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Dalit Women Voices from the Other India In Truth Tales: a Study of Contemporary Stories by Women Writers of India

Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages in Partial Fulfillment of the Degree of Magister in Post Colonial Woman Literature Written in English

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DEDICATIONS

Gratefully, this work is dedicated to my affectionate parents Djillali BOUSSEBHA and Halima LAZAZI.

My dedications are also offered to my husband Dr. Mohammed FARHI, my son Abderrahmane, and my daughters; Dr. Fatima Zohra FARHI and Sarah Nour el Houda.

I won't be grateful if I don't dedicate my work to my grandmother Zohra ZEBLAH.

I also dedicate to my brothers and sister, and all their children.

To my friends; the years I spent with you in Djillali Liabes University will be a sweet memory to cherish.

I respectfully dedicate this work to the Dalit rights activists who spare their time and energy for regaining the dignity of Dalits in general and of the Dalit women in particular, and faithfully, to Dalit women who made the odds their strength and are now lighting the lives of numerous fellow brothers and sisters. When the circumstances are rough and the resources few, it is their courage, determination and perseverance that mark the beginning of a successful journey.

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ABSTRACT

Today, when globalisation seems to have taken over every form of art and culture everywhere in the world, there's still one form of writing that thrives on being different, driving home the idea that every country has different claims and different histories. Women are part of those marginalized who flourish away from the mainstream and express themselves by their artistic writing. Before independence, both male and female writers were following the master narratives of the west. After independence, more and more writers took refuge to the native traditions to seek creativity, agency and individual expression. This was also true for the female writers. They were talking about women emancipation but they lack agency and subjectivity. In this research work *Dalit Women Voices From the Other India in Truth Tales: A Study of Contemporary Stories by Women Writers of India*, addresses the gap in Indian feminism and Dalit activism as neither of them have addressed to the concerns of the Dalit and tribal woman who is at the locus of multiple victimhood. It also examines the theories of social problems and gender disparity as treated in Truth Tales. The authors' writings are not about an event but about a process- an unending process of exploitation. The power, in India, simply changed hands between the old colonial masters and the ruling elites today. Hence condition of women from the marginalized sections of the society needs to be closely analyzed as there is no real independence for them, and still, they stand at the lowest end of the hierarchy of women. Writings by such women often present a challenge to mainstream feminism because they resist homogenizing into the larger category of Third World women. Since they are triply marginalized by the burden of gender, caste and class, these women remain the "other" within the nation state. Truth Tales depicts how a Dalit woman derives strength from her body and her inner feminine core to raise her voice and fight against her marginality. Less of a feminist and more of a humanist, women need to be judged from the point of view of a human and not from the point of view of gender, race, caste and class.

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General Introduction

Today, when globalization seems to have taken over every form of art and culture everywhere in the world, there's still one form of writing that thrives on being different, driving home the idea that every country, and every local community within that country, has different claims and different histories. Women are part of those marginalized who flourish away from the mainstream and express themselves by their artistic writing.

Generally, literature is not developed in a vacuum. Literature is a simulacrum of reality and every work of art is a product of its social and cultural milieux. Consequently, every writer is a product of his/her socio-cultural and historical milieu. The Indian novel as a medium of literature is not an exception because the society remains the material that inspires writers. Every society has gone through one experience or the other; such experiences are what writers depict in their writings. The purpose of such depiction is either to appraise or criticize the trend. Mostly common in Literature is the depiction of the unpleasant realities of life. It is in this light that a discussion, of the Dalit Women Voices from the other India in the Study of Truth Tales: Contemporary stories by Women Writers of India published by Kali for Women, including seven short stories, as autobiographies, becomes relevant.

Indians have driven out the colonizers but not the one who are discriminating Dalits. For Dalit women, they are also coerced to be victimized in the patriarchy. Dalit women are demeaned and degraded and their body is a free terrain of colonization by men from other community. Dalit women are a deprived section and at the lowest level of economic and educational structures. They are poor, illiterate, sexually harassed, faces state, caste violence and exploited. Doubly, triply or multiply discriminated, Dalit women face a lot of struggles in daily bases otherwise just being overwhelmed with those surges of discrimination up to them. Without being struggling, Dalit women would be just left in despair.

Selecting Truth Tales for a reflection on Dalit women's writing in the perspective of a generational experience is also supported by the fact that all of Mahasweta Devi, Ila Mehta, Suniti Aphale, Mrinal Pande, Lakshmi Kannan, Ismat Chughatai, and Vishwapriya Lyengar are not only female writers but prominent writers of their generations as well. They are widely read and very popular in India and even abroad, some of them have been awarded several literary prizes, all of them have been translated into foreign languages,

including French and English. They also combine social activism and activist journalism with art. They are broadly understood as writers of political agency, although each reacts on that 'label' differently.

First, let one starts with reflecting briefly one's location and positionality which has been a point in focus in this research. One is trying modestly to analyze literary texts that stem from cultural context other than one's own, which always brings about both drawbacks and advantages. The obvious drawback may be an insufficient penetrating into the cultural context and missing some important nuances. The advantage, on the other hand, may be a less direct influence of the context (political, social, power-discursive, etc.) that is usually strange for the insider.

In that regard, one has been deeply inspired by what Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak said in an interview with Sneja Gunew (1986); Spivak emphasizes learning about other cultures through language, specific programs of study and reflecting one's position as an investigating person, which she calls 'homework'. Not doing that homework means, especially for a person coming from a 'dominant' culture speaking about a culture of a colonial experience, the risk of being shallow or simply wrong. (Gunew 1986: 3). However, the culture one comes from is not 'dominant'. To be specific, Algerian culture, a mixture of Muslim, Arab and North African culture which can easily be understood as postcolonial. Much of its experience originates from the reverse side of the power discourse (since Algeria was as a colony of France, one of the dominant powers of Europe, between 1830 and 1962), although it was not an experience of a classical colonialism as that of India.

Still, a sort of subaltern experience, be it political, social, gender or whatever forms it may have, can perhaps, and hopefully, make researchers from this part of the world more sensitive to other types of oppression and share this experience in a way, being, of course, aware of the easy or simplified parallels. However, because these 'Other' Dalits are not present for us, we are in a rather strange position as readers.

The autobiographies in Truth Tales have several aspects in common apart from their major themes. First of all, the stories focus the Dalit women as subaltern. Through the technique of telling the stories and introducing the issues all of the writers expand their narratives into larger socio-political as well as historical subjects. The writers introduce the

reader to a country of the Third World where Hinduism, blended with older religious practices in certain areas, is the dominant religion.

One's belonging to the Third World deepens one's reason of choosing the stories which come across as the post-colonial, gendered responses that serve to topsy-turvy such hierarchical structures, generating aesthetics of opposition in the process. One could, though not entirely, identify and relate to the culture in terms of being from the Third World. Moreover, and relating the facts to Devi's The Wet Nurse, according to one's parents, one personally lived the experience of being fed by two wet nurses; one of which was one's aunt the other one a neighbour, since one's mother felt ill for nearly two weeks after one's birth. Thus, such an experience is not strange in one's culture; moreover, one has a clear understanding of the Hadler children's feeling toward Jashoda, the breast giver, as a mother.

Likewise, the short stories in Truth Tales considered as creative works reflect several textual features that define a radical engagement with postcoloniality in creative literature. Postcolonial condition (of disadvantage) entails a special responsibility on the Indian writers. In its attempt to reinstate local culture and engender self-esteem to Indian nationalism, as Franz Fanon, the famous Algerian revolutionary suggests, postcolonial literature must evolve towards a phase of combat from the complicitous phase of assimilation.

Although this work mainly focuses on content, it is interesting to see that also some formal features of the literary works are quite similar. Six out of the seven stories are written in a third-person narrative perspective. This implies that the narrator is not a participant in the story or a part of the plot. Furthermore, this external narrator is omniscient, which indicates that the narrator knows everything about the inner thoughts and feelings of the various characters. This technique opens up to a variety of possibilities to express and discuss the themes, characters and plots. The reader gets to know how the characters think, how they consider the world around them, and how they see themselves.

The texts to be analyzed are of value because they still speak to us today. They are culturally specific; nonetheless, they are related to each other through the interlocking of identity layers, concerns, and writing objectives. This interrelatedness locates differences and inequalities not only between men and women but also among women, thereby stressing that the female characters analyzed in the chapters do not neatly align with a

fixed, coherent female image or experience. Another aspect of the texts is their potential to theorize a multitude of women's stories.

In short, the selected texts weave diverse female stories of oppression in order to inspire change in a postcolonial world that is not always hospitable to women. The texts create alternative, resistant female spaces that counter oppressive ones, thereby arguing that postcolonial women writers and critics share feminist concerns about decolonizing Indian women and envisioning a better world. Their texts and visions are relevant to our society and to the present time because they inspire change and mobilize affect. They do so through adopting different perspectives that refer to the diversity of postcolonial writing and of the female characters represented there, as will be argued in the next sections.

So many people have written on gender related issues, but one's choice of the short stories in Truth Tales is informed by the fact that the works focus on gender issues with special attention on moral decadence. These autobiographies are chosen because they are typical examples of the concept of Indian Feminism and Dalit Womanism in particular in postcolonial India.

One, as a researcher and a future teacher, feels concerned by the duty to facilitate the proliferation of the postcolonial women's writings, especially the Dalit women writings, and seeks to build a bridge connecting one's culture to the Indian one since it is acknowledged that twenty first century is the age of globalization, multiculturalism, telecommunication and digital technology. Particularly, the growing popularity of the Indian women literature prompts questions about opening doors to Indian women literature in particular to take specific part in the new curriculum of English Literature in our universities. Arguably, education today is considered as an important mechanism and effective means to develop creative and effective human resource (Gould 1993: 148; Rao 1996: 2).

The purpose of this research will discuss and compare the themes in Truth Tales: Contemporary stories by Women Writers of India edited by Kali for Women. The linking point of the selected texts revolves around the identity crisis presence in the different stages of female's lives – childhood, wifehood, motherhood, and widowhood. Although it is shared by the texts, the conjuncture is treated differently by the authors. One's main objective is to explore the themes, based on a thorough analysis of characters and plots. The themes of caste, gender and class will be seen through the lens of feminism in a

postcolonial setting, which is a prevailing theme in Truth Tales. Furthermore, one's focal point will be the question of discrimination, alienation and oppression, as these issues are related to all of the three themes.

This study will also consider the effects of social class and caste on Dalit women and Dalit community in particular and on the society at large and as well, and proffer solutions on how to redeem the image of women from the abyss of despair. It also examines that women have played great roles in the growth of the society, thus, they deserve to be acknowledged and appreciated by the male gender.

The scope of this project work is focused on Feminist aesthetic in Indian Dalit Literature with a close study of seven short stories as autobiographies written by various authors of Truth Tales written by and about Indian women.

In order to get one's line of thought straight vis-à-vis one's concern and preoccupation in this work, there is the need for one to state in clear terms, where one's work will begin and where it will end. Going by the title *Dalit Women Voices from the Other India in Truth Tales; A Study of Contemporary stories by Women Writers of India*, one will examine the issue of gender ideology, social crises on the one hand and the manifestation of feminism as raised and presented by the women writers of Truth Tales on the other hand. For this to be done, one will make an attempt to examine the words gender ideology, caste and class crises and later, one will embark on examination of the concept of feminism as well as its relevance to postcolonial literature.

For the problematic and the research questions, Dalit literature is experience – based. While dealing with the trends of Dalit literature, one will make a humble attempt to point out the core issues of its ideology. In this context it can be said that Dalit literature questioned the mainstream literary theories and upper caste ideologies and explored the neglected aspects of life.

However, in the context of the increasing significance of Dalit literature there is a great need to address major theoretical issues connected with it. The important questions which will be addressed in this paper are the following:

- To what extent does Dalit literature echo the voices of the marginalized?
- What are the similarities and differences between the efflorescence of Dalit literature in different languages?

- How far and in what measure the Dalit writings have transformed the full dimension of the cruelties and humiliation they had suffered into literacy expression and experience?
- And where do the present trends in Dalit writings lead to?

To answer the question, one's hypotheses suggest that the selected authors create several resistant/confining female spaces as a way of speaking and being. Besides, they represent diverse identities and histories and speak with different and even conflicting voices, all of which are acknowledged and heard. This signals a key aspect of the research, namely the need to approach the texts as artefacts constructed from various authorial positions, social contexts, and women's standpoints, thereby developing a rich cultural and literary archive of Dalit women's voices and stories.

Dealing with methodology, the methods used to analyze the stories in Truth Tales: Contemporary Women Writers of India are mainly close reading and comparative techniques. Close reading has been absolutely necessary when exploring these short stories, as all texts are contemporary. However, one has also been drawing on some secondary material like postcolonial and feminist theory, as these discourses have been useful in terms of expanding one's knowledge of the themes, definitions and reflections. One's major focus has been on M. Foucault, Frantz Fanon, Homi K. Bhabha, Simone de Beauvoir, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak who are central figures in this respect.

The methodology underpinning this work is also informed by feminist theory. One examines the views expressed at the time by the women writers themselves and accords their views the status of material evidence. Researching a wide range of feminist research methods Reinharz (1992) explains the relationship between feminism and methodology and challenges existing stereotypes. She concludes there is no one correct feminist method, but rather a variety of perspectives and argues that such a diversity of methods has been of great value to feminist scholarship. The doctorate thesis of Professor F. BEDJAOUI has also guided one and made things easier. Moreover, one regards one's work as being a continuity of one of the many branches of the Professor's thesis.

Concerning structure and organization, the present research is divided into four chapters. In chapter one entitled *Defining Concepts for the Purpose of Text and Context*; the main focus will be on postcolonial theories and the Indian social context and to explore how these issues are related to gender discrimination. The question qualities, like external

factors, historical and cultural aspects, will be discussed. Furthermore, distinctions concerning the East and West, male and female will prevail throughout. Since increased exposure to the Western culture may influence cultural change, post-colonial literature is to question diverse issues notably oral vs. written language, men's and women's roles, caste, class and culture.

In chapter two, labeled *Debating Gender and Literary Genre*, the gender issues, and the literary genre adopted by the authors will be in focus. There will be an attempt to show how the relationship between the East and the West are linked to femininity and masculinity and to what extent the issues of caste, class, and gender and their strong relation to cultural and religious aspects will be important in the development of the literary genre and the writing creativity of the Dalit women in particular.

A major preoccupation in recent Indian Woman's writing has been a delineation of inner life and subtle interpersonal relationships. In a culture where individualism and protest have often remained alien ideas and marital bliss and the woman's role at home is a central focus. It is interesting to see the emergence of not just an essential Indian women sensibility but an expression of cultural inequality.

The thematic chapter, chapter three, *Thematic Study of Truth Tales; from and for the Dalit Community*, will discuss the theme of oppression, and alienation that the various daily issues raised in the stories of Dalit women and the hierarchical distinctions between individuals and groups will be the focal point as well. Both the physical and psychological impacts of class and caste system will be discussed and compared. The chapter will also pay attention to what the various characters long for, what possibilities they have and how they struggle towards independence from male power.

Whereas, chapter four focuses on didactics, *Teaching Women Literature in Modern University ESL/EFL Class*. Since, as a researcher concerned by women literature and a future teacher, one of the responsibilities is to transmit the knowledge acquired during the process of learning and through the different modules. One of the most difficult tasks of teachers is to raise the students' interest in reading literature and by 'reading' we refer to that process which is generally called interpretation and which is meant to help readers decode all types of information hidden behind the aesthetic beauty of a work of art. Instead of being objective and fixed, knowledge becomes personal, social and cultural as it is constructed by the learner. Resultantly, it also gives autonomy to students and they take

the control of their learning and meaning making. Thus teaching literature with literary theory such as postcolonialism and feminism, in the case of one's study, can help to achieve the major objectives of twenty-first century education.

The vision is directed toward the study of various techniques of representation which deal with gender issues such as identity politics, memory, sexuality, colonization, and transformation. The aim of this suggestion is not only to create and remember women's narratives but also to make use of the socio–artistic, emotional, and revolutionary aspects of women's daily experiences depicted in the aforementioned representations/narratives. This helps stimulate the critical thinking and mobilize the awareness and affect about the complex issues and struggles facing women today, locally and globally. In this way, postcolonial women's writing tends to be not only oppositional and challenging but also critical and transformative.

This work will also try to open new doors for research in other postcolonial literatures, notably African, Maghrebian and Algerian. An account on the pedagogical dimension, focusing on the use of technology, may also open doors as it will be related to the new curriculum in English Literature and draw learners and teachers the stream of the twenty first century. Some suggestions will be shown for this purpose.

Today also such struggles of women continue, although times and circumstances have changed. We know that the nature of these struggles across nations are very similar, no matter how different are the socio-economic and political ambiences in each nation. They have had serious influences on the sociology of nations and the world. There is a need for better understanding with other countries through study, research, discussions, lectures, exchange of ideas and information with other organizations from outside engaged in similar activities.

The present research seeks to address such issues of inter/trans-national dimensions within and across disciplines with respect to gender. This is especially important as any cross national communications will be half complete under the rubric of a gender neutral or so called "objective" discourse. If economic boundaries continue to flout political ones and if peace is something which has to be continuously produced through trade, travel and mutual trust, then the question of gender has to be given a chance.

CHAPTER ONE: Defining Concepts for the Purpose of Text and Context

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1.2.1 Post-Colonial Theory

1.2.2 Origins of Postcolonial Theory

1.2.3 Understanding the Critical Part

1.2.4 Tricontinental Approach _Third World_

1.2.5 Postcolonial Discourse; Challenging the Binaries

1.3 Postcolonial Literature; For the Sake of Representation

1.4 Postcolonialism, and Postmodernism

1.5 Post-Colonialismand Feminism

1.6 The Sociolinguistic Situation

1.7 Globalization and Postcoloniality

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1.15 Dalit Literature as an Instrument of Repression

1.16 Secularism; a Transforming Agent in India

1.16.1 Secular India Engaging Modernity

1.17 Conclusion

Notes to Chapter One

1.1 Introduction

Concepts are seen as terms used by social scientist as analytical categories to study society and social behaviour. Walker and Avant (1995:40) state that the concept selected should be significant and important to the research problem; that is, it should further theoretical development in the area of interest. Through the use of concepts social scientists develop categories that act as aids in the scientific investigation of behaviour in the society. In this chapter there are several such concepts that provide the framework in the study. Thus, their characteristics and relations to other concepts are clarified.

This chapter deals with the definition and analysis of the major concepts related to one's topic of research. Beyond the definition, Concept Analysis also entails an assessment process that uses various techniques to explore the description of a concept from literature. It is a process of unfolding, exploring and understanding concepts for the purpose of concept development, delineation, comparison, clarification, identification, refinement and validation (Morse et al 1996:225).

Morse (1996:255) define concept analysis further as a process of inquiry that explores concepts for their level of development as revealed by their internal structure, use, representativeness and relations to other concepts. Concept analysis forms the basis for providing operational definitions of abstract concepts.

The aim of this chapter is not to draw definitive conclusions in the notions of postcolonial theory, women literature, and the diversity of the Indian social context, in addition to the constructs that maintain or uphold a system. Rather, it is to draw attention to how discourses are constituted in these areas. This chapter was also written with the intention of looking beyond absolute constructs and moving into an arena based on gender distinction where culture and identity are viewed through multiplicity and seeks to explore the avenues through which subjectivities are constructed, maintained and contested.

1.2 Postcolonialism

When one engaged in reading about forms of postcolonial theory, one finds oneself engaged in the notions of history, representation, identity and discourse, which are the main components when dealing with the term 'postcolonialism'. According to the literature emerging in the last decade, there are several theories as to what constitutes the basis of the term (Alexander & Mohanty, 1997; Jayaweera, 1999; Rajan & Mohanram, 1995; Rizvi & Walsh, 1998). Postcolonialism was traditionally seen as a period of history

initializing the ‘handing over’ of colonized states by what were classified as supreme powers to rulers born and bred in the colonies themselves (Ahamad, 1995).

Some literature in this area has focused mainly on analyzing these definitions in relation to historical and postcolonial markers at a general and theoretical level (Chakrabarty, 1992; Chow, 1994; Parry,1994). Postcolonialism is a contested term. Its uses range from references to the time period in the immediate aftermath of European colonialism, an intellectual inquiry into European colonialism and its legacies, to an examination of contemporary economic, political, military, and social practices that bring to the fore experiences of people who have been marginalized by global power relations.

In this vein, Gunew (1998) states that discussion of postcolonial theory requires knowledge of what the theory deals with and what kinds of critical and philosophical traditions it builds on, and should be critiqued in various ways.

1.2.1.1 Post-Colonial Theory

Along the various readings to enrich one’s work one considers that some strategies that combine multiple theories and concepts have larger effects and that the growing body of evidence suggests that interventions developed with an explicit theoretical foundation or foundations are more effective than those lacking a theoretical base.

While the concept of Post-colonialism (or often postcolonialism) deals with the effects of colonization on cultures and societies. The term, as originally used by historians after the Second World War such as ‘post-colonial state’, where ‘post-colonial’ had a clearly chronological meaning, is used for designating the post-independence period.

However, from the late 1970s the term has been used by literary critics to discuss the various cultural effects of colonization. Although the study of the controlling power of representation in the colonized societies had begun in the late 1970s with the text such as Said’s Orientalism, and led to the development of what came to be called ‘Colonialist Discourse Theory’ in the work of critics such as Spivak and Bhabha, the actual term ‘post-colonial’ was not employed in these early studies of the power of colonialist discourse to shape the form and opinion and policies in the colony and metropolis.

Post-colonial theory examines the problems which were posed by Europe’s colonialization of various regions of the world throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries

and the cultural, political, and social effects of such. Post-colonial theory examines the origins, effects, and both immediate and long-term political, cultural, and social results of Europe (as well as America's) colonialization of different cultures and regions of the world through the study of various literary texts which depict, sometimes celebrate, and critique and disparage the act of colonialization. Postcolonial theory attempts, furthermore, to recoup the lost histories of the colonialized subjects and reveal the ways in which colonialization empires have shifted and erased the identities of the colonialized subjects.

According to Young (2001:383-426), postcolonial theory as a "political discourse" emerged mainly from experiences of oppression and struggles for freedom after the "tricontinental" awakening in Africa, Asia and Latin America: the continents associated with poverty and conflict. The postcolonial theory remains problematic since the road from colonial to postcolonial never ends merely with "post" in a postcolonial concept. Instead, this vicious circle does not allow the world to be postcolonial – to be entirely free from colonialism. Hence, the philosophy underlying this theory is not one of declaring war on the past, but declaring war against the present realities which, implicitly or explicitly, are the consequences of that past.

For the past two decades, both the term and the field of postcolonialism have been subjected to thorough and extensive criticism from the perspectives of literary, political and religious studies. Theorists take different views about this field of study. From an optimistic point of view, postcolonial theory is a means of defiance by which any exploitative and discriminative practices, regardless of time and space, can be challenged. By contrast, the pessimistic view regards postcolonial theory as ambiguous, ironic and superstitious. These views create an interest which has to be dealt with before researchers can apply the theory in their fields.

Accordingly, Postcolonial theorists often stress the need to differentiate between the contrasting colonial experiences and literatures of each nation because of the range in historical time frame, level of colonization, and national history. Thus, in a dislocated culture, postcolonial theory does not operate against on the past, but challenges the consequences of the past that are exploitative. In so doing, postcolonial theory engages the psychology of both the colonised and the coloniser in the process of decolonisation. Postcolonial theory raises self-consciousness which revolutionalises the minds of the colonized and the colonizer to build a new society where liberty and equity prevail.

1.2.1.2 Origins of Postcolonial Theory

Thoughts, ideas and thinking need a basis of understanding to make sense to people. "The 'Original Thought Theory' states that: anything, anyone can ever say, has already been said by someone else" (Smith f995). This reliance on similarity provides the resources for an extremely natural explanation of the phenomena. Young (2001:74-112) draws three perspectives in which postcolonial theory emerges, namely humanitarian (moral), liberal (political) and economic. Whereas humanitarians and economists staged anti-colonial campaigns, politicians (liberals) supported colonization as a means of civilising the heathens by any and all means, including force.

Young (2001:75-82) notes that the first example of an anti-colonial campaign, as humanitarian, is attributed to Bishop Bartolomé Las Casas (1484-1566) of the Roman Catholic Church in Spain in 1542, this was 50 years after the expedition of Christopher Columbus in 1492 to the "new world". Young (2001:75) argues that "Las Casas's affirmation of the full humanity of the Indians and his denunciation of the 'social sins' of the conquistador rule, led Gustavo Guitierrez (1993) to identify him as the originator of twentieth century Latin American liberation theology."

The anticolonialism campaign of Bishop Las Casas was taken up by Simon Bolivar (1783-1830) at the beginning of the nineteenth century in South America, and was eventually joined by other European anti-colonialism activists and by the eighteenth century, his sermon had been "developed into a fully-fledged political discourse of theories" of equal rights that formed the basis for anti-colonial and anti-slavery movements in Europe.

The economic objection to colonialism has also been developed in the folds of history and literature. Smith's argument in his book, The Wealth of Nations (1776), is that colonies are not a product of good planning "wisdom and policy" of European colonialists, "but rather as effects of their [greed] 'disorder and injustice'" (Young 2001:82). Smith opposed slavery, not necessarily on moral grounds, but particularly because slaves were becoming expensive to maintain and therefore were less efficient.

Even if the primary motive of economic objections was to safeguard the economic interests of the industrialized nations, the development of these objections boosted and strengthened the anti-colonialism campaign. Karl Marx also contributed greatly to the economic objection, although he was not anti-colonialist per se, only when colonialism

touched or interfered with economics. Marx's anti-imperialist theory was developed around capitalism. As Young notes,

> Marx discussed colonial expansion in relation to the economic effects of capitalism, but with no "emancipatory programme" for colonial revolution. Marx's preoccupation with the anti-colonial struggle was seen not as much from the plight of the colonised, but from the economic consequences at home that interfered with the feudal system.
>
> (2001:101-112)

The liberal anti-slavery campaign developed. By the end of eighteenth century, the anti-colonialism, also a liberal anti-slavery, campaign had focused its expression in legal matters challenging imperial rules at home. Edmund Burke(1) addressed his critiques at the abuses of power and intolerance towards the norms, social practices and institutions of other cultures in British colonies. This received support from the French Revolution when the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity were theoretically extended by its proponents to all races (Young 2001:79-80).

Young (2001:85-87) comments that Bentham, who challenged European countries to liberate their colonies in 1793, supported Smith's argument that profits from colonies were at best illusory, given the expense of protecting them and the cost of the international conflict that they provoked. His commitment for colonial liberation was adopted by the Americans and the French as a "discourse of universal rights". Equality, liberty, the rights of man and national self-determination eventually enhanced "the justification and very foundation" of the anticolonialism struggle. It was later endorsed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, shortly after World War II.

Las Casas's preaching was later emphasized by liberation theology as the struggle for humanism in favour of the oppressed, the poor, the victims of gender and racial discrimination, the displaced and the homeless (Comblin 1981:51).

In Africa, even before the emergence of liberation theology and black theology, Simon Kimbangu (1889-1952) led the way against Belgian colonialism in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). African independent churches and other religious movements in southern Africa also played a great role in fighting against colonialism (Banana 1996:69-76). Liberation theology and Black theology (Maimela 1998:111-119) were characterized by the struggle against class domination, oppression and apartheid. The experiences of Latin Americans and African-Americans in their campaigns against social

injustice and racism, in which Martin Luther King and Malcolm X stood on the side of poor (Cone 1993:1-11), encouraged Africans to engage with and challenge apartheid and dictatorial regimes (Stinton 2004:105-136).

Therefore, it is difficult to keep pace with the rapidly changing world while at the same time keeping the definition (if any) of postcolonial theory intact since all social forms keep change in time and place. For this reason, it is equally difficult to formulate a single theory to deal with all forms of the winds of change: social, political, academic, military and economic – those that have created new histories in societies across the globe (Slemon 1995:100-105). Consequently, postcolonial theory becomes a constant and continuing struggle in the company of humanity (Bhabha 2001:39).

1.2.3 Understanding the Critical Part

The critical part of a definition of "postcolonial" concerns the prefix "post", which signifies two different meanings in one compound word. Theorists such as Ashcroft et al (1989:1-4), Slemon (1995:45-52), Young (1996:67-68; 2001:1-10) and Moore (2001:182-188) have tried to address this issue. Slemon (1995:100) admits that one of the most "vexed areas of debate within the field of postcolonial theory has to do with the term 'postcolonial' itself." According to Moore (2001:182), such a conception of "post(-)colonial" can be viewed as "naïve, inadequate, or utopian". By contrast, Slemon (1995:101) argues that colonialism comes into existence within the concept of imperialism, "a concept that is itself predicated within large theories of global politics and which changes radically according to the specifics of those larger theories."

Whereas, all of Mongia, Chakrabarty (1992), Mohanty (1991) and Spivak (1990) argue that the prefix 'post' in postcolonial connotes a change in power structure after the period of colonialism. The prefix also signifies the continuing aftermath conditions in discursive practices.

Postcolonial Criticism developed as a distinct category of criticism through the influence of such books as In Other Worlds (1987) by Gayatri Chakravorti Spivak, The Empire Writes Back (1989) by Bill Ashcroft Nation and Narration (1990) by Homi Bhabha and Culture and Imperialism (1993) by Edward Said. An important collection of relevant essays is Race, Writing and Difference (1986) edited by Henry Louis Gates.

The origin of postcolonial criticism can be traced to Franz Fanon's The Wretched of the Earth published in French in 1961. This text expressed what might be called "cultural resistance" to France's African empire. According to Fanon, a psychiatrist from Martinique, the first step for colonized people in finding a voice and an identity is to reclaim their own past. The first step towards the postcolonial perspective is to reclaim one's own past and the second one is to begin to erode the colonialist ideology by which that past had been devalued. Yet another major book, which can be said to inaugurate real postcolonial criticism, is Edward Said's Orientalism (1978).

The language itself is a second area of concern in postcolonial criticism. Stephen Dedalus in A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man expresses this uneasy attitude to the colonial language. Stephen tells himself that "the language in which we are speaking is his before it is mine…. My soul frets in the shadow of his language". European languages are considered as instruments of colonial power. Some writers turn away from the domination of these languages to embrace native languages (Ngugi wa Thiong'o); others nativise the dominant languages, seek a more hybrid nature for language identity (Derek Walcott, Salman Rushdie)

The emphasis on identity as doubled or hybrid is another characteristic of postcolonial criticism. Thus Chinua Achebe's first novel, Things Fall Apart (1958), was criticized by an early reviewer for affecting to identify with African villagers while his education, job and urban residence implied the values of "civilization," supposedly brought to Africa by Europeans.

1.2.4 Tricontinental Approach "Third World"

The term "Third World" (Young 2001:57-58) has been widely used to distinguish between the developed and the undeveloped or underdeveloped continents. As the term is itself colonial to some anti-colonial and post-colonial theorists, and therefore inappropriate for use, they prefer using the term tricontinental instead.

The Havana Conference of 1966(2) used the momentum of a growing consciousness against colonialism and imperialism. At this conference, Latin America joined forces with Africa and Asia to form a tricontinental bloc. The Havana Conference established a journal called Tricontinental and brought together the anti-colonial and postcolonial writings of people such as Frantz Fanon, Amircal Cabral and Ernesto Che Guevara. The Afro-Asia Latin American People's Solidarity Organization (OSPAAAL) (3)

made a substantial contribution, putting together the thoughts, strategies and writings that formed a political and cultural unity, and that subsequently provided "the theoretical and political foundations of postcolonialism" (Young 2001:213).

