as sexual objects and commodities. She shows how the marginalization of maidservant's bodies are exploited, plundered and raped by male members of society.

Conclusion

Chughtai has highlighted "the individuality of these characters by situating them in a state of crisis, because it is only then that the latent capabilities of the characters become fully dynamic and active" (Kumar and Sadique 201). The characters appear as active both at the paradigmatic as well as the syntagmatic level. The writer peeps into the depths of the characters and represents their social as well as psychological conditions. Chughtai's female characters are far from the category of stereotypes and not fixed specimens of craftsmanship without any space for movement. Manjulaa Negi examines Chughtai's characters "leap out of the pages- to shake you, hold you, make you laugh and cry alone with them as though they breathe even today" (7). All the female characters of Chughtai are linked by some common basis attributes that enable the readers to determine their status. The lesbian, the ugly, the girl from a lower class, and the unmarried girl are recognizable characters preciously on the basis of their special qualities. In the context of the social, psychological and religious level, the characters have special categories. On the basis of their social, psychological and mental distinctiveness, the characters have their separate existence. Each character of Chughtai is a unique being and by carrying the imprint of the writer's personality, moves independently and becomes something different.

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The Deterministic World of the Polyphonic Texts: Pirandello's Puppets in *Six Characters in Search of an Author*

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Abstract: Mikhail Bakhtin in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* creates a discourse on the polyphonic novel where the author creates not voiceless slaves "but *free* people, capable of standing *alongside* their creator, capable of disagreeing with him and even rebelling against him" (6). According to the Newtonian mechanical universe theory, it is possible for the creator to sketch out the plot of the lives of his created beings, and any semblance of choice or free-will is only a fallacy. Therefore, following Bakhtin's definition of a polyphonic novel one may conclude that the universe of the polyphonic text is non-deterministic, where the characters are the Gods of their universe—not bestowed with a puppet-like consciousness mouthing the words of their puppeteer—having autonomy over their actions even though the plot is predetermined by the author. The aim of the paper is to determine the nature of the universe of a polyphonic text like Luigi Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* and to question the degree of freedom the characters of a polyphonic text seem to possess. Also, it would be interesting to analyse if the predetermined plot of the polyphonic text nullifies the freedom bestowed upon the characters by the author—whether their freedom dwells in the realm of extremities or in the realm of relativity with varying intensities. In this context the idea of "relative freedom" (Bakhtin *Problems* 13) within a strict and carefully calculated design of a plot or narrative must also be explored, as the authorial design is overarching and all-encompassing, and traps the characters in a pre-destined universe. Despite Bakhtin's insistence on "internal independence" (*Problems* 13) the trajectory of its actions are predetermined at the moment of their conception, because a character is not born *ex nihilo*—plot or story precedes the character. Therefore, there is an irony inherent in the pre-destined freedom Bakhtin refers to. The paper would conclude with the assessment of how the issue of predetermined free-will is a crucial element in the concept of dialogism.

Keywords: Bakhtin, Polyphonic text, Characters, Author, Determinism

A Great Dialogue: Polyphonic Novel Defined

> When I hear a writer talking earnestly of how the characters in his latest book 'took over the action' I am inclined to laugh…. Fictional characters are made of words, not flesh; they do not have free will, they do not exercise volition. They are easily born, and as easily killed off. They have their flickering lives, and die on cue, for us, giving up their little paragraphs of pathos. (Banville "Making" 107–8)

In Luigi Pirandello's "A Character in Distress," Icilio Saporini, a teacher, who after forty-five years had come back to Italy to die, was compelled to rely on an author to fulfil his desire (10). Just like his sudden birth from artistic imagination over which he has no control, his death too is beyond his grasp. He carries with him his story, his past, but not his denouement. In Luigi Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, the characters are born yet bereft of the life-giving script; they are dependent on the author for their existence—"Imagine what a disaster it is for a character to be born in the imagination of an author who then refuses to give him life in a written script" (65). The aim of the paper is to determine the nature of the universe of a polyphonic text like Luigi Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* and to question the degree of freedom the characters of a polyphonic text seem to possess.

In the tug-of-war between the theory of Newtonian mechanical universe and the Quantum mechanical universe, between free-will and determinism, the availability of wiggle room in the context of literary characters is questionable—if the characters who are dependent on the author for life, meaning and even death possess free-will or if their lives are predetermined by the author since conception. Mikhail Bakhtin in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* created a discourse on a specific kind of novel in which the characters created by the author were not voiceless slaves, "but *free* people, capable of standing *alongside* their creator, capable of disagreeing with him and even rebelling against him" (6). In this special type of novel the "plastic and pictorial image" (Morris 88) of a character's life is not created and represented using the all-consuming consciousness of the author which encloses the character's consciousness, his feelings and desires (Bakhtin "Author" 13) in a bell jar, but rather with the help of dialogic interactions between autonomous subjects—"a great dialogue of interacting voices, a polyphony" (Morris 89). This symphony of independent yet harmonically related chorus is responsible for the nomenclature of the said kind of novel as the "Polyphonic" novel. Even though, in Bakhtin, the concept of polyphony is used exclusively to refer to novels similar to those by Dostoevsky, it is, however, applicable to any literary text where the characters are bestowed with what A. V. Lunacharsky, in "On Dostoevsky's 'Multi-voicedness'," refers to as "that unheard-of freedom of 'voices'" (qtd. in Bakhtin *Problems* 35). The paper would thus begin with an assessment of Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* as a polyphonic text.

Polyphony and Dialogy

"*The polyphonic novel is dialogic through and through*" (40) as Bakhtin claims in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, since the polyvocality arises out of the dialogue between the multiplicity of voices. Bakhtin formulates the concept of the dialogical novel as opposed to the monological novel where the narrative is a "determination of the *single consciousness of the author*" (Renfrew 77), where the novel is a "monologically understood objectified world relating to a single and unified authorial consciousness" (Bakhtin *Problems* 6) and the characters are "encased in a firm and stable monological framework" (Bakhtin *Problems* 17). Thus, in a monological novel despite the multiplicity of characters, the discourse formulated by them, their world-view or even their actions are encased within the overarching, all subsuming authorial consciousness thereby rendering the characters mere objects within the discourse of the God-like author. On the contrary, in the dialogical novel the character is imbibed with a "freedom, an openness that contradicts the hero's status as a 'mere' character"

(Renfrew 78). Furthermore, in a dialogical novel, according to Bakhtin, "the character is treated as ideologically authoritative and independent…the author of a fully weighted ideological conception of his own" (Bakhtin *Problems* 5). Despite being the creation of an author the characters of a dialogical text seem to dissect themselves from the authority of the creator, trying to assert themselves as well as their ideology on top of that of their creator's. In this context one must wonder how far or how well their ideological freedom translates into their freedom to act however they wish to. Also, it must be pointed out that from the very beginning of their conception there seems to be a contest, a fight for autonomy between the author and his characters as the authored characters become the authors of their own vision of the world, thereby highlighting a duality inherent in the nature of the actions of the character.

"Dialogism is the name not just for a dualism, but for a necessary multiplicity of human perception [as well]" (21), notes Michael Holquist and multiple perception implies multiple meanings and world-view. In the polyphonic text, therefore, "every concept, image and object lives on two planes, is rendered meaningful in two value contexts—in the context of the hero and in that of the author" (Dentith "Introduction" 8) since the discourse of the author and the character are distinct and discrete. More importantly, if the author is "renouncing the right to the last word and granting full and equal authority to the word of the characters" (Bakhtin *Problems* 6) can it not be, by extension, concluded that the author is simultaneously relinquishing his control over the actions of the characters. Consequently, it may be assumed that in a polyphonic text every action must also be realised on two planes—the characters' predetermined actions anticipated by the author as a response to preceding and succeeding actions, and as a result of authorial design; and the characters' actions which apparently spring out of their free-will. In the polyphonic novel, therefore, the actions of the characters must be as dialogic as their words.

In Pirandello's play *Six Characters in Search of an Author* we encounter six characters born out of an author's imagination who have been abandoned post-manifestation by their author and are, thus, looking for an author who will help them change their story or at the very least will help them complete it—"We're looking for an author….the author who created us, living in his mind, wouldn't or couldn't make us live in a written play for the world of art" (Pirandello *Six* 11, 14). They are not only independent enough to exist beyond the consciousness of the author, they also contest the will and consequently the authority of the author. The Father in Act Three claims and explains how once the characters are alive the author is compelled to follow their words and actions—"[The author] must want them to be what they want to be; and it's his bad luck if he doesn't do what they want!" (Pirandello *Six* 65). The author's desire must be intrinsically linked to those of the characters, so much so that they should seem indistinguishable. The Father's utterance gives the impression that the author is obligated to cater to the wishes of the characters. This problematises the idea of authorship and the autonomy of the author as the author is presented as a puppet to the wishes of the characters.

The Question of Free-Will

Bakhtin in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* repeatedly emphasises on the independence and autonomy of characters in the polyphonic novel—the polyphonic novel is characterised by a type of

hero "whose voice is constructed exactly like the voice of the author himself…. It possesses extraordinary independence in the structure of the work" (7). While the freedom Bakhtin writes about is the ideological or discursive freedom, one may extend the meaning to include the freedom to act as thoughts and the actions they lead to are inextricably related. The characters in a polyphonic text, as mentioned previously, are the Gods of their universe—not in possession of a puppet-like consciousness mouthing the words of their puppeteer, but have autonomy over both their thoughts and actions even though the plot is predetermined by the author. According to the Newtonian mechanical universe theory, it is possible for the creator to sketch out the plot of the lives of his created beings, and any semblance of choice or free-will is only a fallacy. Therefore, following Bakhtin's definition of a polyphonic novel one may conclude that the universe of a polyphonic text is non-deterministic, allowing the characters to be in possession of agency, and autonomy over their consciousness and consequently, actions.

The characters in *Six Characters in Search of an Author* were not considered worthy enough, by their author, to be scripted, and the play is a record of their quest to undo that. The tussle of will begins with the script as they are resistant to the finalising verdict of the author. They begin by tempting the author with their scenes till he writes the script—"We spent such a long time, such a very long time, believe me, urging our author, persuading him, for me, then her (*Pointing to the* **Stepdaughter**), then this poor Mother…. Ah, what scenes, what scenes we suggested to him!" (Pirandello *Six* 65). The author's refusal to comply ends with his blatant dismissal and they look for a replacement instead, claiming that they are the one who possess and control the story and not their author—"The play is in us; we are the play" (Pirandello *Six* 15).

The characters, thus, refuse to submit to the authority of the author and insist on their independence much like the characters of a polyphonic text— "When a character is born he immediately assumes such an independence even of his own author that everyone can imagine him in scores of situations that his author hadn't even thought of putting him in, and he sometimes acquires a meaning that his author never dreamt of giving" (Pirandello *Six* 65). This autonomy not only allows them to go beyond their designated roles and to explore their destiny, but also encourages them to seek a new author. Their autonomy, however, comes at a cost since every character has assumed an identity autonomous to the author as their independent wills clash against each other. For instance, the Stepdaughter insists, "I want to show you my drama! Mine!" (Pirandello *Six* 55). Every character wants to stage their version of the play and to clarify their stance. As a result, even if they are independent of the author their voices are restrained by the presence of those of the others and their reality is moulded by the reality of the other characters. Independence of the characters, thus, comes at the cost of restraint and limitations. As the Producer explains to an agitated Stepdaughter:

> But it's [the story] not only yours, you know. It's drama for the other people as well! For him (*Pointing to the* **Father**) and for your mother! You can't have one character coming on like you're doing trampling over the others, taking over the play. Everything needs to be balanced and in harmony so that we can show what has to be shown! (Pirandello *Six* 56)

The aforementioned balance and harmony are necessary because if the domination of the author gives way to the domination of one of the characters where the consciousness of only the said character is given precedence, the polyvocal and by extension the dialogical framework of the text falls apart.

Free-Will: Fallacy or Reality?

As mentioned previously, the author's refusal to flatten, and then absorb the "plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousness" of the characters, in order to transform them into inanimate puppets played and voiced by a single consciousness, creates a text which is "as a whole formed by the interaction of several consciousness, none of which entirely becomes an object for the other" (Bakhtin *Problems* 6, 18). Since the consciousness of the characters is not absorbed by that of the author's, and they are allowed to retain their subjective perspective, their actions, according to Bakhtin, are autonomous. But this autonomy and subjectivity are dubious; they are not natural, or claimed and obtained by the characters but bestowed upon them by the author who structures the text "to make dialogical opposition inescapable" (Bakhtin *Problems* 18). A polyphonic text springs out of the author's "stubborn urge to see everything coexisting, to perceive and shove all things side by side" (Bakhtin *Problems* 28). As a result, every character becomes a manifestation of differing ideas, and is forced to act and interact accordingly, in order to satiate this "stubborn urge" (Bakhtin *Problems* 28) to witness the coexistence and cohabitation of antithetical entities. Just like the God-like author of the monologic novel, who dictates how a text should be interpreted by dictating the behaviour of each and every character in order to restrict the meaning of the text; the author of a polyphonic text too does the same in order to ensure the polyvocality of the text rendering the free-will of the characters questionable.

In the play Pirandello's characters are not only free to have differing opinions; they are also free to contest each other. In fact, throughout the play the characters continue to contest each others' perception of certain events leaving the spectator confounded at the multiplicity of their truths. However, their actions somehow seem to be tied to a fixed story. They seem to be tied to a plot despite having no script. For instance, the Mother is craving to connect with the Son but she cannot even utter a single word to him since the author had not intended to allow her to experience the satisfaction of opening her heart out, to let her emotions gush out to fill the chasm between the two, and reconnect the Mother-Son duo (Pirandello *Six* 71-72). Even a self-proclaimed dramatically underdeveloped character (Pirandello *Six* 31) like the Son who insists on leaving the scene is unable to leave. Furthermore, the characters in spite of having a name are tied to the identity given to them by the author and are incapable of becoming anything beyond that. As the Father while elucidating the backstory of the Mother (named Amalia) states, "She's not a woman, she's a mother. And her drama…her drama is focused completely on these four children of the two men she had" (Pirandello *Six* 18).

Authorial Determinism and Causality

The incapability of the characters to escape their dramatic fate brings forth the idea of determinism in the lives of the characters. The author of a polyphonic text, as it has already been established before, dictates the behaviour of his characters. However, Bakhtin insists that in a polyphonic novel:

> [The] characters remember nothing, they have no biography…there is no causality…no genesis, no explanations based on the past, on the influences of the environment or of the upbringing, and so forth. Every act a character commits…is not predetermined; it is conceived of and represented by the author as free. (*Problems* 29)

The erasure of the characters' histories ensures that their actions have no origin in the context of their past, thereby preventing them from being predetermined by the things associated with the characters. Even though the actions stem forth from a blank slate, i.e. they are spontaneous, and therefore free from the fetters of predetermination, they are ironically "conceived of and represented by the author as free" (Bakhtin *Problems* 29). When free-will becomes a fabrication, someone's conception, the freedom inherent in the free-will becomes questionable. Therefore, the author by depriving the characters of a deterministic past is ironically making them the slaves of his authorial determinism. For instance, in *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, the Son refuses to comment upon the on-going action—"I can't and I won't say what I feel, and what I think…. I am a character who has not been fully developed dramatically" (Pirandello *Six* 31). While there is an active denial on his part to act in the re-enactment of their lives' stories, there is also a conscious awareness of incapability because of being a dramatically under-developed character. At one point he even decides to leave the stage, but no matter how much he hovers near the edge of the stage he cannot leave it. As the Step-Daughter mockingly remarks—"He can't, you see? He can't! He's got to stay here! He must. He's chained to us forever" (Pirandello *Six* 69). Thus, authorial design is overarching and all-encompassing, and traps the characters in a pre-destined universe. To further illustrate, when Madame Pace surfaces out of thin air, her spontaneous manifestation appears to be beyond the control of the author. However, upon closer examination her existence is revealed to be dependent upon the demands of the story as imagined by the author; and even though the story has long been abandoned by the author, her existence is still tied to the story—she springs to life when the story demands, and disappears once her function is complete.

Causality and Dialogy

In a polyphonic text a lot is dependent upon the interaction between the characters, both verbal and physical, as explained previously. Just like an utterance acquires meaning only in relation to other utterances (Dentith *Bakhtinian* 43-44), similarly in order for an action to acquire meaning it must be assessed in relation to actions preceding and succeeding it—every action must anticipate the action of the other, and simultaneously be a reaction to an antecedent action. For a text to be polyphonic the words of the characters must be highly dialogised, so that the priority is not given to one particular voice, idea or attitude. In order to accomplish that their words are "shot through with

anticipations of, and rejoinder to, the word of an other" (Dentith *Bakhtinian* 44). Furthermore, if "*The polyphonic novel is dialogic through and through*" (40) as Bakhtin claims in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, then a dialogic relation must be present between the actions of the characters as well; thereby establishing a chain of causality, and by extension, determinism. In *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, the Father decides that the Mother should live with his Secretary, for it will make her happier, which leads to a series of uncontrollable events ending with the deaths of the Boy and the Girl; and this act on behalf of the Father moulds the rest of the story.

A dialogue is constitutive of three elements according to Michael Holquist, "an utterance, a reply and a relation between the two" (36). This conjecture leads one to question the nature of the relation—if a reply is a response to an utterance, the reply being an antecedent utterance to another reply, and the utterance being a successive reply to another utterance, then it may be assumed that the relation between the two implies causality, i.e., the utterance causes the reply to be uttered. According to causality theory, the universe is swirling in an illimitable play of causation. Since "the causation of one thing by another is nothing but one thing making the other intelligible" (2) to quote Michael Della Rocca; the actions of characters in a text must also follow the string of causality so as to make the story intelligible. However, in this endless play of actions there must be a primary action which initiates the play, in other words, a first domino which causes the rest to fall. This first action is the author's conception of the story followed by the *naissance* of the characters, and the moment a character is conceived it gets trapped in the whirlpool of causality. As Freddie Montgomery, the narrator of John Banville's *The Book of Evidence*, explains: "I used to believe, like everyone else, that I was determining the course my own life, according to my own decisions, but gradually as I accumulated more and more past to look back on, I realised that I had done the things I did because I could do no other…my life [is] a prison in which all actions are determined according to a random pattern thrown down by an unknown and insensate authority" (15-16). The author, being what Thomas Aquinas refers to as the "first cause who is not causally dependent" (Davies Introduction 9), becomes akin to Freddie's "unknown and insensate authority" (Banville *Evidence* 16). The author pulls the narrative strings, while the characters much like Pirandello's actors fail to realise that "you are playing a game where you have been given parts and in which you are not just yourself but the puppets of yourself" (Pirandello *Six* 9). They are, to borrow Pirandello's metaphor, egg shells bereft of any agency (Pirandello *Six* 9) dancing along to the tunes of the author. To elucidate, in *Six Characters in Search of an Author* the characters were born from a plot and into a plot, and despite their attempts at changing their destiny the denouement of their story remains unchanged. They are much like Munch's screaming man, locked in a frame, condemned to scream forever without respite. As the Father almost cries out, "Ours [reality] doesn't change, it can't change, it can never be different, never because it is already determined, like this, for ever, that's what's so terrible!" (Pirandello *Six* 64). Interestingly enough, the characters are free enough to look for a new author but not free enough to change their destiny even after they have been abandoned by their author. As a result, their endeavour to gain autonomy over their plot fails repeatedly.

Free-Will and Determinism: Endless Dialogue

The polyphonic text is, therefore, characterised by an endless dialogue where the "internal open-endedness of the characters" is juxtaposed against the "external completedness" of the text (Bakhtin *Problems* 39). This brings us to Bakhtin's idea of "relative freedom" (*Problems* 13) of the characters in a polyphonic novel, the cornerstone which makes a text quintessentially dialogic. The universe of a polyphonic text, thus, despite its seemingly innate determinism provides the characters with a space to contest the authority of the author which launches an endless dialogue between the characters' free-will and authorial determinism. This dialogue is dramatised in "A Character in Distress," where the narrator-author reads a novel where:

> …the author—completely absorbed in holding together one of the tritest stories—had found himself unable to understand this character, who in himself contained the germ of a real creation. But for a time the character had succeeded in escaping from the author, in cutting himself loose and superimposing himself vigorously upon the banal story of the book. Then all of a sudden, deformed and enfeebled, he had allowed himself to be bent to the exigencies of a wrong and silly ending. (Pirandello 13)

Similarly, in Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* even when the characters fail to change their predetermined fate, their efforts are not entirely futile. In the end the Father, the Mother and the Son come together and stand "transfixed" (Pirandello *Six* 76), with the solace of having the chance to contest the autonomy of the author by narrating their story to the Producer and the actors, and almost staging it, despite being doomed to wander without a script. Every time they try to change their story, they will be forced to line up and react according to the whimsy of their author. At the same time, the longer the characters are tied to the predetermined story of the author, they will never cease to resist the authority of the author. As a result, as long as the characters are denied uncontested autonomy, they can prevent the author from assuming the role of the uncontested authority over the text. Their relative freedom, thus, lies not in their autonomy but in their struggle for autonomy.