Latin America remained one of the places where foreign politics and religion effectively collaborated to oppress natives for about 500 years. However, political independence did not change the lives of indigenous people. The determination grew from self-consciousness to actions. Guevara's (1995:20) revolutionary motto was that "the world must not only be interpreted, it must be transformed".

The Indian legacy in liberation struggles is well known. Political writers and historians have argued that the Indian liberation was unique. Although liberation movements were individually constituted, the cause of freedom "remained unique in its operation as well as in the ideological range of its participants"(Young 2001:308-309; Guha 1997). Alongside the adoption of national self-rule and cultural consciousness, Gandhi developed the idea of "self-reliance", known as swadeshi, for the Indian economy. Gandhi's difficult task, however, was to maintain unity in India with its multiplicity of religious and political factions. In order to be more inclusive, his argument almost diverged from nationalism and he argued that "India was not so much a nation as a civilization, and to that degree, he was able to incorporate diversity and multiplicity."

African liberation took the form of an international movement and never operated in isolation. Political consciousness combined with the African culture and the pain of oppression responded to the revolutionary call as the only alternative to rescue Africa from the bondage of colonialism.

Figures in Francophone and Lusophone Africa who have lead anti-colonialism movements include Léopold Senghor of Senegal, Tovalou Houénou of Benin and Tiemoho Kouyaté from Mali, Amircal Cabral from Guinea-Bissau and Frantz Fanon from Martinique (Mazrui 1993:60).

Léopold Senghor and Aimé Césaire articulated through literature and poetry the principle of humanity to the oppressed and oppressors. By contrast, Frantz Fanon chose psychology as his means of investigating the impact of colonialism on colonized people. Influenced by the experience of the Algerian revolution and his studies in psychology in an industrialized country (France), Fanon, unlike many anti-colonial non-violent campaigners from Gandhi to Mandela, developed the idea of active intervention (violence) as a response

to colonialism. Presbey comments that Gandhi and Fanon both agreed on the liberation of the colonized (1996:283-283). But they differed in their approach which to a large extent was the result of their different contexts. However, Mandela took the middle way between the two approaches, "stressing the importance of nonviolence while eventually turning to limited use of violence". Fanon (1965:9, 13) states that "decolonization itself is always a violent phenomenon" and the origin of violence is colonization itself.

Having come to this conclusion, Cabral's definition of liberation is about ending imperial domination and building a cultural renaissance, a "new fabric" through which people will regain their identity and dignity.(1973:55)

1.2.5 Postcolonial Discourse; Challenging the Binaries

Postcolonial theory is built from the colonial experiences of people who engaged in liberation struggles around the world and particularly in the tricontinental countries. Colonial discourse constructed Asia, Africa, South America, Australia, and the Caribbean as objects and spaces to be evaluated, examined, and eventually governed for exploitation and the civilizational mission since the last decades of the eighteenth century. Although early constructions of India or the East may not approximate to the truly "colonial" sense, the representational modes deployed in European texts when talking about the East suggest a "proto-orientalist" tendency (Barbour 2003: 17), encoding a "colonizing imagination" (Singh 1996: 2). In the European "framing" of other spaces they emerge as "objects of colonial knowledge" (Raman 2001:3).

In the concluding remarks to his introduction to postcolonial theory, Young discusses the works of Said, Derrida and Foucault. This illustrates that colonialism not only operated as a form of military and economic domination, but also "simultaneously as a discourse of domination". This is the contribution that Said's Orientalism (1978) made to the literary world (Young 2001:383-384). Said (1978:3) asserts that it is not possible to understand how European culture was able to manage and produce the Orient in all spheres of life during colonial period without examining Orientalism as a "discourse".

By its very definition, post-colonialism or even postcolonialism without its hyphen points to a binarism that was sought to be obliterated in the narrative of the post-modern world. Beyond the description of the colonial worldview, postcolonial critics confront issues of decolonization via the deconstruction of colonial values and ideas in literature. In the rush to understand relations between these easily categorized groups

(colonizer/colonized; black/white; master/slave), postcolonial theory has too often oversimplified the levels of complicity and integration possible in the postcolonial world.

Expanding on the work of Said, Malini Johar Schueller complicates the term Orientalism in her study U.S. Orientalisms: Race Nation, and Gender in Literature 1790-1890 (1998). Schueller articulates some of the important differences between America and European colonial and imperial projects: that I am not arguing that all of these critics are generalizing but that the "big picture" of postcolonial theory often reduces the sum of all of this criticism to binary opposition. Also, in Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies (1998), Bill Ashcroft describe the meaning of binarism for postcolonial studies:

> "*The binary logic of imperialism is a development of that tendency of Western thought in general to see the world in terms of binary oppositions that establish a relation of dominance. A simple distinction between centre/margin; colonizer/colonized; metropolis/empire; civilized/primitive represents very efficiently the violent hierarchy on which imperialism is based and which it actively perpetuates"* (24).

Discursive practices derive from the constructs of language embodied in discourse. According to Gee, (1990, p. xv), discourse is 'a combination of 'saying-doing-thinking-feeling-valuing' something. This contention underlies the statement that language is not the expression of unique individuality. Rather, it constructs a member's subjectivity in ways that are socially specific. Derrida (1976) advocates that language is always open to challenge and redefinition with shifts in discursive context. de Saussure (1974) classifies language as a heterogeneous mass of speech facts that can only exist by virtue of a contract signed by the members of a community. Barthes (1986) advocates that if language is socially determined, then acts of representation are sociocultural.

This leads to the conclusion that the social constructs put in place within a society determine the way a language is spoken and the purpose it serves in communication. Foucault (1977) refers to communication as a systematically organised discourse of the community. Furthermore, Derrida (1976) has shown that language is a powerful discourse embedded in context and situation through what he classifies as differance. The meaning conveyed by language is produced via the dual strategies of difference and deferral.

1.3 Postcolonial Literature; For the Sake of Representation

To state exactly what is meant by 'post-colonial literature' has never been an easy task. It is because 'post-colonial' means different things to different people, and because of the range of writing under its umbrella. In another sense, post-colonial literature is writing

which reflects, in a great variety of ways, the effects of colonialism. This might include the enforced mass migrations of the slave trade, or the impact of colonialism upon indigenous societies. Post-colonial literature is a large topic.

Though post-colonial writing is clearly a response to empire, it should not, however, be defined purely against it. As 'post-' implies, it is also the literature written after the end of formal colonial rule. Internal conflict has been one legacy of colonialism, particularly in countries such as India or Nigeria where traditionally isolated or conflicting groups were brought within national boundaries created by colonialists. Christian (1995:457-460) contends that the language employed mystifies instead of clarifies the condition of the marginalised when the literature of the people of color, of black women, of Latin Americans, of Africans began to move to the 'centre'.

Post-colonial literature should be clearly distinguished from colonial literature. 'colonial writing' is writing produced by authors who belong to the colonising power (white writing about India, Africa or the Caribbean) and written before independence in the relevant region. Colonial writing also comes in many shapes and forms; it covers a large time frame, from the 16th to 20th centuries, and colonial writers are certainly not uniform in their depiction or opinion of empire.

The label 'post-colonial' demands a shift in focus, away from British literature (literature produced by British writers) to world literatures in English. Whereas it would have once seemed impossible to separate Britain and British attitudes from great writing in English, post-colonial literature questions the importance of both 'Britishness' and 'Englishness'. Perhaps the prominence of post-colonial literature reflects the changing nature of British society itself, which is now multi-cultural.

Furthermore, whereas English literature was once exported throughout the empire, through schools and colleges, now the writing from former colonies is being exported to Britain. In the words of the Indian novelist, Salman Rushdie: 'The Empire Writes back to the Centre.' This book attempts to deal with the implications of that shift.

Just as feminist concerns began to be expressed through creations of alternate canons of literature, the freedom movements across the globe in the middle of the twentieth century called for an urgent reinterpretation of the worldview, particularly as expressed in literary works. Some of the most famous theoreticians who were instrumental in calling for the representation of the 'voiceless', of course, included Frantz Fanon and

Edward Said. Both helped to unearth the hidden agendas of western literature and thought to explore the insidious ways in which eastern or oriental ways of life were projected through the lenses of western assumptions. The immediate result of these studies was the examinations of literatures of various different parts of the world, where each region is explored and wrested with issues which were particularly relevant to their societies. This took different forms in different regions across the globe.

While Africa primarily grappled with the issue of language use, particularly as examined by writers such as Nguigi Wa'Thiong and explored its own societies, as in the works of Wole Soyinka, the Indian subcontinent attempted to reach beyond its many languages to study its common past in Sanskrit as well as codify the growth of its own literature in English (Iyengar, 1945). In South America, writers such as Gabriel Màrquez (4) began to experiment with new forms of writing such as magical realism in order to be able to tell a unique story in a unique manner.

By focusing on literature that continues to be defined on the basis of its geographical origin, a 'West vs rest' form of dialectic, the postcolonial canon remains guilty of re-asserting the norm, albeit with different considerations. These binaries upon which the canon is based is increasingly disappearing, given the realities of globalization in which multiple migrations, access to travel and information and the movement of goods and ideas are so easily made. For instance, most of Indian writing in English is published outside the country by men and women who live in India (Kiran Desai, Amitav Ghosh). Many Caribbean writers such as V.S. Naipaul and Derek Walcott live in England while they speak of experiences in their homeland. Other novelists such as Michael Oondatjee and Rohington Mistry are now based in Canada although they speak of their native countries in much of their writings.

The most significant limitation of the post-colonial canon, however, is the fact that in the course of establishing a network of writers who could stand against the predominant narrative, a counter canon has rapidly emerged. Deepika Bahri (2003) aptly deals with the notion that emerging counter canon privileges specific texts which have successfully accessed the western market at the expense of numerous local narratives. Further, Brians (2006) and others have also studied the way in which the canon admits only those whose writings in some way are read as victimized and also seen to directly challenge the narrative of colonialism. For instance, R.K. Narayan (5), an Indian novelist who does not deal with the political ramifications of empire, is never part of this new

canon, neither is Nadime Gordimer, who, as a white writer may not be perceived as being sufficiently marginal.

Nirmala Menon (2010) suggests that a number of native texts, particularly from the Indian subcontinent have not received enough attention and that it was time for literature to move beyond the binaries of centre-periphery to examine local literatures. Diana Brydon and Helen Tiffin, in an attempt to arrive at an approach that would facilitate a more inclusive strategy of coping with varieties of texts, urge for a more comparative approach to post-colonial texts in order to wrest the common elements within these societies (Brydon, Tiffin, 1993). The counter canon, thus, appears to consist of those writers who are either exotic enough or, in some way, have more access to western publication facilities and are able to represent themselves as voices of the margins.

1.4 Postcolonialism, and Postmodernism

Postmodernism is the term used to refer to the non-realist and non-traditional literature and art of the post-Second World War period. Literature and art during this period took certain modernist characteristics to an extreme limit. The term is also used to refer to the general human condition in the "late capitalist" world of the post 1950s.

The term postmodernism was first used emphatically in the 1960s by critics such as Leslie Fielder and Ihab Hassan for the change of sensibility that occurred during the period. Arnold Toynbee became the first person to use the term outside the specific literary critical sense, when he announced in 1947 that we were entering the postmodern age. In the mid-1970s the term gained importance and comprised first architecture, and later dance, theatre, painting, film and music.

In his seminal work, Lyotard(6), The Post Modern Condition: A Report on Knowledge, first published in 1979 in French and later translated into English in 1984 he decided to use the word "postmodern" to describe the condition of knowledge in the most highly developed societies. He posited a simple definition for the idea of 'postmodern' as "incredulity to metanarratives." By metanarrative Lyotard means all those grand narratives or intellectual discourses which aim to offer a comprehensive frame in which to understand some aspect of modern life. The Enlightenment Belief in Progress, Darwinian Theory of Evolution, Marxism, Freudian Psychology, are all metanarratives.

Jean Baudrillard, the French sociologist was concerned with the transformation that occurred to signs in the passage of time. For him in the postmodern times it is the

“Map that precedes the territory” instead of territory preceding the map. It is a neutral practice, but unlike mimicry it does not have hidden motives and satirical aim. In postmodernism “text” is supplemented or displaced by “discourse.” A keynote feature of postmodernism is the fading of boundaries between genres.

A common ground between the postmodern theory and the postcolonial theory is their insistence on difference. The move off-center is indeed laudable; and it is highly appreciated by the once-marginalized voice. Modernity requires from the postcolonial societies to have a sense of optimism and to be active agents in the postmodern project.

Through acting as a vehicle for progression and inventing in different domains, the countries of the “periphery” will certainly find a sense of real identity in the postmodern era. Their works should not be characterized by opposition, rather by creativity and competition with the Western thought. Postcolonialists should try to benefit from the West in different fields; following, thus, the steps of some renowned scholars such as Ibn Rushd, Edward Said, Chinua Achebe, to name but a few. These multicultural, not to say postcolonial, theorists dealt with the West; they criticized and learned from its intellectual assumptions.

At this thematic and structural level, it is not just the relation to history that brings the two posts together; there is also a strong shared concern with the notion of marginalization, with the state of what it could be called ex-centricity. Salman Rushdie in Shame (1983) wrote :

> "History is natural selection. Mutant versions of the past struggle for dominance; new species of fact arise, and old, saurian truths go to the wall, blindfolded and smoking last cigarettes. Only the mutations of the strong survive. The weak, the anonymous, the defeated leave few marks. ... History loves only those who dominate her. It is a relationship of mutual enslavement." And who writes history ? Those who have the power to write it down, to shape it....”(98)

As a result, the old hierarchy of high and low culture completely dissolves in the postmodern discourse. For the sake of setting a difference from the established order, the once- marginalized is now, thanks to postmodern theory, heard and given full credence. According to Ihab Hassan, the postmodern text, verbal and non-verbal, invites performance and participation from everybody. The postmodern discourse, to be sure, is characterized by the multiplicity of voices and dissolution of all canons. A further characteristic of

postmodern theory is its rejection of basic spiritual and natural truths and in its emphasis on material and physical pleasure.

1.4 Post-Colonialism and Feminism

Feminist discourse shares many similarities with post-colonial theory and for this reason the two fields have long been thought of as associative, even complimentary. Firstly, both discourses are predominantly political and concern themselves with the struggle against oppression and injustice. Moreover, both reject the established hierarchical, patriarchal system, which is dominated by the hegemonic white male, and vehemently deny the supposed supremacy of masculine power and authority. Imperialism, like patriarchy, is after all a phallocentric, supremacist ideology that subjugates and dominates its subjects. The oppressed woman is in this sense akin to the colonized subject. Essentially, exponents of post-colonialism are reacting against colonialism in the political and economic sense while feminist theorists are rejecting colonialism of a sexual nature.

Both women and ‘natives' are minority groups who are unfairly defined by the intrusive ‘male gaze' , which is a characteristic of both patriarchy and colonialism. Both peoples have been reduced to stereotypes (virgin, whore, savage, heathen) and denied an identity by the system that entraps them. In recent times, post-colonial studies has reacted to this viewpoint and subsequently involved itself with the issue of gender, questioning to what extent this affects the lives of colonial subjects who also happen to be female, i.e. investigating whether gender or colonial oppression is the more significant political factor in women's lives.

The undeniable fact that colonial oppression affected men and women in different ways should be recognized, as females were often subjected to what has been called a ‘double colonization' , whereby they were discriminated against not only for their position as colonized people but also as women.

Women in many societies have been relegated to the position of "Other", marginalized and "colonized". Women, like post-colonial people, have had to construct a language of their own when their only available tools are those of the colonizer. Both groups are powerless, exploited and have a subordinate position in society. Feminist and post-colonial discourses both seek to reinstate the marginalized in the face of the dominant, and early feminist theory, like early nationalist post colonialism sought to invert the structures of domination.

Both discourses are oriented towards the future. Both are projects towards revolutionary disruption in society. There is another thing that these two theories have in common: Post colonialism and Feminism are opposed to Marxism. According to the Marxism, the ruling class constructs and circulates ideas which secure its power because they dominate the minds of the working class. The ruling class for Postcolonial and feminist theories is Europe and men respectively. However, the working class (= Post colonialism and Feminism) as a result of its material conditions of exploitation and oppression, will fight against the ruling class (=Europe and Men) by producing its own ideas.

1.6 The Sociolinguistic Situation in Postcolonial Context

Postcolonialism represents several facets of interaction that need to be studied in relation to realities within the postcolonial areas themselves. In their seminal book, Language Contact, Creolization and Genetic Linguistics, Thomason & Kaufman (1988: 4) rightly point out that "the history of a language is a function of the history of its speakers, and not an independent phenomenon that can be thoroughly studied without reference to the social context in which it is embedded". The history of colonialism involved the conquest of not only peoples but also of their languages. So the study of postcolonial societies should be accompanied by a study of the history of the languages and their speakers and how these languages moderate the daily lives of these speakers. This would mean factoring in the linguistic reality of these communities at any given period under study and factoring out what should have been if the languages were to be spoken as they are in their foreign native contexts.

Multilingualism is defined as the use of more than one language within the same community. To distinguish it from bilingualism, which is the use of two languages, multilingualism is taken to mean the use of at least three languages. This definition offers insights into the functions, statuses and attitudes towards languages in multilingual communities.

Such frameworks would have to take into account the complex type of multilingualism in these societies, which though not introduced by colonialism, was further complicated by it through the introduction of writing, formal education, and other social elements.Taking into account the local ecology in which these languages now co-exist (although one is of European origin), it is expected that results will be different in African

public domains. This is because, he insists, further references to the former colonial language should be made on basis that it is already a normal member of the linguistic community of languages and not a privileged code sitting on top of the others, as was the case during colonialism.

As a result, few studies evaluate these multilingual contexts from the viewpoint of the postcolonial subjects who, at the end of colonialism found themselves faced with foreign languages starkly different from their own native indigenous languages—and above all, written, taught in school, and important sources of livelihood. Complex relationships between oral indigenous languages and written foreign, official languages in these contexts have often been ignored, leading to various misrepresentations of multilingualism in postcolonial settings.

Two main domains in which colonialism altered multilingual patterns in postcolonial spaces are the introduction of educated varieties of excolonial languages and the emergence of mixed languages. These domains constitute complex, hybridised (and hybridising) patterns of lingual and cultural identity. There is the need to fill current disciplinary gaps, focusing on the identity fluctuations, hybridisation or alignments of people in postcolonial multilingual contexts as they go about their daily activities—explaining how they include and exclude others, how they interpret the mix of languages, and how this, after all, reflects or solidifies their sense of belonging together.

A participant at the 1965 conference on African literature made the following statement on the ownership of ex-colonial languages:

> *"The problem is to make the people of England realise, and in France for that matter, that their languages are no longer their sole property, because they have almost defeated themselves by their own success in propagating their languages"* .
>
> (Spencer 1971: 51)

As Pande, Schmid and Mforteh(7) show, English has been turned into the own language (ownership of English, e.g. Indian English) by speakers in India, Nigeria and Cameroon who use it for a range of differing purposes and who identify with it.

The multilingual equation therefore has changed given that speakers now identify with languages on a scale of situational priority. The context in which one finds himself determines what linguistic identity to show.

The propagation of these languages during colonialism was accompanied by the propagation of identities (though on a second class basis) constructed on them. The French mission civilisatrice, seen in such phrases as “nos ancetres les Gaulois” sung by African colonial subjects, refused them the right to an original African (linguistic) identity. It imposed on them a French identity referring to them as France Overseas citizens (France outre mer), which neither fitted their racial origin nor their linguistic heritage. At the end of colonialism, these overseas subjects had two choices: regain their original identity or incorporate features of it into a new hybrid identity that reflected their new existence as a new nation state. This latter identity became hybridized, having been built on local languages and cultures and the foreign language and culture introduced by colonialism.

Today, African countries are referred to, not in relation to their ethnic language heritages (e.g. Bantuphone or Swahiliphone) (8), but following their colonial linguistic heritages, (e.g. Anglophone, Francophone or Lusophone). Identifying with languages that represented (colonial) oppression and utilising them as neutral codes in the battle of indigenous languages, shows the versatility of postcolonial regions and emphasizes the need for community-based approaches to them. This would shed light on the special types of multilingualism existing in these contexts.

1.7 Globalization and Postcoloniality

Globalization and postcoloniality are perhaps two of the most important terms in social and cultural theory today. Since the 1980s, they have functioned as two of the dominant paradigms for explaining the transformation of political and economic relationships in a world that seems to become increasingly interdependent with the passing of time, with boundaries that once defined national cultures becoming fuzzy. The debates on globalization and postcolonialism are now so universal in character, and the literature on these topics is so extensive, that they are difficult to summarize or categorize. And to the extent that it dominates most debates on the nature of society and economy in the social sciences, globalization must be considered one of the constitutive elements of disciplines such as anthropology and sociology.

Similarly, it is difficult to conceive an area of literary studies, from medievalism to postmodernism that is not affected by debates on postcolonial theory and postcoloniality. While diverse writers on globalization and postcolonialism might have differing interpretations of the exact meaning of these categories, or their long-term effect

on the institutions of knowledge production in the modern world, they have at least two important things in common: they are concerned with explaining forms of social and cultural organization whose ambition is to transcend the boundaries of the nation-state.

For scholars trying to understand cultural and social production in the new millennium, globalization is attractive both because of its implicit universalism and its ability to reconcile local and global interests. In the first regard, as Jan Nederveen Pieterse (9) has noted, globalization brings the universal and the local together in a moment of conceptual renewal and "momentum of newness." In the second instance, what Arjun Appadurai (10) calls global mediascapes and ideoscapes have become the site of tension between "cultural homogenization and cultural heterogenization." In both cases, the language that enables conjuncture or disjuncture—hybridity and cultural transition, for example—comes directly from the grammar book of postcolonial theory.

From one perspective, globalization appears to be a sign of the coming into being of a cultural world order that questions the imperial cartography that has defined global relations since the early modern period. Globalization constitutes, in this regard, what Appadurai calls "a complex overlapping, disjunctive order that cannot any longer be understood in terms of existing center...". Therefore, Globalization and the reduction of boundaries have accelerated the rate at which communities are mixing. While monolingual communities now face the tip of the multilingual iceberg, the multilingual societies are getting more and more complicated, not by the arrival of new languages, but by the spread and consolidation of global languages of trade, as well as by the protection of local languages against the eroding effect of the global counterparts.

1.8 Linguistic Identity: Double Level of Interpretation

The pride in one's language might in some cases, as the literary approach of the Empire-writes-back shows, help to buy back the place of the language or its speakers from past social prejudices.

Of course, in heterogeneous communities, access to closed identity groups requires some sort of border-crossing, which in most cases is realised through the adoption of linguistic and cultural emblems of the group. This assures entry into it and acceptance by its members, hence guaranteeing socio-economic survival through the group. This is identity opportunism or fluctuation, and as Anchimbe (2006: 249) explains, It covers those strategies that make the use of one language more acceptable than the use of another; that

give a sense of attachment or status to a given language and its identity; that make one feel at home and linguistically secure, at least for the moment, in given contexts and situations; and that provide linguistically solid foundations for the exclusion of out-group and non-group members.

According to Bamgbose (1971: 6) speakers in postcolonial contexts follow several principles in their linguistic interaction: "Circumstance, convention and convenience will determine which language or variety of a language he chooses out of his total armoury of linguistic competencies". The survival of languages in postcolonial spaces depends on factors far removed from colonialism. Colonialism may have increased the number of languages and reshaped the hierarchy of importance of languages; it cannot be held an active agent in endangerment and death or extinction of languages in these areas. This notwithstanding, the spread of economically strong languages of Europe reduced the currency of other languages, which now are referred to as disadvantaged languages.

The survival of African and Indian (Asian) languages in the face of the "the invasion of the English language" has not been linked in any substantial way to the strength of civilisation or the "infusion of elements" but rather to the functional demarcation of the linguistic platform. English in these areas is an additive (Mazrui 1996) or additional language, with a range of duties that differs from that of indigenous African and Asian languages.

Extinction of languages, where it has occurred, is blamed on other factors like, the extinction of original population, migration to urban centres of youths, death through (un)natural disasters of old people—living dictionaries of the languages, and stigma (especially among educated elite) that indigenous languages are primitive codes (Anchimbe 2005b). English would have endangered these languages if it were a replacive language.

Multilingualism and the construction of multiple identities were already a part of African and Asian spaces. Ages of intertribal and interethnic marriages, migrations, the slave trade, the search for fertile agricultural lands, the quest for peaceful neighbours, etc. had brought peoples of various races together even before the colonial empire arrived. This indicates that although colonialism introduced written languages and a predominantly different (foreign) culture, the bedrock for their acceptance and integration into the local spaces had been laid long before. The extended kinship relations of these spaces meant that

new additions to the extended family (of kins, languages, cultures, races, etc.) would be accepted without remorse and hence why English and other colonial languages are treated as additive rather than replacive entities. For instance, the history of pre-colonial multilingualism in Africa, as Makoni & Meinhof (2003: 1) explain, was marked by

> *"[p]re-colonial migration, trade down the centuries, the radical displacements of slavery, […]". It was later complicated by the "arbitrary territorial changes under colonialism, industrial exploitation of natural resources, and the unprecedented rapidity of migration and urbanisation in the postcolonial period"*.

Migration and urbanisation brought with them the need for identity construction. It is relevant to note here that people seek their identities only when faced with other groups. Homogenous populations generally do not question, reassess or restate their identities. This happens generally in heterogeneous communities where groups of people need to build boundaries around themselves to secure what they consider makes them peculiar. Language, thus, is a marker of identity. Inasmuch as it shuts nongroup members out, it could be interpreted within heterogeneous violent and competing communities as stigma for excluding its speakers.

In racist America in the late 19th century (1875), Edward King, for example, wrote: *"The lowland negro of South Carolina has a barbaric dialect. The English words seem to tumble all at once from his mouth, and to get sadly mixed whenever he endeavors to speak"* (quoted in Joyner 1984: 196). Because of this double level of interpretation of identity (i.e. as a tool of inclusion and exclusion or disdain), it is proposed here that linguistic identity has to be studied within given societies since it is also constructed differently in different regions.

This entails a reassessment of some of these theories or frameworks (e.g. bilingualism, multilingualism, language planning, identity construction, second language acquisition, interference) with direct regard to these areas—without necessarily comparing them to the West. The need for community-specific approaches to these regions is motivated by discrepancies between European models and postcolonial spaces, such as: written vs. oral cultures and languages; group-based vs. individual-based priorities; individual vs. group power relations; age vs. rightful claim to territory; home-used vs. official plus home-used languages; and multi-identity and multilingualism vs. mono-identity and monolingualism.

1.9 The Diverse Society of India

The “discovery” of India and the vast, wealthy, and varied Mughal Empire, required investigation rather than imagination, even though its wealth had been the subject of European fantasy for a long time before the first voyages. It required careful documentation of resources, people, wealth, landscape, and geography. Though there was no real colonization of India in this period, the English traveler was performing a narrative ordering and colonization of India, “capturing” India in the form of detailed descriptions and histories. This means, even though governance and domination was not their stated aim, the early English travelers were seeking to understand and know India. India was an object that had to be studied—and studying it required particular methods of analysis and “inquiry.”

Indian society is multifaceted to an extent perhaps unknown in any other of the world's great civilizations. Virtually no generalization made about Indian society is valid for all of the nation's multifarious groups. Comprehending the complexities of Indian social structure has challenged scholars and other observers over many decades.

When looking at India as a whole, defining classes is a difficult task, rife with vague standards. According to various estimates, the upper classes include about one percent of the population, or some ten million people, encompassing wealthy property owners, industrialists, former royalty, top executives, and prosperous entrepreneurs. Slightly below them are the many millions of the upper middle class. At the other end of the scale is approximately half of India’s population, including low-level workers of many kinds, as well as hundreds of millions of extremely poor people, who endure grossly inadequate housing and education and many other economic hardships. But the big development in India is the rapid expansion of a prosperous middle class increasingly dictating the country’s political and economic direction. This group includes prosperous farmers, white-collar(11) workers, business and professional people, military personnel, and a multitude of others, all enjoying decent homes, reasonable incomes, and educated and healthy children. Most own televisions and telephones, and many possess cars and computers. Large numbers have close ties with prosperous relatives living abroad.

The ranks of the growing middle class are increasingly evident in cities, where educational and employment opportunities benefit them. For them, as for all in the city, linkages are affirmed through neighborhood solidarity, voluntary associations, and festival

celebrations. Cities, of course, are the great hubs of commerce, education, science, politics, and government, upon which the functioning of the nation depends.

Most Indians reside in villages, where caste and class affiliations overlap. Large landholders are overwhelmingly upper caste, and small scale farmer middle caste, while landless laborers typically belong to the lowest-ranking castes. These groups tend to form a three-level class system of stratification in rural areas, and members of the groups are drawing together within regions across caste lines in order to enhance their economic and political power.

About three-fourths of India’s people live in villages, where India’s most basic business—agriculture takes place. Indian villages are often quite complex and are not isolated socially or economically. Most villages include a multiplicity of economic, caste, kinship, occupational, and even religious groups linked vertically within each settlement. Residents typically range from priests and cultivators to merchants, artisans, and laborers. In daily life and at colorful festivals and rituals, members of various groups provide essential goods and services for one another. Further, dissent and competitiveness seem to have increased in many parts of rural India as a result of the expanding involvement of villagers with the wider world via travel, work, education, and television, and increased pressure on land and resources as village populations grow.

In India English and Hindi are the two most commonly spoken languages. English, the language of the region's former colonial masters, is widely spoken by India's intellectual elite. An attempt in 1965 to make Hindi, India's most widely spoken language, the official national language failed when people from the south violently demonstrated against the new law. As a compromise, the Indian government promised to retain English as a national language. Besides Hindi and English--the now designated national languages, a number of other languages have status as official languages of the different states in India.

Gender distinctions are pronounced. The behavior expected of men and women can be quite different, especially in villages, but also in urban centers. Prescribed ideal gender roles help shape the actions of both sexes as they move between family and the world outside the home. Therefore, given the vast diversity of Indian society, any observation must be tempered with the understanding that it cannot apply to all Indians. Still, certain themes or underlying principles of life are widely accepted in India.

1.9.1 Hinduism; the Soul of India

Some have called Hinduism the "soul of India." Archaeologists have determined that highly developed civilizations flourished throughout the Indus Valley (12) between 4000 and 1500 B.C.E. Within the ruins of the ancient Indus Valley civilization, archaeologists have discovered many artifacts of modern Hinduism that were not found in any Vedic (13) civilizations. Based on this evidence, it seems that when the people from central Asia settled in India, their Vedic beliefs were mingled with the beliefs of indigenous Indians. Thus, it is likely that the Indus Valley tradition and Vedic gods and beliefs combined to form the foundations of Hinduism.

The word Religion comes from the Latin word ‘religio’ which consists of two words, viz., re (back) and ligare (to bring or bind). That which binds the soul back to God is religion. Religion shows the way for the attainment of God-realization. Hinduism is the religion of the Hindus, a name given to the Universal Religion which hailed supreme in India. It is thought to be the oldest of all living religions. This is not founded by any prophet. Buddhism, Christianity and Islam owe their origin to the prophets. Their dates are fixed. But no such date can be fixed for Hinduism. Hinduism is not born of the teachings of particular prophets. It is not based on a set of dogmas preached by a particular set of teachers.

Hinduism is also known by the names Sanatana-Dharma and Vaidika-Dharma. Sanatana-Dharma means eternal religion. Hinduism is as old as the world itself. Hinduism is considered as the mother of all religions. Hindu scriptures are the oldest in the world; Sanatana-Dharma is so called, not only because it is believed eternal, but also because it is thought to be protected by God and because it can make their believers eternal. Vaidika-Dharma means the religion of the Vedas. The Vedas are the foundational scriptures of Hinduism. The ancient Rishis and sages of India have expressed their intuitive spiritual experiences (Aparoksha-Anubhuti) in the Upanishads. These experiences are thought to be direct and infallible. Hinduism stands apart from all other religions for several reasons. It has no single founder, no single book of theological law and truth, no central religious organization, and no definition of absolute beginning and end. Hinduism is a code of life — a collection of attitudes, personal experiences, and spiritual practices. It is, in essence, defined by behaviours rather than beliefs.