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Resistance Denied: *Things Fall Apart* and Ruptures Within

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Abstract:

In Chinua Achebe's novel *Things Fall Apart*, a violent mass upsurge against the coloniser, seemed to be the only way the novel could conclude. The possibility of resistance, however, collapsed before the collective inaction of the Umuofians who deserted their hero at the 'battlefield'. The article seeks to understand the dynamic of Igbo social behaviour in the light of specific cultural forces that ruptured the society from within. It contends that the advent of the coloniser only facilitated the growing movement from collectivism to individualism. This essay does not play down the role of colonial machinery in coercing an indigenous culture into submission. Rather it attempts to underscore the fault-lines of the indigenous culture and the complicity of natives in allowing that machinery to succeed.

The prospect of a mass uprising against the aggrandizing coloniser and the anticlimactic dénouement of its sudden flustering has intrigued the readers of Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart. While objective reality has the proverbial notoriety of dismissing the fantastic dreams of defiance, the denial of resistance here appears contrary to verisimilitude. The reluctance of the community to rebel and their choice of a non-confrontational status-quo is not merely caused by the punitive fear of a greater military might. The conclusion of the novel offers both an insight into the unsaid that shape the trajectory of a transitional society and factors that frustrate the consolidation of resistance.

At the conclusion of Chinua Achebe's novel *Things Fall Apart*, Okonkwo, the indomitable hero goes all in to attempt a valiant last-ditch resistance against the British. Okonkwo's machete hacks down the head of the colonial messenger who appeared with the order for the natives to stop the proceedings and disband. Okonkwo's lone, spectacular daring, although consonant with the heroics of desperation; collapses before the confused Umuofians as they scuttle in panic to take cover from White man's vengeance. Okonkwo's suicide is indeed the rebellion of an unvanquished hero failed by his community, but the supreme self-erasure of the hero does not lead the text to a comprehensive finality.

For the central question remains unanswered-why was Okonkwo deserted completely and universally by the community at a moment when the hero was truly a people's man, a saviour? This

issue was raised by Patrick C. Nnoromele in his observation that Okonkwo's death leads "to the exacerbating question of why did Achebe let the hero fail especially among those who have experienced or confronted the harsh face of colonialism". But instead of developing on people's indifference to follow Okonkwo's lead, he locates the cause in the difficulty of an Igbo hero to conjoin the public obligation and private aspiration. The explanation, however, is not adequate because in spite of Okonkwo's hunger for getting recognized as a legendary hero, he embodies a social model of supreme valour which the community has mostly forgotten to follow (Nnoromele 39-49).

Explaining away the heroic fall as belonging to any variety of the tragic or seeking to identify the tragedy in the collective passivity and inanity of the community, might result in a closure that silences the nuanced subtlety of the text. Okonkwo's character should not be peremptorily dismissed with the tautological observation of inflexibility and stern rigidity as the prime causes of his downfall. Despite acknowledging Okonkwo's social making, Abiola Irele delivers the unwelcome verdict that "Things Fall Apart is the tragedy of one man, worked out of his personal conflicts-his neurosis, almost-as out of contrariness of his destiny (Whittaker 83)". Even harsher is Abdul R JanMohamed who believes Okonkwo to be an "inflexible, calcified monomaniac (Shaffer 78)." Okonkwo' personal urgency for fame, however, stems from a burning zeal to protect his community through a fierce leadership and he operates well within the normative practices of the tradition-hallowed Igbo society. He is committed to a supreme realisation of Igbo ethos and pursues that ideal with uncompromising, dogged persistence. Facing potential annihilation, the champion of a warrior clan should not be expected to fall back on strategic negotiation which was anathema to Igbo people. Begam, finding support in William Valdes Moses's argument, quotes him, ' "Okonkwo is, in other words, identified with his community to the extent that it esteems the martial ethos he embodies, and while his village certainly does more than make war, it especially prizes those men who win distinction on the battlefield"' He concludes that, ' "Okonkwo's faults are essentially virtues carried to an extreme, and that while he is obviously not perfect, he nevertheless represents some of the best qualities of his culture"' (Begam 400)

This article attempts to understand the collective inaction of the Igbo people who turned down their leader's call for action at a climactic moment and allowed their culture to be overrun. The historical-cultural forces that denied resistance as a possibility when it appeared the only natural outcome, must have had an inviolable logic, shaping people's behaviour. Perhaps the disintegration of the community, occasioned by the ruptures within its structure, had already compromised its cohesion.Falling apart was only inevitable before the colonising power could exploit the fault-lines and break open a fragile social structure already made vulnerable by its self-contradiction. I propose that the demise of the traditional Igbo society was owing to a movement from collectivism to individuality, from withdrawal of 'self' to assertion of 'self' in the evolving social behaviour. For the community, Okonkwo no longer represented the collective ethos of the people, and they cut him loose by asserting themselves in questioning the wisdom and validity of Okonkwo's peremptory impetuosity.

Chimera of an outrage?

The run-up to the climactic encounter between Okonkwo and the colonial system was clearly rife with explosive material. Tearing off the mask of the ancestral spirit of Egwugwu, leading to its humiliating demystification was tantamount to plundering the Igbo of its best kept secret. The over-zealous converts led by an impatient missionary crossed the line that guarded the hallowed precincts of Igbo ethnic identity. Desecration of the Egwugwu was virtually an assault on the very existence of the natives, its connection to an oracular, primordial past. The foundation of the Igbo belief system was principally a symbolic meaning making process. The ritual observances

seek to buttress the elemental ties between people and the divine with recurrence of renewal, primarily underscoring the fear of the inscrutable. Therefore, robbing the omnipotent of its enchantment and exposing the ancestral spirits to the profane, naked eyes of the mundane was the worst form of cultural invasion the natives could ever imagine. The violation was so big that the audacious act of razing the Church down found ample justification to the Igbo people. The retribution of the coloniser, however, proved to have been infinitely more overpowering. Arresting the headmen by deceit, beating them like common criminals and levying hefty fines for their release had the effect of holding in ransom the entire Igbo community. One may pause here to deliberate whose supremacy was more at risk of being jeopardised in this decisive battle. The British, for the time being, had managed to crush the adversary; but their victory ran the risk of potentially stoking the fire of a surging nationalist sentiment of the people who could now legitimately feel doubly wronged.

The emergent meeting held to decide on the measures for the shameful sacrilege and abomination; was attended by an unprecedented number of clansmen. They kept pouring in from every quarter of the nine villages and the marketplace "already had so many people that if one threw up a grain of sand it would not find its way to the earth again" Achebe. The spontaneous presence of such large number of people could only testify that the meeting had a deep emotional appeal for them. Having had a chequered history of martial prowess, the people obviously were not looking for ignominy of appeasement but an opportunity to assert their survival with counter

offensive. The survival instinct was inherently interlaced with the necessity of applying ruthless force that so much characterised the domineering, patriarchal nature of the Igbo people. An assembly, supposedly taut with the nerve-racking strain of plunging into dire action, was fittingly addressed by the prominent elders. Okika proclaimed in no uncertain terms that the decisive moment had arrived to root out the evil even at the cost of sacrificing their own brothers who would choose to take side with the evil. It was no less than a war, an epic conflict that the community embarked upon to ensure their existence.

Okonkwo's jumping into action might have presented it as too abrupt for the people to respond, but the peremptory prohibition of the British was cause enough for a violent outburst. The fury had already been fuming in the atmosphere and Okika's speech had the impact of kindling the

fire towards inciting the crowd to a full-scale jihad. Okonkwo, as an emissary, simply began the onslaught. And yet, the clansmen remained impassive to Okonkow's bold deed. Instead of seizing

this as a fearless moment of dire action, they dispersed in utter consternation. The strangeness of their response not only made Okonkwo's action counter-productive but proved that the leaders had founded revolt on complicity. On a softer note, the leaders had either been impervious to the reality of the secession of the people from the glowing ideals of firmness or had lacked courage to face the unalterable truth. I would like to argue that the combination of both the reasons marked the growing divide, for Okika's passionate avowal of retribution is juxtaposed with the cautious sagacity of Obierika. Obierika was never a pacifist, he too wished his brothers to rise up at this climactic moment; but he was also the one who had seen through the futility of applying force. He told Okonkwo that the coloniser had turned some of the natives into their own and pitched them as antagonists against their own men driving out the enemy by force would not wipe out the enemy lying within. Obierika said:

The white man is very clever. He came quietly and peaceably with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now he has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart.

Okonkwo's revolt revealed the potential for defection in the rank and file of the clan. What was true about a handful of converts now appeared to be an embedded factor in the mass mentality. The number of participants and their spirited presence in the assembly did not necessarily guarantee a cohesive, unified body of people who thought the way they desired to be thought. Lacking in necessary conviction for commitment to the cause, they allowed themselves to be overcome by the fear of vengeance against the sense of security in collectivism and decried Okonkwo's action. For the voices that asked," why did he do it?" did not simply repudiate Okonkwo' s act but scoffed it as childish. For this new breed of people, loyalty to the heroic principles and martial glory had no particular appeal. They are not willing to plunge into action with the unblemished spirit of passionate rage without a scrutiny of the ideas recommended. And the seeds of this development of personality were sown long before the white men had arrived. Therefore, the prospect of mass upsurge remained unrealized for all practical purposes although the political factors were poised for a violent overthrow of foreign domination.

The Rupture Within:

The invading power best knows where the target society comes loose in its closely-knit social structure. The target culture can be diagnosed of its weakness by studying the areas picked up as vulnerable by the colonizer. The British begin the conquest through a systematic process of expelling the native religion as savage, false and deceitful. The pagan deities are summarily dismissed not merely for their presumption of power but also for their wrathful vengeance. The missionaries in Mbanta, after denigrating the local religion, add by way of illustration:

All the gods you have named are not gods at all. They are gods of deceit who tell you to kill your fellows and destroy innocent children. There is only one true God and He has the earth, the sky, you and me and all of us."

The reference is to the oracular instructions of sacrificial killings and desertion of twin children in the depth of forests. The Omuofians as a community perhaps never doubted this supreme power of dispensing justice and aligned themselves with the will of the oracular Gods. Nevertheless, uncompromising adherence to laws was not without moral conflict and the strain must have been great for those members who were directly affected by the losses. The killing of Ikemefuna was one such incident that had made the contradictions of the society evident on many counts.

Okonkwo looked for the glory of a supreme Igbo warrior. He summoned a stoical fortitude to execute the colossal task of killing Ikemefuna who called him father. Although the act called for almost superhuman mental resolve, it invariably implied the violation of the sacred bond between a father and a child. Okonkwo's heroic firmness was ironically founded on dismantling the elemental ties of humanity. Essentially, placing the principle of revenge over regenerative life in a no-war situation, the indigenous culture appears to be structured on inherent cruelty. The sacrifice of Ikemefuna might have contributed to Okonkwo's aspiration for consolidation of his heroism but the culture nonetheless approved of the killing. At least, the oracular deities had no admonition for the perpetrator of the act.

The killing of Ikemefuna had left Okonkwo a broken man. He strived to let the episode be seen as a supreme test of putting the public before the private, but the unmistakable emotional turmoil was enough evidence that such killings never received approval from heart. At the bottom, there was an implicit disjunction in the social psyche between religious commandments and their personal acceptance. Much of it never got articulated as independent expression of variance to the public injunctions; but lay embedded in the painful process of compliance as Okonkwo did. Only rarely do we get to know how people's fear of divine retribution blocks independent action that may suggest defiance of god's ways. In Chapter 16, the locals, arguing with the visiting missionaries, articulated their fear of divine wrath if departed from their own gods:

"If we leave our gods and follow your god," asked another man, "who will protect us from the anger of our neglected gods and ancestors?"

"Your gods are not alive and cannot do you any harm," replied the white man. "They are pieces of wood and stone."

When this was interpreted to the men of Mbanta they broke into derisive laughter. These men must be mad, they said to themselves. How else could they say that Ani and Amadiora were harmless? And Idemili and Ogwugwu too? And some of them began to go away.

Surprisingly, the natives are not fanatically insistent on the surpassing glory of their own gods. Instead of clinging to an impassioned attachment to their own faith by placing it above and beyond doubt, they endorse the consideration of changing camps unless there is fear of retribution. While their "derisive laughter" on White man's ignorance about the power of Igbo gods amply restores the potency of the indigenous divinity, it does not help rebutting the charge of their being vengeful.

But something more fundamental was foreshadowed by the changes wrought upon Nowye Okonkwo's eldest son. Ikemefuna's killing suddenly placed him in stark opposition to his own

culture which hid cruelty in the name of firmness. His revulsion, instead of expressing itself in angry outburst, steered him irrevocably to a vision of a more humane world- a world of love, compassion, forgiveness and music. Roselyne M. Jua observes that "things do not begin to fall apart in Umuofia only with the advent of the white man. Long before that…vital sections of the population had been silenced within the family and society: the woman and the child (Jua 201)".

It can be argued that Nowye is an exceptional case of behavioural peculiarity, for the deeply entrenched ethnicity cannot possibly identify itself with something so utterly foreign. But Nowye's conversion was solidly founded on ethical-moral ground and his judgement of the native culture was completely independent of foreign influence. Precisely, Nowye's emotion was proved upon his pulses; helped him gain the crucial insight on the flawed nature of the native tradition. He was like a homegrown apostle of love and humanity-one who offers a forceful alternative to the unilateral celebration of Igbo martial prowess. The conversion of Nowye had a more manifest truth than the figurative significance it implies. If it is agreed that the boy 'defected' not out of youthful infatuation for things glamorously new, he emerges as the representative of many who still suffer dissatisfaction with their own culture under an overriding injunction.

Much before the missionaries picked up the sensitive issue of desertion of twin children in the depth of forests, Nowye's mind had been unhinged by the plaintive baby cry from the wilderness. The treatment of twin children and Ikemefuna's killing, for him, were the faces of the same inherent cruelty sanctioned by the divinity. Later when the missionaries had secured a decisive victory by proving their immunity from the sinister spirits of the black forest, they found their efforts rewarded in welcoming the first woman convert-Nneka. Nneka had been a victim of the inhuman tradition of deserting the twins; she had to abandon her twins in four previous childbirths. Understandably, the mother's heart found immense solace in the liberal dispensation of the new religion. If the deep emotional anguish of a mother is temporarily set aside, Nneka's defection could be seen as placing personal fulfilment above community wellbeing. But Nneka is not alone, potential for defection is also found in Ekwefi when it comes to the question of protecting Ezinma from the unexplainable wrath of Agbala. Ekwefi never questioned the wish of Agbala, but she fought hard to stop the priestess taking her to the perilous, uncertain journey to the cave of the Goddess. If fear was the bedrock of devotion-the novel recurrently stresses on the fearful presence of the divine, it had not been adequate to earn spontaneous love and unsuspecting loyalty of the subjects. In essence, Ekwefi violated the divine commandment by

following Chielo, but the gravest sacrilege was certainly committed deep inside by doubting a benevolent, protective God. Obierika came very near to expressing it when he reflected on the sad calamity that banished Okonkwo from the village:

Why should a man suffer so grievously for an offence he had committed inadvertently? But although he thought for a long time he found no answer. He was merely led into greater complexities. He remembered his wife's twin children, whom he had thrown away. What crime had they committed?

The fall:

Many of the fault-lines did not actually show up until the coloniser spotted them as prizes worthy of exploitation. The chronology of their occurrence therefore, is not an ideal guide to their point of origin. There are instances of corruption and opportunism, the roots of which may be argued to predate the vicious influence of the coloniser. In Chapter twenty, Obierika apprises Okonkwo of a recent fight over land dispute which led to the hanging of Aneto by the white man's government. The punishment is however, a far cry from the ideal of delivering justice to the people, because a certain Nnama's family bribed the white man's messenger and interpreter to manipulate judgement to their favour. The corruptibility of native people finds an opportunity to flourish under the alien, indifferent and hostile government of the British. Ironically, corruption is also the prime driving force for internal colonisation. Although the court messengers came from a distant land, they speak the same language and share the same African origin. Yet they extracted fifty additional bags of cowries as fine from their own impoverished natives for the release of the Umuofian elders. The coloniser might have turned a blind eye in case they had known, but they were not responsible for instilling greed in the first place. Among the newly christened natives, the joining of Ogbuefi Ugonna is symptomatic of a radical transformation in the social dynamic. He had already been a prominent man having two titles and he "…like a madman had cut the anklet of his titles and cast it away like a madman." The evident fury of rejection is symbolic of the failure of the Igbo religion in integrating the individual to the community with the wide magnanimity of concord. Ugonna's defection may be motivated by narrow individual interest unlike the nobility of Nowye's emotional appeal; but it is a definite lead to understand the seething tension in the hierarchical structure of the African tribal society. I contend that the appearance of the British in the form of a powerful adversary attracted not only the lowborn and outcasts but also lured some of the elites with the prospect of rich harvests in the changing time ahead.

Things Fall Apart, I have suggested, is ultimately about the transition of the traditional tribal society to a more individualised, self-driven society that aspires to break free from what they perceive as a rigorous regime. This journey, of course, is inspired by a delusional vision of a bright new world to be ushered in by the new agency of power that has proved its superiority in religion, trade, medicine and cunning, let alone military might. The crumbling down of the old order represented by Obierika, Okonkwo and other old-timers was only a matter of time since it had always been vulnerable in the face of a challenging, superior might. The natives simply began to change camps as the British offered those better opportunities for self-actualization. They could have remained dogmatically faithful to their own system/structure of social organisation and resisted change as many ancient civilizations had done, but the foundation of Igbo society, in spite of its rigidity, was built on a peculiar receptivity of influences and endorsement of the unknown. If it was not so, how are we supposed to understand that the Westerners were allowed to preach and build a shrine in Umuofia even when they openly denounced the native religion? The receptivity of the people is observed by Dan Izevbayeas their characteristic adaptive ability, leading to an inevitable dissociation from the hero:

The adaptive nature of Igbo history is an important factor in Achebe's conception of tragic experience. Thus although the postcolonial experience presupposes a tragic mode as one of the major

choices for African writers, in Achebe's fiction the emphasis is on the community's expectation of the continuity of life and its social detachment from the tragic hero (Izevbaye 36).

Strategic transformation of people's mind is a consensual process that convinces the agent in the necessity of change and wins his spontaneous participation. Change may not be sanctioned by imposing ideological state apparatuses onto a set of resistant people. Winning the favor of a hostile community is perhaps best exemplified by the manipulative stratagems of Mr. Brown. He had integrated religion, education, commerce and administration in his efforts to accentuate the definition of power in the new age. The natives quickly found out that the new religion and English education was a passport to the enhanced access to power in the administration. This was played out in an atmosphere of radical economic mobility as the trading store of the Europeans

pumped in much money by an unprecedented exchange of goods. What looked like a thoroughgoing victory of the coloniser's manipulative ingenuity is used by the natives to their advantage, possibly to exercise power over their own kind:

Mr. Brown's school produced quick results. A few months in it were enough to make one a court messenger or even a court clerk. Those who stayed longer became teachers- and from Umuofia labourers went forth into the vineyard. New churches were established in the surrounding villages and a few schools with them. From the very beginning religion and education went hand in hand.

No wonder that the presence of those who still thought the new institutions evil, were unable to reclaim the others who had already gone soft with the new dispensation. My purpose here is not to downplay the ferocity of European colonial enterprise in coercing a traditional community into subjection. But the colonizer's success story was written primarily by the conscious decision of the people in buying their notion of progress and development. While this essentially meant playing into the strategies of control and occupation, the converts had had the satisfaction of seeing their own agenda fulfilled. Power and privilege of the new order entailing an edge over other members of the clan, appear to be the prime mover behind the benign complicity of the Umuofian people. The incident that brought the adversaries to a direct confrontation was occasioned by the over-zealous converts. And Enoch represented the intolerant arrogance of the newly 'empowered' villagers who either were looking to settle scores or seeking to dethrone the traditional bases of authority in sheer presumption of self-assertion. At the very least, they use the turmoil to push their influence deep into the heartland of Igbo society.

Identifying the overriding grand design of colonial machinery over a 'powerless' traditional community has the danger of seeing the subjected people as passive, incapacitated victims. This view of social dynamic practically shuts off myriad formulations of evolutionary social development by writing off the role of thinking beings operating under the play of specific social-cultural forces. The subjected people also exercise their own ideology and actively participate in having the relations of power proliferated. They seek to transfer colonisation to their own kind when overthrow of the foreign might is not an option. It is not hard to imagine that the Umuru 'ashy buttocks' would soon be joined by their Umuofian counterparts to help enslave other African people in their ambition of

gaining power under abject powerlessness.

Obierika's final outburst to the District Commissioner was a glowing tribute to Okonkwo's role as a champion. He said: "That man was one of the greatest men in Umuofia. You drove him to kill himself and now he will be buried like a dog…" But his overwhelming emotion overlooks the role of the villagers in having their hero dead. Okonkwo, truly speaking, was killed by the collective ignominy of his own neighbours who allowed him to be consumed by the fire he had lit for all.

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Khawto: *The Wound* through the Bakhtinian Lens

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Khawto (2016), directed by Kamaleshwar Mukherjee, not only touches multiple chords with the contemplative cine-going audience but also facilitates discussions regarding diverse issues of literature and literary theory. A film classified as a work of drama and psychological thriller, thus, becomes an apt text for discussions about Dialogisms. It opens with young lovers Sohag (Tridha Choudhury) and Rishabh (Ronodeep Bose) embarking on a romantic getaway. During a solitary walk on the dark beach of Koelphuli, Sohag meets Nirbed Lahiri (Prosenjit Chattopadhyay), a once-renowned Bengali author living in self-imposed exile. The author invites the couple to his bungalow, and begins to narrate his life-story. The narrative shifts between millennial Kolkata and present-day Koelphuli as Nirbed Lahiri reminisces the heyday of his career as assistant editor of the literary magazine *Drishtikone* (Point of view). Nirbed claims to have fallen in love for the first time in his life on the thirty-second birthday of his wife Sreejita (Raima Sen). Among the guests invited that evening was Sreejita's batchmate, Alakesh (Rahul Banerjee) and his wife Antara (Paoli Dam). Nirbed is fascinated by Antara and is determined to woo her at any cost. The clandestine affair reaches its peak on a trip to Palamu, but is followed by a spiralling descent into death, disillusionment and alienation. Alakesh commits suicide, Antara loses her sanity and Sreejita divorces Nirbed due to the latter's disloyalty. It is possible to attempt a substantive analysis of *Khawto* with respect to the theories of dialogism, heteroglossia and carnivalesque professed by the 20th century Russian literary critic, Mikhail Bakhtin.

The film unfolds like the narrative of the eponymous autobiographical novel, *Khawto*, and it accommodates multiple disjunctive agencies within itself. Nirbed muses, "When several bits of clouds gather in the sky, we call it 'monsoon', and a gathering of several bits of words— 'novel'." This statement attempts at dismantling the monologistic trend of regarding the novel as a monolithic medium for expressing a singular idea of the author, and throws light upon its fragmented matrix. For Bakhtin, dialogism functions in a text as a principle of radical otherness. Far from aspiring to the telos of a synthesis or a resolution, the function of dialogism is to sustain and think through the radical exteriority or heterogeneity of one voice with regard to any other, including that of the novelist himself. She or he is not, in this regard, in any privileged situation with respect to his characters (Man 102). *Khawto* constantly brings out this exteriority of voice, most importantly, that of the narrator, by means of close-up shots of a younger Nirbed (gazing into space) through a vivid red filter, and the flashback technique. Nirbed is a mere scriptor who allows his characters the freedom necessary to develop on their own. He himself is a character in his autobiography, and the film shows his subservience to time, space and event. Nirbed observes that had he succeeded in creating distance between himself and Antara on their return from Palamu, his novel would have had a 'watery'

climax. But Antara's insistence on meeting Nirbed in private creates the final catastrophe which ironically suits his reputation as a dark and decadent romantic. By the time he yields up the manuscript of his autobiography to Sohag, he has already relinquished his author(ity), and allowed the natural flow of events to govern the trajectory of the plot.

Mukherjee's explorations of the question of autonomy of fictional characters is summed up succinctly in his later film *Mukhomukhi* (2019),which is also about an author, Isha Chatterjee, played by Gargee Roy Chowdhury. While she composes a novel about a dysfunctional couple, her friend and critic Agnibha (Rajatabha Dutta) suggests some changes in the plot which transform the very nature of the characters, so much so that they are unfamiliar even to their creator. When a dismayed Agnibha asks Isha, "Are these the characters that you created?", Isha replies, "I didn't; Time did." In order to create something purely original, the author must relinquish their control of the characters.

In *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, John Fowles writes:

> A planned world is a dead world. It is only when our characters and events begin to disobey us that they begin to live. (Fowles 96)

This Bakhtinian concept, common to literary discourse, is introduced effectively into Mukherjee's cinematic narrative in both the films. Far from being an omniscient author-creator, Nirbed's penchant is oriented more along the lines of destructive "debauchery". He reflects, "Be it a tempest, a flood, *Aslesha*, a tornado or a hurricane, they can never be such a debauch as I am. I rule over creation and order. I am the apocalypse." Bakhtin believed that people are not closed units; they are open, loose, disordered, unfinalized: they are "extraterritorial" and "nonself-sufficient" (Morson and Emerson 52). Furthermore:

> To be means to be for another, and through the other for oneself. A person has no sovereign internal territory, he is wholly and always on the boundary; looking inside himself, he looks *into the eyes of another* or *with the eyes of another* (Bakhtin 287).

Nirbed seamlessly navigates the interstices between self and other and participates in a dynamic process of maturation through the internalisation of the other's voice. He is almost the criminally ostracised *poete maudit* when he talks of extracting "Antara's aroma to the last drop and making it into a perfume"—sex is like an adventure to him which allows him to question ethics and create characters with a dynamic quality: the character, for Bakhtin, is an event and not a static entity who can be filed into a predetermined category (Patterson 134). As Nirbed, the author becomes other to himself, he may now speak with Nirbed, the hero, and thus justify the Bakhtinian aesthetic experience as an encounter between discourses—between consciousnesses (Patterson 134).

In Bakhtin's conceptualisation of the novel, heteroglossia postulates distinct and antagonistic class structures as well as the celebratory crossing of social barriers (Man 102). "Heteroglossia" may be understood as the presence of diverse "points of view on the world, forms for conceptualising the world in words, specific world views, each characterised by its own objects, meanings and values" in a particular language (Bakhtin 291). Heteroglossia is employed in *Khawto* essentially through the

agency of one character—Alakesh, who is loquacious, extroverted and has a pronounced child-like aspect to his nature which while making him seem adorable to many, also introduces a monotone to his personality. While his wife, Antara claims to love him, she is also deeply dissatisfied with his considerably inferior intellect. "Are you aware of his (Alakesh's) mental age?" Antara asks Nirbed. Antara is a woman of remarkable intellect and personal charm. Apart from having won a gold-medal at college, she had also attained significant fame through her publications in little magazines. She had a vibrant social life and was the apple of several eyes. She enjoys solving crossword puzzles from newspapers and claims to "win" the game every day. On the other hand, Alakesh is simple and hard-working without much concern for a contemplative life. The socio-cultural gap between husband and wife is brought out in the course of two memorable incidents when the use of homophones exemplifies heteroglossia; these two incidents are discussed in the following paragraph.

At Nirbed's residence, the guests invited for Sreejita's birthday marvel at Nirbed's books and his collection of artefacts. First, as Sreejita and her friends recite a poem by Neruda, Alakesh refers to the Chilean poet as *Nyara-Da* (informal Bengali way of referring to an older, acquainted man called *Nyara* meaning one with a shaven head), much to the indignation of Antara. Secondly, when Alakesh expresses his dismay at some specimens of African tribal art on Nirbed's walls, it is pointed out to him that these may be categorised as "Makonde"art. Alakesh replies nonchalantly that he cannot be bothered with "*Makundo* stuff". *Makundo* is a derogatory Bengali term for a man who lacks facial hair. Alakesh brings about homophonic transformations of both "Neruda" and "Makonde", and this leads not only to a confrontation of ideologies, but also a transgression of social barriers, laying bare the incipient conflict between class structures in the world, as well as in art. While members of the learned, somewhat elite, intellectual Bengali upper-middle class will appreciate the poetry of Pablo Neruda and African Makonde art, a stockbroker such as Alakesh, who has no inclination towards the arts and literature (nor has any need to do so) will assign blatant misnomers to the same in public. While the film terms Alakesh to be an "average" individual, and Antara calls him *bajarsarkar* (a man employed in medieval and Early Modern Bengal to buy goods from the market), Alakesh in turn mocks the erudition of Antara by saying, "How much you know! I feel like kissing you while eating", thus rendering intellectualism as superfluous to the low-brow, materialistic existence.

Patterson is of the opinion that polyglossia frees consciousness from the tyranny of its own language and has a liberating impact on language, a major indicator of this liberation being laughter (Patterson 133). Alakesh achieves precisely this: not only does he afford comic-relief to the audience, but also intrigues them by bringing about the uncomfortable juxtaposition of two discourses. His words (*Nyara-Da* and *Makundo*) make repetitive allusions to hairlessness, which is, in itself, considered comic in Indian social and literary traditions. In "Forms of Time and the Chronotope in the Novel", Bakhtin develops the rogue, the clown and the fool—those who are free to be 'other' in this world. (Bakhtin 159). Alakesh fits into the categories of both the clown and the fool. Bakhtin argues that these three figures influence the positioning of the author himself within the novel, and also the author's point of view (Bakhtin 160). This is because:

> …the novelist stands in need of some essential, formal and generic mask that could serve to define the position from which he views life as well as the position from which he makes that

> life public. And it is precisely here…that the masks of the clown and the fool come to the aid of the novelist (Bakhtin 161).

In *Khawto* one sees an on-screen representation of this profoundly philosophical observation, translated into cinematic screen-play.

Mukherjee's film refers to acclaimed Bengali cultural icons in a tongue in cheek manner which masks a genuine questioning of *bhadralok* pretensions. "All Bengalis are *Aranyak* ("of the wild/ lovers of the wild)" remarks Nirbed when Sreejita's friends plan the trip to Palamu. Not only does this statement allude to Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay's celebrated novel *Aranyak* (Of the Forest), but also facilitates the comparison of *Khawto* with Satyajit Ray's *Aranyer Dinratri* (Days and Nights of the Forest). The four protagonists of *Aranyer Dinratri* were also headed to Palamu, but they halt en route at a forest bungalow which catches their fancy. There are clear parallels in the action and dialogue of the two films; first, Hari (Shamit Bhanja) in *Aranyer Dinratri* performs a bowling action which is mirrored by Alakesh in *Khawto*; secondly, both films refer to Tarzan, and thirdly, while *Aranyer Dinratri* depicts a memory game, the protagonists of *Khawto* reject it and settle for a mind game instead, which Bishakha had secretly intended as a trap for Nirbed.

Mukherjee follows Ray in employing the carnivalesque which operates through subversion of the. established order through chaos and laughter. In Bakhtin's words, it brings out "the joyful relativity of all structure and order. Asim (Soumitra Chattopadhyay) in *Aranyer Dinratri* remarks that he enjoys breaking rules occasionally, since dwelling in civilised society creates ennui in the urban subject.The wilderness becomes an ideal space for the carnivalesque spirit to unfold in both Ray's and Mukherjee's films. The latter film, however, descends more obviously and melodramatically, into a dark abyss in contrast to the objective distancing of the directorial viewpoint in Ray's film. The older Nirbed reminisces how the sylvan charm of Palamu, alcohol, the scent of women and the aroma of burning meat had commingled to create the ideal setting for catastrophe. The spirit of the carnival thus collapses ethical restraint and makes for the unrestrained enjoyment of pleasures forbidden and controlled by society, which ultimately leads to the disintegration of two families through suicide, insanity, divorce and self-imposed exile. According to Bakhtin,

> The work and the world represented in it enter the real world and enrich it, and the real world enters the work and its world as part of the process of its creation, as well as part of its subsequent life, in a continual renewing of the work through the creative perception of listeners and readers. (Bakhtin 254).

Kamaleshwar Mukherjee's *Khawto* upholds this principle in myriad ways. Structured in the form of an autobiographical novel, *Khawto* is constructed not as a monolithic and monologic discourse, but as a combination of discourses and of the responses to those discourses (Patterson 131). Each worldview presented in the film is animated and vivified by responses to competing world-views and this is achieved cinematically through a combination of intelligent screenplay and a remarkably nuanced understanding of the individual characters. Moreover, in spite of the preponderance of Nirbed's narratorial voice, it is constantly subjected to scrutiny and influences by other characters, thus enabling the film to function as a space for consummate dialogue.

All in all, *Khawto* is the fruit of substantial content and intelligent film-making which enriches and entertains at the same time while facilitating discussions regarding the accommodation of heterogeneous world-views in modern society. Being a partially bilingual film, *Khawto* incorporates the use of heteroglossia in order to facilitate the juxtaposition of social ideologies, and corroborates how class-boundaries will be inevitably rendered fluid through the "dialogic" imagination: Nirbed and Antara qualify as "intellectual" and "above average" while Alakesh stands on the other side of the divide, visibly insubstantial and materialistic. Finally, the iconic space of the forest serves as an active agent for questioning social dogma and illustrating the Bakhtinian notion of carnival.

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Psychotic or Psychedelic?: Reinterpreting 'Madness' in Alan Moore's *Killing Joke*

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Abstract: The United States of America in the late 1980s was still dealing with the reverberations of the Counterculture Movement of the sixties. The epoch, characterized by the amalgamation of native antiquity and post-World-War Americanism, witnessed a reinterpretation of the rebel, the mad and the criminal. Alan Moore's Killing Joke, published in 1988 is primarily about Joker, Batman's antithesis, the supervillain to the superhero. The graphic novel dismantles the chronological narrativity as the past and the present conglomerate frequently, providing the readers with the origin story of the supervillain as well as his present psychotic condition. Placing Moore's Joker in the context of the Counterculture Movement and considering the use of psychedelic therapy in criminal asylums, the paper attempts to reconsider Joker's 'madness'. The paper intends to map the overlapping coordinates of psychosis and psychedelia and analyze the socio-cultural position of the modern age Joker.

The 1960s in the United States of America is characterized by the emergence of almost a decade long Counterculture Movement, the repercussions of which were evident even in the eighties. The movement witnessed multiple anti-establishment phenomena along with an increased abuse of psychoactive drugs and their experimental use as therapeutic substances. However, it would be unfair to locate the use of these drugs within the strict boundaries of any temporality. American anthropologist, Raoul Weston La Barre, in his book, *The Peyote Cult* (1938), referred to hallucinogens as 'narcotics.' He located its usage by the native Americans, and noted the traditional high value placed on abnormal psychedelic states by them. Hallucinogenic plants and fungi were used by the natives as a medium to connect with the divine; see God or 'acquire' prophetic powers. According to Barre, since the new age America did not undergo much significant geo-political crises like invasions, interpolations or even migration (though all these are highly contested historiographically), the former has inherited a larger chunk of the 'Old World.' His idea of 'Old World America' incorporates the elaborate span of time, beginning from the Neanderthal Age till the onset of colonization. Paul Devereux, therefore, observes in his book, *The Long Trip: A Prehistory of Psychedelia* (1997):

> At this point its cultural remains are clearer and stronger in the New World than in most of the Old. This fact is important for understanding the antiquity and context of plant hallucinogen use, and also is a factor in exploring (as we will) its most overlooked remnant: the physical marks it left on the land. (Devereux 109)

Hallucinogens have found innumerable synonyms during the process of chemical categorization: psychotomimetic, psychotropic, psychoactive, followed by psychedelic which transpired an entire subculture. The term 'psychedelic' emerged as a congregation of the notions reflected by Aldous Huxley and Humphry Osmond. Both wanted to devise a term that focused on the mystical and healing aspect of the hallucinogens while disregarding the pathological connotations associated with it. Osmond coined the term 'psychedelic' in 1957, deriving the word from the Greek 'psyche' meaning soul and 'delos' meaning to portray, against Huxley's 'phanerothyme'. Therefore, Osmond's psychedelic means soul or mind-portraying. LSD or Lysergic Acid Diethylamide became a leading tool for psychiatric treatment in the 1950s, as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) intended to use it as a 'truth-serum'. However, it is pertinent to note that the influence of LSD transcended the institutional boundaries and seduced the contemporary youth owing to its ability to create temporary escapades from the real and the ugly. Timothy Leary, the epitome of the psychedelic movement of the sixties, attempted to portray the need for chemical experimentation with LSD, in order to dismantle the ontological binaries and consequently question the hierarchical American society, as observed by Peter Conner, in *White Hand Society: the Psychedelic Partnership between Timothy Leary and Allen Ginsberg* (2010). In *Birth of a Psychedelic Culture: Conversations about Leary, the Harvard Experiments, Millbrook and the Sixties* (2010), Leary says, "Drugs are going to become a permanent part of American culture" (177). Amidst all this, it becomes pertinent to note that psychedelics were massively used in asylums to deal with schizophrenia and other mental disorders. Alan Moore's graphic novel, titled *Killing Joke,* published in 1988, with illustrations by Brian Bolland, deals with the American superhero Batman's nemesis, Joker, who is otherwise an unnamed human character, who creates havoc in Gotham City, with his psychotic brutality. In my paper, I intend to place the character at the continuing trajectory of the Counterculture Movement and re-interpret his 'madness' through psychedelia.

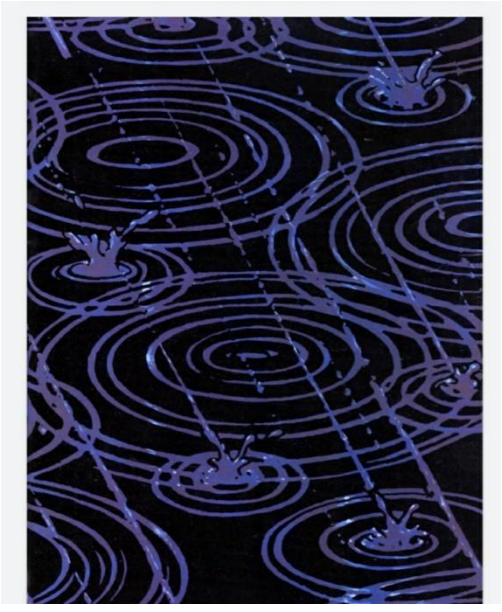

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

The novel begins with an eerie silence, graphically manifested through an enveloping panel of psychedelic patterns created by raindrops. The single panel disintegrates into smaller panels with the patterns gradually reducing. The readers' view is widened as details from the surroundings are gradually incorporated into the panels. The hypnotic silence created by the psychedelic patterns is penetrated by the blinding flashlight of the Batmobile and the readers are slowly taken to the entrance to the Arkham Asylum, a confinement for 'the criminally insane'. The table-topper at the reception, reading 'You don't have to be crazy to work here, but it helps,' makes us wonder if 'madness' is a choice. The entrance of Batman's nemesis, Joker demonstrates the chaotic alignment of the panels, therefore reflecting his chaotic and unorganized consciousness. Moore begins his graphic novel with the manifestation of Batman and Joker as binaries. While he uses dark somber colors for the Superhero, the darkness symbolizing his dark vigilante status, Joker is represented through bright neon colors and convoluted patterns which are the primary characteristics of psychedelic art. His bright purple suit and green hair, giving him the look of a 'hippie', is presented to contrast Bruce Wayne's sophistication through Batman's monochromatic attire. Albert Hofmann, in his *LSD, My*

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Problem Child: Reflections on Sacred Drugs, Mysticism and Science, noted his experience after synthesizing LSD in his laboratory for the first time:

> At home, I lay down and sank into a not unpleasant intoxicated-like condition, characterized by an extremely stimulated imagination. In a dreamlike state, with eyes closed, I perceived an uninterrupted stream of fantastic pictures, extraordinary shapes with intense, kaleidoscopic play of colors (12)

Fig. 3: Use of strong, vibrant colors to reflect the psychotic fits

The psychedelic aesthetics, that vividly represents the American socio-political crises of the mid-20th Century, simultaneously challenges the Cartesian dualisms while developing the postmodern ontological self-reflectivity. The psychedelic self, therefore emerges as not an unconscious self but an 'altered' self. Joker's altered self, which depicts psychedelic tendencies, is not disjunct from the real. He frequently portrays social and political consciousness. Moore's Joker delineates how the 'mind' and the 'body' are interconnected and hence it is impossible to catalog them as two separate distinct blocks of binaries as his somatic deformity immediately triggers his mental state. Psychedelic

aesthetics do not attempt to portray anything beyond the socially real, but rather make space for the Others or the ones relegated to the margins, by witnessing the 'altered states of consciousness and counterculture identities and social structures' as observed by Lana Cook in her thesis, "Altered States: The American Psychedelic Aesthetic" (2014). What Cook refers to an 'altered' consciousness, has been referred to as a new psychology by Nietzsche, or more precisely a "physio-psychology…daring to descend to the depths" (12) and eventually "translate man back into Nature…the eternal basic text of homo natura…"(12), in his *Beyond Good and Evil.* Nietzsche's status of 'homo natura' (79), the metamorphosed human nature, is acquired through knowledge and probity. Similarly, Joker's transformed self comes after the realization of his loss, depravity and physical deformity. Despite his sadistic criminality, the supervillain in Moore's graphic novel emerges to engage in an honest dialogue as he attempts to portray how the gap between the 'civilized' and the 'uncivilized' can be very easily dissipated. Daniel Berthold-Bond, in his discourse, "Hegel, Nietzsche, and Freud on Madness and Unconscious," regards 'madness' as the inverted reflection of the 'developed consciousness' (193), with an altered notion of rationality that connects the self with the world. Therefore, 'madness' becomes a reflection of the 'unconscious' or vice versa. Freud in his *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900) observes the 'unconscious' as the 'true physical reality' whereas in *The Ego and the Id* (1923), he regards 'consciousness' as the surface of the mental apparatus.