Accordingly, one Hindu devotee might worship well-known gods such as Vishnu and Shiva in a large, public temple, whereas another might worship less common deities in a private shrine within his or her own home. Yet they would both be considered good Hindus, provided that they honored each other's choices. This tolerance makes Hinduism difficult to understand and define, but it does explain why so many gods, goddesses, and rituals are described in the numerous Hindu scriptures.

1.9.2 Myths; Mapping History and Keeping Beliefs

Before defining the term "mythology" one needs to define the meaning of the word "myth". According to Oxford Dictionary, the word itself comes from the Greek "mythos" which originally meant "speech" or "discourse" but which later came to mean "fable" or "legend". In this document the word "myth" will be defined as a story of forgotten or vague origin, basically religious or supernatural in nature, which seeks to explain or rationalize one or more aspects of the world or a society.

Furthermore, in the context of this document, all myths are, at some stage, actually believed to be true by the peoples of the societies that used or originated the myth. The definition is thus clearly distinguished from the use of the word myth in everyday speech which basically refers to any unreal or imaginary story.

Some myths describe some actual historical event, but have been embellished and refashioned by various story tellers over time so that it is impossible to tell what really happened. In this last aspect myths have a legendary and historical nature. For one’s purposes the word mythology has two related meanings. It refers to a collection of myths that together form a mythological system.

Mythology is then an organized collection of stories (i.e., "myths") by which people explain their beliefs and their history. Beneath the story-lines, myths usually confront major issues such as the origin of humanity and its traditions, and the way in which the natural and human worlds function on a profound, universal level. Other myths, however, seem merely to narrate the deities' daily activities -- their love affairs and pleasures, their jealousies and rages, their ambitions and schemes, and their quarrels and battles. Indian Mythology is one of the richest elements of Indian Culture, which enriches it further and makes it a unique one in the world. Through generations, different stories in Indian mythology have been passed from generation to generation either by word of mouth or through carefully stored scriptures.

These stories, which form the backbone of Indian mythology, area great medium for people especially parents to inculcate interest in Indian Culture in the younger generation and to impart values of Indian culture to them. The interesting aspect of the stories in Indian Mythology, is that they are usually meant to convey subtle facts, rules and maxims to guide the Indians' daily lives.

Naturally story-telling is the best medium for conveying even powerful messages. The stories in Indian mythology vary from subtle maxim conveying tales of Panchatantra and Jataka-tales (14) to subtle life paradigm defining stories from the Bhagvad-Gita, Ramayana and Mahabharata (15). A key point to note is that there are usually multiple stories explaining the same fact or occasion or festival. So each version is right in its own merit. This is a result of the natural evolution the stories might have gone in the process of being handed over from generation to generation for centuries. The subjects of myths reflect the universal concerns of mankind throughout history: birth, death, the afterlife, the origin of man and the world, good and evil and the nature of man himself. A myth taps into a universal cultural narrative, the collective wisdom of man.

Broadly speaking myths and mythologies seek to rationalize and explain the universe and all that is in it. Thus, they have a similar function to science, theology, religion and history in modern societies. Systems of myths have provided a cosmological and historical framework for societies that have lacked the more sophisticated knowledge provided by modern science and historical investigation. The stories and myths associated with women tell us a lot more about the preoccupations of Greek men than they do the about the opinions and imaginations of Greek women. Women were the givers of life in an age when the processes of conception, fertility and childbirth were still deeply mysterious and little understood. As a result, many of the mythical stories about women manifest signs of a deep male anxiety about feminine power.

1.9.3 The Caste System

Caste is a rigid social system in which a social hierarchy is maintained generation after generation and allows little mobility out of the position to which a person is born. The term is often applied to the hierarchical hereditary divisions established among the Hindus on the Indian subcontinent. The word caste was first used by 16th-century Portuguese traders; it is derived from the Portuguese casta, denoting family strain, breed, or race. The

Sanskrit word is jati. The Sanskrit term Varna denotes a group of jati, or the system of caste.

The traditional caste system of India developed more than 3000 years ago when Aryan-speaking nomadic groups migrated from the north to India about 1500BC. The Aryan priests, according to the ancient sacred literature of India, divided society into a basic caste system. Sometime between 200BC and AD100, the Manu Smriti, or Law of Manu, was written. In it the Aryan priest-lawmakers created the four great hereditary divisions of society still surviving today. According to one long-held theory about the origins of South Asia's caste system, Aryans from central Asia invaded South Asia and introduced the caste system as a means of controlling the local populations. The Aryans defined key roles in society, and then assigned groups of people to them. Individuals were born into, worked, married, ate, and died within those groups. There was no social mobility.

If a Hindu person were asked to explain the nature of the caste system, he or she might start to tell the story of Brahma — the four-headed, four-handed deity worshipped as the creator of the universe. According to an ancient text known as the Rigveda, the division of Indian society was based on Brahma's divine manifestation of four groups. Priests and teachers were cast from his mouth, rulers and warriors from his arms, merchants and traders from his thighs, and workers and peasants from his feet.

Others might present a biological explanation of India's stratification system, based on the notion that all living things inherit a particular set of qualities. Some inherit wisdom and intelligence, some get pride and passion, and others are stuck with less fortunate traits. Proponents of this theory attribute all aspects of one's lifestyle — social status, occupation, and even diet — to these inherent qualities and thus use them to explain the foundation of the caste system.

The caste system is the most characteristic feature of the traditional Indian society. It emerged many centuries ago from Hinduism; today, it prevails among all religious groups in South Asia. Muslims, Christians, and even Sikhs (who, in the first place, justified their secession from Hinduism by rejecting the caste system 400 years ago) have their own hierarchical ranking that defines which group is positioned ‘higher’ or ‘lower’ in society (Bronger 1996: 110). The caste system can be compared to the estate system of medieval Europe with its nobles, clerics, and peasants, or the bourgeoisie with its guilds, but the

Indian caste system is much stricter. Thus, it has been impossible to determine the exact origins of the caste system in South Asia. In the midst of the debate, only one thing is certain: South Asia's caste system has been around for several millennia and, until the second half of the 20th century, has changed very little during all of that time.

In ancient India, the ranked occupational groups were referred to as varnas, and the hereditary occupational groups within the varnas were known as jatis. Many have immediately assumed that ascribed social groups and rules prohibiting intermarriage among the groups signify the existence of a racist culture. But Varnas are not thought to be racial groups but rather classes. Four Varna categories were constructed to organize society along economic and occupational lines. Spiritual leaders and teachers were called Brahmins. Warriors and nobility were called Kshatriyas. Merchants and producers were called Vaishyas. Laborers were called Sudras. Ascending order of Responsibilities and Status

In the above mentioned fourfold classification of duties according to Dharmashastras, there was an ascending order of responsibilities. While Brahmin was given the highest position he was also entrusted with maximum responsibilities. The entire task of preserving Dharma was mainly the responsibility of the Brahmin. The next social status in Varna hierarchy was given to the Kshatriya as he had the responsibility of defending the nation in times of war and administering law and order in the society. He provided social justice with the help of the Brahmin scholar. The Vaishyas and Sudras had lesser responsibilities and therefore were assigned lower status. The Sudra gradually came to be so much looked down upon that he could not touch a Brahmin. The Sudra could not be initiated into the Vedic study and the only ashram out of the four that he was entitled to, was that of the householder.

In addition to the varnas, there is a fifth class in Hinduism. It encompassed outcasts who, literally, did all the dirty work. They were referred to as "untouchables" because they carried out the miserable tasks associated with disease and pollution, such as cleaning up after funerals, dealing with sewage, and working with animal skin. Brahmins were considered the embodiment of purity, and untouchables the embodiment of pollution.

Physical contact between the two groups was absolutely prohibited. Brahmins adhered so strongly to this rule that they felt obliged to bathe if even the shadow of an untouchable fell across them. The four original castes have been subdivided again and

again over many centuries, until today it is impossible to tell their exact number. Estimates range from 2000 to 3000 different castes established by Brahmanical law throughout India, each region having its own distinct groups defined by craft and fixed by custom.

In recent years considerable strides toward eradicating unjust social and economic aspects of the caste system as practiced in India have been made through educational and reform movements. The great leader in this endeavor was Mohandas Gandhi. The drafted constitution of India, which was published a few days after the assassination of Gandhi in January 1948, stated in a special clause under the heading "human rights": "Untouchability is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden." Despite official attempts to improve the status of members of the lowest caste, many of whom now prefer to be referred to as Dalits (Hindi for "oppressed people"), discrimination and exploitation is still common.

1.10 Globalization Narrowing the Gaps of Casteization

In this modern day and age, many countries are moving towards globalization. With the current changes and improvement in technology, people easily share and exchange goods, products and services for economic and social development. A lot of opportunities are given to many people so they can take part in globalization and uplift their living. However, there are still countries that seem to lag behind because of their internal problems in regards to inequalities.

The Indian Constitution under Articles 15 (4), 16 (4), 46 and 340 refers to “socially and educationally backward classes” or “backward class citizens”. In the country in which peoples’ politics is stuck on the unfortunate duality of caste and class, the State as well as the judiciary coolly interpreted class in the Constitution to be synonymous with “caste”. In order that an entire caste is considered socially, economically and educationally backward, it needed to pass the test of homogeneity and to formulate a policy for such castes there should have been objective definability. However, there was none.

It was the Nehruvian project of modernization (16), mapped mainly by the land reform and green revolution in rural India that brought about this change in castes structure as never before. The displacement of the upper caste landlords from villages, enrichment of a section of the shudra caste cluster (traditional farming castes) through this programme, the consolidation of the populous shudra castes into political constituency, has changed the entire socio-political fabric of the country. Paradoxically, these castes, labeled as backward, have full social control of the entire rural and semi-urban India and dominate

politics and significant part of the economy of the country. The ritual caste differences between them are no more sharp because of these developments. This caste dynamics reduces caste to the divided between Dalits and non-Dalits.

The caste system has been a huge, never-ending problem for the Indians. their inability to eradicate caste completely even after the rise of what Indians call prophets, like Mahatma Phule and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, reveals their own blindness to one of the most dehumanizing systems the world has ever known. There is no point in saying that the Indian Constitution has abolished untouchability because it is known that the law has not taken care of the root system that gave rise to the practice of untouchability. There is no point in saying that there are reservations for the Dalits, because if there were no reservation system, they would have effectively consigned all Dalits to their inhuman existence.

So today, Dalit are forced to appeal to the overseas multinational companies to voluntarily provide for affirmative action just as they have provided such benefits for African-Americans and other minorities in their own nations. In order to make their case, the Dalit writers have no option but to describe their lives as they know it in modern India. Caste is alive and well on planet India, cities, villages and towns.

Politics has not delivered on the issues of Dalit discrimination or the abolishment of caste, Dr. Ambedkar's main dream and desire. What is required is the development of a national and global social conscience on the issue of caste discrimination and its atrocities. This new social conscience is both national and global because the caste problem is not only limited to India. It is present in all South Asian nations and in other parts of the world where Indians congregate. The rise of the extremist Hindutva movement also has meant the rise of the caste-based structure in society. The world Hindu can say that the life of the cow is more precious than the life of the Dalit.

Nevertheless, this is going to be a long, difficult struggle and campaign. Those who have profited economically and politically from the caste system will not yield easily. Globalization has resulted in the world for the privileged minority, but now let globalization also result in India for the majority Dalits and other oppressed castes/tribes.

Due to globalization with the development of transportation and communication, nations are competing against other nations of the entire world. In a modern society, where time and resource are truly valued, the Caste system has held back India by wasting some

incredibly talented individuals of lower caste. Also, as the people of India were informed about how neighboring countries and countries across the continents give rights to all citizens, frictions appeared. The world is one, and how a nation deals with its immigrants is really important for the future of the nation. The Caste system cannot make India a stable country anymore, since there is no spot in the system for immigrants to India.

The caste system is making a big gap between the rich and the poor. The extent of and trends in inequalities and poverty in India affects global trends because of its large population size and majority of its population fall under the poverty line. Due to globalization with the mass improvement of transportation and communication, nations are competing against other nations of the entire world. In a modern society, where time and resource are truly valued, the Caste system has held back India by wasting some incredibly talented individuals of lower caste.

1.10.1 Debating Untouchability in India

According to Ahuja (2004: 35), 'caste' is a "closed-rank social group" which is ascribed and does not permit social mobility to its members. The affiliation to a caste has profound consequences for the individual - it determines status, 'purity', occupation, marriage, food habits, religious rituals, and relations with other castes. The 'lower' the caste, the lesser are the privileges and the greater are the disadvantages for an individual.

There are two diverging hierarchy systems referred to as 'caste system'. Beneath the four castes are the Dalits who are doomed to do 'impure' jobs like cleaning latrines and tanning or disposing of waste. They are also called untouchables. However, this relatively simple model is not too relevant in everyday life, as it is the much more complex jati system which determines the acknowledged status of a person in the caste society (Bronger 1996: 109).

Despite some regional differences concerning the 'purity' of certain activities, there is a high level of correspondence all over South Asia. For instance, being a priest is universally regarded as an exceptionally pure occupation, while cleaning dry latrines (manual scavenging) or sweeping floors is considered exceptionally 'impure'; only the 'lowest' of the different castes (scavenger castes) can perform these tasks. Leather-making is still judged as a very 'impure' occupation, but it is slightly less 'impure' than sweeping floors. In opposition, trading would be ranked somewhere in the middle. Many South Asians now believe that not only are these activities 'dirty,' but also the people from the

respective castes exercising them. Not only leather making as such would ‘pollute’ someone from a ‘high’ caste, but also the physical touch of a leather-maker itself. Hence, the leather-maker is untouchable for the ‘higher’ caste member.

This untouchability is not just confined to direct physical touch itself. Many South Asians believe that if an untouchable uses the same well, it ‘pollutes’ the common water source; if he enters a temple it ‘defiles’ the idols; and if he is invited to the home he could ‘contaminate’ the whole household. In extreme cases, even the glimpse or shadow of an untouchable is considered as ‘polluting’; therefore they are sometimes prevented from entering entire ‘high-caste’ neighbourhoods. On this basis, millions of ‘Untouchables’ are severely discriminated against even today they are insulted, beaten up, raped and murdered in the name of caste.

With this in mind, it is needless to say that a marriage to someone from an untouchable caste is totally out of question for someone ranked ‘higher’ in the traditional caste system. In general, most South Asians only marry endogamously, as inter-caste marriages result in a social relegation of the party ranked ‘higher’. In fact, many scientists see in inter-caste marriages the historic origin of untouchability. Ambedkar, in contrast, concentrated on the social system. He not only exposed the Hindu myths and its social order but also studied other alternatives. He had mobilsed community against the caste system and brahmanical domination. He decided that this vast energy has to be channeled for positive purposes.

Ambedkarite perspective of the world is supporting all the social movements for change, for rights of individual, for questioning every religious text and defending the ideals of freedom and justice. The best tribute would be to bring together all the forces of social justice together with the ideals of Dr Ambedkar. The ideals of Ambedkar are valid for all those who fight for human rights and social justice world over. Ambedkarism is an idea for all democratic strugglers who are fighting for social justice and support equality, liberty and fraternity. The aim is to let the tribes of Ambedkarites grow and work for social change and human rights. To let it reach on every corner of the country to develop so that people do not pick up guns to counter any hegemony but arguments to demolish historical myths of the ruling elite. It is the right moment in history and they have to accept the challenge and use Ambedkar’s thought to develop counter culture of democracy, freedom and humanism.

Studies by historians like Romila Thapar (1979), A.R. Desai (1984), and M.N. Srinivas(1964) have shown that Indian society was never static. The main traditional avenues of social mobility were sanskritization, migration and religious conversion. Lower castes or tribes could move upward in the caste hierarchy through acquisition of wealth and political power. They could consequently claim higher caste status along with sanskritising their way of life, by emulating the life style and customs of higher caste.

Occupational association of caste has marginally changed in rural areas. Brahmins may still work as priest but they have also taken to agriculture. Landowning dominant castes belonging to both upper and middle rung of caste hierarchy generally work as supervisory farmers. Other non-landowning lower castes, including small and marginal peasants, work as wage labourers in agriculture. Artisan castes like carpenters and iron-smith continue with their traditional occupations. However, migration to urban areas has enabled individuals from all castes including untouchables to enter into non-traditional occupations in industry, trade and commerce and services.

Inter-caste marriage is almost non-existent in rural areas. Restrictions on food, drink and smoking continue but to a lesser degree because of the presence of tea stalls in villages patronized by nearly all the castes. The hold of untouchability has lessened and distinction in dress has become more a matter of income than caste affiliation. People migrate to cities and bring back money which has changed the traditional social structure. Caste has acquired an additional role in the operation of interests groups and association in politics since the introduction of representative parliament politics.

Thus, we find that caste has undergone adaptive changes. The core characteristics of the castes, which have affected the social relations, are still operative. However, the status quo of the intermediate and low castes has changed due to their acquiring political and economic power. The hegemony of the high castes has given way to differentiation of these statuses in some regions of India so that high castes do not necessarily occupy a higher class position or power.

1.10.2 Rethinking Dalit Identity Crisis

Identity should serve the purpose of distinguishing one either as an individual or some aggregate of individuals from their counterparts in larger society. But when all kinds of people, seemingly located in dissimilar camps, claim the same identity, it naturally entails identity crisis. In what way, a politician who follows parochial politics identifying

people on the basis of their language, religion, region and even sub castes is to be identified with a landless Dalit struggling to eke out his living. Ambedkarite identity fails to serve as a viable identity to various interest groups as listed above.

While the Ambedkarite identity is flaunted by Dalits within themselves, many of them tend to hide it at the interface with others. Since Ambedkarite identity is synonymous with low caste untouchable, many upwardly mobile Dalits have changed their caste indicative surnames and adopted upper caste names. They would not have Ambedkar's picture in drawing room, lest others should identify their caste. Many of them even go further to adopt the language, behavior, culture, and to observe traditions and rituals merely to hide their caste identity. To a large extent these behaviours of the upwardly mobile Dalits also have created disconnect between them and the common Dalit masses. This behavior rather refutes the representational logic that has been the core of the Dalit movement. The higher educated Dalit individuals, occupying positions of power or prosperity do not necessarily represent concerns of the dalit community. This was sadly experienced by even Babasaheb Ambedkar in his own life time.

Dalit culture has been far superior, but is undermined by the hegemonizing Brahman culture. It is not to deny the intrigues of Brahmins in enslaving Dalits, but merely repeating this blame externalizing rhetoric tends to blind Dalits to look inwards for some of their weaknesses too, which is more important from the viewpoint of their emancipation. For instance if someone played cheat with them, the complementary truth will be that they were cheated, which could have been possible only because of some weakness in them. This perspective only can help them charting better future for themselves. While introspecting what has gone wrong, the Ambedkarites would be better off searching their own self for internal deficiencies before locating external forces responsible for them. In most cases, the internal deficiency comes handy for the enemy to make inroads and aggravate it to his advantage.

The basic problem is associated with the characteristics of caste itself. Caste, as one sociologist puts it, has no precise definition, it is not an "objective" measurable category like occupation, age, sex, education, etc. and rather may be seen as "subjective" category related with identity and perceptions which change from time to time. They have missed out one dangerous logistical characteristic of caste which is that caste is essentially hierarchy seeking and hence infinitely divisive.

The other point they deal with is political objections that caste enumeration would promote 'divide and rule' and argue that 'subaltern claims for power sharing' is always taken as divisive by the elites. The basic point here is whether castes today are viable units to plan sharing of power, privileges or any resources equitably. Today the Indian political reality may be simply read in terms of rulers as a class whereas the ruled are castes, whether by volition or by engineering, as in colonial times.

1.11 Defining Feminism: Awareness and Action

According to the Oxford Dictionary (1933:63) "Feminism is the opinions and principle of the advocates of the extended recognition of the achievements which were not accepted in the community due to the gender differences and this actually call for the agreement for women in the area of fighting for their own recognition in the society, coupled with equal right achievement".

Feminism is a form of criticism which is the struggle for women emancipation. "Feminism is a worldwide ideological and political movement directed at changing the existing power relations between men and women in a patriarchal society" (Joseph, 2003:161). From this definition would observe that feminism is concerned with societal inequality with emphasis led on the female gender to develop her self-esteem. It is directed against patriarchal hegemony which according to Joseph (2003) 'give men confidence that the female as an inferior being'. Feminism is an awareness of patrician control, exploitation and oppression of material and ideological levels of women's labour, fertility, and sexuality in the family, at the place of work, and in society in general and conscious action by women and men to transfer the present situation.

Points in the definitions are many. Firstly feminism is an attitude of mind which needs to be developed or cultivated among men and women is society. Hence first aim is to spread awareness that make people sensitive about women's issues and their oppressions. Secondly it calls for action. It is not enough to know or to be aware of social reality. People activists, should work to change the social condition. Hence, the conscious efforts to change the present situation and the participation in the action plan are required. Thirdly the definition talks about women's oppression and exploitation that take place within a family, at work place, in political field etc.

The definition further states that this oppression takes place because of patriarchal control. Hence awareness of women takes place at both material and ideological levels.

Women experience discriminal unequal treatment in terms of food, nutrition, health care, education, employment, main-stream decision-making activities. Furthermore, it is not enough to recognize those conditions or to be aware of them; if not accompanied by action. The action can take place anywhere. Feminism, from the definition, is seen as the belief that women too are human beings and need to be treated the same way men are treated, and not only be restricted to traditional roles such as caring for home, bearing and rearing children.

Bardwik (1980:5) reports that feminism is "an explicit rejection of life style created by strongly coercive norms that defines and restrict what women are and can do". Feminism from the definition is a total rejection for former lifestyle of women. This concept of rejection is made by force to explain to the society, what women are meant for, and what they can do, regardless of the traditional role allocated to them at the beginning of life.

Keohane (2003:102) posits that feminism "…attempt to win for women full right and power in the contemporary society and in the dominant political system". The above definition, gives us information about feminism which strive to win for women the full right and power in the contemporary society and in the dominate political system whereby they too can have a say, could rise up to some instances where men think that they are the only one who has the final say.

1.11.1 Feminist Theory: a Panoramic Vision

Feminism refers to political, cultural, and economic movements aimed at establishing greater rights, legal protection for women, and or women's liberation. It includes some of the sociological theories and philosophies concerned with issues of gender difference. Nancy Cott defines feminism as the belief in the importance of gender equality, invalidating the idea of gender hierarchy as a socially constructed concept.

Feminist theory is academically concentrated in women's studies and encompasses work in history anthropology, sociology, economics, literary criticism (supported by women's literature, music, film and other media) art, history, geography and other discipline. Elaine Showalter modelled the development of feminist theory, although Toril Moi, criticize this model seeing it as essentialistic, deterministic and failing to account for the situation of women outside the west. Feminism is a serious, coherent, and universal philosophy that offers an alternative to patriarchal thinking and structures.

Feminists believe that woman should be viewed as equal partners in social and economic terms. They believe that:

> "qualities traditionally associated with women- the feminine principle and at least equal in value to these traditionally associated with men the masculine principle – and that this equality must be publicly recognized"

(Erwierhoma 2002).

The definition above gives the detail of the word "'Feminism" that is, the only way through which women try to go against the ruling of men over them and the reasoning of women about their own good qualities and how they too can help in the development of the society.

An extension of feminism into theoretical or philosophical fields such as anthropology, sociology, economics, women's studies, literary criticism, art history, and psychoanalysis is called feminist theory. Feminist theory aims to understand gender inequality and focuses on gender politics, power relations, and sexuality. While providing a critique of these social and political relations, much of feminist theory focuses on the promotion of women's rights and interests. Themes explored in feminist theory include discrimination, stereotyping, objectification (especially sexual objectification), oppression, and patriarchy. Today, feminist theory has manifested in a variety of disciplines such as feminist geography, feminist history, feminist theology, and feminist literary criticism and has changed traditional perspectives on a wide range of areas in human life, from culture to law.

Feminist activists have campaigned for women's legal rights such as rights of contract, property rights, and voting rights while also promoting women's rights to bodily integrity and autonomy, abortion rights, and reproductive rights. They have struggled to protect women and girls from domestic violence, sexual harassment, and rape. On economic matters, feminists have advocated for workplace rights, including maternity leave and equal pay, and against other forms of gender-specific discrimination against women.

During much of its history, feminist movements and theories were led predominantly by middle-class white women from Western Europe and North America. However, at least since Sojourner Truth's 1851(17) speech to American feminists, women of other races have proposed alternative feminisms. This trend accelerated in the 1960s

with the civil rights movement in the United States and the collapse of European colonialism in Africa, the Caribbean, parts of Latin America, and Southeast Asia. Since that time, women in former European colonies and the Third World have proposed postcolonial and Third World feminisms.

Postcolonial feminists argue that oppression relating to the colonial experience, particularly racial, class, and ethnic oppression, has marginalized women in postcolonial societies. They challenge the assumption that gender oppression is the primary force of patriarchy. They object to portrayals of women of non-Western societies as passive and voiceless victims and the portrayal of Western women as modern, educated, and empowered. Today, they struggle to fight gender oppression within their own cultural models of society rather than through those imposed by the Western colonizers. They, thus, react against both universalizing tendencies in Western feminist thought and a lack of attention to gender issues in mainstream postcolonial thought.

Some postcolonial feminists, such as Chandra Talpade Mohanty and Black feminists, such as Angela Davis and Alice Walker, are critical of Western feminism for being ethnocentric. Chandra Talpade Mohanty criticizes Western feminism on the ground that it does not take into account the unique experiences of women from third-world countries or the existence of feminisms indigenous to third-world countries. This discourse is strongly related to African feminism and is also associated with concepts such as Black Feminism, Womanism, Africana Womanism, Motherism, Stiwanism, Negofeminism, Chicana Feminism, and Femalism.

1.11.2 Reaction to Feminism: Male's Perception and Suggestion

Men used their field to establish themselves on the literary scene gaining victory over matriachism. This made writers like Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton to mention a few to focus on male protagonist, hence, relegating the female character or presenting them as complememtaries as opposed to the enterprises of the male character. Therefore feminism is not the movement against female ignorance, exploitation, and subjugation. It also negates male ignorance, prejudices, and biases.

Pro-feminism is the support of feminism without implying that the supporter is a member of the feminist movement. The term is most often used in reference to men who are actively supportive of feminism and of their efforts to bring about gender equality. The activities of pro- feminist men's groups include anti-violence work with boys and young

men in schools, offering sexual harassment workshops in workplaces, running community education campaigns, and counseling male perpetrators of violence.

Pro-feminist men also are involved in men's health, activism against pornography including anti-pornography legislation, men's studies, and the development of gender equity curricula in schools. This work is sometimes in collaboration with feminists and women's services, such as domestic violence and rape crisis centers. Some activists of both genders refer to all pro-feminist men as 'pro-feminists' and not as 'feminists'.

There have been positive and negative reactions and responses to feminism, depending on the individual man and the social context of the time. These responses have varied from pro-feminism to masculism to anti-feminism. In the twenty-first century, new reactions to feminist ideologies have emerged, including a generation of male scholars involved in gender studies and men's rights activists who promote male equality including equal treatment in family, divorce, and anti¬discrimination law. Today, academics like Michael Flood, Michael Messner, and Michael Kimme (18) are involved with men's studies and pro- feminism.

The feminist movement has effected change in Western society, including women's suffrage, greater access to education, more nearly equitable pay with men, the right to initiate divorce proceedings and 'no fault' divorce, and the right of women to make individual decisions regarding pregnancy (including access to contraceptives and abortion), as well as the right to own property.

However, these concept mentioned above are the branches of the same tree because their main goal are aimed at eliminating discrimination against woman.

1.11.3 Writing Feminism: a Perspectival Representation

Feminism on the other hand can be seen as those writings either male or female that use a form of writing in bringing about actualization of the dream of women about equality and liberation. Feminism, however, differs in their analysis of the causes of gender inequalities and therefore provides different recommendations for change. The first stage was in the early 20th century which was dominated by writers like Oliver Schreine, Elizabeth Robins, Rebecca West, Virginia Wolf, George Eliot and many more.

Virginia Wolf’s general contribution to feminism is her recognition that gender identity is socially constructed and can be challenged and transformed. She has continually

examined the problem facing women writers. The first wave was more concerned with women's authorship and the representation of women condition within literature. Her call therefore is on women to be interested in themselves and their environment and to write as women and for women making their fear, pain love and experiences their thematic concern. In her fictional work 'Women and Fiction' (1929), she projects women, their fiction, and works written about them. Woolf having observed that fiction was the easiest for women to write due to the fact that it is the least concentrated form of art, she then challenges them to take up writing not just fiction but history criticism and essay, prophesying that literature would soon become forewomen as foremen an art to be studied and a means through which women would be able to express themselves.

Also Elaine Showalter in her 'A Literature of their Own' (1979) outlines a literary history of women writers and promote both a feminist critique and a gynocritic. She is occupied with investigating and interrogating the images projected by the reader and tries to expose the male's prejudices and biases. Nnaemeka cites: "It may be that these writers are writing back not tradition itself but to a masculinity reinvention of it in which women own tradition spheres of action and authority are excluded". (2002:84)

Really, many female writers are not writing back to tradition per say, they are writing for equal rights, liberation and changing of men's view about them. This is why their own aesthetics reveals more of feminism in their writings than that of men aesthetics of feminism. Appiah (1992:47) evaluates that feminism as "on the one hand, a simple claim to equality, a denial of substantial difference, on the other hand is a claim to a special message, revealing the feminine 'other' not as her 'helpmate' of sexism, but as the new women." Equality has been the major song or cry of feminist in their writings. Men have classified themselves as the mighty being and lord over all. This makes them feel superior over women. They don't regard the status and contribution of women to the societal growth.

Frank (1990:80) asserts that feminism "is a philosophy where values, personal growth and individual fulfilment incomplete over any large communal needs or good". From this view, women move from an individual experience to fight a system whereby she suffers intimidation, neglect, brutality, disgrace and so on. Joseph (2002:99) views feminism as "an ideology of social commitments to the struggle for female liberation in the society through conscious and collective efforts". The two main important words in all

their definitions are equality and liberation among the sexes which may be enchained by the struggle women themselves.

It is vividly known that lack of regards to women actually made them to go ahead with the concept of feminism and through their writings they think they can bring about the reality of the desired. Examples of women writers that helped in educating the people about the concept of right and liberation for women are, Buchi Emecheta, Flora Nwapa, Stella Oyedepo, Julie Okoh, Ama Ata Aidoo, Zaynab Alkali and many others.

Feminism, which is seen as the theory of women was, in the other hand, encouraged by some male writers who think that equality among sexes cannot help in the development of the entire society and these motivate the male writers in joining hands with the female writers to see to the eradications of inequality through their writings. Examples of some of them that support the eradication of inequality that exist are; Sembene Ousmane's God's Bits of Wood (1962), Ngugi's A Grain of Wheat and Wole Soyinka's The Lion and the Jewel (1964) and many others.

1.12 "Ecriture feminine": Towards a Recognition of an Art

Today, when globalization seems to have taken over every form of art and culture everywhere in the world, there's still one form of writing that thrives on being different, driving home the idea that every country, and every local community within that country, has different claims and different histories. Women are part of those marginalized who flourish away from the mainstream and express themselves by their artistic writing.