Moore's *Batman: The Killing Joke* shows a similar representation of its superhero and supervillain: The rich, privileged, organized, civilized and rational mind trying to save America and its people, by adhering to the 'book' of law, against the poor, marginalized, chaotic, uncivilized, mad Joker killing and raping. In Hegelian dialectics, as noted in *Hegel's Philosophy of Mind* by William Wallace (1978), 'consciousness' emerges as the civilized state and unconscious as the uncivilized state. He further establishes that the unconscious mind is segregated from the real, actual world.

This resonates with Freud's notion of neurosis which talks about a condition that cannot distinguish between 'reality' and 'phantasy', and consequently feels a repulsion from the real and hence manifests a withdrawal "from the ego and its laws." Joker confesses that he doesn't remember what led to his delirium but he is conscious of his madness.

> Something like that happened to me, you know. I…I'm not exactly sure what it was. Sometimes I remember it one way, sometimes another…but my point is…my point is, I went crazy. (Moore 23)

Moore however depicts what led Joker to attain his psychotic state. The flashback looks at Joker as an unnamed struggling stand-up comedian who left his regular job of an engineer to pursue his American dream. The anonymity of the character creates a sense of inclusion; his poor, marginalized status reflecting the other side of the economically blooming America in the post-Depression decades. Bolland here uses gray and faded soft purple tones to reflect the character's psychological distress. His wife Jeannie, inspector Gordon, his daughter Barbara, the policemen are portrayed in human, yellowish tones, therefore being presented only through their conscious state. There are multiple oscillations between the character's conscious past and the psychotic present; shifts that show a cinematic suddenness almost like a schizophrenic movement. It is pertinent to note that Joker's transformation to the chemically deformed, psychotic state is presented by the change in the

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background color as the somber dull tones are replaced by neon psychedelic patterns again. We can label Joker's madness into two chronological segments: his delirious state after his pregnant wife's death leading to his accident at the chemical factory that permanently disfigures him: his face bleached white and his hair neon green, and his chaotic state after his prolonged treatment at the Arkham Asylum, with psychoactive drugs.

Fig. 4: Transition of Joker showing psychedelic patterns and vibrant colors.

One of the significant reasons for the increasing use of psychedelic drugs in medical therapy in the 1960s was the belief that these drugs can reduce the guilt feeling after an act of 'criminality' and even work on anxiety and depression by creating hallucinogenic effects. There were two kinds psychedelic therapy: one that intended to excavate the 'psychodynamic unconscious' through psycholytic therapy that required small doses but multiple sessions of injecting LSD, mescaline or psilocybin and the other is the conversion process or the psychedelic process which uses larger doses of LSD aiming to primarily reform the criminals. Lester Grinspoon and Rick Doblin in their "Psychedelics as Catalysts of Insight-Oriented Psychotherapy" (2001) examined the case study of three different people: a 55 year old man suffering from anxiety, a murderess and an alcoholic laborer and their respective experiences after the ingestion of LSD. Joker during his psychotic acts of criminality, provides his readers with a glimpse of his rationality, conscious, depressive state as he makes pertinent revelatory justifications:

> Memory is so treacherous. One moment you're lost in a carnival of delights with poignant childhood aromas, the flashing neon of puberty, all that sentimental candy-floss…the next, it leads you somewhere you don't want to go.. (Moore 24)

Here, memory becomes a reflection of the conscious self or rather the trajectory that leads to the conscious self. Arthur Robinson in his "Memory and Consciousness" observes that memory emerges from an unconscious state which is a 'purely spiritual realm where "…the function of consciousness is a choice…Freedom is pushed back into the shadows, and we should be most free when we are least clearly conscious." (321). Moore's Joker therefore finds liberation in insanity. This sense of liberation emerging from a sense of acceptance of the self is also what psychedelic therapy does.

However, this acceptance of the self demonstrates an ambiguity. While psychedelic therapy talks about primarily the acceptance of the rational self with all its failures and setbacks, Joker's self-acceptance leads to a stronger establishment of his psychosis. His glorious declaration, "…Remember there's always madness. Madness is the emergency exit" (21), emerges as a tool against his conscious state where the ghost of memories haunt him: "Memories can be vile, repulsive little brutes like children I suppose…" (21)

Freud in his *Project for a Scientific Psychology* looks at memory as the primary component of nervous tissue that bears the capacity of immediate permanent alteration of the psyche owing to a single occurrence. This Freudian notion is reverberated in Joker's words as he says: "I've demonstrated there's no difference between me and everyone else! All it takes is one bad day to reduce the sanest man alive to lunacy." (24)

Both Hegel and Freud view mental illness or more precisely psychosis as a deliberate withdrawal into the very realm of the unconscious and a gradual estrangement from the real and rational. Therefore, in Hegelian argument 'madness' becomes the 'double center' of reality as the mad self severed its ties with the rational self. Thus, the mad self becomes for Hegel, a double personality as is observed by William Wallace in *Hegel's Philosophy of Mind*. Nietzsche in his autobiographical account "Ecce Homo" (1900) talks about the dual experience of the sane and the insane and portrays them as a 'double personality' as he notes:

> I know both, I am both…This dual series of experiences, this access to apparently separate worlds, is repeated in my nature in every respect: I am a Doppelganger, I have a 'second' in addition to the first. (234)

This schizophrenic attitude is mildly depicted in Joker too, however he does not delineate the distinct traits of schizophrenia. His acts of criminality has a purpose, he intends to justify himself and his psychotic actions. Michel Foucault in the preface to his *Madness and Civilisation* observes:

> …the constitution of madness as mental illness, at the end of the eighteenth century, bears witness to a rupture in a dialogue, gives the separation as already enacted, and expels from the memory all those imperfect words, of no fixed syntax, spoken falteringly, in which the exchange between madness and reason, was carried out." (x)

In his article, "Madness, the Absence of Work" (1995), he equates madness or the unconscious with the 'truth of the human laid bare' and therefore the society feels there is an immediate need to discard 'madness'. He states that in the absence of any pathological awareness in the future madness will transform into an "ageless memory of an evil that has been effaced as a form of illness but persists as misfortune". To simplify the concerned notion, Foucault talks about the institutionalization of madness as it has enormous revelatory power and is immensely capable of creating terror. Through this Foucauldian analogy, madness becomes a tool of resistance for Joker. In the flashback, Joker's economic depravity and failed American dreams and in the present his facial deformity and his depressive psychotic criminal state make him a severely marginalized person. Therefore, when he reclaims power, he takes the deformed and socially neglected people, the participants of the freak show at his amusement park under his wing. Bright psychedelic neon colors used for all these quintessentially marginalized 'creatures' reflect a sense of solidarity. Madness as an act of resistance against the crumbling socio-political state of the country is most vividly represented in Joker's song:

> When the world is full of care
> And every headline screams despair,
> When all is rape, starvation
> And life is vile,
> Then there's a certain thing I do,
> Which I shall pass along to you,
> That's always guaranteed to make me smile,
> I go Loooony! (23)

The latter part of the song, "You can trade your gloom,/ For a rubber room/ and injections twice a day," is a suggestion for a psychedelic drug therapy in an asylum. Joker also mentions how he has consciously avoided doses of reality as it "gets in the way of the hallucinations". This questions the truth of his psychosis as he remains partially aware of himself, his feelings, his conscious as well as unconscious selves. However, despite his victimhood or his psychotic condition, one simply cannot disregard his sudden criminal impulse. The shift from his hesitation to rob for the sake of his family to his hedonistic attempt to kill and probably even rape Barbara Gordon to prove a point, while being aware of his condition cannot be born purely out of a trauma or psychosis.

It becomes pertinent to note that Joker's 'madness' cannot be examined only through his criminal actions, it is primarily his words, his utterances that make him 'sick', 'abnormal' and 'insane'. Foucault rightly says in his 1995 discourse *Madness, the Absence of Work* that madness is actually a 'language' that has been 'excluded': people who pronounce words that go against the socio-political institutions, words that are meaningless or violent or pose any sort of threat to the ruling institutions are categorized as 'mad'. It is probably on this trajectory that Nietzsche locates madness in the conscious and not in the unconscious. Joker's 'sanity' is established multiple times as at one point he states:

> I mean you're not unintelligent! You must see the reality of the situation. Do you know how many times we've come close to World War Three over a flock of geese on a computer screen?

> Do you know what caused the last war? An argument over how many telegraph poles Germany owed its war debt creditors! Telegraph poles! Ha ha ha ha ha! Its all a big joke! Everything anybody ever valued or struggled for…it's all a monstrous, demented gag! (23)

This is the point where he clearly breaks away from his illusory, insane, unconscious and attempts to connect to the real, the conscious. According to him, madness is something that is embedded within us and it takes one single bad event to awaken it. Therefore, he tries to awaken the uncivilized insane self of Inspector Gordon by first stripping him naked to mark the initiation of the uncivilized and then shows him the pictures of his injured naked daughter for finally unleashing the mad in him. Joker tries to do the same to his foil, however he adopts a more sober psychological manipulative tool as he engages in a dialogue with him:

> I mean, what is it with you? What made you what you are? Girlfriend killed by the mob, maybe? Brother carved up by some muggers? Something like that I bet. Something like that. (25)

These lines simultaneously exhibit a sense of understanding and empathy, given they both lost their families to the corrupt American society. This connotation of mutualism is depicted from the very beginning through multiple attempts to indulge in dialogues with an intention to look at the protagonist and the antagonist as coordinates along the same latitude of existence. Batman's words at the beginning of the comic is imbibed with an anticipation for the ultimate existence of either the conscious or the unconscious: "I've been thinking lately about you and me. About what's going to happen to us in the end. We're going to kill each other, aren't we?" (5) However, the comic ending with the two characters sharing a good laugh over a joke finally depicts a co-existence of the both. The narrative ends with the same purple psychedelic patterns which were at the very beginning, therefore portraying the perpetual insanity. This is further established in the final illustration showing Batman and Joker as the two sides of the same structure.

Moore's Joker does not throw razor-tipped playing cards or spray poisonous concoctions, rather he primarily uses psychological manipulation. He shoots Barbara Gordon only to drive her father insane and prove how it does not take much to lose one's conscious self. Joker, here, emerges as an ambiguous, complex, multi-layered villain whose 'madness' is a tool of protest and resistance. The ambiguity is depicted in his conscious use of logic as well as reminiscence, apathy as well as understanding. It is this contradiction and ambiguous nature, that makes it harder to label him 'psychotic', especially when his delirious state minus the criminality, makes more sense. It is probably the psychedelic drugs that make him face a superhero with advanced high-functioning technological tools, unafraid and armed with a deformed grin, sadistic humor and manipulative tactics.

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A Quasi-Queeristan: An Analysis of Suniti Namjoshi's *The Mothers of Maya Diip* as a Lesbian Heterotopia

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Abstract: "There is not one but many silences, and they are an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses," postulates Foucault in The History of Sexuality. Foucault indicates that power in its several manifestations creates varieties of discourses each serving to silence those on whom power exerts itself. Therefore, it can be deduced that there are numerous circles within a circle each having a centre and a margin of its own. In such structures of disaggregated margins, or margins of margins, there are surrogate centres of power that create a topology of subjects split into concentric circles; the closer the subjects are to the centres of power, the more included they are within its structure. Though centre and margin are expected to set up a binary, margin can also be made of binaries. Victims are victims all over the map, but victims can further victimise their kindred. Though stereotyped as 'other than woman' and sterile and marginalised by the collective forces of patriarchy and heterosexuality, lesbians never retreat from solemnising power games among themselves. Therefore, lesbian utopia is nothing but maya, an amusing illusion, a consolatory dream. In reality, it is nothing but a macabre heterotopia that mirrors existent patriarchal power politics and binary construction uncritically. Maintaining Queer Theory, Judith Halberstam's theory of "female masculinity," Foucault's postulation of power and heterotopia, this paper attempts to expose the superficially constructed status of lesbianist 'we' and contests the notion that all lesbians share identical experiences, ranks, interests, and practices through a reading of Suniti Namjoshi's unacclaimed and unexamined novel The Mothers of Maya Diip (1989). This paper seeks to unearth the paradigms used to construct the category of lesbian mother, who fits in it, who is waiting for her turn and who is totally ousted from this genus, who is privileged and who is underprivileged, exploited as well as their causes. In the process of answering these riddles, this paper will narrow down its focus on Namjoshi's politics of including beasts (who are endowed with human-like speaking ability) in her lesbian cosmos along with her politics of genre-blending in the above-mentioned novel.

Keywords: Lesbian, heterotopia, utopia, dystopia, class, power, centre, margin, overlapping circles, silence, exclusion.

Habitus is neither a result of free will, nor determined by structures, but created by a kind of interplay between the two over time: dispositions that are both shaped by past events and structures, and that shape current practices and structures and also, importantly, that condition our very perceptions of these. In this sense, habitus is created and reproduced unconsciously, without any deliberate pursuit of coherence…without any concentration. (Bourdieu 170)

Michel Foucault theorises power as an all-pervasive, supreme entity beyond agency or structure, while Pierre Bourdieu postulates power as an apparatus produced by the culture which legitimises itself through a recurrent series of interactions between agency and structure. Therefore, it can be deduced from this proposition that if the structure is supposed to be the universe surrounding us as it is, perhaps growth, mutation, and refinement will be ushered through making the most of our agency. Similar emerging structural changes, in succession, will shape our agency, and in a slow but steady manner, this cyclical framework will pave the way for an unaccustomed earth: a Queeristan, a novel, an all-inclusive, intersectional, redemptive haven for the Queers, of the Queers and by the Queers which will be an elysian meadow where non-normative is nothing but normal-alternative. Though envisioned facilely, this type of unlived brave new world hurls a series of questions to the Queer community. First, will this utopian dreamland ever become materialised? Or, will it reduce itself to a nightmarish dystopia where existent normative power structures of inequity, injustice, and discriminatory practices aggravate day by day? Second, will this refuge be robust enough to validate itself as the ultimate queerscape sheltering the sexual refugees? Third, will there be simulations of heteropatriarchal power structures here? Fourth, will it emerge victorious in dismantling the anatomy of predilection? Above all, will it outstretch its cards on the table as a nauseating but homophilic heterotopia that cautiously cocoons all power equations among its several ghettos? Though stereotyped as 'other than woman,' unwomanly, mannish, sterile, and marginalised by the collective forces of patriarchy and heterosexuality, lesbians never retreat from solemnising power games among themselves. Therefore, lesbian utopia is nothing but *maya*, an amusing illusion, a consolatory dream. In reality, it is nothing but a macabre heterotopia that mirrors existent patriarchal power politics, games of hierarchy, and binary construction uncritically. Maintaining lesbian nation-building theory of Jill Johnston and Becki L. Ross, Edward Soja's theory of 'Thirdspace,' Foucault's postulations of power and heterotopia, and Baudrillard's theories regarding Postmodernism, this paper attempts to expose the superficially constructed status of lesbianist 'we' and contests the notion that all lesbians share identical experiences, ranks, interests, and practices through a reading of Suniti Namjoshi's unacclaimed and misinterpreted novel, *The Mothers of Maya Diip* (1989). Such theoretical intersectionality is utterly required in order to delve deeper and dissect the ways in which Namjoshi within the framework of class, gender, race and ethnicity, embraces the discussion of sexuality and sexual identity in Indian society. This paper seeks to unearth the paradigms used to construct the category of lesbian mother, who fits in it, who is waiting for her turn and who is totally ousted from this genus, who is privileged and who is underprivileged or exploited as well as their causes. In the process of answering these riddles, this paper will narrow down its focus on Namjoshi's politics of including beasts (who are endowed with human-like speaking ability) in her lesbian cosmos along with her politics of genre-blending in the above-mentioned novel.

"Minority or marginalised groups have privileged perspectives on the rethinking of national identities, helping to make them more inclusive and realistic" (Huddart 68). In sharp contradiction to Bhabha's Eurocentric theorization of nation in *Nation and Narration*, built on predominantly discursive, rigidly elitist, and exclusively majoritarian national narratives, Huddart pins his hopes on the formation of an imagined queer nation, which calls for a reconsideration of the authoritarian heteronormative national narratives as well as an out-thinking of the normative parameters of gender and sexuality. "The purpose of queer space is ultimately sex" (Betsky 89). The emergence of queer

spaces as prerequisites for the queers have sprung up from their adverse experiences in a straight culture. To the queers, heterosexual society's ever-widening normative spaces serve as a reminder of reterritorialization, subjectification and difference. In order to escape from the suffocating London suburbs Haroon tells Karim: "[w]e must find an entirely new way of being alive" (Kureishi 147). In accordance with Haroon and Karim, all queers cry out for a room of their own in order not to be choked by heteropatriarchy but to keep breathing. Very often compelled to camouflage their real sexual nature, queer people turn inward, juxtapose the norms of interior space and create a milieu of protection where they can celebrate their selfhood without fright and angst. Queer has the potentiality to design a thoroughly new architecture of desire, which is storied and labyrinthine; an architecture that trespasses man-woman cliched passion and moves past gender lines. No doubt, all theories related to queer nation and nationalism are reflections of this penchant for being alive queerly. The resultant heterodox and unorthodox queer nation, in order to validate itself as all-embracing in scope and multidisciplinary in outreach, attempts to remap the state-assigned geo-political boundaries. "Nations around the world [may] still hold the [queer sub-]culture in disdain" but as soon as this new nation is formed, the queers ``will be gladdened to see [themselves] in sizable numbers leav[ing] their [real country] borders permanently" (Graham 43). In his desperate search for an exclusively gay nation, Garrett Graham emphatically and earnestly pleads for the exigency of an independent and uninhibited homeland or set-apart nation solely for all male homosexuals and, by extension all gender non-conformists and Sapphists of the atlas in his *The Gay State: The Quest for an Independent Gay Nation-state and What it Means to Conservatives and the World's Religions* (2010), his conceptualization of a gay nation smacks of xenophobia and queer-slaughter rather than equality, democracy, and fraternity. He premeditatively brings into play the capital G for the label 'gay,' which other than serving the purpose of self-identification, serves to establish the Gays as a distinguished community of people on a par with the British, Americans, or other upright heteronormative ethnic majorities. If truth be told, through his hypothesis Graham remonstrates against the time-worn centre/margin binary between normal and abnormal, heterosexual and homosexual, normative and non-normative. No longer does he want to linger on "the Gay question" as "a national question" (38) because the gays throughout the globe feel most unhomely in their homelands. They are bluntly ostracised as outsiders by the centrifugal force of heterosexuality. As all endemic notions of nation and nationality are overtly or covertly predicated on the binary of centre/margin, Graham's borderland claims to have no boundaries and no centres. In addition to the articulation of a potent gay national consciousness, Graham also draws the roadmap leading to the professed queer constitution, national language as well as the national banner as the prerequisites for the formation and expansion of a gay nation. However, it should never be overlooked that such sort of an out-and-out gay/lesbian/queer nation "is posited not on an identity but rather on a difference with the 'modular' forms of the national society propagated" (Chatterjee 74). Thus, the very superstructure of a gay/lesbian/queer nation is based on the fundamental stipulation of queerness as a marker of difference. Unlike religion, race, or ethnicity, which sets up the bedrock of other nationalities, queerness applies here as the quintessential principle of nationality. Queer nation, queer national, and queer nationality will be the single shibboleth in this dream design. "Lesbian activities were always there, but lesbian identity was missing. There was only "criminal or non-identity" (Johnston 45). Unlike the visible gays. Lesbians as corporeal creatures have always been invisibilized by society. Therefore, critters whose existence is in contention, simply there can be no question of a room of their

own. However, reality speaks for itself. Since the time immemorial lesbians have been there in every society voicing their grievances. If Graham puts forward his theorization of a gay nation in such words, a lesbian feminist like Jill Johnston goes one step further to challenge the heteronormative archetype of nation by advocating the utter need for a separate lesbian nation in her ground-breaking work *Lesbian Nation: The Feminist Solution* (1973) through such words: "the best thing to do was to retreat and get your own shit together to build a nation from the grass roots out of your own community of women" (22). As an iconoclast, she deconstructs the factual and geographical ambits of nation-states which by all odds preserve, protect and promote heteropatriarchy and defamiliarizes the familiar definitions of nation and nationality by incorporating lesbian subjects and lesbian nationalism with it. This new definition celebrates the collective identity of women, appreciates the revisionist positioning of women in personal and public provinces simultaneously, and negates the age-old stigma associated with lesbianism by asserting it as a political identity. In a quite similar vein, Becki L. Ross in her book *The House that Jill Built: A Lesbian Nation in Formation* (1995) champions peaceful, bloodless, and non-militant lesbian nationalism over the racial or ethnic nationalisms that time and again bring about "brutal 'ethnic cleansing' within and across state borders" (15). Ross further documents those several mechanisms through which lesbian nationalism aims to turn the heteropatriarchal and socio-cultural state formations upside down. Apart from this, rejection of male-dominated customs and ways of living, and incorporation of changes in dressing style and looks that boldly unsubscribe from the heteropatriarchal gaze are subsumed consciously under this broad spectrum. In consonance with this theorem of a desired lesbian nation, it can be hoped that the acknowledgment of lesbian as a political identity is not far away. It is also evident from this discussion that theorists had theorised their penchant for a separate gay/lesbian/queer nation following their individual credos. Hence, whereas Graham presses for an autonomous territorial statehood disconnected from the normative cartograph for the gays, Johnston and Ross call for a particular space for the lesbians within the peripheries of their native lands, an appeal that wipes off the question of an isolated nation crammed with isolated nationals.