'L'ecriture feminine' was first brought up by French philosopher Helene Cixous as the new dream of L'ecriture in 1970s. Cixous objected to the use of words such as "male" and "female" (which opposition to each other) in order to avoid being held back by traditional dualistic logic. L'ecriture feminine, taking the female body as a stronghold, and thus developing into a language of the body, places the emphasis on femininity. Unlike the bodily language of postural interpretation, with L'ecriture feminine women are the subjects who are in control of the life and power of the text; in an independent manner, which transcends dualism, they write and create. Hence, the identity of the female creators broke with Simone de Beauvoir's The Second Sex (Le Deuxieme Sexe), to become the subject of neutral writing.

In the process of writing, the ideal world created by women is different from the traditional patriarchal society. In fact, it resists the patriarchal system. In taking the female

body as a stronghold, L'ecriture feminine aims to elicit the abundant resources of the unconscious. Cixous stresses that L'ecriture feminine has characteristics beyond gender. The different form of "androgyny" is more radical in that it attempts to eliminate the disparity caused by patriarchal society. In the sense of gender characteristics, what L'ecriture feminine stresses more is a manner of writing that should be open and liquid-like, beyond gender, giving the advantage to women, enabling them to express by creative writing.

Cixous was the one who introduced the question of women's writing into the political and cultural debate in 1970s France. She primarily wanted to emphasize the binary nature of patriarchal thought since the opposition man/woman is deeply embedded in the patriarchal value system. The consequence is that the 'female' side is always seen as a negative, helpless case.

According to Cixous, the fundemental pair man/woman is in the background of all the binary oppositions of Western culture. Therefore, the man is always the winner in patriarchy. Cixous wants to annul such a logocentric ideology, proclaim the woman as a source of life, strength and energy and hail the advent of a new, feminine language which continually undermines those binary structures. Cixous claims that the voice of every woman is not her own: it is the echo of a primeval song she has once heard. Cixous celebrates writing as the sphere of the almighty mother.

Woolf noted that although women had been writing for centuries, the subjects they had written about and even the style in which they wrote was often dictated not by their own creative vision, but by standards imposed upon women by society in general. Advances in women's issues, such as the right to vote, the fight for reproductive rights, and the opportunities women gained during the first half of the century in the arena of work outside the home were major developments.

Despite these changes, women artists during these years continued to feel restricted by imposed standards of creativity. It would take, notes Elaine Showalter in numerous essays detailing the growth and development of women's writing in the twentieth century, several decades before women would completely break the mold of respectability under which they felt compelled to write. Fuelled by the feminist movement of the early twentieth century, many women authors began to explore new modes of expression, focusing increasingly on issues that were central to their existence as women and as artists.

The latter half of the twentieth century also provided fertile ground for growing recognition of women writers of color. Lesbian literature has also flourished, and women have openly explored concerns about sexuality, sexual orientation, politics, and other gender issues in their works. Prior to the mid-1960s, women writers who ventured beyond the established feminine stereotypes were regularly characterized as "outcasts," denounced as vulgar or, in the case of Simone de Beauvoir, even "frigid."

Scholars have also pointed to the fact that while works such as Friedan's The Feminine Mystique (19) did much to draw attention to the emerging feminine consciousness, they did not address the needs and issues significant to women of color. Further, the narrative strategies used by such pioneering black authors such as Zora Neale Hurston (20), whose works focused primarily on the private and domestic domain, were, until the 1970s and 1980s, dismissed by both white feminists and black male intellectuals because of the perception that their focus was too limited and narrow.

Later critical opinion, however, has reevaluated the writing style and strategies used by many female authors of color to recognize that the personal narrative is a powerful and uniquely expressive mode of extrapolating and commenting upon the state of the world inhabited by these writers. Asian writers have used these strategies particularly well to counter stereotyped images of their own culture and gender.

Modern women's writing continues to explore new genres and means of expression, and women writers today participate fully in both the creative and scholarly process. Women's studies, feminist literary theory, and women's mode of writing and expressing are now established areas of academic environments, and women are exacting continued and growing control over their own literary and social spheres.

1.13 Sex/Gender Distinction

The term “sex” and “gender” are concepts used by academicians, researchers and feminist writers to make a distinction between the biologically different “male” and “female” and between the socially different “man” and “woman”. Feminist sociologists suggest that there is a need to understand and distinguish between the two terms “sex” and “gender” in academic discourses and writings.

In a very broad way, “sex” refers to the biological and physiological differences between male and female sex. The term sex is a physical differentiation between the biological male and the biological female. Thus, when an infant is born, the infant comes

to be labeled “boy” or “girl” depending on their sex. The genital differences, between male and female, are the basis of such characterization. There is a biological difference between the sexes and most people are born (expect for a few ambiguous cases) as one sex or another.

However, it has been argued that having been born into one sex or another, individuals are then socialized according to specific gender expectations and roles. Biological males learn to take on masculine roles. They are socialized to think and act in masculine ways. Biological females learn to take on feminine roles. They are socialized to think and behave in feminine ways. As the feminist writer Simone de Beauvoir puts it “one is not born a man but becomes one‟, “one is not born a woman but becomes one‟.

Hence, the concept of gender in feminist writings and other sociological discourses became popular in the early 1970. Therefore, gender is an analytical category that is socially constructed to differentiate the biological difference between men and women. The term gender is also used to describe the differences in behaviour between men and women which are described as “masculine‟ and “feminine‟. Feminist writings focus on this aspect and claim that these differences are not biological but are social constructions of patriarchal society.

Some theorists suggest that the biological differences between men and women also result in their mental and physical differences. They argue that biologically, men are physically and mentally superior to women. Other theorists suggest that the biological difference between men and women are exaggerated. The differences are socially constructed by the patriarchal system of society by which men are described as superior to women. Therefore women become subordinate to men in the society. Ann Oakley in her book, Sex, Gender and Society written in 1972 explores the term gender. Oakley says that in the Western culture women play the roles of the “housewife‟ and “mother‟. This is because women are made to play these roles because of their biology.

The western culture also believes that any effort to change the traditional roles of men and women in the society can cause damage to the social fabric of the society. Oakley concludes that this view regarding the roles of men and women helps to support and maintain the patriarchal society. Simone de Beauvior, in her book “The Second Sex‟, says that “one is not born, but rather becomes a woman”. She explains that gender differences in the society make the man superior through his role as the bread winner. It gives him a

position of power in the society and family. Gender differences are set in hierarchal opposition such that men are superior and women are subordinate. Women's position is that of the "other" and women are the continual outsiders. It is a sociological term that has more than one valid definition. In ordinary speech, it is used interchangeably with "sex" to denote condition of being a male or female.

The above discussion clearly brings out the way in which patriarchy differentiates between men and women. And through such differential treatment women are denied access to resources of the society and to positions of power and authority both in the family and in the community. However, a number of feminist theorists have actively engaged with the body and have recognised the need for greater incorporation of the biological in feminist conceptions of gender and sexuality. In her pioneering paper *Notes Towards a Corporeal Feminism* Elizabeth Grosz seeks to examine "the role the body plays in the social constitution … of sexual identity". Rather than reducing the body to a fixed, ahistorical essence, which exists separately from the realm of the social, Grosz perceives the body as central to social processes, arguing that "the body can be seen as the primary object of social production and inscription … within a network of socio-historical relations". In this way Grosz challenges the essentialist notion that the biological body is a "fixed, concrete substance, a pre-cultural given", arguing rather that the body "has a determinate form only by being socially inscribed". She emphasizes the dangers of "the bifurcation between a purely biological 'sex' and a purely social 'gender'", arguing that this dichotomization reinforces a false "mind/body opposition" which restricts feminisms' capacity to fully theorize subjectivity. Grosz highlights instead the interactions which take place between the social and the biological, such as the introjection of seemingly internal attributes through feminine inscription of the body. In these ways, Grosz attempts to develop a feminist theory of the situated body in which biology is "regarded in continuity with social, cultural and psychological relations rather than in opposition to them".

Moira Gatens in her paper A Critique of the Sex/Gender Distinction also perceives the human subject as neither wholly determined by biological or social forces but by a dynamic combination of both, and argues for a focus on the lived and situated body in feminist theory. She makes the important point that "the very same behaviours (whether they be masculine or feminine) have quite different personal and social significances when acted out by the male subject on the one hand and the female subject on the other". (Moira Gatens1996.104)

In this way Gatens highlights that gender and sex are not arbitrarily attached separate entities, but deeply interconnected components of the lived body and she argues that rather than focusing on either biology or culture feminisms must attend to both by theorizing the lived and sexually differentiated body. Both Lane and Sara Ahmed identify a number of other feminist theorists who engage deeply with the entanglements of the biological and the social such as Anne Fausto-Sterling, Myra Hird, Donna Haraway and Lynda Birke. All these theorists highlight the centrality of biology in the development of gender and sexuality and argue for a feminist theory which accounts for the complex and dynamic interactions between the biological and the social.

Accordingly, Lane argues that feminist analyses of gender and sexuality should recognise that nature cannot be separated from nurture and should seek to understand the "interimplication and the simultaneous activity and agency of the social and the biological" in the construction of a range of subject positions. For example, Lane cites the work of biologist D. Swaab, whose work "locates the cause of sexual orientation or gender identity in the brain structure", but which also emphasises that the brain "structure is itself a product of a socially influenced development process". From this perspective biology – in this case the neurological development of the brain – can be seen as "both a cause and an effect of social identity" and "a rich and complex bio-psycho-social interactive system" can be recognised and theorised by feminisms.

Wilson also argues that "feminism can be deeply and happily complicit with biological explanation" and that a "sustained interest in biological detail will have a reorganizing effect on feminist theories of the body", one which allows for the exploration of the "entanglement of biochemistry, affectivity, and the physiology of the internal organs" and which provides "new avenues" for understandings of the body. Pat Caplan supports Moira Gatens' theory that sex is wrongly viewed as an exclusively natural and thus unchangeable category. Caplan (1987) points out that even though the term sex is believed to be something natural (at least in western societies) it has contained different meanings at different times. He illustrates this by explaining how the expression 'having sex' is a recent invention. It was not included in the Oxford English Dictionary until 1975. The moral standards concerning sex and sexuality have also changed considerably over time (Caplan 1987).

Recent findings in the field of biology also prove that our knowledge about biological sex is changing. The sperm has, since Aristotle's philosophy about the

relationship between man and woman, been seen as the active part in the procreation process (Gaarder 1994). Aristotle believed that women passively received the sperm which contained all the characteristics the child would be born with. New theory focuses on the active role of the egg. The female egg 'chooses', rather than inactively accepts, one sperm and refuses others. Pat Caplan concludes that:

> "...sexuality, like gender, is socially constructed" (Caplan: 10). Henrietta Moore (1993) further argues that the dichotomy sex/gender also is socially created. The very idea of a biological domain separated from the social is a western academic construct:"...the...separation of the biological from the social,...is thus likely to be insufficient for coming to grips with local notions of embodiment".
>
> (Moore 1993:208)

In these ways, feminisms can eschew dichotomous categories such as sex and gender, nature and culture, male and female, heterosexual and homosexual.

1.13.1 Debating Gender, Sexuality and Biology

Despite attempts to distance gender from biology, we need to accept biology as an important aspect of gender and sexuality. The role of biology in the development of gender and sexuality is a controversial issue which has generated much contentious debate in feminist theory. The moves to distance gender from biology formed part of the development of the sex/gender distinction, which challenged the justification of female oppression by recourse to biological differences between females and males. The common conception that ‘biology is destiny’ was effectively destabilised by second-wave feminisms’ social constructionist conceptualisation of sex as consisting of immutable biological facts such as genitals and hormones, and gender as consisting of the contestable social norms and positionings attached to these facts.

This perception of a clear separation between the biological and the social and a deep suspicion of the potentially antifeminist motives of those who incorporate biology in conceptions of gender and sexuality has led to a rejection of any biological role in the formation of gender and sexuality for some feminist theorists. Riki Lane argues accordingly that “rejecting biological determinism has sometimes led to any mention of the biological body being seen as essentialist and has led many feminist researchers to ignore the details of biology”. Similarly, Elizabeth Wilson argues that many feminist and queer theorists – following Gayle Rubin’s efforts to “hold sociality and biology apart” in her

canonical essay Thinking Sex – rely on a conception of biology as a prerequisite for gender and sexuality.

Social constructionist theorists such as Judith Butlerc onceptualise biology – the body and matter – as stable, concrete and a historical and gender – cultural norms and hierarchies – as fluid, dynamic and contestable. From this perspective it is the cultural aspects of gender and sexuality, such as language, discourse and power which warrant theoretical attention and biological factors are considered to have little or no theoretical or political relevance. Bodies are understood, from this position, to carry no objective reality or function but only discursive effects because "there is no outside of, or beyond, the cultural context". Similarly, Myra Hird argues that social constructionist "discussions of discourse and text ultimately erase the materiality of the doer"(2004) by focusing entirely on culture in the development of gender and sexuality. This perspective sets up an opposition between the biological and the social which disavows biology's place in the development of gender and sexuality and "reinscribes an essentialising dichotomy between the cultural and the natural".

Thus, the attempts to distance biology from gender served an important political objective but have perpetuated an essentialist conception of biology and a false dichotomy between nature and culture which prevents a full appreciation, by some feminisms, of the multiple and complex interactions between biology and culture in the development of gender and sexuality.

As such, Lane contends that "while arguments for a biological role in gender development need careful scrutiny, they should not be rejected out of hand", because "if we just dismiss 'biologism', we forget that there really is biology that we have to theorize through investigating what is natural, biological, social, and cultural and how these categories develop and condition one another". Similarly, Susan Sheridan contends that if feminism is to develop "compatible and connected ways of theorizing embodied subjectivity with social structures and processes" it must account for both the biological and the social and their impact on each other. Feminisms must, therefore, find ways to theorize gender and sexuality which do not engage in determinism or essentialism but which do account for the influences and interactions of both biology and culture.

The incorporation of this conception of biology into feminist analyses of gender and sexuality can be understood as an advance on past understandings of biology and its

impact on the social, rather than a return. A number of feminist theorists are engaging with this nonlinear and indeterminate conception of biology, such as Grosz, Hird and Wilson, producing work which recognizes that "biological factors certainly play a role in forming unique gender identities", but which also emphasizes that these biological factors are neither fully determining nor completely passive. In these ways, the new materialist conception of the interactions between the biological and the social may be understood as an advance on, rather than a return to, previous understandings of the relationship between biology, gender and sexuality.

1.13.2 Foucault's Philosophy: "that-which-is has not always been"

Arguably gender identity is the result of obvious changes in the human history which lead to its social and cultural construction and deconstruction. Through the exploitation of the corpus of the study one finds relevance in the authors' revelation and the ideas of both Foucault and Butler. Michel Foucault (1926-1984) combined philosophy and history in a new way that resulted in an astonishing critique of modernity and things we take for granted. His studies show the historically random and haphazard nature of practices in modern culture, such as punishing and treating those seen as mad, locking up criminals in prison to try and reform them, or our views on sexuality. The effect of Foucault's studies is estrangement; as readers we suddenly see aspects of our culture we have previously taken for granted as strange and contingent. History, he claims, 'serves to show us how that-which-is has not always been; i.e., that the things that seem most evident to us are always formed in the confluence of encounters and chances'.

Johanna Oksala summarizes the Foucauldian view of the intellectual's role as that of exposing new ways of thinking: 'to make people see things around them in a different light, to disturb their mental habits and to invite them to demand and instigate change'. Foucault does not consider the intellectual to be the moral conscience of society, nor should s/he pass political judgements, but s/he should make alternative ways of thinking possible.

A recurring theme in Foucault's works is that historical circumstances play an important role in determining who we are, what we think and how we look upon ourselves. Tracing the history of our current practices is an efficient way to question their inevitability – 'that-which-is has not always been' – of states such as gender. His concepts of discourse and power are useful in the study of gender, as they might be generally applied to any field

of ‘knowledge’. Although he himself never chose to study the concept of gender, he historicized sexuality. He stated:

> *Sexuality [gender] must not be thought of as a kind of natural given which power tries to hold in check, or as an obscure domain which knowledge tries gradually to uncover. It is the name that can be given to a historical construct: not a furtive reality that is difficult to grasp, but a great surface network in which the stimulation of bodies, the intensification of pleasures, the incitement to discourse, the formation of special knowledges, the strengthening of controls and resistances, are linked to one another, in accordance with a few major strategies of knowledge and power.*
>
> (Foucault, Sexuality 1…, pp. 105-106)

One argues that what Foucault says about sexuality here can also be applied to the concept of ‘gender’. Gender is in this study seen as an historical construct, as grids of discursive power relations, and as fields of knowledge; all according to gender expectations. In Foucault’s view, no ‘real’ or essential structure underpins historical events or materials, but neither does he accept a view where ‘reality’ is constructed out of human consciousness. There is no ‘truth’ and no linear development in the sense of the world or humanity developing into higher stages, no progressivist or continuist view of science. In The History of Sexuality 1 Foucault points out that the meaning of that study is not to discover anything about sex itself, for no such truth can be found about anything. The only thing one can do is:

> To account for the fact that it is spoken about, to discover who does the speaking, the positions and viewpoints from which they speak, the institutions which prompt people to speak about it and which store and distribute the things that are said. What is at issue, briefly, is the over-all “discursive fact”, the way in which sex is “put into discourse”.
>
> (Foucault, Sexuality 1, p. 11)

Likewise, according to Butler, gender and sexual identity have always been a matter of performance, acquiescence to social norms and to mystifications about sexuality and gender derived from popular culture and the sciences such as philosophy, religion, psychology and medicine. Performativity, for example drag, upsets these norms, sometimes appropriating them in a transformed manner, sometimes parodying them in a way that makes them suddenly ‘visible’ and open to criticism. Thus, feminine behaviour is not ‘the result of a true and foundational female sex, but the reverse is true: the idea of a true and foundational female sex is the result of feminine behaviour’ (Oksala, p. 76).

Butler sees the idea of a stable gender core as a fiction, upheld by a constant, repetitive performance. She states that gender is ‘a kind of becoming or activity’ which

should not ‘be conceived as a noun or a substantial thing or static cultural marker, but rather as an incessant and repeated action of some sort’ (Gender Trouble, p. 152).

Individuals have no identity except those identities available in culture. In order to speak as a coherent subject, the individual has to understand and present her/himself as gendered. But as anatomically sexed bodies do not provide a permanent foundation for gender, this self-presentation and self-understanding must be constantly repeated. No origin of gendered identity exists.

That gender reality is created through sustained social performances means that the very notions of an essential sex and a true or abiding masculinity or femininity are also constituted as part of the strategy that conceals gender’s performative character. (Butler, Gender Trouble, p. 192) It is the daily repetition of tenderized routines, socialization and practices that result in the body’s signification of gender. In Bodies That Matter Butler writes that this is not an individual choice, as no individual inhabits society without having already become gendered. This gendering is not an act or expression, a willful appropriation or, it must be underlined, the taking on of a mask. ‘[I]t is the matrix through which all willing first becomes possible, its enabling cultural condition’ (‘Bodie’, p. 7).

As a result of Butler’s view on gender, femininity does not necessarily belong to women; as little as masculinity belongs to men. She has much to say about gender binaries. In short, she sees the construction of gender binaries and the split into two genders as done in the interests of heterosexuality and its regulation of the reproductive domain. Pointing to bisexual, gay, lesbian and heterosexual contexts in which gender does not necessarily follow from sex, desire or sexuality, she claims that anatomical sex, gender identity and gender performance do not reflect one another and that two genders do not seem enough to cover and categorize existing gender identities.

One uses Butler’s theory explicitly in one’s analysis of The Truth Tales, where the notions of gender binarism and heteronormative sexuality are challenged. Exposing the constructedness of gender, Butler’s theory helps in the understanding of the novel’s deconstruction of these concepts. However, one also finds Butler’s theory helpful in one’s overall thinking of gender, how it is constructed and unconsciously learned. It may therefore have influenced one’s reasoning in the other chapters too.

1.13.3 Gender Ideology and Linguistic Resources

According to Lorber (1994:30), gender ideology is defined as "the justification of gender statuses, particularly, their differential evaluation". Kroska defines gender ideology as "the attitudes regarding the appropriate roles, rights, and responsibilities of women and men in society". Gender ideology about the family, in the African society is seen for example, as men fulfill their family roles through instrumental, breadwinning activities and women fulfill their roles through nurturing, homemaking and parenting activities. It also refers to attitudes regarding the appropriate roles, rights, and responsibilities of men and women in the society. (Amy Kroska:2007). Language is the key instrument and medium by which gender ideologies are constructed, perpetuated and propagated.

> *" gender ideologies differ with respect to nature of male and female; justice, naturalness, origins and necessities of various aspects of the gender order; on whether difference is fundamental, whether it should be maintained and whether it can-or should-be maintained without inequality"*
>
> (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2005: 35)

Difference in ideology can be manufactured in order to support gender and power hierarchies as it can be given and justifying the necessary results of inequality. The maintenance of the gender order through ideology is often viewed as a moral imperative either for divine origin and/or embedment in convection or perpetuation and sustainability of the power position.

Convention and gender assumptions include such fallacies as those that drive various gender ideologies in given societies. Some of these fallacies include stereotypes such as: strong /weak, brave /timid, aggressive /passive, sex driven /relationship driven, rational / irrational, direct / indirect, men don't cry.

All these fallacies lead to the creation and ideologization of man and woman in society. All people in one way or the other are pervasive images of ideologized male and female differentiation. Such dichotomies and oppositions are not only practiced but linguistically articulated. They hold a significant place in the construction of gender ideologies and their representations permeate society in many ways while eliciting significant impact. Further dichotomization and genderization are evident in gender specific metaphor and figures of speech such as the feminization of poverty, feminization of continents, especially Africa – Mama Africa; the musculinization of war and power.

It is quite likely, that as long as language has existed, the distinction between male and female has also been present within it. Today, there are no languages, which do not distinguish between the genders at all, leading linguists and psychologists to believe that gender may be "so fundamental to social organization and social structure that linguistic means to refer to this category are indispensable for speech communities" (Stahlberg et al. 2007, p. 163). However, references to grammatical conventions of gender in language have prompted contemporary concerns over the power of language to shape social stereotypes about gender, and perhaps ultimately shape status distinctions between men and women. The feminist language critique, in particular, deems language to be overwhelmingly androcentric, putting girls and women at a disadvantage in personal and professional relationships (Stahlberg et al. 2007), and some countries, such as Norway, have actively reformed their languages to reflect a more genderless outlook (Gabriel and Gygax 2008).

In spite of attempts at language reform already underway, numerous questions remain regarding the relationship between the social aspects of gender and language and the potential benefits of modifying languages to be more gender-neutral. Recent theorizing suggests that language not only reflects the conventions of culture and particular patterns of thought, but systems of language can actually shape our cognitive understanding of the world around us (Boroditsky 2009; Deutscher 2010). Specifically, the gendering of language (even that which appears mundane and purely grammatical, such as the use of 'la' versus 'le' in French) can actually impact our perceptions. For example, researchers have discovered that the grammatical gender of a term for an inanimate object can influence people's perceptions of the masculine or feminine characteristics of that object, and this cannot be due merely to the properties of the object as the researchers used terms that were grammatically masculine in one language and feminine in another (Boroditsky et al. 2003; Konishi 1993).

1.13.4 Gender and Sociolinguistic Towards a Specificity

Differences in the ways that men and women use language have long been of interest in the study of discourse. Despite extensive theorizing, actual empirical investigations have yet to converge on a coherent picture of gender differences in language.

Sociolinguistic studies have long observed that women use more forms of standard language than men, so much so that the stereotype of women's hypercorrect

language has emerged as somewhat of a universal principle in the field. By extension, sociolinguists have also recognized women's important role in the initiation and dissemination of language change. Earlier studies identified women as the leaders of linguistic changes that that spread from above the level of public consciousness and involved new prestige forms emanating from the upper ranks of the social strata. In contrast, men were found to lead changes in vernacular forms spreading below the level of public awareness. However, recent studies have shown that women's role in language change is more complicated. William Labov's theory of the gender paradox asserts that while women adopt prestige forms of language proceeding from the upper ranks and from above the level of public consciousness at a higher rate than men, they also use higher frequencies of innovative vernacular forms occurring below the level of public awareness than men do (Labov 1990:213-15).

In the 1960s, sociolinguists began to do research on gender and sex and its relationship to language. Specifically, these studies have mostly centered around the differences in speech behaviour of men and women at the phonological level, and the conversational styles of men and women in discourse. Studies of gender-specific variation are diverse and often contradictory, depending on such factors as researchers' assumptions about sex and gender, the methodology, and the samples used. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet have summed up the varied positions in stating:

Women's language has been said to reflect their…conservativism, prestige consciousness, upward mobility, insecurity, deference, nurture, emotional expressivity, connectedness, sensitivity to others, solidarity. And men's language is heard as evincing their toughness, lack of affect, competitiveness, independence, competence, hierarchy, control. (qtd. in Wodak & Benke 127)

However, despite divergent claims, gender variation has emerged as a major field of sociolinguistic study. An important consequence of gender differentiation in language is linguistic change. Aspects of linguistic variability are of interest to sociolinguists who attempt to chart how the language used by individuals and groups in various social situations can vary in patterned ways. Language variation serves to distinguish the speech of different social groups (social variation), as well as the speech of an individual in different contexts (stylistic variation). Over time, these variations may lead to language change, which occurs when a new linguistic form, used by a particular sub-section of a speech community, is adopted by other members of the community and accepted as the

norm. Sociolinguists now recognize that not only linguistic variation between social groups, but also gender differences in speech play an important role in the promulgation of language change.

1.14 Indian Literary Tradition: from Oral to Textual Inclusion

Such a concept of tradition is significant for the critic as well as for the creative writer. Tradition does not mean a sense of inheritance from some past authors or merely a sense of belongingness to the past. Tradition is a dynamic force. It does not mean standing still. Tradition is the historical sense and not the handing down, or following the ways of the ancient blindly. It cannot be inherited. It can only be achieved with great conscious efforts. For example, it was through the oral that these pan-Asian movements travelled from one part to the other. The poetry, music and the multiple traditional theatre genres – known from Pakistan to Bangladesh, from Nepal to Kerala to Sri Lanka – were not either in a single language or restricted to a single nation state, or only through the written word. Oral communication was primary.

This great fund of oral literature – called by several names like Bhakti poetry, Bardic traditions, Buddhist chants, minstrels, the message of the Bauls, couplets of Sufis and the fakirs, the music of the Qawaals – is one dimension and still relevant for establishing communication between and amongst civil societies of nation states and levels of society. Of equal relevance is that the many genres of the musical and theatrical traditions of South Asia brought together diverse social and religious identities without conflict.

The great Allauddin Khan of Maihar Gharana, was from a village in Bangladesh. The musical trinity of Thyagaraja, Dikshitar and Syama Sastri composed devotional music in classical idiom in different South Indian languages – Telugu, Sanskrit and Tamil. They all were and continue to be integrators without asserting status or social identities. Even more important is the positive and productive dialogue between the Hindu or Muslim, or ‘low caste’ or ‘high caste’, musicians who came and continue to come on the same platform. While social identities are not given up, there is perfect harmony and peace. It is only in the economic and political sphere that these identities surface and are visibly in conflict.

In South Asia although there is today a new awareness of the place of oral communication, there is not yet a recognition of this system of creating knowledge and

communicating knowledge. South Asian scholars as also others have raised these questions. Some decades ago the well-known poet A. K. Ramanujan, Professor in Chicago, had raised this question. He had said,

> *"It would be fallacious, however, to assume a notion of linear development between the written and the oral or classical and folk. It is more profitable to imagine a history of texts that is made up of written and oral forms contained within cycles of transmission that move up and down through time resulting in manifold possible recompositions within a 'simultaneous order' of texts".* (16)

Young scholars have reiterated the role of the oral word and orality in cultural communication. Aditya Malik, Professor of Religion in Christchurch, New Zealand and formerly of Heidelberg, says

> "The vital importance of oral traditions and their expression in various genres – both classical and folk – within Hindu religious thought and practice cannot be emphasized enough …It also needs to be noted that oral traditions in the South Asian context are not restricted to folk traditions and folklore. While folklore and folk narratives are indeed recited, spoken, sung, and performed – orality itself is not confined to folk traditions. In fact in classical or Sanskrit traditions we find a prevalence of the oral word, in spoken and sung form, both in an epistemological sense – sound as vibration (nada) carries knowledge and metaphysical meaning as well as ritual efficacy (mantra) – and in a performative sense.
>
> Many Sanskrit texts, for example, Puranas and Mahatmyas, use narrative framing devices that involve a speaker and an audience in dialogue with one another. Even more so, several important Hindu religious texts, such as the Rgveda (Vedas) and the two great epics, the Mahabharata and Ramayana, were not only orally recited and transmitted for millennia, but once written, as is the cased with the latter two texts, continued to show signs of having originated out of a possibly oral 'core' that coalesced into their current written form…"
>
> (Aditya Malik. 2005.17)

Thus tradition requires not only the knowledge of the past but also a will to assimilate the best of the past and a desire to relate to the presentness. we have so far been talking about continuity of the oral system of communication. However, the twin of this communication system is the long and continued trajectory of the textual traditions in South Asia. The oral was undoubtedly primary, but the written word is not negated. Thus there is no question of not recognizing the fact that literacy is absolutely necessary. The written word today is of course important for the modern world; it is the basis of all transactions. The written is also indispensable as evidence of the trajectory of information and knowledge. As a reality we may not take the written as the indicator for the grading of civilizations as was done in the 19th century (Gordon Childe). South Asia represents an

incomparably rich array of scripts and written languages. These are found in inscriptions on monuments, copper plates and of course in the millions of unpublished manuscripts in the repositories of the countries of South Asia and abroad.

There are records which provide vital evidence in regard to political, social and cultural histories. They also reflect the distinctive South Asian sensibility in its aspect of diversity and unity. The scripts and the literature are varied and yet interconnected. The development of multiple languages and scripts in South Asia is of fundamental importance.

1.15 Dalit Literature as an Instrument of Repression

The arts were the most potent tools of giving sanctity and significance to a natural phenomenon – not to be equated with what were considered to be the animist world of 'primitive' people.

The idea that the low-caste birth which was taught to be the curse of one's sins in the previous birth should be lived accordingly so as to get relieved of the curse and have a noble birth in the following one, had been dinned into the minds and psyche of the people belonging to the lowest strata of Caste System through various arts and literary forms – Myths and Puranas, folk-tales, proverbs, riddles, games and sports, traditional fictions and so on – and along with this continuous brainwashing, these people have also been threatened that it wouldn't be proper on their part to think and act rationally in matters pertaining to physical labour.

Even in this modern age of immense scientific, technical and technological advancement, even the psyche of the youth belonging to these castes is burdened with this sense of guilt. And, they live on with the inferiority-complex that they are sinners and that their low-caste birth is the divine punishment meted out to them. In fact, this psychological construct of the oppressed castes was the foremost of all information that one could gather about their life.

Thus, believing themselves to be sinners and accepting all the oppressions and humiliations meted out to them at the hands of the ruling castes as the 'divine punishment' for the sins committed by them in their previous births the 'marginalized sections of the society live on, feeling resigned to their abominable state of affairs.

While the folklores and the terms used therein construct religious aspects, beliefs and ingredients another dimension of it plays a divisive role in their lives, segregating

people. This can be clearly seen in several folklores. The folk-song called Ponnar Shankar Kadhai (The Tale of Ponnar-Shankar which is the song that tells the story of Annaamaar Saami.) This folk-song which is so beautifully constructed with a magnificent story-line which is firmly rooted in the rich tradition of the region called Kongu Naadu, telling the tale with such clarity and finesse that invariably brings back to mind the battle-scenes of Kurukshethra has always proved very successful.

Born out of the above situation is determined resistance and struggle for change. The literature of suffering is the literature of change. Literature has the power and ability to construct and protect the cultural space of various communities. It also plays a vital role in providing more opportunities for self-realization of any community by providing necessary information about the cultural, history and customary practices. It is being adopted as a strategy for social change and social movements by the people in power, since literature possesses a greater value in the political dynamics of any state. The new category of writing 'Dalit literature' has established itself as a new literary movement in several regions in India in the last four decades.

Dalit writing is revolutionary in its aims; the destruction of the caste system and the establishment of equality in the social and political spheres. They identified two of the important functions of Dalit writing. Firstly, Dalit writing attempts to deconstruct 'the dominant, castiest constructions of India identity' and secondly' it constructs a distinct Dalit identity.' Dalit writing presents a Dalit centric view of life and constructs Dalit identity in relation to Colonial identity and Indian identity. It seeks to reject those conventions and cultural norms which not only marginalized the Dalit voice and the voice of other oppressed communities including women. It reveals the collective consciousness of community whose voice had remained suppressed through the annals of history. It inaugurates a new era of cultural transformation in the Indian context, and inevitably reaches out to the global phenomenon called postmodernism.

Purpose and Goal Dalit literature is typically Indian not only in its roots but also in its purpose and goal. It is addressed to the entire Indian literary tradition and its fulfilment lies in the total transformation of this tradition. Dalit literature is the postcolonial nativistic movement aimed at the cultivation of creative urges of the masses of numerous castes, tribes and communities condemned for centuries to voiceless existence.

Dalit literature is a literature of protest, pain and agony. The works of Dalit feminists like Sivagami, Bama and Sugirtharani assume special significance, because they reveal the specific problems of Dalit women. Dr Jyoti Lanjewar (b.1950) is one of the foremost Marathi women writers, widely acclaimed and much anthologized and also a pioneering Dalit women poet today. A noted critic, poet, columnist, activist, short story writer, Biographer, Linguist, feminist scholar and academic. She has authored more than fifteen books and remains one of the leading voices in Modern Indian Poetry today.

Whatever be the tone, mild or sharp, ferocious or highly confrontational, it is written with a specific purpose, to sting the complacent and the leering into active thought. Dalit writing is addressing the oppressed, the untouchables, the victims, and the oppressors. It is not our wish that what we write should be read only by the untouchables. Our writers desire that it should be read by the touchable as well. (Raosaheb Kasbe in his essay some issues on Dalit literature).

Dalit literature, being the most powerful form of literary expression today, has acquired a prestigious position in Indian English literature. It focuses on writing that includes Dalit characters, or descriptions of Dalit life and experiences. Influenced by post-modern literary movements, it questions mainstream literary theories and upper caste ideologies, and made use of writing as a method of propaganda for the movement.

Dalit writers have employed various genres for self-articulation. Their choices have begun to leave a positive impact on mainstream literature. Poetry comes first, followed by other kinds of writing such as autobiography, drama criticism etc. it is not just modern, but a new kind of writing in terms of experience and sensibility, structure and style. The most notable among the Dalit poets are Narayan Surve, namdeo Dhasal, Keshav Meshram, Mallika Amar Sheikh, etc. among women. A Dalit poem is unique in the sense that it builds its structural pattern out of Dalit sensibility. It is unusual, exceptional in terms of experience and expression. It is thus a poetry of protest, voicing its opposition to all that is orthodox, traditional and conventional. The Dalit poets destroy and reverse the established symbols and myths, and construct their own myth. Narayana Reddy’s poetry speaks on diverse themes as womanhood, motherhood, friendship, honest commitment, human values and love.

In the postcolonial era Mulk Raj Anand's novel Untouchable and The Road, Raja Rao's Kanthapura, Rohinton Mistry's A Fine Balance, Arundhati Roy's The God of Small

Things, and Aravind Adiga's The White Tiger have faithfully documented the social history of the untouchables. Together they constitute a powerful critique of the moral corruption and hypocrisy of the Indian society which allows untouchability to continue.

Collections of short stories have been published throughout the nineties and thereafter. Apart from Sivakami's three collections and Bama's two, there have been many more writers who have brought out collections of short stories and continue to publish in journals and little magazines. Some of the short-story writers have written novels, poetry and plays as well. Abimani has brought out three collections: Nokkadu (1993), Tettam (2001) and Oorchoru (2003). Short stories bring out the gender pressures over Dalit women and caste hegemony over women at large. Dalit writers, thus offer thought-provoking subtexts to gender-caste traffic in Dalit lives.

Dalit literature has gained a positive impetus through Dalit publishing houses and more significantly through translations. Dalit publishing houses like Kali for Women and Vitiyal Pathipagam in Coimbatore undertakes not only publication of Dalit writings but also publishes translations of Dalit works. Many Dalit texts have been translated into English and French.

In conclusion, it may be stated that the concept of Dalit literature constitutes a contribution to aesthetics of literature and opens up an ever-expanding world of Dalitness before creative minds of today and tomorrow. This perception is basically a perception of eternal human sufferings. Dalits of today may not remain Dalit tomorrow but their place will be occupied by new Dalits.

Dalit literature is seen, in the main, as protest against the establishment as commitment to inculcating new values aiming at a new order. It breathes freedom. The hope lies in the fact that Dalit women have begun organizing themselves. Dalit women have come together autonomously to make their voices heard. Dalit women are no longer going to accept submissively patriarchal economic, political, social, cultural and religious institutions that oppress them.The image of the Dalit woman that is emerging is that of a strong person, and yet becoming a voice of strength in the community too.

1.16 Secularism; a Transforming Agent in India

The conflict between religious faith and human reason, which forms part of the background to the emergence of the modern ideology of secularism, surfaced in the late Middle Ages. (Madan 1997, 6). An Indian political scientist, Partha Chatterjee, has defined

three principles as the characteristics of a secular state. The first is the principle of liberty, which requires that the state permit the practice of any religion, within the limits set by certain other basic rights which the state is also required to protect. The second is the principle of equality, which requires that the state does not give preference to any religion over another. The third is the principle of neutrality that is best described as the requirement that the state does not give preference to the religious over the non-religious and which leads, in combination with the liberty and equality principles, to what is known in the constitutional law of the United States of America as the 'wall of separation' doctrine: namely, that the state does not involve itself with religious affairs or organizations.

Exactly because of the multi-ethnicity India opted for secularism, which was considered vital for the existence of the Indian state. Secularism was supposed to solve the problem of religious and ethnic pluralism by uniting India. Secularism derived from the idea of modernity. It was connected to the nation-building and development of the new and modern India, and it was supposed to give a basis for a new identity for Indians. A modern, secular Indianness would replace the traditional, old-fashioned religious identities. But to make a difference to the Western secularism this was interpreted so that all religions are entitled to flourish in India equally. The state of India has the demands and will lean on its mantra that India will stay united: 'unity in diversity'. India will be a land of many faiths, equally honoured and respected, but of one national outlook. (Jawaharlal Nehru, 24 January 1948)

Many of the researchers, for example Ashis Nandy and T. N. Madan, who specialize in Indian history and politics argue that secularism does not suit India. They find the reasons for the rise of communal feeling in modernity. India is a traditional society, and modernity, which was brought to India by the colonial power, has always remained an unfamiliar element to Indians and is seen as something threatening, as the 'Other'.

According to T. N. Madan's view, Madan argues that secularism will not find a suitable form in which it could function in India. In the prevailing circumstances, secularism as a generally shared credo of life is impossible in South Asia, because a great majority of the people of South Asia is in their own eyes active adherents of some religious faith. It is also impracticable as a basis for state action, because the standpoint of religious neutrality is difficult to maintain since religious minorities do not share the majority's view of what this entails for the state. According to Madan, secularism would also be impotent

as a blueprint for the foreseeable future, because it is incapable of countering religious fundamentalism and fanaticism. (Madan 1997, 276).

Shortly, with secularism it is meant that religion and politics should be kept in different spheres in society, religion in the private sphere and politics in the public. According to T. N. Madan, secularization ordinarily refers to the socio-cultural processes that enlarge the areas of life, such as material, institutional and intellectual, in which the role of the sacred is progressively limited. Secularity, then, is the resultant of this process, and secularism is the ideology that argues for the historical inevitability and progressive nature of secularization

There is a difference between Gandhiji's concept of secularism and that of Mr. Nehru. In Gandhiji's view, secularism stands for equal respects for all religions. At his prayer meetings, holy texts were recited from Gita, Quran, Zend Avesta, Granth Sahib and Bible, According to him, all religions are equally true and each scripture is worthy of respect. Nehru's idea of secularism was equal indifference to all religion and bothering about none of them. Under this ideology he wrote a special article in the constitution, banning religious instruction in any educational institution maintained by government. Such secularism, which means the rejection of all religions, is contrary to the culture and tradition and can do harm instead of good.

The state in independent India is officially secular as it is not allied with any particular religion or an instrument of any church. Yet, in practice the Indian state does not separate itself from religion, but tries to give a picture of itself as a neutral country by publicly recognizing all religions and their social practices. Religious rituals, often with a preference for the Hindu, form a part of public functions held under the auspices of the state.

No one can be prevented from choosing and defending secularism or agnosticism, as the affirmation of a humanism free from "absolute" ideologies. But we cannot avoid asking ourselves why for subalterns, in this case for Dalits, religion represents an important reality, expressed through both their adherence to various reformist movements within Hinduism (Bhakti, Vaisnava, Sanskritisation) or their conversion to other religions such as Islam, Buddhism and Christianity (Zelliot 2004). Even prior to judging whether their commitment to these movements and religions has effectively resolved their condition of

subalternity, one must question the reasons behind their choices and seek to understand their ultimate motivations (Díaz-Salazar 1991).

1.16.1 Secular India Engaging Modernity

Indian secularism is a creation of modernity and the idea of a modern nation-state, and it was supposed to guarantee the unity of India and the welfare of the citizens. Many of the researchers who specialize in Indian history and politics argue that secularism does not suit India. They find the reasons for the rise of communal feeling in modernity. (10)

India is a traditional society, and modernity, which was brought to India by the colonial power, has always remained an unfamiliar element to Indians and is seen as something threatening, as the 'Other'. Modernity has a role in the increase of communalist violence. Ashis Nandy claims that today, as India gets modernized, traditional tolerance is diminishing and religious violence increasing. In earlier centuries interreligious riots were rare and localized. Over ninety per cent of the riots begin in urban India, within and around industrial areas. (11)

According to T. N. Madan's view, modernity also replaces religion with modern, scientific principles. This triggers off an irreconcilable conflict between scientific secularism and religion. Religion, which has been marginalized in India, becomes a source of resistance to this alien world-view and sometimes curdles into bigotry and violence. Therefore, the demand for the removal of religion from public life within the secular framework, which is based on the mainstream Enlightenment view of religion, is irrational. Much of the fanaticism and violence associated with religion today comes from the sense of defeat of the believers, from their feeling of impotency, and from their free-floating anger and self-hatred while facing a world which is increasingly secular and desacralized.(13)

The rise of communalism confirms Rajeev Bhargava's assumption that secularism in the context of India is insensitive to religious people. By forcing people to think of their religion as a matter of private preference, it has uncoupled the link between religion and community, and deprives people of their sense of identity.(14) It has become more and more obvious that modernity is no longer the ideology of a small minority; it is now the organizing principle of the dominant culture in politics. The fact that religion, or as Ashis Nandy classifies it, religion-as-faith (15), dominates the normal life of Indians, is being pushed to the side in politics.

To conclude, Indian nationalism and Indian secularism are both attempts to come in terms with multicultural India. They both tried to unite the different ethnic groups and religions of India by forming an identity of togetherness: Indianness. For the unity of the country Indianness was supported by an Indian form of secularism. They both were aimed at guaranteeing the peaceful coexistence of the different religions and ethnic groups of India. Indianness was imagined, but it was not accepted by other Indian nationalisms.

This can be seen in the way the Indian state was alienating from the Indian society when it tried to unify the different communities under the state. Indian secularism denied the role of religion in everyday life situations in a way that communities could not accept.

1.17 Conclusion

Consequently, what can be deduced is that there never was and there never should be a discrete divide in the constructs of post colonialism, feminism and literature. Such a practice can be implemented through discourse. This calls for a deeper exploration of the nomenclature of postcolonial theory and cross-culturalism and an opening up new ‘signposts’ for collaborative discursive practices. To sum up, the postcolonial theory deals with cultural contradictions, ambiguities and perhaps, ambivalences. It repudiates anti-colonial nationalist theory and implies a movement beyond a specific point in history (i.e. colonialism). Hence, postcolonial theory is transnational in dimension, multicultural in approach and a movement beyond the binary opposition of the power relations between the ‘colonizer / colonized’, and ‘centre / periphery’. Overall, the rights and status of women have improved considerably in the last century; however, gender equality has recently been threatened within the last decade. Blatantly sexist laws and practices are slowly being eliminated while social perceptions of "women's roles" continue to stagnate and even degrade back to traditional ideals. It is these social perceptions that challenge the evolution of women as equal on all levels. The next chapter will deal with the dominant feminist thoughts and writings relevant in the corpus of one's research as well as identity construction and female selfhood relevant to the short stories of Truth Tales.

Notes to chapter one

(1) Burke is remembered today as an intellectual who distrusted reason, and as a political theorist who condemned theory. Profoundly moved by concrete injustice, he opposed any attempt to alter existing institutions on the basis of abstract principles, or to apply a "delusive geometrical accuracy in moral arguments". The best forms of government, he felt, were based on tradition: they had evolved through, and were tested by, time. This belief is the basis for his analysis of party politics,"Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents" (1770), and for his best-known work,"Reflections on the Revolution in France"(1790). Burke's fundamental ideas, his learning and capacious mind, and his mastery of a balanced, incisive style are well illustrated in his 'apologia pro vita sua', the "Letter to a Noble Lord"

(2) An event of outstanding importance to the Free World took place in Havana on January 3 of 1966. The Cuban capital was the site of what was probably the most powerful gathering of pro-Communist, anti-American forces in the history of the Western Hemisphere.

(3) The Organization of Solidarity with the People of Asia, Africa and Latin America (Organización de Solidaridad con los Pueblos de Asia, África y América Latina), abbreviated as OSPAAAL, is a Cuban political movement with the stated purpose of fighting globalisation, imperialism, neoliberalism and defending human rights. It publishes the magazine Tricontinental. The OSPAAAL was founded in Havana in January 1966, after the Tricontinental Conference, a meeting of leftist delegates from Guinea, the Congo, South Africa, Angola, Vietnam, Syria, North Korea, the Palestine Liberation Organization, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Chile and the Dominican Republic. Mehdi Ben Barka, the Moroccan leader of the Tricontinental Conference, disappeared the year before. One of the main purposes of the organisation is to promote the causes of socialism and communism in the Third World; for example, OSPAAAL strongly supported Hugo Chávez.[citation needed] Social development, which the organization says is a human right, is a recurring theme in OSPAAAL publications.

(4) Gabriel José de la Concordia García Márquez (American Spanish: [gaˈβɾjel ɣarˈsi.a ˈmarkes] audio (help•info); 6 March 1927 – 17 April 2014) was a Colombian novelist, short-story writer, screenwriter and journalist, known affectionately as Gabo throughout Latin America. Considered one of the most significant authors of the 20th

century, he was awarded the 1972 Neustadt International Prize for Literature and the 1982 Nobel Prize in Literature.[1] He pursued a self-directed education that resulted in his leaving law school for a career in journalism. From early on, he showed no inhibitions in his criticism of Colombian and foreign politics. In 1958, he married Mercedes Barcha; they had two sons, Rodrigo and Gonzalo.[2] García Márquez started as a journalist, and wrote many acclaimed non-fiction works and short stories, but is best known for his novels, such as One Hundred Years of Solitude (1967), The Autumn of the Patriarch (1975) and Love in the Time of Cholera (1985). His works have achieved significant critical acclaim and widespread commercial success, most notably for popularizing a literary style labeled as magic realism, which uses magical elements and events in otherwise ordinary and realistic situations. Some of his works are set in a fictional village called Macondo (the town mainly inspired by his birthplace Aracataca), and most of them explore the theme of solitude.

(5) R. K. Narayan (10 October 1906 – 13 May 2001), full name Rasipuram Krishnaswami Iyer Narayanaswami, was an Indian writer, best known for his works set in the fictional South Indian town of Malgudi. He is one of three leading figures of early Indian literature in English (alongside Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao), and is credited with bringing the genre to the rest of the world. Narayan broke through with the help of his mentor and friend, Graham Greene, who was instrumental in getting publishers for Narayan’s first four books, including the semi-autobiographical trilogy of Swami and Friends, The Bachelor of Arts and The English Teacher. Narayan’s works also include The Financial Expert, hailed as one of the most original works of 1951, and Sahitya Akademi Award winner The Guide, which was adapted for film and for Broadway. The setting for most of Narayan's stories is the fictional town of Malgudi, first introduced in Swami and Friends. His narratives highlight social context and provide a feel for his characters through everyday life. He has been compared to William Faulkner, who also created a fictional town that stood for reality, brought out the humour and energy of ordinary life, and displayed compassionate humanism in his writing. Narayan's short story writing style has been compared to that of Guy de Maupassant, as they both have an ability to compress the narrative without losing out on elements of the story. Narayan has also come in for criticism for being too simple in his prose and diction.

(6) Jean Francois Lyotard is undoubtedly one of the most important early theoreticians of postmodernism. Lyotard, a French philosopher, was commissioned by the

Council of Universities of Quebec in the late 1970s to do a survey of the state of knowledge in the Western world.

(7) They work on discourses and linguistic choices in both ex-colonized and ex-colonizer communities as each copes with the outcomes of colonialism. The construction of identities, the translation of religious texts, the discursive construction of nations, the use of indigenized varieties of colonial languages, and the emergence of diaspora communities are salient topics in postcolonial linguistics, and are treated here with great expertise by the authors. Their work complement and expand upon traditional descriptions of multilingualism

(8) People speaking Bantu and Swahili respectively

(9) Nederveen Pieterse's first major work on culture and representation is the 1992 study White on Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture. This interest is developed further in a volume co-edited with Bhikhu Parekh, The Decolonization of Imagination (1997). Particularly well known is Nederveen Pieterse's work on hybridity. The often cited article on 'Globalization as Hybridization' appears in his volume Globalization and Culture: Global Mélange (2003). A second edition appears in 2009. A sequel study is Ethnicities and Global Multiculture: Pants for an Octopus (2007) with probing treatments of ethnicity, social capital, multiculturalism, Islam and cosmopolitanism.

(10) Arjun Appadurai (born 1949) is a contemporary social-cultural anthropologist. In his anthropological work, he discusses the importance of the modernity of nation states and globalization.

(11) The term refers to the white dress shirts of male office workers common through most of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Western countries, as opposed to the blue overalls worn by many manual laborers. The term "white collar" is credited to Upton Sinclair, an American writer, in relation to contemporary clerical, administrative and management workers during the 1930s,[2] though references to "easy work and a white collar" appear as early as 1911.

(12) The Indus Valley Civilization (IVC) was a Bronze Age civilization (3300–1300 BCE; mature period 2600–1900 BCE) extending from what today is northeast Afghanistan to Pakistan and northwest India (see map). Along with Ancient Egypt and

Mesopotamia it was one of three early civilizations of the Old World, and of the three the most widespread, covering an area of 1.25 million km2. It flourished in the basins of the Indus River, one of the major rivers of Asia, and the Ghaggar-Hakra River, which once coursed through northwest India and eastern Pakistan.

(13) The Vedic religion is practiced in India. Its name is derived from veda which means knowledge or the action of knowing something. It was the religion of the Indo-Aryans of northern India.It is a historical predecessor of modern Hinduism, though significantly different from it. The Vedic liturgy is conserved in the mantra portion of the four Vedas,[6] which are compiled in Sanskrit. The religious practices centered on a clergy administering rites. This mode of worship is, largely unchanged, being practiced by a small fraction of conservative Śrautins who continue the tradition of oral recitation of hymns learned solely through the oral tradition.

(14) The Panchatantra is a legendary collection of short stories from India. Originally composed in the 2nd century B.C, Panchatantra is believed to be written by Vishnu Sharma along with many other scholars. The purpose behind the composition was to implant moral values and governing skills in the young sons of the king. The ancient Sanskrit text boasts of various animal stories in verse and prose. During all these centuries, many authors and publishers worked hard to make these fables accessible and readable by a layman. The grand assortment has extraordinary tales that are liked, perhaps even loved by people of every age group.

Jataka Tales, like the tales of panchatantra, are very old and have a long tradition of being passed on from generation to generation. These stories are stories of wisdom, and morals written around 300 BC in a language called PALI, which were later translated and distributed to people across the world. These stories are mainly about past incarnations of Buddha, and are meant to teach the values of self-sacrifice, honesty, morality and other values to a common person. These tales shows how good ultimately wins over evil.

(15) At more than 100,000 verses (seven times the length of the Iliad and Odyssey combined), the Mahabharata may be the longest epic poem in the world. Authorship is traditionally attributed to the sage Vyasa; modern scholarship has established its development over several centuries ending in the first century AD. The central theme of the Mahabharata ("Great Tale of the Bharatas") is dharma, especially the dharma of kingship.

The Mahabharata is most well known for the Bhagavad Gita, the single most popular Hindu text. The Bhagavad Gita ("The Song of the Lord") tells the story of King Pandu and his five sons and features a memorable appearance by Krishna, the popular incarnation of Vishnu.

The Ramayana ("March of Rama") was composed around the 2nd century BCE, but likely drew on preexisting oral tradition. It tells the epic story of Rama, the 7th incarnation of the deity Vishnu.

The Puranas are collections of mythology, hymns, ancient history, rules of life, rituals, instructions and knowledge, cosmology. Most attained their final written form around 500 AD. Today they are among the most commonly used scriptural texts. There are 18 Puranas, with six each dedicated to Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. In all the Puranas the goddess Lakshmi is given a prominent place without any sectarian dispute.

(16) Jawaharlal Nehru - Indian statesman and leader with Gandhi in the struggle for home rule; was the first prime minister of the Republic of India from 1947 to 1964 (1889-1964)

(17) it was an African-American abolitionist and women's rights activist. Truth was born into slavery in Swartekill, Ulster County, New York, but escaped with her infant daughter to freedom in 1826. After going to court to recover her son, she became the first black woman to win such a case against a white man. Sojourner Truth was named Isabella ("Bell") Baumfree when she was born. She gave herself the name Sojourner Truth in 1843. Her best-known extemporaneous speech on gender inequalities, "Ain't I a Woman?", was delivered in 1851 at the Ohio Women's Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio. During the Civil War, Truth helped recruit black troops for the Union Army; after the war, she tried unsuccessfully to secure land grants from the federal government for former slaves.

(18) As feminist writer Shira Tarrant has argued, a number of men have engaged with and contributed to feminist movements throughout history. Today, academics like Michael Flood, Michael Messner, and Michael Kimmel are involved with men's studies and pro-feminism.

(19)In 1963, Betty Friedan's groundbreaking feminist book, The Feminine Mystique, hit the shelves. In her book, Friedan discussed her discovery of a problem that had formed within post-World War II society that she called, "the problem that has no

name."The problem stemmed from the growing expectation that women in American society should enjoy the benefits provided by the new, modern, time-saving appliances and thus make their role in society exclusively based on maintaining their home, pleasing their husbands, and raising their children.

(20) Zora Neale Hurston is considered one of the pre-eminent writers of twentieth-century African-American literature. Hurston was closely associated with the Harlem Renaissance and has influenced such writers as Ralph Ellison, Toni Morrison, Gayle Jones, Alice Walker, and Toni Cade Bambara. In 1975, Ms. Magazine published Alice Walker's essay, "In Search of Zora Neale Hurston" reviving interest in the author. Hurston's four novels and two books of folklore resulted from extensive anthropological research and have proven invaluable sources on the oral cultures of African America.

CHAPTER TWO: Debating Gender and the Literary Genre

2.1 Introduction

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Notes to Chapter Two

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter displays the major concepts related to the basis of one's research whereas this chapter will offer a literature review of criticism on postcolonial Dalit women's writing in order to reclaim a plurality of female narratives and voices which are effective tools of change. The selected texts create female spaces through different themes and styles. Due to some similarities between postcolonial women's writing and Indian feminism, one is inclined to make connections between the selected texts and feminist theory in this chapter. These connections foreground the potential of postcolonial women's writing to theorize transformation and of its authors to be a useful bridge between the socio–cultural and the literary; that is, to occupy the position of literary activists and feminists who promote agendas of decolonization through the written word. Gender discrimination, Indian caste system, and social class are the main issues behind Dalit women oppression and suffering. These issues are not taken up by the authors of Truth Tales explicitly, but they are still relevant and so clear for the reader through the lines of the stories.

When one discusses Dalit exclusion it remains incomplete unless one takes into account a strong undercurrent of Dalit women and their condition as a part as well as a separate stream under the overall space of Dalit literature. With it, it can also be argued that any perspective on Dalit women is bound to be lop –sided unless one takes into consideration the peculiar socio-economic milieu in which she is placed. Dalit women are rightly seen as "thrice – subjugated as women, as Dalit women, and as Dalit women who perform stigmatized roles inside and outside her home.

2.2 Gender and Literature

Gender ideology is a much debated and pressed subject in literature. Globally, the role of gender plays out as such that the male figure acts as the sole provider, while also conducting himself as the head of the household, making major decisions that are only allotted to the paternal figure while female figure acts as maintainer of the household. The universal roles of men and women usually remain constant, however, as time progressed and changed, so did gender ideology among genres of literature.

Gradually, as the colonial period diminished, women began to have a voice as characters and as authors. Though not very popular in American literature, the struggles, hardships and concerns of women began to show up. Nathaniel Hawthorne, a renowned

Romantic author, generally used male characters to execute his ideal on "human nature about sin and guilt, and about the peoples of the intellect and the pleasures of the heart" (Hawthorne: 682). Presently in Africa, the realities of issues that affect the gender are being promoted by many authors in order to mobilize and sensitize females against the existing coded cultural dictates and policies that hinder the welfare of female.

Measures that relegate the female to the background on a second class cadre are now being discussed and strategies for protecting female rights and their fair treatment at all level of existence, (social, domestic, national, economic and political affairs) are now being articulated and accentuated as contributory seeds of change for gender inequality. This has gone a long way among the elites and educated ones in most postcolonial countries like Nigeria or India, for instance, but yielded low result among the vast majority of people especially, the illiterates.

The domestic responsibilities constitute ideology in the sense that it is the expectation of the African society that females should be responsible for domestic work as ideology itself is a set of ideas that constitute someone's goals, expectations and actions.

For illustration, the roles of female in African society are not the same if compared with that of male. This ideology has been the major dominants in the works of early African writers. For instance, in Things Fall Apart (1986), Chinua Achebe made this remark:

> You have not eaten for two days, said his daughter Ezinma when she brought the food to him. 'So you must finish this.' She sat down and stretched her legs in front of her. Okonkwo ate the food absentmindedly. 'She should have been a boy, he thought as he looked at his ten-year-old daughter.
>
> (Chinua Achebe.1986.P97)

For the fact that that Okonkwo appreciates Ezinma's concern for his wellbeing yet he still considers the fact that she is a female who is only in charge of domestic work while Nwoye, his son is not portrayed in the novel, as having anything to do with domestic works.

2.3 Masculinity vs Femininity

Femininity and masculinity or one's 'gender identity' (Burke, Stets and Pirog-Good 1988; Spence 1985) refers to the degree to which persons see themselves as masculine or feminine given what it means to be a man or woman in society. Femininity

and masculinity are rooted in the social (one's gender) rather than the biological (one's sex). Societal members decide what being male or female means (e.g., dominant or passive, brave or emotional), and males will generally respond by defining themselves as masculine while females will generally define themselves as feminine. Because these are social definitions, however, it is possible for one to be female and see herself as masculine or male and see himself as feminine. The sex / gender differences raise the issues of male – female; masculine and feminine, male associated with masculinity and female with femininity. With each construction the biological differences between men and women get translated into social terms and descriptions.

According to Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary (Sally Wehmeier), Masculinity is defined as "the quality of being masculine" while femininity is also defined as "the fact of being a woman; the qualities that are considered to be typical of women". The feeling of belonging to a gender, masculine or feminine, has different meanings: First, a biological meaning that refers to primary and secondary sexual characteristics; Second, a sociological meaning that has to do with real and symbolic roles that society attributed to men and women, and finally, psychological meaning that consider the ensemble of traits belonging to either gender. This has to do with individual mind as they consider the differences between man and woman in any society with their minds.

In western culture, stereotypically, men are aggressive, competitive and instrumentally oriented while women are passive, cooperative and expressive. Early thinking often assumed that this division was based on underlying innate differences in traits, characteristics and temperaments of males and females. In this older context, measures of femininity/masculinity were often used to diagnose what were understood as problems of basic gender identification, for example, feminine males or masculine females (Terman and Miles 1936).

Feminist writers argue that biological differences get heightened through social descriptions of masculinity and femininity. Patters of differences by gender is seen when the character is either masculine or feminine. For example, pink and blue are gendered colours, former regarded as "feminine" and the latter as masculine. Further to be "strong" and "tough" is masculine. Being "weak" and "soft" are associated with feminine character. There are several other traits that are categorized as masculine and feminine. Masculinity and femininity are concepts which signify the social outcomes of being male or female the traits and characteristics which describe men and women give men advantage over women.

Moira Gatens points masculinity is not valued unless performed by biological male. Some argue that these differences are based in their biology while others reject this argument and emphasize that the differences are socially constructed.

2.4 Feminism in India: a Post-Modern Trend

Traditionally, Indian Society is a male dominated and man has been regarded as a protector, a master and a guardian of woman. Generally women have been looked upon as being inferior to men. Women are always oppressed, suppressed and marginalized by men. They have been ill-treated and exploited in all walks of life. In her introduction to The Second Sex (1953)', de Beauvoir wrote: "*She is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her, she is incidental, the inessential opposed to the essential. He is the subject, he is the Absolute. She is the other".* (Beauvoir. 124)

The term 'Other' was originally introduced by Simone de Beauvoir, she argues that one is not born but rather becomes a woman. The general view appears to be that women had to be under the care of parents in their childhood, under the protection of husband in their youth, and in their old age they had to be under the control of their sons. Though she is a master figure in the family, she lived the life of slavery, suffering and suppression. Virginia Woolf, describes the woman's place in a male dominated world:

> *"A very queer, composite. Imaginatively she is of the highest importance-practically she is completely insignificant. She pervades poetry from cover to cover, she dominates the lives of kings and conquerors in fiction… Some of the most inspired words, some of the most profound thoughts in literature fall from her lips, in real life she could hardly read, could scarcely spell, and was the property of her husband".* (94)

Virginia Woolf shows how the woman is subjected to slavery and suppression. They are always recognized by a relationship like Kaku and Kaki, Atya and Vahini, Ajji and Mami which is relational to her father or husband or son.

In this patriarchal society, the standard of womanhood is set by men for women. The traditional role assigned to her has been that of a dutiful wife and mother. It was the Universal assumption that woman belonged to the home as wife and mother. Her entire life was devoted to her family and she remained in confinement within four walls. Marriage is considered a great ambition and ultimate goal of a young girl. Simone de Beauvoir points out that "Marriage is the destiny traditionally offered to women by the society" (1953.97).

The root cause of all the discriminations and bias that women face in their social, cultural, political and economic life rests in religion. It all starts from the religion and then stems outward.

2.5 Issues of Indian women's Emancipation

Indian women's emancipation was closely linked with two important movements, one a political movement of challenge and resistance to imperialism and the other, a social movement to reform traditional structures. The religious base on which these traditional structures rested was Hinduism, which had more or less acquired its present form in the 5th and 4th centuries BC. Hinduism has some characteristics that set it apart from other religious. It is not derived from a historical person not does it spring from any divine revelation. Some of these cults had their origins in the Vedic religion practical by the first immigrants into India from the north – west. Others had flourished among the people and were gradually observed into organized religion.