Although criticized as "frustratingly incomplete, inconsistent, incoherent" (Soja 121), "sketchy, open-ended and ambiguous" (Johnson 85), Foucault's concept of heterotopia is originally derived from the study of anatomy, where the term refers to "parts of body that are either out of place, missing, extra, or, like tumours, alien" (Hetherington 72). The credit for coining the term does not go to Foucault. However, Foucault's employment of the term heterotopia as a spatial metaphor derives from the ancient Greek pronoun *heteros* (meaning 'other') and the noun *topos* (meaning 'place'). Deployed as an analogy to utopia and dystopia, heterotopia literally signifies a place of a different order, an actual or real place perceived as being otherwise existing outside the normative socio-political space. According to Foucault, heterotopias 'mirror,' 'reflect,' 'represent,' 'designate,' 'speak about' all other sites but simultaneously 'suspend,' 'neutralize,' 'invert,' 'contest,' and 'contradict' those sites. The three most crucial segments in his works where Foucault explicitly and profusely calls the readers' attention to heterotopia are, firstly, the introduction to *The Order of Things* (1966) where he discusses Borges' Chinese Encyclopaedia, secondly, a radio broadcast as part of a series on the theme of utopia and literature (1966), and thirdly, a lecture given to a group of architects in 1967 which was published posthumously as "Of Other Spaces" (1984). In all these three cases the matter in question introduced and resolved is that of ordering. According to Foucault's propositions,

places of 'Otherness' are spaces, whose existence sets up "unsettling juxtapositions of incommensurate 'objects' which challenges the way we think, especially the way our thinking is ordered" (Hetherington 42). In a nutshell, heterotopias connote those spaces in which an alternative social ordering is performed, "one that stands in contrast to the taken-for-granted mundane idea of social order that exists within society" (Hetherington 39). The shocking impact heterotopia produces on the mind of the reader results from their unfamiliar and grim mode of ordering. What defines heterotopia as a place of unusual order is not a physical location but the confluence of discourses, institutions, and procedures deployed in a place. Heterotopias can hardly be spotted straight away within a system of representation but neither do they exist *sui generis*. Heterotopia can barely be found in the order of things but can obviously be located in the ordering of things. They can be simultaneously peripheral and central. They can also be correlated with both transgressive marginalities as well as carceral sites of social control. Heterotopias are sites of all things which are marginal, disordered, dislocated, forsaken, forbidden, rejected, or ambivalent; their worth stems not from a specific single centre, but from their interrelation to a set of remaining spaces, which encompasses the extant surroundings or terrains stretching at a huge distance from a marked site.

"There is not one but many silences, and they are an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses," propounds Foucault in *The History of Sexuality* (1: 27) implying that power in its many manifestations creates varieties of discourses each serving to silence those on whom power exerts itself. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault adds further that power operates at the most micro levels of social relations. Taking cue from this implication it can also be inferred that there are many circles even within a circle, each having a centre and a margin of its own. There are ghettos within ghettos, with multiple layers of power within each, so that the marginalised often becomes the marginalised to those who remain in a lower stratum of power. In such structures of disaggregated margins, or margins of margins, there are surrogate centres of power that create a topology of subjects split into concentric circles; the closer the subjects are to the centres of power, the more included they are within its structure. Corresponding to Rubin's "charmed circle", in this theorization of queer subjects as they are formed in relation to power, some are positioned at the hearts of the centres, some are scattered over the peripheries and some are altogether outsided. Though centre and margin are expected to set up a binary, margin can also be made of binaries. It is utterly shocking that as a marginalised subculture lesbians are ostracised by the mainstream hetero-norm society but even if they are given an opportunity to build a coterie of their own, they never retreat from simulating patriarchal power structures in their enclave.

Betrothed to an egalitarian feminist revisionist zeal, pruned and polished in the West, aided by non-normative parodic idiom, an eroticized grammar, and subversive fabulosity, Suniti Namjoshi, a diasporic lesbian author of Indian origin, serves as an iconoclast shattering all myths of patriarchy and heterosexuality. Though an unfamiliar name in the Indian queerphobic, straight academia, she has attained an unblemished reputation for her anthologies like *Because of India* (1989), *Cyclone in Pakistan* (1971), *The Jackass and the Lady* (*1980*), *The Authentic Lie* (1971), and fictional works like *Feminist Fables* (1993), *From the Bedside Book of Nightmares* (1984)*, The Conversation of Cow* (1985), etc. As an author, Namjoshi encapsulates a particular identity that Guzman (1997) terms 'sexile'—a queer global subject deliberately exiled from her native country, and acerbically liberated into free transnational mobility. Though she left India in 1968 for good, her works still pour out Indianness.

She consciously sets her novel in a fictitious Indian island called Maya: "[o]f all the princely states of India there was one in which a matriarchy bloomed unashamedly…off the west coast of India…oh. You mean Maya Diip, don't you?" (*Maya Diip* 5-6). Therefore, it is crystal clear that whereas India is a real space, the island of Maya is an imaginary space, "an-Other" (Soja 57). Such balanced interweaving of the real ('Firstspace') and the imagined ('Secondspace') produces what Soja terms the 'Thirdspace,' a transcendental space that constantly expands to include "an-Other," and thus enables contestation and re-negotiation of boundaries and cultural identities. Namjoshi conceptualises Maya as a space where "everything comes together…subjectivity and objectivity, the abstract and the concrete, the real and the imagined, the knowable and the unimaginable, the repetitive and the differential, structure and agency, mind and body, the conscious and the unconscious, the disciplined and the transdisciplinary, everyday life and unending history" (Soja 57). In Maya Diip, the boundaries of real and imagined are blurred; it becomes a real space where action is enacted through the expectations of the imaginary. Namjoshi invents a grave new Queeristan through Maya Diip. Fictioners who "invent worlds, purpose to make them in some degree reflective of the familiar world from which they are estranging their readers, may…present readers with versions of their own world" (Bailey 109). Reading through this looking glass, readers can easily deduce that for all its fantastic spatial envisioning Namjoshi does not far depart from consensus reality, the utmost point Namjoshi furthers her artistry is towards the emancipation of the lesbians. Namjoshi's sole concern here is to condemn those societal norms and institutions she considers predominantly erroneous. With the numb hope of discovering such an 'eutopia,' Namjoshi juxtaposes a prejudiced present and a miraculously altered distant past with a hopeless future only to prove that all are flawed for lesbian safe cohabitation. Her forlorn innovation or revolution or disjunction, introduced and enlarged with an analogous austerity which "determines the whole narrative logic" (Suvin 70), is an evident sign provided to the reader to concede that the narrative basically attempts to envisage an alternate world, and that the conflicting fictional spaces of the text have been turned upside down only to be reorganised according to a radically different, thoroughly post-colonial or cross-cultural, set of ethics and credence. This study proposes that through positing the novel in an unfamiliar post-colonial context, Namjoshi has trodden a postmodern avenue which is devoid of a fixed set of rules; it follows its self-made rules and flouts them whenever necessary. In this way, the novel chooses the burning social debates and transcreates them into fictional forms, questioning the ideological biases of oriental historiography as well as more recent efforts to rehabilitate India as a post-colonial Queeristan.

"Utopias afford consolation: although they have no real locality, there is nevertheless a fantastic, untroubled region in which they are able to unfold. Heterotopias are disturbing, probably because they make it impossible to name this and that," postulates Foucault in "Of Other Spaces" (xvii). Therefore, utopias or non-places are filled with power and possibility whereas heterotopias juxtapose contrasting or mutually opposing places. While typical utopias or dystopias necessitate an extant body of a well-grounded historical facts framing the distant past, recent present and near future, ambiguous heterotopias foreground the discursivity of these historical facts and deconstruct the methods through which they shape the modalities of social reality. Three common denominators of all conventional utopian and dystopian texts are that they have fictional settings, they never dare to defy the outdated, unified narrative structure and they hypothetically equate human with man—

stereotypes in utter need of revision. Consequently, feminist revisionist zeal engendered a considerable number of fictions envisioning gender non-discriminatory alternative worlds more significant to the particular culture they derive from. Heavily influenced by Adrienne Rich's theory of "lesbian continuum," Suniti Namjoshi chooses to go after Angela Carter's choice of heterotopia in *The Passions of New Eve* (1977) over utopia or dystopia. Among the six crucial principles of heterotopology listed by Foucault, the first principle is that heterotopias arise in all cultures (be it normative or non-normative) but in different forms. Being a lesbian author, Namjoshi adds a distinct lesbian hue to the genre of heterotopia which makes her novel come under the subgenre of heterotopia of deviation. She conceives the island of Maya as a habitus where lesbians are marooned because their sexual orientation confronts the so-called 'normal.' The most essential principle of Foucault's heterotopia is that it has to juxtapose within its womb several heterogeneous spatial elements which are in themselves incompatible—a feature that turns heterotopias into ambiguous, contradictory, and non-totalisable spaces. Namjoshi schematically juxtaposes as many as four contrasting patterns of quasi-human society in this heterotopian 'herland:' firstly, there is an out-and-out lesbian, separatist matriarchy called the empire of Maya, secondly, there is Ashagarh, an all-men utopia headed by a banished matriarch, thirdly, there is a federation of male androids, and lastly, there is an Arcadia namely Paradise full of male gallants who are constantly engaged in courting mothers. Whatever may be the permutation and combination of gender binary systems, ageless patriarchal oppressive structures reappear in a camouflaged or masked form in all these systems. Power and patriarchy are inseparable twins.

> [Wo]men…have diseased identities…They fight sabere-toothed tigers when there are no sabre-toothed tigers to fight. They worship power and find the victory of battle heroic. They battle one another…This they perceive as the exercise of power; …Power is an aphrodisiac. Power is pheromone… The smell of power makes their nostrils twitch. (*Building Babel* 114)

If Namjoshi's *Building Babel* betrays the inner power structures of a lesbian-dominated world in such derogatory terms, her *The Mothers of Maya Diip* stride further to suggest that gay/lesbian family structures are as oppressive as the hetero-patriarchal ones. Namjoshi's lesbian Gulliver Jyanvi gets an invitation from her lover Saraswati and sets forth her voyage to Maya Diip with her friend, The Blue Donkey. "The nation … is singular and homogenous, or at least it becomes so in order to comply with the requirements of the state," argues Butler. Maya Diip has an epiphanic quality in the sense that with its hierarchical structures and ruthless labour system, it can easily prove Butler's argument as nothing but an oversimplification of the actual nation-state scenario. Maya Diip is portrayed as a misandrist lesbian island governed by an outwardly benevolent matriarch, in the manner of ancient Rajahs/Maharajas of India, called Ranisaheb, a 'she' (not 'he') who must be obeyed. *Maya Diip* introduces the matriarch as "a formidable figure" (*Maya Diip* 18), "an old woman" who "remain[s] unmoved" (*Maya Diip* 17) in every critical situation and "exude[s] her supreme authority" (*Maya Diip* 46) irrespective of the gravity of the situation: Ranisaheb is an absolute monarch" (*Maya Diip* 17). Her anonymity equates her with any unruly patriarch who wields power through aggression and

authority of wealth and status. Women have no value here as individuals; womanhood is equated here with motherhood. Reproduction here is state-controlled. Maternity is the highest single ideal of this cosmos: "[i]t's the duty of every Mayan to sacrifice herself for the welfare of children" (*Maya Diip* 146). Mayans never come to understand that motherhood is never simply a core of human relationships but a political institution, the patriarchal keystone to dominate, control and oppress women in every sphere of life. This matriarchy operates through an oppressive hierarchical classification of mothers: Grade A mothers (daughters of the Matriarch), Grade B mothers (biological mothers), and Grade C mothers (labourers who accomplish the task of daughter rearing). However, this hierarchy is superficially flexible. While Grade A mothers have proprietary rights over daughters (comparable to authoritative husbands) Grade C mothers are nothing but caretakers of daughters (comparable to housewives engaged in household chores). Only through diligence and perseverance, Grade C mothers aspire to climb up the hierarchy. Jyanvi is stupefied by this covert and biased class hierarchy that privileges some mothers over the rest and starts to question the hypocritical system of mothering and childrearing. Mayans are totally unaware of the deep-rooted patriarchy in their apparently egalitarian matriarchy. Ranisaheb with the help of five guilds monopolises power in reality, though they make this syndicate appear thoroughly democratic. The system of choosing a successor is also manipulated by the Ranisaheb through an oracle: "[i]n theory all the Daughters of Maya look to the Matriarch [Ranisaheb] as an incarnation of the Supreme Mother; but in practice, the bloodline has been unbroken for seven hundred years" (*Maya Diip* 127). The delusion of an alternative and more democratic female line of succession, which outwardly seems to parody the patrilineal system of accession to the throne, smashing all hopes proves loyal to patriarchy. Therefore, like the gradation system of mothers, the system of succession has patriarchal corruption as its core definition. Even ferocity, warmongering, and vehemence, which Mayans believe to have been exterminated from their empire by the planned weeding out of males, linger on as a partially buried secret in the form of atomic weapons hidden cautiously on the island. Apart from such inconsiderate hierarchy, bloodthirsty rapaciousness, manipulation, and hypocrisy, Maya is infested with "unsisterly sisters, heresies, rivalries and jealousies of diverse sorts" (*Maya Diip* 20) which collectively prove it to be no less than a dystopia. Just as patriarchal exclusionist politics homologates women as secondary to men, Mayan mothers do not bestow male children with full human status but consider them "just as necessities" (*Maya Diip* 52). In this all-women utopia, men are always on the margins; they are here the victims of misandry, the alter-ego of misogyny; they are commodified as use and throw goods needed only for the sole purpose of procreation: "men are about as much use as the tom cat, the buck rabbit, the rooster who lays no eggs, the bull who gives no milk. Episodic characters…all of them" (Gyaltsen 11). After their semen is collected and rationed to women who qualify for motherhood, the boys are drowned in the sea and they turn into foam. Mayan mothers hate patriarchy but paradoxically they worship patriarchy's projection of women as womb, and, most importantly, they are totally unaware of it. As absolute power is said to corrupt absolutely, Ranisaheb is banished from her kingdom along with Jyanvi, The Blue Donkey and Saraswati through a conspiracy hatched by her other two daughters namely Shyamila and Pramila.

After being expelled from Maya, the exiles reach Ashagad, i.e., the city of hope, founded by Asha, the eldest daughter of the Ranisaheb, who was banished from Maya as she raised her voice against the malpractice done to the boys. Ashagad forms a binary opposition to Maya, i.e., Ashagad

is a seeming inversion of Maya. Whereas Maya is an all-women empire, Ashagad is an all-male empire. Ashans have their own myth and legend. This is an all-men dominion led by an empress, Asha, whose ideals are shaped by that of Maya: glorification and celebration of motherhood is again the single most ideal here. Boys, abandoned by Mayans, are sheltered by Ashans. These boys compete with each other for gaining motherhood; they strive to achieve motherhood after passing several tests and trials and attaining adult status. As they cannot be biological mothers, they pray to the Tree of Life under which they find babies. When Valerie pinpoints the patriarchal system lurking deep inside Maya and Asha and the latter tries to imprison the former, Ashans are shocked at this revelation and they ponder over the prospect of having their own babies by enslaving the Mayan mothers. Therefore, Ashagad provides the exiles with nothing but irony.

The world of male androids is explored next. Some male androids descend to Ashagad to rescue Valerie. These western androids are not real men but robotic models built to a specific male stereotype who will be simulated by the real men. Therefore, here there is nothing real. The real is produced by the artificial. There is no longer any distinction between reality and its representation; there is only the simulacrum: "the simulacrum is never that which conceals the truth—it is the truth which conceals that there is none. The simulacrum is true" (Baudrillard 126). From the ancient world of Rajahs and Ranisahebs, the readers are shifted to a hyperreal world without notice. Another essential principle of heterotopia is 'heterochrony' or discontinuity in time. Heterotopias can return to the remote past, or, stretch out the present, or, leap into an unthinkable far away future. Namjoshi designedly situates her novel in an ancient past when matriarchy was in vogue and abruptly incorporates there the androids of the distant future in order to achieve a heterochronic effect. These male androids are primarily traders and they follow a military regime and by and large uphold the values of a patriarchal society. When all trade agreements fail, the androids accuse Asha of her autocratic behaviour and forcefully overthrow her on the false charge of "obstructing the causes of democracy and justice" (*Maya Diip* 103). Before leaving Ashagad, the androids appoint "a new government that'll be more cooperative and loyal" to the boys because patriarchy has taught them "that it is not okay to be ruled by women" (*Maya Diip* 103-4). These high-handed, sexist, mechanised androids take Ranisaheb, Asha, Jyanvi, The Blue Donkey, and Saraswati with them as hostages in their helicopter. However, their helicopter crashes down and they head for an emergency landing in Paradise.

In Paradise, the reader is confronted with an extravagant heterosexual milieu. Society here is neatly and strictly split into two genders: mothers (i.e., the women) and gallants (i.e., the men). The norm predominant here is: "two of a kind may mot pair" (*Maya Diip* 232). Therefore, the reader is now in a "bad land of modernity" where queers have no space. According to its sexist parameters, women are regarded here as embodiments of beauty, passivity, love, and romance. The prime concern of men here is to win the favour of women and worship them. The adulation of the gallants reaches its greatest heights when, having a shortage of mothers, they begin to kill themselves and start reciting courtly poems before dying: "when the gallants commit suicide, they leave behind a couplet, sometimes a quatrain…it has become a custom, a tradition—the poetic thing to do—to die with a song on your lips" (*Maya Diip* 239). However, this extreme idealism, which is fundamental to Paradise, turns out to be the rescuing aid for the exiles. Ranisaheb and the queen of Paradise come to an agreement: Paradise has an acute crisis of mothers and Ranisaheb is in need of male warriors to

regain her lost kingdom. It is decided that the Gallants will help Ranisaheb to reclaim Maya and in return, the Gallants will be permitted to court the Mayan mothers. Therefore, the archetypal gender roles emerge in a renewed form: men as warriors and women as mothers. Namjoshi here substantiates that matriarchy is nothing but patriarchy. Therefore, matriarchy can never be a benign boon to the bane called patriarchy. Maintaining poetic justice, the good people win and the bad people are punished in the end. Breaking the bloodline Jyanvi is made the successor to the throne while Ranisaheb retires into the forest accompanied by The Blue Donkey. In this complex way, the novel proves that the myth of a unified, homogenous gay/lesbian/queer nation cloaks heterogeneity surreptitiously. Only the truth prevails: "we [the queers] are [never] a people, one people" (Graham 38).