As society developed, various sub-castes grew up in association with different type of work. The continuance of the system was ensured by caste being made hereditary & the performance of one's caste duly being synonymous with righteous action. Inter-caste commensality and marriage were forbidden. The accent on heredity made the family the unit of society. Since the family was patriarchal, women were generally subordinate to men. Male children were greatly prized for important religions rituals could be carried out only by a son. The practice of self-immolation by a women on the death of her husband seems to have seen merely symbolic at the early stages, for these are reference to widow remarriage, but later, the practice of a widow burning herself on the husband's funeral pyre become real and widow remarriage was forbidden, women appear to have had some degree of choice in marriage in the early periods, as the story of Sita choosing Rama at a Svayamvara would appear to indicate. Later develop however, restricted this practice and made the choice of husband subject to caste and ritual practice and made the choice of husband subject to caste and parental control. However, it cannot be forgotten that a sizeable section of the population of India was not widow having converted to Islam.

2.5.1 Under British Colonial Rule

By 1823, almost all of India had either been directly annexed by the British or was under their indirect control through their alliances with princely states. The last aggression were the subcontinent might be more easily exploited and controlled, the British army was

strengthened, roads & railways are built, a civil service was formed to administer the country and the infrastructure of a colonial economy was established. The administration of these vast territories required local officials, and on English educational system was introduced to create this class. The first province to be subjected to these policies was Bengal, where the Hindu college was established in Calcutta in 18th.

That English education and involvement in government would favour the creation of westernized elite was to be expected to quote Macaulay (1) in 1835. 'We must do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions we govern; a class of persons Indian in blood but English in taste and opinion: Two factors worked against the whole – hearted adoption of this policy'. First, job opportunities for the British had to be kept open, and second the British feared that education of Indians world in the long term be determined to the continuation of their own control.

2.5.2 Post Independent Indian Women

When the independence movement began, men and women came together for the first time. Reformers like Raja Rammohan Roy, Mahatma Gandhi and Annasaheb Karve appeared on the social and political scene. After getting education, women began to realize the extent of injustice inflicted upon them. Literacy plays a dominant role in the improvement of women's status.

After independence, many Indian women novelists have raised their voice against the exploitation of women. Many men novelists have also portrayed women characters with great sympathy and understanding. It was started by Simone de Beauvoir in 'The Second Sex' (1949) and gained momentum in the 1960s. In the post-independence period women's liberation has gradually come about through education. Education became available to the masses and it changed the attitude of both men and women towards life. Modern educated woman is no longer a docile or meek but a career-oriented. In this post-modern era, women in spite of her career, she has to do household work for the family. De Beauvoir rightly says that even after the attainment of equality, women's ideational world would remain different.

The continuous assessment all over the world has been of women as important as men but no evaluation of women's position in society with other women. The enigma of plural societies like India, which face more social, political and cultural cleavages, is complex and uneasy to differentiate. Parkin notes in this measure:

> "For the great majority of women the allocation of social and economical rewards is determined primarily by the position of their families and, in particular, that of the male head. Although women today share certain status attributes in common, simply by virtue of their sex, their claims over resources are not primarily determined by their own occupation but, more commonly, by that of their fathers or husbands. And if the wives and daughters of unskilled labourers have something in common with the wives and daughters of wealthy landowners, there can be no doubt that the differences in their overall situation are far more striking and significant. Only if the disabilities attaching to female status were felt to be so great as to override differences of a class kind would it be realistic to regard sex as an important dimension of stratification."
>
> (Parkin, 1971, pp, 14-15)

In Indian context, - an Indian woman, a wounded woman, a raped woman, a woman who dares against women, woman who assumes the status of an actual heroine/ role model when she pulls down glitters from fabrics of rich and suave feminist minds by poking fun at their miserableness of being hollow inside.

2.6 To Claim the Specificity of Female Languages

Whatever the difficulties, women are inventing new kinds of writing. But as Irigaray's erudition and plays with the speaking voice show (as do Cixous's mischievous puns and citations of languages from Greek through German to Portuguese, and Wittig's fantastic neologisms and revision of conventional genres), they are doing so deliberately, on a level of feminist theory and literary self-consciousness that goes far beyond the body and the unconscious. That is also how they need to be read. It takes a thoroughgoing familiarity with male figureheads of Western culture to recognize the intertextual games played by all these writers; their work shows that a resistance to culture is always built, at first, of bits and pieces of that culture, however they are disassembled, criticized, and transcended. Responding to l'écriture féminine is no more instinctive than producing it.

Women's writing will be more accessible to writers and readers alike if it is recognized as a conscious response to socio-literary realities, rather than accept it as an overflow of one woman's unmediated communication with her body. Eventually, certainly, the practice of women writers will transform what we can see and understand in a literary text; but even a woman setting out to write about her body will do so against and through her socio-literary mothers, midwives, and sisters. We need to recognize, too, that there is nothing universal about French version of ‘écriture féminine’. The speaking, singing, story-telling, and writing of women in cultures besides that of the Ile de France need to be

looked at and understood in their social context if they are to fill in an adequate and genuinely empowering picture of women's creativity.

Feminist writers in Nigeria have used their works in economic, to advocate for work place rights, including equal pay and opportunities for careers to start business, maternity leave and against order form of gender specific discrimination against women. These feminist writers have helped in achieving some protections and societal changes through sharing experiences, developing theory and campaigning for rights.

The central idea of Buchi Emecheta's The Joys of Motherhood (1979) is feminism. She pursues the cause of women in her text by featuring and ideas dominant in her works. Buchi Emecheta, among others is an example of a prominent Nigerian female feminist writer who has contributed to the progress and spread of feminism in African literature. Emecheta through her novel The Joys of Motherhood has condemned the African culture that gives impetus to man and preaches the equality of both sexes. Through her writing she has succeeded in delving deep into the female mind and displaying the female personality.

Buchi Emecheta has used simple language in her novel The Joys of Motherhood. This is done in order to depict the feminist philosophy. There is however a lot of code switching and code mixing especially through the use of "pidgin English", a mixed and simpler kind of English spoken amongst the local centers of Nigeria e.g. page 93…. "No, no, sah! No police, sah! Na work me de find!. The language use suits the subject matter therein. She uses plain and simple language to report the event in the text. In place where words were difficult, the author interfered in order to explain the in depth meaning.

There is a communication barrier between the English, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. The language barrier shows a destitution in each other's race and class, due to this fact, there was the use of mixed proverbs from different cultures and tribes e.g. page 198: "… people come and people go …" this is an Igbo cultural proverb. Italization is also used to represent the inner representations of Nnu Egos thoughts e.g. page 177. These make the readers to sympathize with the protagonist Nnu Ego.

2.7 Dalit Women Confronting Invisibility

One suggests that the widely held perception of the Dalit woman as the 'Other' is the distilled impact of centuries-long alienation generated by ingrained patriarchal and Brahminical values at all levels in society, which in turn causes the high level of exclusion,

invisibility and structural and domestic violence which is the experience of Dalit women. Thus even among women, She belongs to the ‘lowest' category, as manifest in her condition of total social, physical, economic and political vulnerability. This is most clearly evident in the struggle for basic needs such as food or water, and in the submission to sexual violence for the sake of employment. Most Dalit families are landless and precariously dependent on the dominant castes for wage labour.

Knowledge creation has never been a smooth process for Dalit women. The bulk of information that has been created by their lived experiences could never appear as knowledge. The boundaries of their information dissemination were strictly defined. It could never take a shape of a structured knowledge and there are several reasons for that. To site few of them - their limited access to education, ability to comprehend their realities and articulate in public domain and the influence of internal as well as outer patriarchy. These are fundamental reasons, or let us say factors that have never allowed space to locate their issues in a manner that is 'politically correct'. Perhaps they have never been recognized as such. Thus their sublime confrontation with their invisibility remained subterranean and never appeared in public domain to masses in general and even within their own community in particular. If one views the same, even more critically, then, their confrontation has always remained sidelined by the 'mainstream'.

Dalit women have confronted their invisibility in several ways. An engagement on knowledge creation and hence recognition to the same is important. Considering Dalit women as an analytical category, the knowledge creation process in the context of critical knowledge is important. In social science oriented knowledge production or otherwise in the public domain and spaces, it is evident that Dalit women in their critiquing process did have some space. Dalit women as a category were analyzed and used to understand the subordination of mainstream women that led to sharpening the lenses of upper caste and upper class women comprehension of their self. Dalit women are more concerned with the context of Dalit women subjugation and how free are they to choose their partner unlike upper caste-class women. In this context it is important to note that Dalit women are being discussed and studied, not for themselves but for the understanding of subordination of mainstream women.

The understanding of the term Dalit women cannot be understood through the blanket understanding of women or feminist ideology, rather it has to be understood by contextualizing it, coming down to the lived reality of Dalit woman. A Womanist,

Genderist perhaps Dalit Womanist perspective is worth taking up; because there is a lapse in ignoring not only the category Dalit women but also Dalit community as it overshadows the issues of upper caste-class women.

Womanist perspective is necessary because Dalit woman were basically co-workers in production along with her male partner - the subordination which she was subjected too was not all by herself but her man was always there with her. The given context suggests that there is a need to have a knowledge system owned by Dalit women and recognition of their pre-existing knowledge system, because they do have one. Kumud Pawade in her narratives on Sanskrit as a language of upper caste argues "What I have to listen is to praise; I need to listen for praises"(2013.68), indicating what really has been created about "these others" from "those" privileged categories.

Another aspect to understand the Dalit women's reality is the Practice of Critical Knowledge (2) - a necessary critic on 'us' and 'they'. Provided there is a need to understand the notion of critical knowledge, it is basically for emancipation. This emancipation is not only for the oppressed but also the oppressor. The critique on 'us' and 'they' traces back to the analysis of several black feminists especially Dr. Patricia Hill Collins, Mcclaurin, Bell Hooks, Alice Walker and several others who used standpoint feminist epistemology as an approach while studying women of colour. It also proposes that 'we don't have to go for the emancipation of the subordinated but we also have to understand why these particular aspects have subordinated us'.

In India, various pedagogies are in practice to understand Dalits and different sets of people are studying the category Dalit. There are differences in the way they present their studies, findings and analysis. Each set of people produce information with different approaches. These categories or set of people can be referred to as - category of upper caste-upper class researchers, category of Dalits themselves the category of non-Indian or to be more specific, western whites.

2.7.1 Outcaste Women: A Feminist 'Vie'

When we discuss Dalit and Dalitism it remain incomplete unless we take into account a strong undercurrent of Dalit women and their condition as a part as well as a separate stream under the overall space of Dalit literature. With it, it can also be argued that any perspective on Dalit women is bound to be lop –sided unless we take into consideration the peculiar socio-economic milieu in which she is placed. Dalit women are

rightly seen as “thrice – subjugated as women, as Dalit women, and as Dalit women who perform stigmatized labour. Dr. Ambedkar saw the Hindu caste system as a pyramid of earthen pots which are put on one another. In this structure not only the privileged castes of Brahmins and Ksatriyas are at the top and Shudras and untouchables at the bottom but within each earthen pot “men are at the top and women of that caste are on the bottom like crushed and wasted powder. And at the very bottom are the Dalits and below them are the suppressed Dalit women.”

Thus on the one hand a Dalit woman shares with her male the deprivations and disabilities due to her position at the lowest ladder of brahminical hierarchical social order, on the other as a woman she has to bear the tortures and invisibilities which our patriarchal social order imposes upon the supposedly 'fair sex'. It has been her fate as a Dalit to bear threats of rape and violence from the hands of upper caste, upper class people.

While Dalit movement brought in its wake hope for a better treatment and equality, with the rise of identity concerns and community feelings it also increased the risk of objectification of Dalit women. While feminism asserting the female identity tended to ignore the peculiar socio-economic environment which made her experience different from the upper class female, the Dalit movement also cannot be absolved of the charges of showing strong patriarchal leanings.

The sexual freedom as granted to females is curbed by caste panchayats when it involves a woman who either elopes or gets pregnant. Most of the time adultery is settled within the home with husband beating the wife or wife quarreling with the other woman and abusing her. While the misadventures of man are either ignored or taken lightly, the burden of carrying honour of the family falls on the woman herself. Further, when such relationship involves a man of upper caste and woman of low caste, the woman invariably becomes the object of fury and censor and the responsibility of the man is conveniently forgotten.

2.7.2 “Movement” to "Development" The Case for a Dalit Womanism

The history of both women's and Dalit movements are five decades old. Most of the leaders of women's right movement do not like an idea of social, cultural and religious pluralism among women. Unfortunately, they wrongly believe that it is divisive and communal. Dalit women and women belonging to other minority groups hardly get any opportunity to hold key positions in such movements. Therefore, negligible presence of

Dalit women is seen in the activities and programs organized by the organizations leading women's movement.

It is important to view the movement among Dalit women from the perspective of the women's movement in India, which has been the major impulse for Dalit women to get organized. The women's movement has identified patriarchy as a system of graded subjugation and hierarchical relationships which specify women's oppression in terms of class, caste, race, religion and gender. Patriarchy defines not just women as the 'Other' - all those who are dominated over. The interlinkage of all forms of oppression and the double or triple oppression women face within patriarchal structures are the basis of political thought of a large section of the women's movement in India.

What has emerged as a political movement, therefore, is a new feminist paradigm which has challenged traditional ways of understanding and analyzing society and a totally new way of looking at what liberation of people and society implies. There is no doubt, whatsoever, that Dalit women can contribute significantly to both women's and Dalit movement in eliminating gender-based and caste-based discrimination respectively. Similarly, Dalit movement also needs strong support of the women's movement. Unfortunately, both movements are heading in two opposite directions concerning mutual help and cooperation. There is little understanding of the economic, religious, political and ideological isolation of Dalit women. This is certainly true of their experience in the mainstream women's movements, where most of them feel disillusioned and alienated.

What Feminism and feminists in India engaged with was far removed from the lived experiences of Dalit women. The agenda of feminism, as set by its very well-known, senior and experienced leaders, had little, if anything at all, to do with the lives of Dalit and other subaltern women. There was also some literature on the term Dalit Feminism but this to one's knowledge did not ring true because the one who wrote it was not a Dalit woman. Add to this the stereotype among scholars that Dalits are good at practical things like mobilizing crowds but not very good at theorizing, vividly satirized and categorized by Prof. Gopal Guru as Theoretical Brahmin and Empirical Shudra (2014). What was clearly needed in its place is an articulation based on the consciousness of the Dalit women themselves, their experiences of suffering, exclusion and thrice-removedness - isolation by virtue of gender, caste, and class – not to speak of religion, if one were a Muslim or a Christian Dalit.

In searching for this alternative, one discovered that black women had had similar experiences in the United States and Africa. So they came up with a new term – Womanism – to distinguish their struggles and experiences and used in a way that may be seen as tangential to feminism. It was one where women did not only see males as oppressors but also saw them as victims – of racism. Soon Hispanic women in Latin America had also found a term – Mujerita – to describe their own struggle for identity apart from feminism which appeared to dominate the academy and the movement for justice among women.

The Dalit Womanist paradigm will be invested with its own meanings from its own political and geographical location, just as Black/African womanism is imbued with its own meaning. Dalit Womanism will be broad enough to include the experience not only of the Dalit women in general, but also sensitive enough to provide space for the expression of the diversity of the experiences of religious minorities, tribal and ethnic identities who are presently termed subaltern, and there can be no stopping the process. It will not only build and shape theory, it will also learn to mediate the spaces as well as build solidarity between itself and the existing Feminist and Womanist thought and theory. It will also negotiate its differences with and build solidarity with men from Dalit and other subaltern and marginalized groups. Anyone who see the imperative need to change the paradigms of society from caste and patriarchy-dominated ethos towards a more inclusive and equitable society will realize its significance.

The statement has been in the public domain since mid-2006, having been posted on the website of the Women's Studies Department of the United Theological College, Bangalore. In its Preamble, it states:

> "At a time when nascent movements of the marginalised are under siege in India from the forces of dominant ideologies including Brahminism, majoritarianism, and globalisation, we feel the need to affirm that the voices of the marginalised and their aspirations should be reflected in the rich tapestry that comprises the Indian nation…It will work to strengthen the voices of Dalit women through building knowledge, working towards ideological clarity, and highlighting the values, visions and aspirations of Dalit Women…It will provide a platform for solidarity on these issues to grassroots activists, students and other civil society actors with a vision of a gender-just, non-casteist and equitable society."

The statement articulates the visions and aspirations of the members, and describes the unique vision of Dalit women who have decided that their experience within Feminism has not been positive, and that the climate within the Dalit movements was also

not as favourable as they expected. Hence they feel the need to come together to articulate their visions and build their own praxis and theory:

> *"We experience not just gender and class oppression, but also colour and caste oppression. While our men do oppress us, even they experience domination, which has its own impact on our experience of "otherness"…We therefore feel that we need a new language to define this state of being. We therefore coin the term Dalit Womanism to better define and understand our lives, because it affirms us in a more holistic way rather than the term "Feminism" which comes with a lot of baggage and which, further, fails to be inclusive enough of our aspirations and concerns*. (Ibid)

Thus, Dalit women are slowly attempting to come to grips with their invisibility in the discourse, and are beginning not just to speak out, but also to theorize and build wider solidarities so as to earn the place, hitherto denied, under the sun. Women writers are beginning to construct an identity out of the recognition that women need to discover, and must fight for, a sense of unified self-hood, a rational, coherent, effective identity.

For the upper caste woman, her family is her world and argues for self-modification centered on individual liberalism. On the other hand, for the Dalit woman, her community is her family an aimed towards the upliftment of the community. It is a widely held perception that Dalit woman considered as 'Other' and it is the impact of the centuries-long alienation and loneliness created by patriarchal and Brahmanical values at all levels in society, which in turn causes the high level of exclusion, structured and domestic violence which every Dalit woman experiences throughout her life. Thus, even among women, she is perceived as 'Other'. She belongs to the 'lowest' category manifested in her condition of social, physical, economic, and political vulnerability.

This is clearly evident in her struggle for basic needs such as food or water and in her submission to sexual and domestic violence. "There is no girl in our cheri who has not been coerced or raped by the dominant caste men when they go to the fields to fetch water or for work", confided a young girl from Southern Tamil Nadu to a Dalit woman activist recently". (Basu 124) In relation to women, it was emphasized that sexual oppression, economic exploitation, and socio-cultural subjugation are the sources of unequal gender relations.

Gayatri Chakrborty Spivak categorized women, non-whites, non-European and oppressed castes and frames them in the subaltern description in her 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' She brings forward series of questions regarding representation, resistance, cultural subjugation of the perspectives of marginalized, exploited, oppressed. She centers

the debate on the women as Satis on the husband's pyres absent as subjects and constructed as property and objects in the lengthy discussions of the representatives of the society. She says: "The Subaltern cannot speak. There is no virtue in global laundry lists with 'woman' as pious item. Representation has not withered away". (Spivak 4) Professor Gopal Guru in Theoretical Brahmin and Empirical Shudra said: *"This exclusion of Dalit women from the mainstream women's movement is not such a bad thing after all: it has caused them to start building their own praxis, identity, and agency".* (Basu 145)

Therefore, it was required to have a development of Dalit feminist theory and to define this state of being through Dalit female language. Thus, a new word was coined, "Dalit womanism" to understand Dalit woman's life in a better manner and try to transform them. Womanism defined as a consciousness, incorporates 'racial, cultural, sexual, national, economic and political considerations' whereas Feminism places priority on women.

Consequently, The Womanism of the Dalits will be entirely based on the lives, experiences, and consciousness of Dalit women. Thus, Dalit women are slowly attempting to speak out their traumatic experiences as well as theorizing their pain, their anger in their autobiographical writings.

2.8 Dalit Quest for Identity

Ambedkar tried to endow the lower castes with a glorious history of sons of the soil to help them acquire an alternative – not-caste based – identity, to regain their self-respect and overcome their divisions. In The Untouchables, who were they and why they became Untouchables? (1948), Ambedkar refutes Western authors explaining caste hierarchy by resorting to racial factors. His interpretation is strikingly complicated. He explains that all primitive societies have been one day or the other conquered by invaders who raised themselves above the native tribes. In breaking up, these tribes as a matter of rule give birth to a peripheral group that he calls the Broken Men.

When the conquerors became stationary then, they resorted to the services of these Broken Men to protect themselves from the attacks of the tribes which remained nomadic. The Broken Men therefore found refuge, as guards of villages, in the suburbs of the latter because it was more logical from a point of view of topography and because the victorious tribes did not accept foreigners, of a different blood, within their group. Ambedkar applied this theory to India by presenting the Untouchables as the descendants of the Broken Men

(Dalit, in Marathi) and, therefore, the original inhabitants of India, before the conquest of this country by the Aryan invaders.

According to Ambedkar these Broken Men were the most constant followers of Buddha soon after he began his teachings in the 6th century BC. And they remained Buddhists when the rest of the society returned to the Hindu fold under the pressure of Brahmins. Ambedkar drew two conclusions from it:

> "It explains why the Untouchables regard the Brahmins as inauspicious, do not employ them as their priests and do not even allow them to enter into their quarters. It also explains why the Broken Men came to be regarded as Untouchables. The Broken Men hated the Brahmins because the Brahmins were the enemies of Buddhism and the Brahmins imposed untouchability upon the Broken Men because they would not leave Buddhism."

(1997.98)

Thus, Ambedkar did not contend himself with elaborating a theory of castes which culminated in the idea of graded inequality; he also devised an untouchable tradition susceptible to remedy the former. If they recognized themselves as sons of the soils and Buddhists, the Untouchables could better surmount their divisions into so many jatis and take a stand together as an ethnic group against the system in its entirety. Omvedt underlines that by the end of his life Ambedkar was working on a grand theory of the origin of the Untouchables and the conflict between their civilization and Hinduism. The notion of autochthony played a key role in this theory. Ambedkar argued that if Hindu India had been invaded by Muslims, Buddhist India had been subjugated by Brahmins outsiders much before. Omvedt (3) considers that there was 'a racial ethnic element in all of this, in which Ambedkar identifies his heroes to some extent with non-Aryans, for instance, arguing that the Mauryan empire was that of the Nagas.

Dalit Consciousness has significantly influenced the lives of millions of Dalits by awakening them and inspiring them for self-realization of their identity as a human being beyond cast and creed. This Dalit awakening has been centrally focused in various vibrant and multi-faceted creative writings. The very presentation of literary consciousness by Bama is itself marked by the transformation of the untouchability consciousness into a dignified

2.8.1 Dalit Consciousness: Transformation for a 'Room of their own'

It is this subverted Dalit consciousness that inspires other Dalits to look beyond the traditional conventions and value their individual identity. Ambedkarite thought is the inspiration for this consciousness. Dalit consciousness makes slave conscious of their slavery. Dalit consciousness is an important seed for Dalit literature. It is separated and distinct from the consciousness of other writers. Dalit literature is demarcated as unique because of this consciousness.

Often the term, Dalit consciousness that resounds in the discussion of Dalit identity, has greatly influenced the lives of millions of Dalits. Though it is a complex term to be described, yet it is a general perception that Dalit consciousness is the awareness that makes Dalit realize of what they actually are and what they are said to be. The idea of a 'Dalit consciousness' is a central concept in both the creation and evolution of Dalit literature that has not only been restricted to just the themes of seclusion and resistance but it is also a living and breathing literary movement to awaken millions of Dalits.

Different Dalit writers, scholars and critics have defined Dalit consciousness differently. Some call it "a revolutionary mentality" whereas some others call it "deconstructive consciousness" (Breuck 350). But the essence that comes out of the different definitions is more or less similar in nature. These definitions refer to an underlying subversive spirit that challenges the oppressive and exploitative structures of Hindu Society mainly manifested in the caste system. This rebellious current aims to establish an egalitarian human society. Sharan Kumar Limbale, a reputed modern Dalit critic in his widely acclaimed Dalit critical book Towards an Aesthetics of Dalit Literature (2004) gives a comprehensive definition of Dalit consciousness: Dalit consciousness is the revolutionary mentality connected with struggle: it is a belief in rebellion against the caste recognizing the human being at its focus.

Today the Dalit voice has magnificently registered its presence at both international and national fronts. Its insurgence in modern times signifies the subversive spirit that questions the dominance of Brahminist ideology and this subversive spirit is focused in Bama's works.

Bama is among the most distinguished Tamil Dalit Fiction writers who own the credit to write the very first Tamil Dalit woman autobiography. She has produced works of immense value on gender, caste and marginalized sections of the society. Bama displays

the subversion of control of the power discourse from the hands of oppressive casteist masters to the Dalit masses. Being a Dalit, she centralizes the Dalit issues with a strenuous Dalit consciousness. The very presentation of literary consciousness by Bama is itself marked by the transformation of the untouchability consciousness into a dignified Dalit consciousness. It is this subverted Dalit consciousness that inspires other Dalits to create a 'room of their own'.

2.8.2 Dalits as "Subalterns"

Becoming "Dalit" is the process through which the caste subaltern enters into circuits of political commensuration and into the value regime of "the human." (Rao 2009, 264). one needs to take into account the development of the Gramscian concept of the sovereign state as "the protagonist of history" in relation to the "integral State" where both political and civil society intervene to preserve power for dominant groups through the hegemony of consent and coercion. There is a remarkable closeness between the two expressions "State as Protagonist of History" and the definition of subaltern groups as being "On the Margins of History," including slaves, peasants, religious groups, women, different races and the proletariat. It is clear that Gramsci has in mind "subaltern groups" both in Italy and in Europe, where a process of colonization was already taking place even prior to the development of a territorial colonialism outside Europe. In summary, Green writes "He wants to understand how the conditions and relations of the past influence the present and future development of the subaltern's lived experience" (Green 2002, 8).

According to Spivak, the discourse of Subaltern Studies is intrinsically flawed because it relies on British, nationalist and colonialist documents, in which subalterns leave minimal traces. If the representation of subalterns finds itself "inscribed" into the dominant discourse, Spivak concludes "the subaltern cannot speak." Clearly, this position dissociates itself from a Gramscian approach when referring to the search for "traces" offered by the subaltern.

Whilst the practice of 'sati' had been formally abolished in the Presidency of Bengal in 1829, only as late as 1833 did the British Parliament approve the "Slavery Abolition Act." In South Asia today, Dalits represent the quintessence of this reality, not only from an economic and social point of view, but also from an ontological perspective, touching the order of being and of human personhood. The main concern is that at the

basis of their subalternity there lies an ideology defining them less-than-human, which is then translated and ramified in very concrete terms in the daily life of Dalits.

For them subalternity becomes a spatial/territorial, economic, social, educational and, above all, religious/ontological segregation. This is also the poignant and powerful meaning of the word "Dalit" – "broken, downtrodden" . The adoption of the term Dalit as self-designation springs out of the awareness and perception of the oppression/humiliation (Guru 2009) they have to endure: the real subaltern in Gramscian terms. When the word Dalit is spoken by a non-Dalit it might have the character of a derogatory remark. Yet for Dalits themselves the term has become a place of resistance and a reason for struggle.

2.8.3 Doubly Subaltern

It is arguably said that Dalit women are doubly subaltern, both as women and as Dalit. Not only does the Dalit woman speak and talk, but she wants to be listened to through words, poetry, singing, dancing and working - and more precisely the always underpaid extra-work. Often the Dalit woman finds herself compelled to subtract a handful of rice from the family dinner, sell that rice and pay for her daughter's education, so that the latter will not like her, be illiterate, but will learn to defend herself from within and outside the group (Zene 2002). Besides inspiring a different understanding of "Dalitness" within their own communities, Dalit women have also motivated feminist scholarship to challenge Brahmanical feminism (Rao ed. 2003; Tharu 2003; Rege 2004, 2006; Narayan 2006), to address anew the "Caste Question" (4) (Rao 2009) and to postulate the Dalit as a "new political subject" (Rao 2008).

In their history these Dalit groups manifest moments and "traces" of self-consciousness of their subaltern condition and they offer palpable examples of resistance and a willingness to overcome subalternity – at different levels and to varying degrees – despite the persistence of "disaggregation, multiplicity and juxtaposition". It is a history that takes into account how Dalits express themselves, in order to manifest and overcome their subalternity through their own means and their meta-language: folklore, popular religiosity, so-called "superstitions", tales and myths, proverbs, music, dance, theatre, figurative arts, or what Boninelli (2007) calls "indigestible fragments"

During the past few years a major change has been taking place: the emphasis seems to have shifted from Dalits‟ mere awareness of their "oppression", towards the mobilization of consciousness as a 'transforming agent' of subalternity, and hence towards

a new path taking them from “desperate cries” to liberating action. This new line of thought, in addition to regaining the historic figures of the “Dalit question” – such as Jotirao Pule, Valangkar, Periyar, and Ambedkar (Chatterjee 2004)– addresses the formation of methodological concepts which, by revealing the many spheres in which subalternity is present, offer feasible solutions to overcome it.

2.9 Dalit Women thrice Discriminated by Myth and Hinduism

Dalit women are thrice discriminated, treated as untouchables and as outcastes, due to their caste, face gender discrimination being women and finally economic impoverishment due to unequal wage disparity, with low or underpaid labour. Among the untouchables, the status of women is further eroded and closely linked to the concept of purity. This is what the rigid, fundamentalist Hindu promotes through continuation of caste system, imposing the Brahminical values to maintain the caste system.

The creation of a number of Hindu religious books including the Manusmriti, Atharva Vedas, Vishnu Smriti, and many others like these and their strict compliance by the Brahmans (upper priestly Hindu caste), led to a society in which equality between men and women was far from existent (Agarwal: 1999). Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, an architect of the Indian constitution, also makes it very clear in his article titled “The rise and fall of Hindu woman” that the root cause of suffering for women in India are these so called Hindu religious books (Ibid.). Books like the Manusmriti divide people into a stratified caste system and promote inequality between men and women (Thind: 2000 and Agarwal). According to the Manusmriti, women have no right to education, independence, or wealth (Thind: n.pag). It not only justifies the treatment of Dalit women as a sex object and promotes child marriage, but also justifies a number of violent atrocities on women as can be seen in the following verses (Agarwal and Manusmitri):

- A man, aged thirty years, shall marry a maiden of twelve who pleases him. Or a man of twenty-four a girl of eight years of age. If (the performance of) his duties would otherwise be impeded, he must marry sooner. (Manusmitri IX.94)

- By a girl, by a young woman, or even by an aged one, nothing must be done independently, even in her own house.” (Manusmriti V.147)

- Her father protects (her) in childhood, her husband protects (her) in youth, and her sons protect (her) in old age; a woman is never fit for independence. (Manusmriti IX.3)

- Even the killing of a Dalit woman is explicitly justified as a minor offence for the Brahmins: equal to the killing of an animal (Manusmitri).

If the killing of an untouchable was justified as a minor offence, anyone can imagine the treatment they received throughout their lives.

In a male dominated society, Dalit women suffered unimaginable oppression, not only through caste, but gender too, from which there was no escape. The laws in the Manusmriti and other Vedic scriptures close all economic, political, social, educational, and personal channels through which Dalit women could be uplifted (Thind n.pag). The horrendous Laws in the Manusmriti were incorporated into Hinduism because they were favourable only to the Upper Castes, which form the majority of India. Even today, in modern times, we see the severe oppression and exploitation of Dalit women. The Laws of the Manusmriti have a devastating effect on the level of education reached by Dalit women.

2.9.1 Dalit Women's Sexuality under Cultural Forces

Culture, meanwhile, regardless of its history- traditional culture or modern culture- reflects positionality of peoples collectively with rules, values and norms. Culture is dynamic changes never static with identities and shared experiences. Family, religion, and education system used to be the main elements of culture. Culture is influenced by media. Rituals are always carried out by people, which are reinforcing the meanings of life. The traditional culture which is locally interacting, reconstitutes against this the cultural imperialism which is institutionalized which is the identity of cultural power. Culture of the Oppressed is to resist the culture of the dominant to bring freedom. Traditional culture has continuity of people's lives and respects moral codes adopted by people.

The stories of the oppressed revealed through symbols and practices. People's culture is a culture of multiplicity which is dominant over other culture. This involves a political structure which is decentralized sensitive to local culture. The alternative cultural politics leads to cultural and social change. India is, essentially, home for many cultures mutually enriching contact with each other. Indian culture has come from Dravidian culture. Indian culture is a living force. It has a significant role in moulding the culture of Asia.

The Hinduism History which has continued degrading Dalit women through dogmas and concept of purity, then, affects culture which can work as a catalyst for progress of Dalit women's living environment. With Sanskritization which is hinduization a dominant model, the ideals and beliefs of the Brahminic practices are imposed on Dalits

to adopt a life style with untouchability practices. Sanskritization is an alien faith to Dalits, the spirituality of Dalits is replaced by Sanskritic spirituality. The Dalit life is in continuation, that is, of dead and living are the integral spirituality of Dalit culture.

Brahminical culture endangers Dalits' identity and integrity. It enhances and annihilates Dalit culture instead of enriching the culture. The culture is reflection of resistance from the past to the present and moves to shape a blueprint for the future life which becomes a flowing stream. There is continuity of collective life in Dalit culture. In addition, modernization introduced consumerism and market economy which has destroyed ethos, value system, celebration, and affirmation of the culture of the people, particularly the culture of Rural Dalits. Traditional culture is a way of living and producing for life, to sustain life. But through imperialistic modern culture, the mode of production is set only for consumption. It is called as neo-colonization of traditional culture which is not the people's culture.

Meanwhile, what would be the question of duties of a wife? Who is the head of the family? Wives are devoted to their husbands and afraid of even mentioning the name of their husband. Barren woman considered to be "amangalam", bad women and inferior to others, to be a curse to the society. Puberty is viewed as 'flowering' stage in a girl's life, as pleasurable. Fertility, women are referred to mud waiting to receive seed. Woman in marriage are framed to be obedient and submissive wives. Motherhood is expected to be nurturing, fearful, good wives and bearers of worthy sons. Sexuality of fertility is socially permissible and sexual acts such as homosexual, lesbian behaviours are considered to be deviant, perverse and abnormal. Society allows multiple forms of sexual behaviour to co-exist practically but not socially. Erotic literature such as Kamasutra hints at the existence of homosexual desire and love.

Although it has been praised diverse of sexuality of the "human beings" at the one side of Hindu concept, Fundamentalist, Hinduism excludes plurality of the people even in sexuality. Particularly, lower caste, labouring women, who are Dalit women- are treated as the sexual "property" of the men of the all caste. The other caste women are treated as good and lower caste Dalit women as bad women because of Dalit women social status is low, subordinated that is why they are made to be sexually available to other caste.

Dalit women are marked as the coming of patriarchal Hinduism and its caste system into India institutionalized the oppression of the outcaste Dalits and this had a

particularly deleterious effect on women. The control on women's sexuality was essential for the development of a patriarchal caste hierarchy, both for the maintenance of caste and for the legitimation and control of inheritance. Restrictions of time, place and space were therefore imposed on women to ensure the purity of caste by avoiding the danger of inter-caste 'pollution'.

In Madurai every year Meenakshiamman the goddess is decked with the temple jewels and adorned in a new saree, then she is married to a male brahmanical god. But for the people, Meenakshiamman continues to be the real goddess, not the Brahmin god. Shital, also the goddess of smallpox, in another region rejects marriage and pregnancy symbolizing the local people's rejection of Brahmin attempts at patriarchal control of women's sexuality.

2.9.2 Negative Stereotype; Caught between Culture and Weakness

Culture ideas, symbols, norms and values play a significant role in the creation of women images and the differentiation of gender roles. India, a heterogeneous society, presents conflicting women images. The normative model image of Indian womanhood has displayed remarkable consistency. Images of women have not remained static and have undergone numerous changes. However, certain basic models have widespread acceptance.

Society suppresses the choices of males and females through cultural tyranny. The socialization process forces males and females into behavioral modes, personality characteristics, and occupational roles deemed appropriate by society. Most important, these constraints bring about system that is biased in favor of males. Men have the opportunity to develop their talents while women may only within a severely limited range. In this particular culture, imbalance and exploitation are so common that many people fail to perceive them.

Various cultural images of women: unconditional devotion to husband, Glorified Motherhood, female Image. First at the societal plane, the perception of different categories of women is distinctly shaped/conditioned by the popularly accepted female images/stereotypes. Secondly, at the interpersonal level within the family situation, these images frequently impinge in a variety of ways.

Indian girls grow up with deep rooted sense of fear and insecurity which not only restricts their social mobility in the mundane day to day life but also often psychologically cripples them to face the hardships of life in general and resist gender based discrimination

in particular. These gender dichotomies, flowing almost directly from the popular images fostered most significantly, these images in most Indian families. Most significantly, these images leave a deep imprint upon women's self-perception.

In Indian society, whether they belong to the majority or the minority group, what is apparent is that there exists a great disparity in the matter of economic resourcefulness between a man and a woman. Indian society is male dominated both economically and socially and women are assigned, invariably, a dependent role, irrespective of the class of society to which she belongs.

A woman on her marriage very often, though highly educated, gives up her all other avocations and entirely devotes herself to the welfare of the family, in particular she shares with her husband, her emotions, sentiments, mind and body, and her investment in the marriage is her entire life a sacramental sacrifice of her individual self and is far too enormous to be measured in terms of money. This sacrifice is mischievously embodied and engraved into the mindset of the society as the natural destiny of women by misinterpreting the benign mandates of various religions.

2.10 Postcolonial Indian Women's Autobiography: a New Vistas of Knowledge

The writing of autobiography forms its existence from the early 19th century in India. In the initial stage, the autobiographies of kings and queens were in existence. Later on the political leaders have started writing their autobiographies. In Indian English literature, very few Indian women writers have written their autobiography in the pre and post-independence era

Indian women writers have established a permanent place in the arena of literature, because they have written with a women's point of view. They have not initiated male manner of writing .Majority of Indian women autobiographies belong to the first category of autobiography described by Andre Maurois .They have expressed a genuine female experience .

According to Andre Maurois, autobiography is a prolonged speech for the defense and is of two types: one is where the writing is as interesting as novels and as true as the finest life. It has truth tone and a fidelity and impartiality in portraiture of a very high quality indeed. The best autobiographies are those, which expose the inner journey of the

self and depict the inner struggles of the person. It establishes a coherent and individual identity of the person.

The autobiographies from Sunity Devee's, The Autobiography of Indian Princess, (1921) Mrinal Pandey's Daughter's Daughter (1993) and Taslima Nasserin's My Girlhood Days express the inner search of women with women's point of view. Until the end of nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, women autobiographies lacked an authoritative voice to speak. They could speak only of family or religion.

In the later part of twentieth century, we find autobiographies of Amrita Pritam The Revenue Stamp, Kamala Das My Story, and Shobha De Selective Memory. As well as the other modern women, writers like Dilip Tiwana, Saranjeet Shan, Mrinal Pandey and Bangladeshi writer Taslima Nasrin. They have boldly expressed the social inhibitions and cultural taboos laid down by the society .Their autobiographies have a tone of truth and fidelity.

Women writers like Vijayalaxmi Pandit, Krishna Hutheesing and Nayantara Sahgal have written their autobiographies about the Indian struggle for freedom. Hence, their autobiographies have political learning's too. The autobiography depicts the hidden form of inwardness 'and the writer has to establish the portrait of the self in the public eye.

There are many women in India, who have felt the urge to express their inner selves to the reading public. These women have been lawyers, political activists, women from royal families and so on. There is a remarkable distinction between the writings of a woman and a man. This is evident not only in India but round the world as well. The Autobiography of an Indian Princess (1921) is one of the earliest writings by an Indian woman. The book is a stepping-stone in the realm of Indian women autobiographies as it depicts the inner feelings of most of Indian women of 19th and 20th century.

Another remarkable woman autobiography is India Calling (1934) by Cornelia Sorabji. It is the autobiography of India's first woman lawyer, who raged a struggle against the suppression of women. Krishna Hutheesing, With No Regrets: an Autobiography (1943) is an account of memories and reminiscences. Her autobiography has been termed as a simple picture incarnated in a simple frame. Sarojini Naidu also considers this autobiography as a simple and intimate depiction of the events.

The famous autobiography of Indira Goswami is titled as The Unfinished Autobiography which describes the problems faced by an upper caste woman who is expected to behave according to the set by the patriarchal society. She demonstrates her resistance towards unjust religious customs and practices in India. She shares her experiences as a young widow and questions the patriarchal Hindu society for its cruel behavior towards widows. She went against society to find her own independent existence. In her anxieties to search for peace, she visited a number of sadhus and sanyasis but to no avail. She mentions, "The sight of the holy saint could not bring any change to my heart. I (have) no desire left to go … and ask for his guidance". (1988)

Goswami also expresses resistance towards widowhood in her autobiography. She shows contempt towards society's attitude against widows. She describes how widows in Vrindhvan known as 'Radheshymis', were poor and survived on a meager wages that they earned from singing Bhajans in temples.

India achieved freedom in 1947. Hence, forth began a new era of challenges and changes in Indian life. The new social scenario inspired creativity of the Indian writers in English as well as other regional languages. Once the country achieved freedom and the society gained stability people became candid and self-assertive. The social upheaval got expression not only in the poetry and fiction but also in the autobiographies. The autobiographical genre got a new meaning and open up new vistas of knowledge for all.

After independence, more and more Indian women were feeling confident in expressing themselves through life narratives. Ishwani pseud is another writer catch the attention of the readers with her autobiography Girl in Bombay (1947) The book reveals the writer's determination to pursue her own religion that is Shiya Khoja creed rather than pursuing religion of her husband that is Afghani Khoja. She becomes determined that she divorces her husband Rashid.

Similarly, another autobiography written by a famous Bengali actor Binodini Dasi shows subversion and resistance to the norms and conventions of patriarchal society. Like Goswami, Binodini asserts her individuality repeatedly in her book .Despite of the fact that she was very young as an artist; she very confidently presented herself in front of her senior actors. Just like Sunetee Devee, Shobhila Das was another girl who loved to dress up like a boy. Nevertheless, her life story A Looks Before and After (1956) does not express any feeling of inferiority for being born a girl.

Women writers across the world have used memoirs, rather than the grand narratives of autobiography, to express their lived reality. In fact, some view the genre as a 'female gendered act that exposes the duplicity of patriarchy and the sub-human, subaltern status accorded to women in male dominated societies.

Ismat Chagatai's A life in Words is another memoir representing a powerful woman's history. Ismat was born rebel as she says, "There is something in me that militate against putting faith in anyone uncritically… One should first examine all points of disagreement before coming to a consensus.''(p 49)

Mostly known for her path-breaking stories like Lihaaf or Chauthi Ka Joda, Ismat was castigated as vulgar by her contemporaries. Her memoir Kaghazi Hay Pariah,' first published in full in 1994, and now translated as A Life in Words, offers a glimpse into the turbulent and unconventional life of the author who refused to be bogged down by societal norms.

Likewise Truth Tales consist of women autobiographies which, in fact, open with the statement of how social conditions are organized by gender with women being "a problem." In asserting such a condition to start, the reader understands fairly quickly how this is going to be challenged throughout the story. The idea of the narrators not readily accepting how females are seen in the specific social order helps to bring out that there is an eventual or demanding of rights. The mere depiction of such a social order is done so to bring attention to the challenges of being a woman in India, and can be broadened to throughout the world. The women writers have been able to demonstrate how fighting for one's rights and asserting one's own sense of self in such a condition is the only way to approach this reality.

2.11 Translation; a Matter of Contextual Consistency

Evidently, 'prose-translation' is the translation of novels, essays, fiction, short stories, comedy, folk tale, hagiography, works of criticism, science fiction etc. It is a type of literary creativeness where the written-work of one language is re-created in another. It is an inherent idea that the translation of poetry is very problematic, yet one has to agree that the translators also have to face lots of difficulties when it comes to translating prose. For example, the Wycliffe Bible (ca. 1382) was the original grand English translation and it illustrated the flaws of an English prose that was weak in nature. The great epoch of English prose translation started at the closing stages of the 15th century with Thomas

Malory's Le Morte d'Arthur, which was an adaptation of Arthurian romances and we can scarcely call it a proper translation. Accordingly, the earliest great Tudor renditions were the Tyndale New Testament (1525), which impacted the Authorized Version (1611), and Lord Berners' version of Jean Froissart's Chronicles (1523–25).

However, when the source and target languages belong to different cultural groups, the first problem faced by the prose-translator is finding terms in his/her own language that express the highest level of faithfulness possible to the meaning of certain words. For example, there are some words that are related to typical fabrics, cookery specialties, or jobs; they also represent specific culture and the translators should be very careful in translating such words. They also find it difficult to render ambiguous puns. Similarly, the titles of stories and novels provide many examples of such ambiguities, which are hard or even impossible to translate.

Many people think that the translation of literary works is one of the highest forms of rendition because it is more than simply the translation of text. A literary translator must also be skilled enough to translate feelings, cultural nuances, humour and other delicate elements of a piece of work. In fact, the translators do not translate meanings but the messages. That is why, the text must be considered in its totality. Alternatively, Peter Newmark (1988) delineates translation as "rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text" (p. 5). A further point is that there are examples in which the source text contains 'facets' that are advocated in an apt manner by Lawrence Venuti (1995): "…discursive variations, experimenting with archaism, slang, literary allusion and convention" (p. 310).

Language has more than a communicative, or societal and connective purpose in literary-prose translation. The word works as the 'key ingredient' of literature, i.e. it has an arty function. A tricky course of action emerges between the start and the conclusion of an innovative work of translation, the 'trans-expression' of the life incarcerated in the framework of imagery of the work being translated. Hence, the problems in 'prose-translation' are within the area of art and they depend on its particular laws.

In brief, to translate is to pour meaning from one vessel to another one that is equivalent to the first whereas prose represents ordinary speech or writing, without metrical structure. It indicates "words in their best order" (Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, 1913). In other words, "Everything that is not verse is prose" ("Le Bourgeois

Gentilhomme", 2010). So, concerning the mentioned definition, one can say that "thinking is translating 'prosaic-ideas' without accessories" since ideas (in brain) do not follow any metrical composition.

Walter Benjamin (1996) presents the idea that a translation does not indicate an original text, it has no relationship with communication, its purpose is not to carry meaning, etc. The work of writing does not merely imitate or copy, but rather strives to extract and convey the essence of the previous text. But, it is not the message that is passed along in the good translation. He shows the relationship between the supposed original and translation by using the symbol of a tangent: translation is like a straight line or curve, which touches the circle (i.e. the original) in one single point and follows its own way later.

At the very beginning, the translator keeps both the Source Language and Target Language in mind and tries to translate carefully. But, it becomes very difficult for a translator to decode the whole textbook literally; therefore, he takes the help of his own view and endeavours to translate accordingly. So, translation can be 'servitude' and 'freedom' (Vieira, 1999: 111). It is broadly accepted that 'the original text', 'the translated version', 'the language of the original' and 'the language of the translation' are constantly transformed in space and time.

From the perspective of 'position', "Spivak talks about the race and power dynamics involved in the prohibition of sati in Can the Subaltern Speak? (Sharp, 2008: Chapter 6). She often focuses on the cultural texts of the 'marginalized' by 'dominant western culture': the new immigrant; the working class; women; and other positions of the 'subaltern' (Spivak, 1990: 62-63); "... subaltern is not just a classy word for 'oppressed'" (De Kock, 1992: 29). We never hear from the sati-performing women themselves. Similarly, a question can be raised- Can the translator speak? Sometimes, the translator can talk especially when the go-between (translator) becomes a get-between through the act of paraphrasing. Nonetheless, numerous publishers, reviewers and readers accept a translated text if it is fluently readable, if it reflects the foreign author's individuality or purpose or the fundamental sense of the foreign book - that the translation is not a translation in reality, but the original.

In the end, since translation is simultaneously a theory and a practice, the translators, beside dealing with the difficulties inherent to the translation of prose, must

think about the artistic features of the text, its exquisiteness and approach, as well as its marks (lexical, grammatical, or phonological). They should not forget that the stylistic marks of one language can be immensely different from another. “As far as the whole text is concerned, it is simply impossible to transfer all the message of the original text into the target text” (Yinhua, 2011: 169). However, the translators can try to find equivalence in translation and show the cautious nature of their assertions accordingly and request the readers to join and select which translation renders the thoughts, notions and words of the original text correctly.

2.12 Conclusion

This chapter has explored a number of key feminist issues which informed the theoretical background of the research. The chapter also highlighted the tendency of some critics to use the term “Womanism” as an expression of female diversity and specificity. Consequently, women from several developing cultures adopt various methodologies in order to theorise and challenge oppression. In this sense, postcolonial women writers occupy the positions of literary activists and feminists who promote agendas of decolonization through the written word. Consequently, the concerns of feminism need to be developed by a return to the texts of Third World women writers in order to revive agendas of change in light of the authors’ critical interventions. A critic of the women's movement would quickly remind us that women have a right to decline marriage and sex, and pursue their individual interests. However, one would argue, in the previous discussions, that the social pressure women must endure if they do not conform to their expected role is unfair. The problem goes beyond social conformity and crosses into government intervention. The next chapter will focus on the thematic study of the Truth Tales through which Dalit women voices and the characters' silences in the autobiographies echo to be heard inside their homeland and, hopefully, far away outside it.

Notes to chapter two

(1) Macaulay has two principal research interests in Brazil and Latin America. These are (1) gender policies and politics (2) criminal justice reform and human rights. In both cases she is interested in the interface between organised civil society and the state, and the way in which specific political institutions and governance arrangements (political parties, decentralisation) impinge on the capacity of civil society groups to affect policy and reform the state.

(2)Practice of Critical Knowledge is grounded in the concepts of critical theory. Consultants employing critical practice skills aim to help people improve outcomes. Analysis is applied to groups working in a particular area of expertise and with identifiable practice skills, and usually to a defined range of problems and situations. Thus, practice tends to be based on a restricted view of people and their problems with a limited range of values applied in that practice.(wikipedia)

(3) Omvedt endorsed the stand taken by Dalit activists at the 2001 World Conference Against Racism that caste discrimination is similar to racism in regarding discriminated groups as "biologically inferior and socially dangerous"(From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)

(4) Caste Question innovative work of historical anthropology explores how India's Dalits, or ex-untouchables, transformed themselves from stigmatized subjects into citizens. Anupama Rao's account challenges standard thinking on caste as either a vestige of precolonial society or an artifact of colonial governance. Focusing on western India in the colonial and postcolonial periods, she shines a light on South Asian historiography and on ongoing caste discrimination, to show how persons without rights

CHAPTER THREE: Thematic study of Truth Tales; from and for Dalit Community

3.1 Introduction

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3.21 Muniyakka's Plight as a Wife

3.22 Conclusion

Notes to Chapter Three

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter tried to find the conceptual notions through which one's work is framed. The temptation made clarification on postcolonial theories and literature in addition to an understanding of the Indian context and its diversity. However, one's main aim in this chapter will be to analyze and discuss if any of the females are discriminated against due to their sex, and to explore how they manage to develop into independent women. The fact, that the main female characters live in different situations, makes the subject particularly interesting. There also seems to be a strong relationship between the three concepts of caste, class and gender, and several issues are therefore discussed.

As to one's method, Truth Tales will serve as one's foundational text in this chapter, as this novel gives a rich and detailed picture of many strong, female characters who struggle for their lives and dignity. The male characters of the stories will be considered when important points are illuminated or seen in relation to the female figures. Hence, in order not to repeat oneself, the concept of gender, caste and class will be explored through literary connections which are suitable for promoting the themes.

3.2 About the Truth Tales

The Truth Tales, originally published by Kali for Women, is an inaugural anthology of Indian women's writings, and serves a fitting prelude to the two-volume collection _Women Writing in India: 600 B.C. to the Present_ also published by the Feminist Press, in 1991. The seven short stories in the ensemble--six in English translation from regional languages Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Marathi, Tamil and Urdu, and the seventh an English original--provide a miniature sample of contemporary fiction by distinguished writers.

Cutting across lines of class, caste and gender, the plots revolve around women negotiating their survival in a difficult world. The deep feminist engagement of the writings derives from the authors' inquiries into diverse topical issues of social injustice, sexuality, mandates of culture, and the material struggle for many living on the frayed edges of society to stay alive.

Therefore, the novel creates a Dalit feminist perspective and explores the impact of discrimination – compounded above all, by poverty – suffered by Dalit women. The economic precariousness of Dalit women leads to a culture of violence, oppression, and

discrimination, and these are themes that run through the book, women fight back. Truth Tales is primarily about a community's identity; not about the single self.

Truth Tales points out how Dalit women are always the most vulnerable, even when educated, economically independent , and choosing to live alone. This novel is written in colloquial style, which overturns the decorum and aesthetic of upper caste, Urdu, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Marathi, and Tamil; the novel seeks to tease out a positive cultural identity as Dalit and women who can resist upper caste norms. It gives an account of Dalit women's dual oppression on account of gender and caste as well as other discriminated situations of womanhood in Dalit culture.

Truth Tales explores the female subjugation and subordination in a great way. Truth Tales is also about Dalit feminism. It also encapsulates the authors' experience of working within a heterogeneous and oppressed society and the series of several interconnected anecdotes, experiences, news, and events as narrated in the book, from an autobiography of a community.

The power structure of their society mainly concerned with men or patriarchy. The caste courts, churches, or mosques are male dominated and rules for sexual behavior are very different for men and women. Even if the Dalit are converted to Christianity or Islam the prevalent system in these religions did not practice what Christians and Muslims say of equality before God.

The novel gives a picture of the female subaltern and the marginalized. They work hard both outside and inside. They work restlessly. No one cares for them and they become mechanical in every corner of life. Individuality, freedom, and even the self and self-consciousness are lost under the male patriarchal domination both inside and outside at home.

Obviously all of the writers use the language of the Dalit in a very realistic manner. Such a language can be seen in the resistance as well as the struggle which happen in Dalit marital life. Here in Truth Tales Vishwapriya Iyengar, the writer of the short story Midnight Soldiers, gives a clear picture of that society:

> His eyes contorted with pain, he spluttered for words spraying her face angry spittle, a mouth deformed in trying to scream wordless thoughts about dying wombs and the barren sea mother, Kaddallama. She could not fathom his fury. Was it rage at some unknown hands turning the secrets of his woman's

> womb? She asked. He stumbled upon her like a wild animal and beat her with wide palms, a possessed man keeping up the rhythm of his demon.

(PP.195- 196)

The publisher herself stands for Dalit feminism and the emancipation of the Dalit community. It is now clear that through Dalit women autobiographies; there is a transformation of women's rejection into resistance.

3.3 Dalit Literature in Focus

There is a need to examine and evaluate Dalit women's historical experiences from the perspective of caste, economic class, politics, and patriarchal angles, aimed towards the transformation in work, wages, and family life. Not only patriarchy and caste but also class divides Dalit women.

Dalit women considered to be the most underprivileged group left out at the bottom of the hierarchal caste society for centuries. In centuries to Dalit men, they suffer more to their dual oppression: being Dalit and being woman. Being Dalit, they suffer due to caste discrimination and being a woman, victimized by the patriarchal social order both in their homes as well as outside. Dalit women believed to be alienated at three levels; caste, class, and gender positions.

Dalit women have been misrepresented in Indian literature and Indian English literature. Most of the upper caste male writers are biased towards Dalit women. They are portrayed as the victims of the lust of the higher caste men and never as rebels to fight against the injustices perpetuated upon them. Even in the writings of the progressive writers such as Mulk Raj Anand, Premchand and so on- Dalit women are either molested or raped by the upper caste men. By depicting such pictures, writers gained sympathy for the victims but such routinely kind of treatment is not enough. They have completely ignored the fact that Dalit women can also resist and fight back like any other victim of social oppression to guard their dignity. Thus, in these literatures, a Dalit woman is never a fighter but always a victim. In order to counter- struggle the misrepresentations of Dalit women in Indian English literature, the first generation of Dalit writers constructed Dalit women in Dalit literature writes:

The female characters in Dalit Literature are dynamic and not static. Dalit writers do not look upon widows, prostitutes, depraved women, as Dalit, the exploited, with compassion alone; but they make them towards radiance. In the stories and novels of

Annabhau, Shankar RaoKharat, BaburaoBagul and others, though the nature of the struggle of woman in the beginning is individual, later it becomes class conflict

> *... As a consequence of this, Dalit female characters end the journey of deep darkness and behold dreams of sunrise… They fight for truth and for themselves. They revolt to protect their self-respect… The revolt of Dalit women is not person-centered but society-centered… That is why Dalit writers do not portray Dalit women as hollow identities, overflowing with love as embodiments of sacrifice.*
>
> (Prasad 46)

Unlike Dalit men, only a few Dalit women have written their autobiographies, their narratives of pain. Most of them have been written in regional languages and they have hardly been translated into English. The position of Dalit women is as marginalized in Dalit literature as they are in their community. Education gave them the chance to narrate their voices of distress, and sorrows in their autobiographical writings. The contribution of Dalit women writers to Dalit Literature is significant. From the onset, the writings of Dalit women represented their own experiences and burning indignation. After a period of century, Dalit women started awakened and giving literary expression to their sufferings.

The Dalit woman is a Dalit amongst Dalit. She has suffered and still suffering. She should walk through the burning desert of casteism in search of their true identity. Bansode says that it is due to casteism that Dalit women are being dishonored and molested. In one poem, she lodged a complaint in the People's court in search of justice, but at last she attacked the inhuman game of oppressors:

> This complaint of mine is against the orthodox culture which has imprisoned us in a sealed room, which has given us the charity of life completely boycotted. Where the wind treats us as strangers, where the Monsoons give us only famines where the water plays with us the most inhumane game of mirage. We are rejecting this unclean and poisonous life. And to escape from these cruel curses will you give me a bright and auspicious moon? My countrymen, to your court I have brought a complaint. Will you give me justice?
>
> (Barbara R. Joshi. P.86)

Brutal patriarchy is a major issue discussed repeatedly in Dalit feminist discourses. However, the viewpoints of some Dalit male intellectuals are contradictory. Dalit feminism is considered as the 'discourse of discontent', 'a politics of difference' from the mainstream Indian feminism, which has often been critiqued for marginalizing Dalit women. Dalit feminist discourses not only question the mainstream Indian feminism's hegemony in claiming to speak for all women, but also the hegemony of Dalit men to

speak on behalf of Dalit women. Many women writers aknowledge the reason behind bama's writing, particularly when she said:

> *My mind is crowded with many anecdotes: stories not only about the sorrows and tears of Dalit women, but also about lively, rebellious culture their eagerness not to let life crush or shatter them, but rather to swim vigorously against the tide……. About their hard labor, I wanted to shout out these stories.*
>
> (Limbale 119)

In such scenario, Dalit writers like Bama, Gunasekhran, UrmilaPawar and many more Dalit women writers themselves taking pen in their hands articulating and recording their experiences of humiliation and hurt subverts centuries of old historical neglect and a stubborn refusal to be considered as a subject. Adhering to the same mainstream, Mahaswet Devi, Ila Mahta, Suniti Aphale, Mrinal Pande, Lakshmi Kannan, Ismat Shughtai, and Vishwapriya Iyengar, map the intersection of sexuality and survival in a context outside of prostitution in Truth Tales. Moreover, Meena Alexander's Introduction provides a crisp but somewhat simplistic contour of the social and cultural contexts germane to the stories for unfamiliar readers. Together with its sequel The Slate of Life, the Truth Tales is a valuable addition to the archives of women's writings.

3.4 Women, Writers and Publishers

In 1998 when Manjula Padmanabhan won the Onassis International Cultural Prize for her play Harvest, the first publisher to step forward with an offer to publish her work was the small feminist press "Kali for Women". Publisher Kali for Women had earlier published a collection of Padmanabhan's short stories and in both instances, a number of mainstream publishers had been doubtful of the wisdom of these enterprises for short stories and plays are not hot sellers in the world of publishing.

Today, Publishing had, for many years, remained a 'gentlemen's profession'. Not only were many publishing houses run by men, but most of their writers too were men, and indeed the subjects they chose to write about were mostly 'male'. 'Women's issues' as they were known then, were seen to be rather 'soft' subjects, and certainly not serious enough to merit being put into books.

Today, virtually every publisher who would like to be seen as a 'serious' publisher has a list of books by and about women. Many of the most successful authors internationally are women and this is the case in South Asia as well. Indeed when Arundhati Roy won the Booker Prize for her novel The God of Small Things, and Manjula

Padmanabhan won the Onassis International Cultural Prize for her play Harvest, they were joining an established list of writers, some of whom may not have won prizes, but are well known nonetheless.

Today most publishers will agree that women's books-whether in the field of fiction or non-fiction-sell better and faster than most others on their lists. Writers have been published both by women's publishing houses and by others. In India the year 1984 saw the setting up of the first feminist publishing house in the country, "Kali for Women". Focusing on southern writers, Kali began to publish academic and trade books, as well as pamphlets etc., for use by women's groups.

Although small in number, this handful of houses has made a major contribution by enabling the voices of women to be heard. Initially, they built upon the work already being done by women's groups and produced books and pamphlets on issues of concern to women's movements. But gradually, they also began to expand on this field and brought in women's creative writing, as well as general books. Both Kali and Simorgh, for example, have begun publishing reprints of books by women, classics which were published in the early part of the last century. In the field of fiction they concentrated on translations from South Asian languages into English, which is one of the main publishing languages of the subcontinent.

Writers like Ismat Chugtai—whose work was censored by the British—Quratulain Hyder, Khadija Mastur, Zohra Segal, Mahashveta Devi, and a younger group with names such as Geetanjali Shree, Anita Agnihotri, Bulbul Sharma, and many others were published by women's publishing houses and became known through their work.

3.4.2 Producing and Disseminating Knowledge about Women

When placed against the mainstream publishing industry this handful of publishing houses and groups does not seem to add up to much. But there is little doubt that their contributionhas been significant. The production and dissemination of knowledge by and about women has been one of the key ways in which feminist writers and publishers have intervened in the debate on women. Such knowledge has helped to create a fairly solid information base about one half of the world's population, and to ensure that they are not left out of the world's reckoning.

Queer Theory, Women's Studies, or what we call writing from the margins, have acquired the importance that they have today largely as a result of the efforts of women's

publishers. Many a feminist publisher will testify that perhaps the hardest part of the task of such publishing is to convince women that their writing and their thoughts are worth publishing. Because the kinds of subjects women have often written about have been seen as somehow occupying an 'inferior' space in the hierarchy of knowledge, many publishers have seen fit to dismiss them.

Once again, the New Delhi publisher Kali for Women has edited Truth Tales, a significant collection of short stories by Indian women, with six of the seven stories having been translated from various Indian languages. "Short story writing is the most difficult kind of writing as opposed to the popular impression that this form is inferior or easier than longer novels. Short story writers should not get discouraged by this wall of opposition. These are exciting times for both writers and publishers in India, and we find more women wanting to write now," said Urvashi Butalia, director and co-founder of publishing house Kali for Women. She also noted in an interview:

> "I have also seen the boundaries between journalistic writing and creative writing blurring, and it is an exciting development that we are witnessing. In fact, writer of short stories have to be focused, sharp and tight in their presentation which is a difficulty task."