"The magic of the faerie is not an end in itself, its virtue is in its operations: among these are certain primordial desires. One of these desires is to survey the depths of time and space. Another is…to hold communion with other living being" (Tolkien 41). When the readers evaluate the political implications of Namjoshi's engagement with utopia, dystopia, and heterotopia as chosen genres and fantastic as a favoured mode (which are denounced by Marx as he encourages artworks to be the mirror-image of reality dipped sternly within the historical and cultural frameworks), they feel contented because Namjoshi uses the fantastic as a means of protest or desire for that which is long forgotten or truant. Namjoshi's strategic use of beasts (with human-like skills of talking, acting, and feeling) in the style of the beast fable enables her to incorporate fantastic elements in her literary oeuvre. Namjoshi's textual world is frequented with several fanciful, mythical, and metaphorical beasts—One-Eyed Monkeyji, Fire-Emitting Dragons, Birds of Prey, The Blue Donkey, and so on—who serve as allegories of human follies. As readers start to listen to these fantasy creatures, they "will be freed from the tyranny of the real" (Le Guin 132). With the inclusion of these fantastic beasts, Namjoshi willingly moves between disparate worlds, where each world is a self-contained system with a particular logic and pattern of assumptions. The topography of her fiction encompasses recognizable geography only to a restricted extent; for the rest, it transports the reader to an alternative world, what Tolkien refers to as a "secondary world" (Tolkien 60). These beasts are simultaneously knowable yet unknown, within easy reach yet unreachable. They are conceived as others, beyond humanity's perceptions.

"Gender is a genre. The third gender will produce a third (new) genre: not prose, not poetry; not fiction, not fact; not discourse, not effusion; but a mixture of all these" (Merchant 49). In all probability, Namjoshi took this idea too seriously to invent a radical style of writing. She conceives her novel both as a gender-bender and genre-blender. Her use of a pun on the title lays bare the inherent paradox— 'Diip' means a lamp and 'Dwip' means an island. Therefore, she devises Maya Diip as an illusory dreamland where women will be enlightened. In order to criticise the notion of a factual, separatist, lesbian continuum through an avant-garde effort, she haphazardly interlaces several genres—*Maya Diip* starts as a travelogue, a take-off on *Gulliver's Travels*, hopes to be a utopia, gradually unfolds to be a heterotopia sheltering several contradictory spatial elements, but eventually degenerates into a nightmarish dystopia, incorporates human-like beasts in the manner of beast fables, includes elements of science fiction, parodies heterosexual courtly love tradition, weaves poetry and myth, and finally, finishes off with a cliched "and they lived happily ever after" ending. Her aim may be to fabricate a story of lesbian emancipation, through deculturation of the established

culture, deconstruction of the hetero-patriarchal realistic modes of literary representation and denaturalization of societal institutions and institutionalised modes of behaviour, and teach the readers how to "live in multiple worlds…the strange prismatic worlds that art offers" (Winterson 264). Most probably, through such arbitrary genre- mingling Namjoshi strives to find ways to give her heterogeneous identities (half-Indian, half-Canadian, lesbian feminist writer of colour) a free play; identities which very often suffocate her as "contradictory, partial and strategic" (Haraway 154). However, to the utter shock of the readers, her over-confident efforts to achieve these high-sounding and ludicrous goals unconsciously reduce to "a great army of 'trashy' objects…a gallery of cheap junk" (Baudrillard 109-10), a postmodern kitsch. To conclude, by turning upside down the concept of the lesbian consortium, Namjoshi may embrace the idea of the "non-conceptual," a movement that opens up the possibility of "a space without/outside the cultural order" (Jackson 43), but *The Mothers of Maya Diip* will forever serve as an example of kitsch, unselfconscious and devoid of any political or critical edge.

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Wonderland, Cats and Hiji bij bij

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Abstract: A weird concoction of symbols and social commentary through allegories makes the Alice stories the epitome of English nonsense literature, one that could perhaps be compared to Sukumar Ray's *Ha Ja Ba Ra La* on many levels. The sheer diversity of experiences Alice has in Wonderland and in the Looking Glass world, or Ray's narrator has in his dream, prevents the construction of a fixed paradigm for this world to function on, and feeds into the cliché that change is the only constant element. The strict devotion to randomness and unreason in these texts questions the viability of a fixed structure (or an institution) and the legitimacy of the 'reason' it propagates. Alice, along with the young narrator of *Ha Ja Ba Ra La*, is a representative of the structured world of recorded 'knowledge', and her sense of equilibrium (and of justice, morality, reason, and so on) is thrown into a topsy-turvy mess once she goes down the rabbit hole. This paper attempts to explore some of those instances by trying to locate the 'unreason' of these fantastical spaces through close inter-textual analysis constructed on the framework of a psychoanalytic reading.

"Grown-ups never understand anything by themselves, and it is tiresome for children to be always and forever explaining things to them."

The Little Prince, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

Alice in Wonderland (1865), *Through the Looking Glass* (1872) and *Ha Ja Ba Ra La* (1921), all function on a singular quality, and with the same purpose—to ensnare their readers, children and adults alike, into a shared dream with Alice or the eight-year-old narrator in *Ha Ja Ba Ra La*, and bamboozle their sense of reason.

The Alice stories have a dreamlike quality to them; they defy, and at times manipulate logic. This may be considered a direct attempt by their creator, the mathematician Charles Lutwidge Dodgson to put in praxis his idea that basic education for young people might include various games of puzzles. These would help them "think correctly"and navigate their way through life, in the same manner they would solve a puzzle. In Bengali literature, Sukumar Ray's nonsense writings *Abol Tabol* and *Ha Ja Ba Ra La*, among others bear great resemblance to the nonsensical worlds of Dodgson.

The imaginative 'dream' spaces of *Ha Ja Ba Ra La* and the Alice stories have much in common. They are represented as products of fanciful dreams of children—the questions arising from their social and cultural experiences. A discussion of some of the components of these narratives would

provide an interesting distinction between how adults and children view normative social practices, more specifically, what is taught to be perceived as 'normal', 'reasonable', and what falls into the sphere of 'unreasonable' or 'mad'. Some of the themes that will be discussed with close textual analysis include identity, madness, institutional bodies, the role of the creator or the dreamer and also the importance of the dream spaces represented.

1.The beginning

A certain section of critics and readers attribute Alice's adventures in Wonderland as psychotropic visions induced by the use of hallucinogenic substances. Alice finds that her entire experience has been nothing but a dream. Considering that Wonderland is dominated by unreason, one may look at the rabbit hole as a pathway to separating and confining the 'mad' components of Alice's mind from her rational consciousness. It is evident that the more time Alice spends in Wonderland, the more she becomes detached from her older, rational self that used to rely on conventional bodies of knowledge, such as geography and mathematics to validate 'smartness'. Thus, isolated from those institutions, Alice is afraid she is turning rather 'stupid'. This underlying trope of transformation is consistent throughout her dreams, perhaps a response to the changes she undergoes in life as she "grows up" to slowly become integrated into the larger social order.

The idea of the rabbit hole is multifarious. While it is an othered space relegated to unreason constituting a vast body of knowledge that is not (and cannot be) explored exhaustively, it is also a sphere of the unknown and infinite imagination and repressed desires. It is a response of resistance to the ordered reality, and hence, a parallel and binary presence in the margins, it is suppressed in Alice's dreams.

In *Through the Looking Glass*, Alice climbs into the Looking Glass world through the large mirror over the mantelpiece. Once again, there is no clear indication till the end of the narrative that her experience in that world is a figment of her imagination or her unconscious. Curiously though, there are multiple references to dreams in this text. Alice is asked to not wake the Red King, as everyone in that world exists because he dreams. Alice's awareness that she might be a part of a dream and the calm acceptance of this possibility makes the plot even more complex: "So I wasn't dreaming, after all," she said to herself, "unless—unless we're all part of the same dream. Only I do hope it's *my* dream, and not the Red King's! I don't like belonging to another person's dream," she went on in a rather complaining tone: "I've a great mind to go and wake him, and see what happens!" (Carroll 214)

Alice's desire to wake the Red King despite the warning that everyone's existence, including her own, might be jeopardized if he was indeed awoken, does not only demonstrate the natural human tendency to disobey[1] but also indicates a much darker underlying theme of self-destruction or Thanatos running through this text, as well as a reflection of the dreary weather in Alice's reality (since dreamwork draws from external stimuli).

The narrator's dream in *Ha Ja Ba Ra La*, on the other hand, has no particular entry point like the rabbit hole or the mirror. It may be marked only by a singular event of change—when his

handkerchief transforms into a red, talking cat that justifies its transfiguration and proceeds to pose ontological questions. In fact, both the narrator and the readers are hardly given the opportunity to question the viability of the existence of the characters. At the very moment of their inception, they justify their presence and their purpose in an unapologetic, entitled manner, as if the inability to comprehend their rationale is the narrator's (and the reader's) failing. There exists a direct, albeit implicit, link between the text and the reader in *Ha Ja Ba Ra La* right from the beginning which culminates with the narrator addressing his young readers in the end after he has been "woken up".

In all three texts, a certain gravity is attached to 1) the ability to comprehend both language and image and 2) the existing knowledge possessed by the child dreamer. At the same time, all serious arguments are represented to be obscure, and hence, nonsensical. The conventional correlation drawn between 'important' or 'serious' concerns and their incomprehensibility are portrayed in a satirical light. The inhabitants of the fantasy worlds constantly mock the ignorance of their respective creators/dreamers and treat them condescendingly if either Alice or Ray's young narrator is unable to answer the quizzical questions in accordance with the alternative paradigms of these worlds.

"The 'royal road' to the unconscious is dreams…Dreams for Freud are essentially symbolic fulfilments of unconscious wishes…the unconscious charitably conceals, softens and distorts [the dream's] meanings, so that our dreams become symbolic texts which need to be deciphered" (Eagleton 136). The dream space(s) experienced by Alice and the narrator of *Ha Ja Ba Ra La* can be defined in psychoanalytic terms as representations of the unconscious of the two 'dreamers'. The interplay of 'symbols' within the dream—human beings, anthropomorphic animals, other non-human entities, the events that take place, and most importantly, the sequence in which they appear—is indicative of the subject position Alice and *Ha Ja Ba Ra La*'s narrator in society, especially within the circle of the family. The Imaginary and primarily the Symbolic dominate the dream space of the two children. They are able to make distinctions between the conventional order they have been taught and the unpracticed rationale presented in their dreams.[2] One of the most intriguing characteristics which define these dream spaces is how both Alice and Ray's narrator are unfazed by animals and creatures that are able to express themselves in the same language as them, yet baffled when the conventions of the dreamland do not mirror the conventions of society. It may be argued, therefore, that these dreams, for the children, are a form of defiance of the norms of the social order into which they are in the process of being integrated. These dreams are also representations of the resistance they might have to the very idea of being a 'grown-up' or undergoing the complex process of growing up itself. The advice of the Cheshire cat and the Caterpillar, the different ideas of temporality that Udho or the Looking Glass world has, may be attempts of transmissions of their own unconscious.

2.The question of identity

In addition to the memory of her ordered knowledge, with the various adjustments in size, Alice begins to lose her sense of "self" that may be interpreted as her identity.[3] When the Caterpillar asks her a rather existential question, one that would perhaps intimidate adults to no end, Alice replies with an equally insightful statement showcasing human inconsistencies, "...I know who I was

when I got up this morning, but I think I must have been changed several times since then" (Carroll 48). The use of the passive voice "I must have been changed" is notable here. Although Alice voluntarily partakes of the various confectionaries that change her size, she makes sure to attribute her change to the active operation of those items on her, the passive receptor without resistance. The "EAT ME" cake and the "DRINK ME" beverage both can be equated with external social factors that shape the Freudian ego. On the other hand, they are also interpreted as hallucinogenic substances (as represented in most modern popular culture). Now here is one of the many paradoxes that plague the scholar's mind. The food items are interpreted both as the instrument of social constraints (realism) and a way to evade those constraints (escapism). The key (literally, the reference to the key in the book is essential) is to use both tendencies in a balanced manner. Otherwise, there may be tremendous consequences, like Alice's exaggerated 'pool' of tears.

Size becomes the primary method of survival in this text. By virtue of her varying size, Alice takes turns playing the roles of both the predator and the prey, and she enjoys none. It can be said that she is never satisfied with the power (or the lack of it) she has. In the chapter 'The Rabbit Sends in a Little Bill', she is attacked when she grows in size while in the White Rabbit's house, being pelted with stones that turn into cakes as they hit her, from outside. This growth is an effect of the beverage she had consumed uninvited (that is, without the label "DRINK ME") in the White Rabbit's room. Two important conclusions may be drawn from here— (a) the stone-pelting is somewhat reminiscent of the earlier treatment of the mad by society when they are presumed to be a threat, and (b) the stones turning into cupcakes may be representative of the coercive process of curing the mad, to conform to their 'normal' standards once again. The first instinct after encountering the gigantic Alice is to set the house on fire along with her. This is almost a reflection of burning a witch at the stakes. In any case, the brutal treatment of the mad is medieval, stemming from the fear of the unknown which overpowers the need to examine the nature and cause of the deviation. There are of course sexual interpretations of all this consumption that is faintly reiterative of Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market* (1862).

Alice faces a similar circumstance when she is accused of being a "serpent" by a pigeon, when her neck grows long, way above the trees. The pigeon's syllogistic conclusions that little girls are also a "kind of serpent" (Carroll 56) on grounds of eating eggs, may be faulty. But this once again calls Alice's identity into question:

> "Well! What are you?" said the Pigeon…
>
> "I—I'm a little girl," said Alice, rather doubtfully, as she remembered the number of changes she had gone through, that day.
>
> "A likely story indeed!" said the Pigeon, in a tone of the deepest contempt. "I've seen a good many little girls in my time, but never one with such a neck as that! No, no! You're a serpent…" (Carroll 56)

Herein lies a vital difference that sets the Alice stories apart from *Ha Ja Ba Ra La*. The narrator, who is also the reader's primary link to the dream, is not subjected to any deviant disfigurement. While in

Wonderland, Alice is constantly plagued with the question of who she is, Udho voluntarily measures the narrator's identity without considering any of his own inputs, especially his age. He explains the process of calculating age in which he is in control of his age, not physically, but in terms of its linguistic expression. Within the narrator's dream, although the parameters of his identity are almost enforced upon him, since they are abstract in nature, they do not affect him at least perceptibly within the dream or without. He is, however, affected by the strangeness or even the plausibility of the ideas thrust upon him, and tries to deny them as "*abol tabol*" (literally, nonsense).

Hiji bij bij's entire discourse revolves around the multiplicity and dynamic nature of identity. He is described as an eccentric creature who resembles both animal and man. Thus occupying a chimaeric position, an amalgamation of imagination and reality, Hiji bij bij chalks out a matrix of his names, ones that he shares with his relatives, and later ones that change temporally. His dialogue with the narrator regarding the plurality of Hiji bij bij's identity enrages the latter who finds it difficult to accept the impermanence of people's names, and the multifarious identities they carry in society.[4]

śeyāl bollo, "bate tomār nām ki śuni?"

se bollo, "ekhan āmār nām hiji bij bij."

śeyāl bollo, "nāmer ābār ekhan takhan ki?"

Hiji bij bij bollo, "tāo jāno nā? sakāle āmār nām thāke ālunārkol ābār ār ektu bikel halei āmār nām haye jābe rāmtāṛu." (Ray 41)[5]

"Dream texts are also cryptic because the unconscious is rather poor in techniques for representing what it has to say, being largely confined to visual images, and so must often craftily translate a verbal significance into a visual one" (Eagleton 137). This is particularly true for *Ha Ja Ba Ra La*'s narrator; he is painstakingly meticulous while focusing on the appearance and transformations of the objects of his dream. His Ego is entrenched in what is considered 'normal' and 'absurd'; how human beings *should* look. Thus, Udho with his green beard, the talking, hybrid creature Hiji bij bij and the over-eager singer distinctly identifiable by his bald head can not only be read as social caricatures or deviations but as being *different* from the narrator's sense of self as well as identities that he deems desirable.[6] It is important to consider that the underlying construction of the dream space is not how one perceives others but the self in relation to others. This perception is plural and hybrid in nature, including both positive and negative connotations. Hiji bij bij may also be interpreted to be the narrator's perception of himself: a child who laughs at hypothetical, impossible scenarios, or have different imaginary identities and names as in play-acting. Excessive laughter, joy or freedom is not acceptable; it is considered nonsensical—that is the gist of his response to Hiji bij bij. He assumes the role of the very 'Law' he himself wishes to circumvent in reality.

Alice goes through a similar experience in Wonderland, as she herself is the subject of various transformations. For her, both fear and disgust are additional responses that function quite actively in her dreams. It is a struggle for her to maintain the image of, and to be acknowledged as, just a 'little girl' and not a deviant creature (additionally, it is difficult to not consider a gendered implication of

Alice's fear or being perceived as anything/anyone else apart from a little girl. It is an early foreshadowing of the unavoidable othering that she must face when she grows up to be a woman in contemporary society).

3.Madness

An identity that can be uniformly shared by the inhabitants of these alternate worlds is that they are all mad, or that the functional framework of their reason is that of 'unreason'.

"...Visit either you like: they're both mad."

"But I don't want to go among mad people," Alice remarked.

"Oh you can't help that," said the Cat: "we're all mad here. I'm mad. You're mad." (Carroll 65)

When Alice further asks how the Cat knew she was mad, it says, "You must be… or you wouldn't have come here" (Carroll 65). Even in the alternative universe that is Wonderland, where practically nothing makes sense, madness is defined and confined, although there may not be physical barriers as such to impose it. The Cheshire Cat reveals that both the Hatter and the March Hare are mad. But the reason behind their madness would be difficult to guess for non-European readers. The proverbs "mad as a hatter" and "mad as a March hare" were both in general use in the Victorian age; additionally, for hatters the occupational hazard of mercury poisoning, and having tea parties in the non-restrictive asylums are stark reflections of the contemporary time. The rhetorical brilliance takes into account the literalness of words is what distinguishes the language of the mad from that of those who are not. Almost all zeugmas in the text are flawed in logic. The March Hare admonishes Alice for not saying what she means, and instead relying on rhetoric to express herself. Considering that language in its entirety, according to poststructural psychoanalytic understanding, is metaphorical or forms "a chain of signifiers" (Eagleton 146). Alice is not the only one guilty of not saying what she means, we all are, the author, readers, critics included.

It is interesting to note that although everything in Wonderland is a representation of some form of subversion and madness, the Mad Hatter is a rather faithful portrayal of a madman with his sudden nature, disjointed speech, rudeness and riddles. What is the significance then, of the lack of deviation of the deviant, in an already skewed 'reality'? It has been said earlier that Wonderland operates on unreason and utter nonsense, which reaches its height in the Chapter "Pig and Pepper". Any time in the text Alice wishes to display her knowledge from the rational world, her efforts go unheeded. The Duchess, her baby which later turns into a pig, and her cook with a violent tendency who puts too much pepper in her dishes, reside in a world which is an intentional mockery of the reality that Alice comes from. The child is not treated with tenderness but crazy affection, the mother is seemingly uncaring, the domestic help is rude, and Alice is left to exercise her own version of rightness.

The Queen of Hearts is an institution or authority in Wonderland, but in her, irrationality is at its pinnacle. This evident caricature of the real world proves that Carroll draws his inspiration from the existing political and social body of knowledge and places it in a miscellaneous structure

constituted only by the collective Id of the real world. The Queen orders random executions but probably never goes through with them. What is evident here is that a mad streak of irrationality is present in all individuals of the rational society who *other* the mad by confining them, because the latter perhaps have the ability to resist the codes of the superego and deviate from social and institutional norms. The distinction, therefore, is maintained through a rather disciplined form of social Darwinism with the goal of self-preservation of the majority who are willing to follow the decisions implemented by authoritative bodies.

The periodic appearances (and disappearances) of the Cheshire Cat in the text seem to signify bouts of madness or moments of great wisdom. It is an abstract entity that cannot be eliminated, as seen in the Queen's Croquet Ground. It represents an idea, here perhaps, the idea of resistance against the established institution, that is, the Queen. The idea of a Cheshire Cat that grins eventually leaves the readers with the (after)image of its grin that is tied to the signifier "the Cheshire Cat" of *Alice in Wonderland*.

In the fable-like nonsense text, one might almost expect time to take on a form. Although it remains abstract and formless, it is certainly attributed to a specific gender—a man— which is perhaps more than enough to make certain presuppositions. However, this claim is also made by a man, and a mad one at that which problematizes matters. The Hatter explains that for them, it is always 6 o'clock, that is teatime, ever since the Queen, enraged by the March Hare's song had condemned him to death, accusing him of "murdering time".

In the mirrored world of *Through the Looking Glass*, however, one must run to keep up with time. The spatial and temporal loci are intricately linked here. The inhabitants of this world all seem to possess absolute oracular knowledge of all events, so that they may execute them perfectly in the reverse order. Ignorance of foreknowledge is an impediment to basic survival in this world.

The Cheshire Cat's claim that had preceded Alice's decision to join the Hatter's tea party sums up the nature of the dreamland she tries her best to navigate around. It is a rather Victorian quality, the attempt of the curious mind to venture into alien territory and colonise it. Wonderland, however, resists Alice's attempts to grasp it within her cultivated learning (rather, reason). This is established in the end when the pack of cards rise up to attack her when she scoffs at their existence: "Who cares for you? You're nothing but a pack of cards!" (Carroll 117)

Wonderland is a universe parallel to Victorian England. It still has the hierarchical structures of monarchy, aristocracy, the masses and the deviants. Now, since Alice constantly changes, it is difficult for her to be associated with any one particular class or group. She is, in effect, a representation of the dynamic forces that form the founding structures of society and knowledge; that is, language, its associated signs and meanings, and codes that dominate what is to be deemed acceptable and what is not. Throughout the text, Alice is seen admonishing various characters, saying "it is rude" or "it is not polite" to do or say such and such things. Why is that? She tries her best to establish what she has learnt is 'right', but to no avail. Even towards the end, when she points out the absurdity of pronouncing the sentence before the trial, in response the Queen orders her death, a far more absurd command.

Alice's identity, therefore, is never complete in the text. It certainly has many possibilities, but essentially it seems that the world of unreason rejects her. Because the chaos that pervades Wonderland is not like an authoritative reason trying to impose itself on all (including those who resist it). With the medicalisation of madness came the need to discipline it, study it, and cure it, not treat it as a spectacle. But the entire foundation of Wonderland is based on the dominance of a Dionysian anarchy which surpasses, rather runs through even the monarchic authority there. The rigid creed to let the mad remain mad and practise their madness freely is a subversive act that is an impossibility in the real world. It is a celebration of the carnivalesque in its truest sense.

There are no political bodies represented in *Ha Ja Ba Ra La*. The novella, however, ends with an elaborate court scene, like in Wonderland. Before the narrator can protest against the impossible sentence pronounced upon Nyara—imprisonment for three months and execution by hanging for seven days—he is awoken rather violently by his uncle. The subversion and disruption of a legal procedure may be, for the young dreamers, an attempt to evade discipline like most children.

4.The creative faculty

The dream spaces in the texts under examination are a part of nonsense literary fiction and hence, it is not possible to restrict the interpretation of the objects of these dreams as being only visual elements with cryptic messages to be decoded. In any case, with the progression of psychoanalytic literary theory from Freud to Lacan, language, too, becomes one of the most integral pillars to make up the psyche, and what better realm for the Unconscious to articulate itself at its fullest than within the dream? Within the dream images are complementary to speech; they cannot entirely substitute speech. Every linguistic expression within the dreams of the two children has at least two aspects—1) they replicate the linguistic (apart from the cognitive, moral and ethical) codes of society they have begun to imbibe, and 2) through the other characters in their dreams besides themselves, they express with abandon what they cannot when awake. In the latter case, it so happens that even if they do express themselves 'freely' in reality, especially to grown-ups, they are likely to generate responses that are either not satisfactory to them, or they are made to submit to silence by the employment of other distractions or disciplinary actions. Thus, it is not surprising that even within her own unconscious, Alice is driven by linguistic commands ('EAT ME' or 'DRINK ME'). Her essential autonomy may be questioned here. Do those commands emerge from her own repressed desires, or are they representations of forms of discipline she has been subjected to in reality that she is unable to escape? This further poses the question of how far these young dreamers can 'escape' their reality through their dreams, and whether it is possible to do so at all. *Ha Ja Ba Ra La*'s narrator, too, is plagued by the nutritionist goat Byakaran Singh, as he had fallen asleep while studying '*byakaran*' or grammar (in that case, what is the primary foundation of his dream—the cat or the goat?).

The creation of nonsense texts (and the sub-texts readers may identify within them) is analogous to the process of "dream-work" (Eagleton 156). The weird and the unlikely are brought together, through image and speech—both submissive and subversive—in the form of chains of metaphoric and metonymic representations of reality. The dream-work is elaborated and made transparent in different degrees in *Alice in Wonderland* and *Ha Ja Ba Ra La*. Both of Alice's adventures are concerned with Alice's identity as the inhabitants of Wonderland and the Looking glass world

struggle to understand the concept of a little girl. This is where Dodgson's texts take on a much more active role that poses a different question altogether: the relationship between the creator (or the dreamer) and the products of their imagination (or the dreams). While Alice is able to identify and label the characters within her imaginative space, they put her under constant cross-examination to ascertain her identity and role amidst them.

The role of the narrator in *Ha Ja Ba Ra La* as a creator is more complex. It seems that although he is the original 'creator' of the initial characters by virtue of being the dreamer, they slowly become independent of his control and start creating narratives of their own into which the narrator is drawn in. It would perhaps be pertinent to consider at this point that much like the construction of a person's identity, social, cultural and institutional influences bleed through their subconscious and become active factors in the construction of the dream space as well. By the time the court session is held, the narrator is a bemused spectator witnessing the bizarre proceedings which, though not conditioned by the reverse order of things as in the Looking glass world, do take place following ample unreason in accordance with the prevalent order of corrupt procedures.

The creator of one of the most vital absentee characters in the novel is the handkerchief-turned-red cat. Gecho *dada*, the omnipresent, omniscient Godot-like character is only alluded to describe only his elusive nature. In fact, he may also be interpreted to be an ever-busy representative of the political body whose existence is affirmed only by virtue of his absence. Like everything else in the text, complex calculations (much like bureaucratic procedures) need to be performed to ascertain where he *probably* might be at the moment. Thus, readers, along with the narrators travel through multiple layers of imaginative recursions that occur in this text—the cat's reference to a hole in the trunk of a tree is the originating point for Udho, Kakeshwar and Budho,Hiji bij bij's reference to the goat prompts the appearance of Shri Byakaran Singh, and so on.

Nonsense literature is generally a satirical critique of contemporary socio-political circumstances. *Ha Ja Ba Ra La* is direct in its approach, capitalising on the unreasonable yet acceptable social and political practices. The text may also be interpreted, like the Alice stories, as a conflicting internal dialogue within the narrator's psyche, between the traditional bodies of knowledge he has to be acquainted with in order to obey the normative institutional ideals, and his imaginative faculty. It is mandatory for a child his age to study subjects such as grammar as it is considered a component of primary education. The natural course of the child's imagination is shaped by such fundamental 'disciplining' subjects which follow fixed rules and prescriptive linguistic formulae at the basic level. It seems that the narrator's psyche seeks to escape in his dreams when he sits down to study. His subconscious accommodates the rational aspects of his 'reality' and magnifies the elements the narrator considers unreasonable.

In the crucial chapter of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, "King's Cross", Albus Dumbledore answers the question about imagination and reality that sums up the existence of fiction, especially that of children's literature: "Of course it is happening inside your head...but why on earth should that mean that it is not real?" (Rowling 579). The elusive nature of the various metaphors used in the Alice stories, combined with the stark allegories that relate them to Victorian England and the Liddell sisters, makes them somewhat labyrinthine texts to grapple with. And therefore perhaps, the

attempt to restrict it within one or even multiple frameworks proves futile. *Ha Ja Ba Ra La*, on the other hand, ends with a direct message to the text's (young) readers, a plea almost to believe the dream the narrator's uncles, undoubtedly, seasoned, sensible men[7] disregard; because, indeed it is often a futile attempt on the children's part to explain to "grown-ups" the dynamic flow of their imagination.

Having a child take the centre stage in perceiving the world gravely alters the direction the text is going to take—in terms of narrative, semantics, linguistics, and abstract principles like morality. Hence, the most dynamic texts of nonsense literature also happen to fall within the category of children's literature, not only because a celebration of the impossible and the spectacular is relatable for children but in order to emphasise that young people, with reason yet to be completely undiluted by the various nuances of social norms, possess the best voice to question the standards propagated by society.

End notes

[1] Alice's urge to disobey warnings may be traced to the Biblical event of Eve's disobedience and the subsequent fall of mankind.

[2] It is, by definition of the Real, not possible to address or specifically identify exactly which objects or moments fall within the category of the same; neither can its absence be claimed.

[3] The Alice stories are perfect instances of texts that may be interpreted entirely by using Jaques Lacan's perspectives on the conception of identity through the Imaginary, the Symbolic and the Real orders. Needless to say, the first two would play a dominant role to explicate Alice's adventures in Wonderland and in the mirrored world. Although a general psychoanalytic framework has been used here, a Lacanian psychoanalytic study of the texts would be the subject of an independent paper in itself.

[4] Variability of identity according to spatial and temporal coordinates is the central subject matter in Diana Wynne Jones's fantasy *Howl's Moving Castle*. The eccentric wizard Howl is known as Wizard Jenkin in Porthaven, as Howl Pendragon in Kingsbury. To his family in Wales, he is Howell. The 1986 novel is conventionally considered fantasy fiction intended for young adults, but upon closer study, carries clear postmodern elements. In any case, it is seen that the plurality of identity is a recurrent idea that authors attempt to explain to young people, perhaps to prepare them for the several social roles they would have to take up as adults.

[5][Fox said, "Alright, what is your name?"

He said, "Now my name is Hiji bij bij."

Fox said, "Is there a now and then of names?"

Hiji bij bij said, "Don't you know even that? In the morning my name is Alunarkol and towards the evening it will be Ramtaru."] (Translation mine)

The link between nomenclature and identity is notable here. While it caters to the conventions of nonsense fiction, it also charts the temporal progression of identity in society. For example, a boy may be called by his name or some pet name as a child or during his youth; subsequently, he becomes a Father, perhaps an Uncle, then a Grandfather, and so on. This is another instance of the child's response to 'growing up' and becoming a part of the broader social network.

[6] "...we arrive at a sense of an 'I' by finding that 'I' reflected back to ourselves by some object or person in the world. This object is at once somehow part of ourselves—we identify with it—and yet not ourselves, something alien" (Eagleton 143)

[7] Antoine de Saint-Exupéry', in his French novella *The Little Prince*, describes a simple process of distinguishing between "grown-ups", those who, like himself, might have retained their imaginative faculty despite the burden of other conventional bodies of knowledge such as "geography, history, arithmetic and grammar" (10) from those who find conversations on "bridge, and golf, and politics, and neckties" (12) 'sensible'. Children's literature, therefore, performs a dual role. Besides being a mode of entertainment for young people, it is also an invitation to adults to reassess their own worldview that has been dulled by material responsibilities and desires.

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The Apollonian and the Dionysian Aspects in the Poetry of Andrew Marvell

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Abstract: In this article, the following metaphysical poems of Andrew Marvell- 'On a Drop of Dew', 'To His Coy Mistress', 'Young Love' and 'The Definition of Love' have been explored from the perspective of the Apollonian and Dionysian elements that had been theorized by Friedrich Nietzsche in his celebrated work, *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872). The central discourse which Nietzsche had propounded in his essay is the essential distinction whereby the Apollonian art alludes to the concept of 'principium individuationis' or the 'principle of individuation', which is limited, restrained and calm. On the contrary, the Dionysian art alludes to the collapse of 'principium individuationis' indicating the mysterious, passionate, untamed and tumultuous, where the demarcations between appearance and reality become indiscernible.

The paper commences with an elaborate description of the mythical figures of Apollo and Dionysus and how they represent two antonymous strains of art- the harmonious and the disharmonious; the serene and the chaotic. Then, the essential distinction between the Apollonian and the Dionysian concepts is established with diverse opinions of eminent critics and their interpretation of these elements.

Andrew Marvell's poems strikingly adhere to this bifurcation that has been theorized by Nietzsche who though in the context of tragedies, says that both these ethics should be organically amalgamated. After explaining the concepts of the Apollonian and the Dionysian, the paper traverses from the generic to the specific, critically analyzing the metaphysical poems of Marvell from the inter-textual perspective of Nietzsche's theory.

Keywords: Metaphysical Poems, Friedrich Nietzsche, Primordial Unity.

I

In Greek mythology, Apollo and Dionysus are sons of Zeus and are half-brothers. They are worshipped as gods of the creative arts. While Dionysus is the son of Zeus and Semele, Apollo is the son of Zeus and Leto.

Apollo is associated with the Sun and is worshipped as a god of light and prophecy. Apollo's poetry and music are elevated and orderly as he is depicted with the lyre, sculpted and painted as sober, elegant and eloquent and is never ecstatic. Apollo metaphorically manifests justice, prophecy,

mental and moral purity. He is famed for his shrines that are situated at Delphi and Delos where numerous oracles and prophecies occur.

Contrary to Apollo, Dionysus is associated with vegetation myths where his festival is celebrated in the spring season. As the myth propounds, when Semele, her mother was six months pregnant, Hera being envious of her husband's infidelity, provoked Zeus to appear before his mistress as the splendid God of Thunder and Lightning. Due to this spectacle, Semele was consumed by fire. Zeus could retrieve Dionysus from Semele's ashes and later completed the period of his gestation in his own thigh. Due to this mythical episode of his own salvation, Dionysus is attributed as the god of death and salvation.

The practitioners of the mystery cult of Dionysus used to perform a ceremonious display of grief upon his disappearance in winter but welcomed his return in spring with rousing joviality and carousal. The female devotees of Dionysus who are called "maenads" have been accounted to run, scream, dance and adorn themselves with grapes and vines. Therefore, Dionysus is considered to be a sensual god, in contrast to Apollo, who is associated with lofty calm. Dionysus thus becomes an embodiment of the deity of dance, intoxication, wine, sexual intercourse, ecstasy, death, resurrection, and frenzy. (Easton)

The concepts of the Apollonian and the Dionysian have been theorized by Friedrich Nietzsche in *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872) which explicates his perception and reflections on tragedy. However, the terms 'Apollonian' and 'Dionysian' had not been coined by Nietzsche since these terms had been in vogue before as witnessed in the poems of Friedrich Holderin, the historical accounts of Johann Joachim Winckelmann and in the zoological treatise, *The History of Serpents* (1608) by Edward Topsell ("Apollonian and Dionysian").

The Apollonian elements represent the realm of clear and luminous appearances, plastic images, dreams and traits that are typically Hellenic which in the modern interpretation allude to the abstract qualities of simplicity, harmony, tranquility and cheerfulness. On the contrary, the Dionysian elements represent hidden ecstatic and disorderly passion, intoxication, disturbing truths, music, exotic, erotic and chaotic realities. James I. Porter has distinguished these concepts, making elaborate description on the characteristics of the Apollonian and the Dionysian. Porter argues that the Apollonian art is "blissfully ignorant of the dimensions of reality beyond the immediately visible" since it is "rapt by objective images (appearances) that are as vivid and certain as marble". He further explains, "At its peak, the Dionysian nearly gains an upper hand and obliges the Apollonian to speak its own truths. As from behind a screen, another reality is revealed to the aesthetic spectator". Since the Apollonian element remains oblivious of the possible hidden depths, the functioning of the Dionysian element accentuates the meaning of the Apollonian by comparison and contrasts. It is the culmination in this process which produced a "rapid flowering of Greek tragedy" in the plays of Aeschylus and Sophocles. (Porter 72)

Nietzsche commences *The Birth of Tragedy* by claiming that the "continuous development of art is bound up with the Apollonian and Dionysian duality". According to Nietzsche, Apollo

represents a warm and familiar realm of phenomenal appearances and Dionysus represents the inaccessible reality of things. The principle of individuation manifested by Apollo and the metaphysical Will manifested by Dionysus exercise their contradictory urges and desires and finally retreat to a "primordial state of unity and quiescence" (Porter 78). Mary L. Coolidge distinguishes between the Apollonian art and the Dionysian art. The Apollonian art comprises "fair appearance" of fancy and image which has "measured limitation" and is free from "wilder emotions". The Dionysian art portrays enchantment, self-forgetfulness, ecstatic revelry, limitless and exuberant vitality that has the potential to rejoice primitive feelings (Coolidge 457).

Coolidge further observes that there are "two very different drives or sets of impulses at work in man, the one seeking expression that is orderly, beautiful, serene, the other finding its only possible outlet in the mysterious, the passionate, and the tumultuous", thereby giving a detailed analysis of the bifurcated concepts of the Apollonian and the Dionysian emotions that are receptive to a work of art. Unlike the Apollonian, the Dionysian ethics would feature the elements that are non-normative and non-theological. She substantiates her argument logically by saying that within the corpus of Christian theology, the romantic passions take the shape of vices to the Devil, whereas the romantic passions take the shape of heroic virtues to the saints struggling against the forces of evil.

The concepts of the Apollonian and Dionysian reconcile to a 'primordial state of unity' which represents a universally harmonious fusion where the individual characteristics are subsumed to formulate an organic whole (Porter 78). According to *The Birth of Tragedy*, the highest form of tragedy would be formulated from an organic synthesis of the Apollonian and the Dionysian elements. This is justified with Porter's observation who opines the similarity between these two characteristics by saying that the experience of the individual is visually perceptible that facilitates a loss of individuation. Nietzsche asserted that in the Dionysian element, the 'Will and Representation' suffuse to form "an individuated image, an Apollonian dream image" that "signifies the ultimate unity of the Apollonian and the Dionysian" (Sokel 502). This unification is termed as 'primordial unity' where the apparently antagonistic principles overcome their innate mutual hostile individuations in the single energy which therefore comprise a collective identity.

II

Andrew Marvell was a Puritan who was an heir to an ambivalent Christian view of Nature. His poems exhibit terseness in poetic style and diction. Consequently, he relies upon wit, metaphysical conceits, puns, innuendos, and double entendre to construct the meaning he intends to convey articulately. He exploits these tools to weave poems with contrived and complex meanings which are built through subtle images and expressions. Marvell's experimental style of composing the poems exhibits both the Apollonian and the Dionysian ethics. However, the latter are subtle, tend to be inarticulate and not easily identifiable since they are explored, established and elaborated by conceits, innuendos, puns and wit which form the basic characteristic of the whole corpus of metaphysical poetry.

Using the central symbol of the dew as an extended metaphysical conceit throughout the poem, 'On a Drop of Dew', the poet narrates how the dew drop allegorizes the human soul that

yearns to ascend to heaven. The poem explicates a compound prototypical amalgamation of the Apollonian and the Dionysian aspects in an organic manner.

From the Apollonian perspective, 'On a Drop of Dew' can be interpreted as a paradigm of two major Neoplatonic concepts, chiefly the emanation of the Soul and the mystic flight of the Soul. Plotinus' theory of emanation speaks about "the universal proceeding from the One" that is indicative of the stasis of the origin of life (Nikulin 334). Therefore, the soul's pilgrimage is the source from which it flowed, whereby restlessness and agility are its quintessential characteristics. The incapability of the soul to get united with the 'One' thus fulfils the Apollonian concept of possessing "measured limitation" (Coolidge 457). Since the soul cannot get united with the 'One' despite the exceeding yearning which it experiences, the instance highlights the limitation prevalent in the soul prohibiting it from the intended unison with the 'One'.

The poem begins with a reference to the "orient dew" that is released from the "bosom of the morn" and has settled in the lush and "blowing roses". The term "orient" indicates east which connotes spirituality and a search for God. The dew drop after being released from heaven and reaching the roses is however "careless of its mansion new", indicating the dew's restlessness and carefree nature because its place of inception was "Round" and is described as a "little globe" which is indicative of perfection and completeness. The dew drop is reluctant to coalesce with its new atmosphere as seen in these lines. The vivid description of the dew is in complete alliance with the Hellenistic manner in which there occurs a "fair appearance" of fancy and image. The description of the dew in the poem also comprises elements of peacefulness and tranquility.

The dew lying upon the red rose now turns the colour of the flower to purple and avoids touching it much but gazes back "upon the skies" and while doing so it glitters with a "mournful light", imaginably crying because of its separation from the "sphere". The dew now "rolls" in a "restless" manner and trembles in fear because it considers itself to be "unsecure", engulfed by the fright of becoming "impure". Marvell's words fulfil the Apollonian criterion of being free from "wilder emotions".

The dew continues to be posed by threats of the mortal world replete with degeneration, decrepitude, and decay until the "warm sun" takes "pity" upon its "pain" and acts as a medium of transpiration through which the dew can transcend the phenomenal world and reach its abode in the spiritual world after the "skies exhale it back again". The soul is being compared to that dewdrop and the ray of the pristine "fountain of eternal day" connotes the pure day when the soul yearns to be united with divinity. The soul expresses "greater heaven" in a "heaven less" atmosphere referring to the earth while being engrossed in "pure and circling thoughts". It is believed to wound like a "coy" figure when it swirls in every way possible, highlighting its briskness and agility. This expression evokes a sense of Apollonian serenity and tranquility.

The idea of the Soul's pilgrimage on a mystic flight and its ardent wish to be united with the heaven intensifies when Marvell's speaker says, "How loose and easie hence to go/ How girt and ready to ascend" (Marvell, lines 33-34). The soul, like the dew, is quite transient as despite being moved to a "point below", referring to the descent to the phenomenal world, both the soul and the

dew drop evaporate, leading them to bend "upwards". The concluding lines of the poem too paint a vivacious, appealing, and serene picture of the dew in essentially Apollonian terms exhibiting the "fair appearance" of fancy and image in expressions like "White, and intire"; "congeal'd and chill" and "Glories of th' Almighty Sun".

Despite being a Neoplatonic poem, Marvell's 'On a Drop of Dew' exhibits many Dionysian aspects like the presence of exotic, erotic and chaotic realities, exuberant vitality, primitive libidinal urges replete with mystery and passion, as well. The 'dew' finding its 'mansion new' can be interpreted as having a sexual charge that is related to orgasmic culmination within the female genitalia. The expressions "Round", "globe's extent" and "sphere" might connote a male organ of reproduction. The expression "scarce touching" thus refers to the male reproductive cells and their mobility and swiftness is suggested by the words "restless it rolls". The adjectives "unsecure", "trembling" and "impure" connote the fact of the fear of death that each cell of reproduction harbours in the race of proving to be the most potent one. "Warm sun" might metonymically refer to uterus which takes "pity" upon the cells and allows them to fertilise as it serves to be a life-engendering haven within the womb.

The terms "soul", "drop" and "ray" are interrelated since the male cells of reproduction contains "soul" or life in it and provides a "ray" of hope of regeneration through procreation. The phrases, "clear fountain of eternal day", "congealed and chill" and "white and entire" perhaps alludes to the description of the appearance of these reproductive cells. The term "humane flower" refers to the human baby born out of the suffusion of female and male cells and "Shuns the sweet leaves and blossoms green" connotes the elimination of less potent cells that are screened and die during the race. The coyness of the "figure wound" symbolically refers to the initial development of the baby in the womb whose closeted nature evokes the impression of shyness.

The shadowy regions of the female body which are navigated by the male cell, are 'Dark' but the prospect of procreation within the womb makes its unknown depths 'bright' with the possibility of a new being which will emerge from that encompassing darkness. The formation of the baby and its parturition is subtly suggested by "Moving but on a point below" and "upwards bend". The impressions "run" and "distill" refer to the swift agility of male cells and the process of distillation or purification which occurs in the womb that propels procreation. The expression contained in the last line of the poem, "Glories of th' Almighty Sun" refers to the act of reproduction sanctioned by God- "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it" (Genesis 1: 28) and "Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness" (Genesis 1: 26).

Though Marvell's 'On a Drop of Dew' explicates an essentially Apollonian ethics that are easily recognizable, the poem however justifies Coolidge's observation that the Dionysian ethics are not vividly identifiable since they tend to be ineloquent due to Marvell's experimental style of composition. However, upon considering the Dionysian perspective, the poem aptly reveals "another reality" of the detailed procedure of recreation. Consequently, the concept of "primordial unity" can be evinced when the dew is believed to retreat to the "Glories of th' Almighty Sun" where the sun becomes an individuated image for Heaven which further signifies the ultimate unity of the

Apollonian and the Dionysian since these elements would shed their individual identities to conglomerate into one unified entity.

In 'The Definition of Love', the central theme is the concept of love existing between two star-crossed lovers. The narrator's assertion in the second stanza is clearly indicative of a theological, orderly and beautiful impulse when he says:

> Magnanimous Despair alone
> Could show me so divine a thing,
> Where feeble Hope could ne'r have flown
> But vainly flapt its Tinsel wing
> (Marvell, lines 5-8)

The adjective "divine" adds a theological dimension to the poem thereby conferring purity upon the love that exists between the narrator and his beloved. Therefore, the amorous bond between the lovers is reminiscent of Hellenic traits replete with a tranquil feeling of serenity. Hope is being personified as "feeble" that is unable to meet the expectations of the narrator and therefore disappoints him. The references to "Hope" and "Tinsel wing" are indicative of the Apollonian quality of possessing a "fair appearance" of fancy and image which has "measured limitation" as theorized by Coolidge.

In the third stanza when the speaker explicates, "And yet I quickly might arrive/ Where my extended Soul is fixt" (Marvell, lines 9-10), he urges to quickly seek his destination where his Soul is attached. The speaker condescends upon Fate who always hinders the lovers' unison. The obstruction of Fate and her hostile envy is responsible for placing the lovers far apart from each other as the antipodes North and South Poles that can never meet and get united. The treatment of personified Fate is theological as Marvell employs the Greek allusion to the classical Sisters of Fate of Moirai-Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos, who in 'The Definition of Love' successfully ensure to extend their tyrannical authority over the couple, in order to be exempted from being demolished into ruin. Therefore, in the fifth stanza, the speaker dwells on the stringent and normative aspect ensured by Fate whose "Decrees of Steel" or unalterable edicts entrust a "fair appearance" of fancy and image which has "measured limitation", ensuring the impulses that are free from "wilder emotions".

'The Definition of Love' also exhibits subtle undertones of the Dionysian element. The lover speaker may have been eager to consummate his love who after being despaired, may have perhaps been finally granted for happy moment of togetherness. The tormented lover's eagerness to consummate his love, though is implicit and intrinsic, his amorous feeling however can be perceived when he indulges in a hyperbolic adulation towards the lady in order to seek her consent and says, "My Love is of a birth as rare/ As 'tis for object strange and high" (Marvell, lines 1-2). His subdued desire is also evinced when in the fourth stanza he despondently states that Fate is hostile towards them and never lets them unite physically. When the narrator says, "It was begotten by despair/ Upon Impossibility" (Marvell, lines 3-4), implying that he finally won over the lady's consent after several pursuits. Consequently, his affirmation in the third stanza, "And yet I quickly might arrive" implies the ecstatic revelry of the tormented lover. The clause "I quickly might arrive" therefore

indicates both the ardent libidinal desire of the speaker as well as the beloved granting her consent for sexual fulfillment of their love.

However, Fate plays her nefarious tricks in order to exercise her tyranny and encroaches between the lovers. This is manifested clearly when the speaker observes that Fate splits the lovers using "Iron wedges". The third stanza of the poem metaphorically indicates that despite the lover reaching his destination quickly, the beloved may have been a Puritanical one and would have thus herself rejected the fulfillment of sexual love when the former approaches her for gratifying their love. Instead of confronting the beloved directly, the intelligent and frustrated speaker accuses Fate to drive the "Iron wedges" and therefore split the lovers, just like carpenters split a log of wood. Therefore, this instance is reminiscent of the chaotic reality of dejection where the primitive feelings of the speaker remain insatiate. The Puritanical aspect of the beloved can be perceived vividly when Marvell's speaker in the fifth stanza says:

> And therefore her Decrees of Steel
> Us as the distant Poles have plac'd,
> (Though Loves whole World on us doth wheel)
> Not by themselves to be embrac'd.
> (Marvell, lines 17-20)

The words clearly indicate that physical consummation of love and unison between the lovers would remain elusive and an inaccessible reality whereby the over-scrupulous beloved denies the sexual advances of the speaker due to her "Decrees of Steel" or rigid reservations.

The speaker also highlights the essential limitless vitality despite facing the limitations offered by the viciousness of Fate. He says that notwithstanding the act of physical embracement of the lovers, they serve as the pivot around which the whole world revolves. This stanza further highlights the exuberant vitality possessed by the speaker whose expression accentuates his ecstatic tone on the contrary to the expectations of the readers who may have initially thought that the narrator would have indulged in a remorseful feeling of disappointment.

The Dionysian aspect of the poem gains momentum when the narrator in the sixth stanza divulges the circumstances under which the possibility of the union between the lovers can occur. He says, "Unless the giddy Heaven fall, / And Earth some new Convulsion tear;" (Marvell, lines 21-22). The rapturous details explicated highlight the chaotic, mysterious and tumultuous reality about the impossibility of the physical coalition of the couple. The word "Convulsion" has connotations of sexual harmony. Though the more prominent interpretation of 'Convulsion' here pertains to the natural phenomenon, the connotation of the muscular contraction too is not completely invalid. Perhaps, the narrator indicates the tearing of hymen due to sexual intercourse where the primitive feelings of the lovers culminate to a climactic situation. The chaotic and disorderly reality of the impossibility of the lovers' union is further manifested when the narrator utters, "And, us to joyn, the World should all / Be cramp'd into a Planisphere" which is also indicative of the inaccessible reality of sexual consummation (Marvell, lines 23-24).

Marvell exploits several images in 'The Definition of Love' hence the poem has layers of interpretation which derive diverse convoluted connotations. In the context of this poem, Michael Craze strongly comments, "All is imagery and personification, and the imagery is for the most part audaciously far-fetched. Conceit follows conceit." He adds, "The reader must either rise to the intellectual challenge or be content to enjoy the poem in terms of sensation and sound" (Craze 81). Marvell's intelligent speaker in the poem thus condemns the personified Fate whereas in reality he speaks about the Puritanical beloved.

'The Definition of Love' perfectly exhibits the concept of "primordial unity" when the narrator expounds a universal truth:

> As Lines so Loves oblique may well
> Themselves in every Angle greet:
> But ours so truly Paralel,
> Though infinite can never meet.
> (Marvell, lines 25-28)

Marvell's speaker compares his love with parallel lines and indulges in a consolatory feeling for a moment. He says that the scope for the confluence of the lovers occurs only when the existent feeling of love is illicit or illegitimate. Indulging in a hyperbolic adulation, the speaker says that the feeling of love between them is analogous to parallel lines that never meet even if they are stretched to infinity. The ultimate unity of the Apollonian and the Dionysian elements gains prominence in the last stanza when the speaker elucidates that the connection of the lovers is a "Conjunction of the Mind", suggestive of a spiritual conglomeration which glorifies and immortalizes their love where individual identities get subsumed to formulate an organic whole of spiritually awakened lovers which the green-eyed Fate cannot tyrannize.

In the poem 'Young Love', the matured speaker attempts to convince a young girl in her early adolescence to love him and provides reasons why she should reciprocate his love while she is young. Marvell commences the poem with the expression:

> Come, little infant, love me now,
> While thine unsuspected years
> Clear thine aged father's brow
> From cold jealousy and fears.
> (Marvell, lines 1-4)

The tone in which the speaker invites the youth for loving him, conveying his urge is quite candid and is elucidated in a simplistic and cheerful manner. However, the matured speaker is oblivious of the reality prevailing beyond the immediately visible, rapt by objective appearance. The speaker fails to grasp the emotional, mental and physiological problems which the teenage girl might encounter sooner or later after the act of reciprocating his love. This might prove to be detrimental to her as well

as her family's reputation, when the girl's family members would discover such an illicit liaison existing between them.

The matured speaker indulges in a witty justification on why the girl should fall in love with him instantaneously and not wait until she turns fifteen. Using the technique of 'blazon', the speaker ratiocinates in stanza three, basking in a hyperbolic adulation that is quintessential to the lover. He says:

> Common beauties stay fifteen;
> Such as yours should swifter move,
> Whose fair blossoms are too green
> Yet for lust, but not for love.
>
> (Marvell, lines 9-12)

The words of the speaker clearly manifest a "fair appearance" of fancy and image when he effectively argues about the extraordinary, beautiful aspects possessed by the adolescent girl. The lover speaker draws on the fanciful image of fifteen-year-old common beauties and also compares the adolescent beloved with fresh blossoming of flowers. The Apollonian perspective gains prominence here since the utterance of the speaker in this stanza is free from "wilder emotions" of carnal desires. According to the speaker, the girl should fall in love with him instantly since she is too young to experience sexual urges but is not too young to experience the feeling of love. In the sixth stanza, the Apollonian concept of the normative element is exhibited when the narrator explains about the unpredictability of the goddess of Fate whose whimsicality might either favour them to enjoy the happy moments of amour or might prove to be hostile towards them by intruding their love. In either case, the speaker and the damsel should love each other and experience the pleasure of love. Like the lover of 'The Definition of Love', in 'Young Love' too, the speaker evokes the theological and normative attribute of the goddess of Fate who is depicted as a capricious and fickle blind goddess.

The narrator then gives an apparently convincing argument in order to substantiate his viewpoint by saying that little boys are crowned in their cradles in order to evade foreign expedition and claimants to the throne, thereby preventing a war of succession. In order to dispel any future contestant for the girl's wedlock, the speaker embellishes the girl's forehead with a tiara of flowers and asks her to crown him with her love in reciprocation, implying them being the king and the queen in the realm of love. He says, "Now I crown thee with my love: / Crown me with thy love again, / And we both shall monarchs prove" (Marvell, lines 30-32). The last stanza therefore ends on a tranquil note leaving an essentially beautiful, serene and harmonious impression of romantic love upon the reader.

Even though the readers might transcend value judgements concerning the amour of the matured lover for the teenage girl, the non-normative and the disorderly attribute of the Dionysian element loom large over the mind of the readers. Though the speaker of the poem justifies sound arguments which may appear to be quite convincing for the youth however it verges on chaotic, inaccessible reality. The erotic and the exotic elements gain prominence when the speaker draws an analogy of the feeling of human love with the love prevalent in the bestial level in the fourth stanza, when he says:

Love as much the snowy lamb,
Or the wanton kid, does prize,
As the lusty bull or ram,
For his morning sacrifice.
(Marvell, lines 13-16)

The narrator observes that the lamb and the billy can readily perceive love as the bull and ram are full of lust. The primitive and passionate sexual urges of the speaker become vivid in this stanza when he says that even though the bull and ram would be sacrificed in the morning they might possess ample reserves of lust even at the hour of slaughter, which happens to be a disturbing truth.

Like the witty speaker of 'To His Coy Mistress', the matured man in 'Young Love' also dwells on the disturbing truths of transience and mortality, highlighting the possibility of the adolescent's premature death. In the fifth stanza, the speaker reminds the beloved about the eternal truth of mortality when he says, "Now then love me: time may take / Thee before thy time away:" (Marvell, lines 17-18). The intention of the speaker of 'Young Love' too is bent upon relishing the pleasure of lovemaking with the youth. His words thus reveal his exuberant sexual vitality and his ecstatic revelry upon being enamored by the bewitching beauty of the young girl. His enchantment and spell-bound mesmerism towards her can be perceived when he considers her to be uncommon and extraordinary as revealed in the third stanza when he segregates her from the other common beauties. The chaotic reality of the matured man extending his amour for the "little infant" however proves to be one-sided. This is manifested since the speaker through his diverse arguments propelled by the act of ratiocination, attempts to influence and mould the "little infant" according to his needs.

Though there are several hints and suggestions that the feeling nurtured by the speaker may be typically driven by his passionate randiness however, treatment of love remains elusive, unusual, obscure and mysterious for the readers. A few lurking concerns which remain unanswered are the unusual anomaly of the matured man's desire to woo and court an early adolescent, the reference to "unsuspecting years" of the girl in the second line of the poem and the mention of the innocent "snowy lamb" as well as the "lusty" ram and bull in the fourth stanza of the poem who possess reserves of love before the morning sacrifice. Love has been treated obscurely since there are certain reservations in the matured lover's mind which compels him to conceal his amorous feelings from the world as well as his intentions are not readily accepted by the readers. Moreover, the switch from innocent "snowy lamb" to "lusty bull or ram" heading towards their "morning sacrifice" instigates the readers to conjecture at the nature of love which the speaker anchors for the young girl.

The last stanza of 'Young Love' highlights the concept of "primordial state of unity and quiescence" when the contradictory urges of the eager passionate lover and the innocent, coy and innocuous girl amalgamate in an anticipatory note with the couple serving as the king and the queen in the realm of love (Porter 78). This stanza perfectly exhibits the individuated "Apollonian dream image", signifying the conglomeration of the Apollonian and the Dionysian elements when the

speaker wishes to exchange a crown of love with the young girl, indicative of the harmonious synchroneity between the matured man and the lass (Sokel 502).

In the monologue 'To His Coy Mistress', the speaker desperately approaches his mistress for consummating their love, in the carpe-diem motif but the mistress is portrayed in essentially Puritanical dimension who does not give in to the advances of the speaker. In this context, she can be portrayed as a firm believer in traditional notions of preserving chastity. She embodies the Apollonian element since she is free from the "wilder emotions" of lust. The reference to the slow growth of the "vegetable Love" of the man superseding the vast empires is one of the most renowned metaphysical conceits employed by Marvell in the poem. This conceit highlights the impulses which seek the orderly, beautiful, and serene, implying the depth which the speaker's love would gather slowly. In the last stanza, the speaker uses another conceit of the "Ball" which perhaps alludes to the canon ball that would "tear" the lovers' pleasures "with rough strife". This strong conceit blends the appearance of fancy and image since Marvell is able to compare the sexual and physical unison of the lovers using an apt comparison to relish the moment of vivacity with the power of the canon ball.

Marvell's speaker in 'To His Coy Mistress' personifies the Dionysian aspect since his utterances and manner of ratiocination reveals the disorderly, chaotic, and disturbing truths while he is desperate to enjoy moment of sexual fulfilment with his beloved. The conceit of the slow growth of his "vegetable Love" in this context defines the condition of the tormented, passionate lover who is overcome by uncontrollable erotic desires. Therefore, the conceit highlights the phallic imagery fully describing the speaker's plight. The term "marble Vault" in the second stanza is a reminder of the disturbing truths of transience and mortality. The witty speaker therefore does not indulge only in a hyperbolic adulation of the mistress, but he constantly reminds her and the readers about these disturbing truths, which qualify as a potent instrument of metaphysical shudder. This is further justified when he personifies the rapid-paced approaching Death as "Times winged Chariot" who hurries towards them.

The portrayal of the beloved too has subtle undertones of her desire to be involved in a love-making scene, painting a mysterious picture of her. The speaker may be considered to bask in his exceeding desire of passion and lust, but the mistress too does not dispel the speaker's incessant attempts which appear to be convincing to her. This is clearly manifested when the speaker observes, "And while thy willing Soul transpires/ At every pore with instant Fires" (Marvell, lines 35-36). The words indicate the woman's quick passion of lust. The speaker's comparison of the lovers to "am'rous birds of prey" highlights the erotic, chaotic and strong primitive feelings, revealing his sexual fantasy which seethes in exuberant sexual vitality to enjoy the moment of copulation. The degeneration of the humans to the bestial level is indicative of an enchanted and ecstatic revelry for which the couple has to immerse themselves in a euphoric situation of self-forgetfulness which unleashes the chaotic reality of a non-normative incident. The bestial level of enjoyment of worldly pleasures gets accentuated when the speaker refers to the tearing of "Pleasures with rough strife/ Through the Iron gates of Life" (Marvell, lines 43-44). The fierce limitless love-making episode is alluded to in these lines whereby the couple would "roll" all their strength together into "one Ball" which becomes reminiscent of the suffusion of the male and female gametes to finally form a zygote. In this context,

the tearing of the "Iron gates of Life" therefore metaphorically indicates the breaking of the hymeneal wall in order to ensure a consummation of their love.

'To His Coy Mistress' perfectly blends the Apollonian and Dionysian elements, addressing the principle of individuation, the concept of the metaphysical will that culminate to form a "primordial state of unity". This is clearly manifested when the individual identities of the speaker and the mistress, expressed by their contradictory urges conglomerate to a "primordial state of unity" as the lovers are anticipated to successfully "roll" their strength up into "one Ball" which underlines the diffusion of their identities into one organic whole after surviving agonizing troubles to get united.

III

According to Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*, an opposition occurs between the Greek gods, Apollo and Dionysus who manifest two antagonistic aesthetic principles that however complement each other in order to produce the highest form of tragedy which therefore exhibits a synthesis of the Apollonian and the Dionysian. By analogy, since these concepts coincide in Andrew Marvell's poems, precipitating the theory of 'primordial unity', therefore the poems too secure a sublime position reflecting the highest form of art as they exhibit an amalgamation of terseness, wit, innuendo, humour and sensuous as well as spiritual imagery as a product of his innovative style where the contradictory perspectives of the Apollonian and the Dionysian culminate to synthesize into an ultimate unity towards the end of the respective poems.

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