In this sense, women's publishing can quite aptly be called a development activity: developing not only a base of knowledge on and by women, but also working with women writers to develop their confidence and often their capabilities, and, in the process, helping to educate readers about the importance of such writing.

3.4.3 Authors Redeeming Morality

Every nation or community has a moral standard setting out what the good or bad behaviour is, in its interaction within itself and other peoples or communities. It is also true that communities sometimes differ in their customs and traditions; owing to differences in geographical and historical influences as well as differences in degree or urbanity or other cultural differences. This moral standard is what measures the degree of variance when a particular problem is noticed in a particular society.

Also the subject of morality and advocacy for socio-economic and political equality of women has been treated with enthusiastic adoration since medieval period. A number of critics have expressed their opinions on social realism in the novels. One of them places more emphasis on the role of the writer as a chronicler and visioner. According to this critic:

> The writer should be more concerned with contemporary socio-political issues and problems which are pressing and require immediate attention. Preventing the present day societies from collapsing is more important than digging up Africa's past glories.
>
> (Julie Agbasiere: 72)

Kali for Women as a publisher and the selected women writers of the short stories in the Truth Tales have contributed to presenting the realities of their society. For instance, Mahaswita Devi's The Wet Nurse, likemost novels, is concerned with problems, which brings about social changes in the society. Suniti Aphale, Ila Mehta, Mniral Pande, Lakshmi Kannan, Ismat Chughtai, and Vishwapriya Iengar have also called for changes at the personal, family and communal levels in their prominent short stories of Truth Tales, showing the reality of a corrupt society and the bad treatment to which women are subjected.

The author's intentions are to make Indian women aware of their "second class" status through the social patriarchy and to break away from the retrogressive attitude that gives rise to unnecessary suffering in Dalit women's lives in particular. Therefore, the authors set out to redeem the image of humiliated women in the Indian society.

3.5 Gender Expectations and Oppression

Similar to the concepts of feminism and post colonialism, the understanding of the theme of gender is complex. The stories in Truth Tales describe the challenges a woman must overcome in order to survive. The authors' message of putting the gendered narratives up against one another is to emphasize the women's living conditions and possibilities to live an independent life. Consequently, totally different settings are described.

Men and women have been in constant state of limbo between power and subordinance since the beginning of time. Many advances have been made; yet, sexism is seen today in every country, even the United States. Even if some things are not outright sexist, there are gender roles to be filled in every society, although these roles are now changing and progressing across the world, thanks to globalism. Those who first dare to step foot outside these roles and pursue a different path are often exiled and thought of as outcasts or ridiculed and persecuted. However, these are the only people that advance the movement and change of gender roles.

Truth Tales, does not profile those who are challenging the gender roles. Instead, the characters reveal the different ways these roles can be oppressive and dangerous to a person, even when they appear to be beneficial to the individual, how one frees him/her-self from these oppressions, and, finally, why it is not completely possible for one to be freed without the help of someone else. The characters are secluded and outcast because they are victims of gender expectations. All of the female protagonists in The Wet Nurse, The Dolls, Munniyakka, Tiny's Granny, and Midnight Soldiers stories endure rejection and seclusion in their communities.

Much of Truth Tales focuses on the gender role women are expected to fulfill in India. To understand the context of the treatments in the book, it is necessary to address the advance, or lack thereof, of the "feminist" movement in India and what the traditional hierarchy of family in India consists of. There has been a historically proven partiality given to boys above girls consistently in India (Volna 2)

The roles of men and women in India families widely come from the combination of "educated Indian middle class Brahmanic ideals" mixed with puritan-Victorian ones. This means that womanhood is subjective to the extent that the woman's purpose is to be a perfect housewife to her husband, serving him in any way possible. As Volna states, "In India, more than in Western cultures, a woman lives for the sake of others, namely for the sake of her husband" (Volna 5). For Hindu's, a "pativrata" is the example of what a woman should be. Volna cites the definition of "pativrata" given by Brhaspati (a law-giver, between 300 and 500), saying, "She is someone whose state of mind reflects that of her husband".

Indian women are to be willing and able to give anything for their husbands at any time, and rooted deep within Hindu culture the only meaning of life for women is to offer themselves as vessels for men to reproduce and continue their own livelihoods. In the short story Tragedy, in a Minor Key "Guruji says that man should satisfy all his desires, so that the body's demands do not obstruct the road to spiritual perfection" (Mniral Pande.. P 132)

3.6 The Male Characters and their Masculinity

The Dalit women are not only victim of upper caste male lust but the males of their own caste too take part in their degradation. It is the skill of the writers that they do not seem to glorify the Dalit male. They are rather blamed for their neglect of their wives and mothers, the drunkenness, the apathy and lack of action on their part in most of the

Truth Tales stories. Dalit males live in a world of stupor caused by acute moral degradation and centuries old social conditioning.

Hence it is not surprising that most of the males pale behind their womenfolk who are more active, responsible and vibrant. Although the female world in the autobiography is mired in poverty, superstitions and all the ills surrounding them, nowhere does the writer blame them for despite being the victim of constant exploitation through the bands of upper class and the subservient position in the household, they are depicted with sympathy and understanding. They are more dynamic and carry on the struggle for survival single handedly and without any help from their husbands.

While the men are mostly lost in the haze of drunkenness and have surrendered themselves abjectly before the soul sapping socio-economic exploitation, the women, by and large, continue to struggle despite such heavy odds. Their refusal to surrender to the degrading conditions, the desire to live and move forward gives them a sense of tragic dignity which is denied to male Dalit.

Most of the time adultery is settled within the home with husband beating the wife or wife quarreling with the other woman and abusing her. While the misadventures of man are either ignored or taken lightly, the burden of carrying honour of the family falls on the woman herself. Further, when such relationship involves a man of upper caste and woman of low caste, the woman invariably becomes the object of fury and censor and the responsibility of the man is conveniently forgotten.

The dichotomy between male and female vis-a-vis the liaisons shows patriarchy within the Dalit society, the focus of the book is primarily on the experience of living as a Dalit and caste is seen as the deciding factor. If a person is seen as aggravating the suffering of his women, it is only individually and not collectively.

In contrast to this, the reader of Truth Tales is introduced to the “less masculine” Devi's male character Kangalisharan, Jashoda’s husband. He works in kitchens, the traditionally female occupation, and he behaves passively in several situations. However, the novel also gives a picture of a more complex character such as K Chacha in Tragedy, in a Minor Key and Razik in The Dolls are presented as masculine and strong at the surface. Whereas, Tony, Iyengar's character in Midnight Soldiers, is a drunker unable to join his work and spend his day in bed waiting for what his wife will gain in her painful, less paid job.

3.7 The voice of translation; ‘Spivak’ and ‘Devi’

Gayatri Spivak's first major work of translation was Derrida's Of Grammatology which she translated from French into English. But her work in postcolonial theory, especially the question of whether the subaltern can speak (which is the title of her essay written in 1988), probed the issue of translation and transparency of texts, and the mediators who claim to represent a people / a text. Her own answer to the question was a qualified no, in that the intellectuals who speak for the marginalized subaltern cannot hope to represent them adequately. The only way they could do it, according to her, was to follow the Derridean concept of listening to the silences in the text. All that the translator can hope to do is try to listen to the marginalized voices that are caught in the web of representation woven by the colonizer.

She demonstrated her principles through the translation of three of the stories of the Bengali writer Mahasweta Devi, published in Imaginary Maps. She uses the translation to help the non-native reader to imagine a culturally different space and time, without letting the reader forget that the text is mediated through a translator. She makes use of a preface and other material like an interview with the author, to locate the text within a specific cultural context. She did not smooth out the source text by choosing a target text-oriented translation.

In fact, her choice of title as “Breast-giver” instead of the more common “Wet Nurse” for the Bengali “Stanadayini” is an example. There is no attempt to exoticize; on the other hand, this provides her with an excellent forum to work out her overlapping theories on feminism and Marxism.

In Spivak's translation theory we see a perfect blend of theory and praxis. Her translations succeeded in getting Mahasweta Devi the attention of the global literary field. This was done without the brouhaha of a William Jones ‘discovering' Kalidasa or the condescension of a Fitzgerald appropriating Omar Khayyam.

Spivak was pointing to a pluralistic source culture that was richly textured and difficult to capture in a language/culture that was as foreign as the Anglo-American one. The only option for a translator here was to underline the artificial and constructed nature of all languages and attempt to bring the reader to the text. This postcolonial translation strategy of refusing to move towards the dominant culture is also an attempt to invert the power hierarchy between the colonizer and the colonized. This is a conscious political

strategy, somewhat like Ngugi's decision to strew Gikuyu words in his English novel. It is a confident assertion of linguistic and cultural equality, a trait that was encouraged by postcolonial theory.

In her translation, Spivak reinstates the symbolical "naming" of Devi's text "Stanadayini" as "Breast-giver". (Whereas 'Wet Nurse' would have .had the original Bengali word as 'Dhai Ma') ; the translator's choice of "naming" the text as "Wet Nurse" governed that particular translation which played on the mythic connotations of the name of the protagonist Jasodhara and to a large extent neutralized the subversive impact of the text). Spivak's interpellation or catachresis in the reading of Devi's symbolical text maps a structure of relations onto another plane or another symbolic system that enriches the textual discourse.

Catachresis describes the process by which a writer or reader/analyst/translator can interrupt the flow of conventional meaning and insert a contradictory or alternative system of meaning. Catachresis ruptures the propriety - the conventional meaningfulness - of the discursive moment. Without an awareness of this rupture, there is no impetus for treating a text as symbolic. Catachresis and symbolism invoke one another, even though they might occupy different textual modalities.

Spivak's alternative system of meaning is the Marxist feminist analysis of the text demonstrating the use of the gendered subaltern by the capitalist society. As Kristeva explained in her discussion of the use of poetic language, catachresis offers a challenge to the hegemony of meanings dominated by patriarchal culture and organized by certain behavioural norms. By challenging the conventional meaningfulness of Devi's short story, Spivak activates the discourse of counter transference in her translation that addresses the rhetorical richness of Devi's text.

3.8 The Silences Telling the Story

In spite of the fact that what women were supposed to write about was very restricted at the time, Jølsen chose to write about the taboo areas in her society: feminine erotic desire, infanticide and women’s desperate financial dependence on men, leading to men’s sexual exploitation of women.

Susan S. Lanser recommends that when reading female authors, works with female narrators or works representing the feminine in general, gaps and silences need to

be taken into account.(1) In Tragedy, in a Minor Key it is evident that the gaps are used as a textual strategy:

> *what an age … Yar! I am an alien in my own house -- these young striplings behave as if they are my uncles. There is my older Crown Prince who believes every elder is his natural enemy -- we were also young men once, but we never displayed such…." (P.140*)

This strategy is interesting: it consists of never describing or representing the events outright. Instead, it is the unspoken that speaks, the events hidden in what is never mentioned. The reader is put in a state to guess what the gaps hide. It is, literally, in the gaps of the text that the events take place, in the white spaces between chapters or blocks of text ostensibly treating more ordinary matters.

The text represents where it does not represent at all. It is not until after reading a section of the text that one understands the events that have taken place in the text, just as the picture of a jigsaw puzzle cannot be properly discerned until the last piece is in place. It takes more than one reading of this text to interpret its textual gaps and symbols, and discover what awaits the reader in the silences.

To analyze what this technique means in practical terms, one will take the example of how the monkey in the short story Tiny's Granny started to pour out all the content of granny's pillow:

> and now the last covering was off and the monkey began bit by bit to throw down the content …. not cotton wadding but …. Shabban's quilted jacket …. Bannu the water – carrier's waist-cloth …. Hasina's bodice … the baggy trousers belonging to little Manni's doll….Rahmat's little dupatta …. andKhairati's knickers….Khiran's little boy's toy pistol….Munshiji4s muffler….the sleeve (with cuff) of Ibrahim's shirt…. a piece of Siddiq's loin-cloth….Amina'scollyrium-bottle and Bafatan'skajal-box…. Sakina's box of tinsel clippings….. " (P.180)

Each gap hides a non-told story by the writer and each gap wants to tell what events and circumstances were lived by the character that made those objects brought to such a place. It also seems to tell what the character's reactions are, in such moments, where the reality is unveiled by the monkey.

As the consequences of the events are fatal, all is hidden away from the reader. These examples demonstrate how events that must not be spoken of are consequently represented through a textual technique where the gaps and recurring depictions of what is not there, what is missing and what is hidden are used to represent what cannot be said.

The fact that everything in the novel treating sexuality and reproduction falls into the white spaces of the text indicates that there is no place for these matters in Dalit literature. In Smoke story Shubba, The gaps hide the sexuality of the doctor and how the doctor hides her sexual desire from her mother in law, and submit to the cultural conventional norms of the Indian society.

3.8.1 Characters Oscillating between Absence and Silence

As in all study of gender, the issues of absence and silence are important. One must constantly ask: what is said between the lines? What is not said, and why? Particularly when studying women authors, narrators and characters, the question of silence can become as crucial as the question of voice, as Lanser notes. '"[W]ho does not speak?" is as revealing as "who speaks" (The Narrative Act, pp. 42-43). She writes:

> The textual meaning is found neither in the isolated discourse content nor in the systems that produce the text, but "in the resonance of the tension between the two structural levels – existing social reality and reality as transformed in the text." (2)

The very gaps or spaces between underlying structures and textual forms reveal meanings in both of these realms. (Lanser, The Narrative Act, p. 107) The inquiry into absence and silence may be discouraged by the text's own naturalizing activity, writes Lanser, but exploring absences in a text may uncover 'the system of values which has made the textual perspective seem natural […] rather than ideological' (The Narrative Act, p. 241).

In Tiny's Granny, for example, Tiny's silenced voice needs to be examined. Why is she silenced? Why is Granny so careful to prevent her from speaking? Although Tiny's silence is naturalized in the short story, it is such a conspicuous part of it that it needs a closer examination. The absence and the silenced voice of the daughters in law in the Hadler family in The Wet Nurse show also that wives are voiceless in the Indian society. The reader knows about them only through their production and their sons to be fed by the breast giver Jashoda. Even the breast giver was no more voiced when her breast stop their production of milk to the family:

> *"Jashoda realized that she no longer had a voice in the household. No one was prepared to listen to anything she had to say. Keeping her counsel she cooked and served and when evening came she went to the temple yard and silently shed her tears of bitterness."*

(Devi. 34).

The voice is given only to their mother in law Hadlerginni to which it is given only after her husband's death and her economic situation bettered exceedingly. By insisting on looking into the absence of feminine voice in Tiny's Granny, The Wet Nurse, and the other stories in the book, one will be able to approach the question of why.

3.8.2 The Silent Female Voice

When one says that Tiny is not allowed a voice of her own, one does not mean that she has no lines to say. She occasionally speaks, but she is never focalized or handed the narrator's role. When she speaks, it is entirely on Granny's terms, and what she says is a subordinate discourse filtered through Granny's own. She is an object. Susan C. Staub claims that speech is placed at the centre of patriarchal authority: to have speech is to have agency.

> *'The woman who speaks neither in acquiescence nor in answer to her husband reveals an independence that endangers the patriarchal order. Since, she ignores the social tenet requiring female silence she may very well ignore other rules of marriage'*
>
> (Staub, p. 36).

There are only three instances in Tiny's Granny when the reader is allowed to hear Tiny's voice directly. One is when she refuses to eat and sleep, the other is when she tells the other women about events when the old Hakim abused her (p. 173), and the last when reciting the Isha prayers. (p. 176).The objectification of Tiny, as a chicken, is confirmed in the following passage:

> *The lord and master was taking his siesta in a room enclosed by water cooled screens. And Tiny, who was supposed to pulling the rope of the ceiling fan, was dozing with the rope in her hand. The fan stopped moving, the lord and master woke up, his animality was aroused, and Tiny's fate was sealed. They say that to ward off the failing powers of old age the hakims and vaids , beside all the medicines and ointments which they employ, also prescribe children's broth -- well! the nine-years-old Tiny was no more than a chicken herself.*
>
> (Ismat Shughtai P.172)

The lord and master treats Tiny as an object, to be used as a treatment for his failing powers. Her objectification is part of the gender discourse at the time, when women and femininity were made into research objects, to be defined and explained by men. In the process the object, the woman, loses her voice, as objects cannot speak. Or rather, the object's voice is not important, as it is the scientist who draws the conclusions, who has something to say, who has the right to speak.

The “Tiny” character represents the Dalit Woman and women’s sexual exploitation on traditionally masculine territory. She will not support the lord’s masculinity by adapting to the role of conventional femininity. Part of his strategy towards this new version of objectification is silencing it. Silencing is part of the politics in the narrative voice, and part of how the narrative voice is used as form to structure the story’s content. The objectification of Tiny and other women fits well into the value universe of The Truth Tales: Contemporary Women Writers of India, where Dalit women do not deserve a voice, as they are inferior. This is not an unusual discourse, and just one of the gender discourses put forward by males.

3.9 The Theme of Class

In the analysis of the stories of Truth Tales the theme of class is complex, as it varies from community to community and in time. There are significant differences regarding living standards and the access to money in the stories. All of the authors also point out that there are differences in class within every small unit of society. Most of the characters experience materialistic privileges in various ways in terms of education, work and modern facilities. Hence, the distinction between male and female is important when discussing the themes of class in the stories, in particular in connection with the caste stratification.

This is further supported by the authorial techniques of telling stories. However, it is important to be aware that class can also be an abstract inner feeling in terms of class identity and class consciousness. The psychological aspects of class-related issues are therefore of major importance when discussing the theme. Throughout history, difference in social class has been related to problems like power, greed, desire, envy, prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination and violence.

The relationship between caste and class in India is complex. Most sociologists studying social stratification in rural India have emphasized the hierarchical division into caste, and some have argued as if that represented the system of stratification as a whole. However, when these studies have been examined more closely, it has been found that there are many aspects of inequality in India which cannot be fully explained within the framework of caste. The investigation leads to other important dimensions of social stratification, like ownership, control and use of land. Béteille concludes that it is not only

the relationship between class and caste which is a very subtle and complex phenomenon, but class itself. (3)

However, the ownership, control, and use of land are not the only bases of inequality and conflict in rural India. Caste and other forms of ethnicity based on religion, language, and provenance are also important (Béteille 305). Through their stories, the authors illustrate that difference in social class exist, and how this inequality in society influences the human mind – both on the individual and the universal level. Social differences also prove to be a reason for oppression and discrimination. Furthermore, based on the discussion of class-related issues, there is a close connection between social class, access of money, and power. These observations are expressed through characters, plots and descriptions of various communities.

The various characters of the texts visualize these universal themes on the individual level. In all of the stories access to money is the major motivations for the continuous struggle in the competitive class system. Although in different ways, the authors describe how the various characters fight in the social hierarchy - some for survival alone, and some in order to obtain better living conditions.

The theme of class is often related to issues of caste in the stories. These connections are visible between those figures who are influenced and privileged by the high and those who are not. The authors describe how characters, all of them women, like Shakun, Matilda, Muniyakka, Granny and Tiny are oppressed both because of their low social class and their caste. Whereas Jashoda endures discrimination because of her class, though, she belongs to the upper caste. Hence, both caste and class are aspects which can lead to discrimination. As the theme of class is the issue to be dealt with in this thesis, it is now possible to see that the female characters in the short stories suffer oppression due to their caste, their gender and their social class. The fate of Shakun, shubba, Jashoda, Matilda, Granny and Tiny exemplify these patterns.

However, the writers point out that difference in social class does not only exist between the high and low caste, but within every small unit in society. Also, Mahasweta Devi in the Wet Nurse story illuminates these aspects; Jashoda, the breast giver is brahmin but still not privileged.

All of the authors confirm how difficult it is to obtain a higher level in the hierarchical system. Even though class belonging in the western tradition is not considered

as “a part of the body”, like in the caste hierarchy of India, the changing of class proves to be difficult for the characters in Truth Tales. Both the concept of class and caste prevent them from happiness.

3.10 Caste Patriarchal Ideology

In a patriarchy society women are mostly treated as child-producing machines, and this makes no distinction between whether they are well off or they are economically under-privileged. The attitude of Jashoda’s husband and that of the men of Haldar family are gender discriminatory in the same way. If Jashoda’s husband Kangalicharan is illuminated by the spirit of Brahma the Creator, the Mistress’s sons ‘become incarnate Brahma and create progeny’ (Devi 51). A victim of patriarchal ideology, Jashoda shows ‘unintelligent devotion to her husband’ and ignorantly accepts the subordinate role as natural: You are husband, you are guru. If I forget and say no, correct me. Where, after all, is the pain? ... Does it hurt a tree to bear fruit? (p 50)

Towards the end of the story, she is thrown off by Kangalicharan as well as by her own children:

> *His mind had already rejected Jashoda….His sons are his sons. Theirmother had become a distant person for a long time. Mother meant hair in a huge topknot, blindingly white clothes, a strong personality. The person lying in the hospital is someone else, not Mother.*
>
> (p 72)

Thus, even being an upper-caste Brahmin, Jashoda is a subaltern figure because she is economically impecunious as well as gender-marginalized in patriarchy. Whereas Dalit men are victims of the caste-system and exploitative economy, a Dalit woman is triply marginalized by the conjoined operations of caste, class and gender. A critical study of The Wet Nurse enables us to understand this complex subjugating pattern. It needs re-iteration that Dalit women are the marginalized of the marginalized, for unlike upper caste women like Jashoda, they are condemned to bear the discriminatory stigma associated with their caste. The fact that they have a share in economic activity hardly counts, since most of their works is devoid of social respectability. Dalit Feminism has specially highlighted this aspect of ‘caste patriarchy’. It has shown that although Dalits are by and large subalterns, all subalterns are not Dalits; the Dalit marginalized state is the worst.

3.11 Deification vs. Submission of the Indian Women

The dichotomy inherent in the Mother figure of Indian mythology and culture is replayed with a certain difference in contemporary Indian society. The sacralised attitudes towards mothers and the unwritten taboo on exploring sexuality have almost silenced Indo-English women's writing on sexuality and therefore on exploring motherhood. It can be seen in the chasm between the adulation of the iconic mother (in both her creative and destructive aspects) and, the neglect and disrespect accorded to actual women-mothers, non-mothers and widows in particular.

The sacralisation of motherhood prevalent in the Indian imagination is inherently problematic because on the one hand it is indicative of female creative power, which as Kamala Ganesh notes, "conveys not so much the ideas of physical motherhood but a world-view in which the creative power of femininity is central" (1990: 58). On the other hand, though, it is possible to read the deification of motherhood as Sukumari Bhattacharji does as "compensatory, seeking to recompense society's indifference to the mother" (1990: 50). The good-mother/bad-mother binary in Indo-English fiction can be traced back to Parvati, the nurturing mother goddess, and, her other side Kali-the goddess of destruction.

In popular imagination these twin facets of the same goddess complement and contrast each other as archetypal images. Kali's independence (of any male god), her physical position above him, her dark and dishevelled appearance and association with cremation grounds are deliberate markers of her otherness that locate her on the margins of society.

She is dangerous because she "threatens stability and order" (Kinsley, 1986: 120). These traits are, however, recognized as being tameable and trainable to preserve patriarchal domesticity. Kali's flip side Parvati is the upholder of societal norms. She embodies very specific cultural values of female strength as moral superiority, often achieved through self-sacrifice. Parvati as the "insider" goddess is part of the patriarchal structure of society while Kali the "outsider" goddess threatens that structure-and with that the whole moral code. The dichotomy between structure and antistructure revolves around Woman's sexuality seen as the central balance of kinship relations in a society.

Motherhood has been a key feminist issue since the early days of women's movements; moreover, since the 1970s a substantial body of work on feminist theories of motherhood has emerged (Chodorow, 1978; Walker, 1984; Smart, 1992; Glenn et al.,

1994). Adrienne Rich's (1979) analysis of motherhood as "experience" and as "institution" led to a re-examination of the idea of motherhood, as did the investigation of the gap between the idea of the mother and the chore work of mothering. The change in western feminist focus on motherhood from the issue of choice, prominent in the seventies, to the creative experience of mothering in the nineties, highlights the crucial significance of the experience.

Along with noting women's right to mother or not, Nancy Chodorow and Susan Contratto noted that mothering could be oppressive or gratifying or even both (1982: 55). But normative motherhood imposes strict controls on women where no choice is possible. Furthermore, often it is women themselves, especially older women, who have internalized a patriarchal ideology and who perpetuate the system victimizing those who do not conform. The most important indicator of femininity in the seven short stories seems to be motherhood.

It was (and seems to remain), the litmus test of how ‘properly’ a woman was gendered. The female character who did not put her children first in a self-negating way, or who did not like children in a motherly way, is instantly condemned in the seven conservative short stories, more ambiguous forms of motherhood can be discerned, not always used to condemn the females and their lack of conventional femininity, but rather to explore other forms of femininity and societal problems.

Starting with the daughters in law of the mistress in the Wet Nurse, the widow in The Dolls, the female characters’ evident lack of interest in their children, and their tendencies to put their own interests before those of their families, carry the plot in these novels. Both stories use evolutionist, essentialist theories to press their point; women’s unwillingness to reproduce and to stay in their homes to tend to their off-spring full-time is a threat to the family institution, society and in the long run, the whole human race.

3.12 Motherliness as a Discourse

The construction of motherliness as an important feminine trait had started early in the nineteenth century (Johannisson, p. 58). The definition of women as females and mothers was given priority over the image of women as rational and sexual beings. The ‘mother instinct’ and women’s call to become mothers were seen as the most powerful of all female instincts, especially by the middle classes. Motherhood was normative: those

women who did not have children were pitied, scorned and regarded as incomplete women with unfulfilled lives.

A woman could no longer escape the mother role without becoming the object of moral condemnation. 'Feminine nature' was now defined as synonymous with the model mother, writes Badinter (p. 206). Devotion and sacrifice were emphasized as traits characterizing 'normal' women, who had to bow their heads or be defined as abnormal.

It is no coincidence that women were pressed to start nursing and tending to their own children at the moment that European societies were just discovering the child's commercial value and starting to view it as a potential economic resource and a basis for the state's military power (Badinter, pp. 124-25, Foucault, Sexuality 1, pp. 140-42).

On the whole, the perspective on the role of the mother in India would seem to have developed. Throughout the short stories of Truth Tales one can see that "The Mother is held as the object of affectionate reverence in Indian Culture. She is the home-maker, the first teacher of the child, the person who lovingly transmits the culture of this ancient land to its heirs in their most formative years."

Conversely, Ibsen had presented a contrary discourse in his play Ettdukkehjem (1879; A Doll's House). Here Nora ends the play by walking out on her husband and three children, because she believes there must be more important things in life than being a wife and a mother: that first of all she must learn to grow as a human being. The play was seen as shocking and scandalous at its time, and when set up in Germany the end was changed so that Nora came back home again.

'It was entirely on [the mother] that everything was to depend', Badinter quotes the doctors of the time (p.237). Should the child die or become a criminal, it would now be considered the mother's fault. It was no longer the father who had to answer for the child's offences but the mother, and it was her failure as a mother that was the reason. 'Even the irresponsibility of the father, was her fault' (p. 167). She had to discreetly lead him on to the right, paternal path.

The question of a fatherly instinct, making a father want to tend to and teach his little ones, never arose. It was the mother who had the almost complete responsibility for raising and educating the children, and it was her influence that was considered important for their development.

As Frykman and Löfgren point out, raising children belongs to the turning nature-into-culture category of 'dirty' tasks that are in general assigned to women all over the world (p. 247). Women might have reached out for emancipation and started to compete with men in the labour market even earlier than they did, if they had not had normative motherliness assigned to them.

3.13 Reincarnation of the 'Mother' in The Wet Nurse

The culture and religion help represent Jashoda's profession positively. Jashoda has a dream where the Lion-seated comes to her as a midwife. At first, the interpretation of the dream is confusing; however, when Jashoda accepts her profession at the Haldar household, people in the neighborhood, including Nabin, the pilgrim guide, realize that her dream was a prophesy of her future. Astrology, dreams, and spiritual connections with the gods and goddesses are taken very seriously in the Indian culture; therefore, the Lion-seated entering Jashoda's dream as a midwife helped legitimize and highlight the importance of Jashoda's new profession.

It is described in the story, "Thus even the skeptics were persuaded that the Lion-seated had appeared to Jashoda as a midwife for this very reason" (Devi 229). The Lion-seated coming into her dream is a very important sign that shows she is not being subjugated or used by others because she is a woman who can rear children, but that it was her fate chosen by God.

The story also mentions that "Faith in the greatness of the Lion-seated was rekindled in the area and in the air of the neighborhood blew the electrifying influence of goddess-glory" (ibid 229). Jashoda helped revive the faith in the Lion-seated. She represented a living form and the glory of the Lion-seated, and because of that "everyone's devotion to Jashoda became so strong that at weddings, showers, namings, and sacred-threadings they invited her and gave her the position of chief fruitful woman" (p 229).

Her connection with the Lion-seated elevated her status and made her important in the neighborhood. Inviting Jashoda is similar to inviting the Lion-seated. The maids praised her by saying, "Joshi! You came as The Goddess! You made the air of this house change" (p. 229). Even the children who were reared on Jashoda's milk were called the Holy Children. This helped the status of the Haldar children and her own because they were seen as the ones who suckled from the Holy Mother.

Despite all the praises and attention she received, Jashoda is exploited because of the class structure. The women of the Haldar household have the same gender role as Jashoda. The Haldar women give birth to children. Nowhere in the text is it mentioned that they have jobs. The gender role for females in the entire story is that women are mothers. In addition to women becoming mothers, all the women's bodies in the story are for their husband's pleasure. Jashoda's breasts are used for her husband's pleasure, and the husbands of the Haldar women want their wives to keep their figures.

Another similarity is the women in the story are inferior to the men. The second son of the Haldar household thinks of the idea of Jashoda suckling the children. He says to his wife, "I've got a divine engine in my hands! You'll breed yearly and keep your body" (P. 227). He makes it clear that he thought of the idea and assumes his wife will automatically follow by authoritatively telling her what she has to do. Likewise, Jashoda has continuously been described as a faithful wife to Kangali, and she tells her husband, "You are husband, you are guru" (P. 228). By referring to him as her guru, she instantly reveals that he is superior.

The difference between the Haldar women and Jashoda is that the Haldar women have more privileges than Jashoda because of their higher-class ranking; for example, these women have the choice of not rearing their children. Therefore, the Haldar women use their status and privileges to exploitJashoda. Jashoda is a poor woman even though she is a Brahmin.

She is exploited by the class structure because the Haldar household is using a poor woman, who needs money and food, to breast feed the children so that the Haldar daughter-in-laws do not have to ruin their figures. They take advantage of the fact that she is poor and that God chose motherhood as a profession for Jashoda; therefore, they make it seem like it was not forced onto her by them, but it was predestined by God. Only after they tell her about the job of rearing the children, does the realization of the Lion-seated appearing in her dream become apparent.

In addition to the class structure exploiting her, the shift in time leads her to her fate of loneliness. Jashoda was busy in the Haldar house rearing the children, and her husband was only involved in her life when he was impregnating her. Both their gender roles switched because Jashoda became the husband by working and bringing in the food

and money, and Kangali became the wife by cooking and taking care of their children at home, which is an abnormal circumstance in an Indian household.

When Jashoda comes back to Kangali, after her profession of motherhood ends, they argue about their situation and Jashoda says, “The man brings, the woman cooks and serves. My lot is inside out…Who’s the cunt, you or me? Living off a wife’s carcass, you call that a man” (P. 232). Kangali tries to defend himself as a man by saying, “Their door opened for you because my legs were cut off” (p. 232). Jashoda diminishes Kangali’s superiority of being the male in the household, which is uncommon in the Indian culture; therefore, this leads to Kangali abandoning her because Jashoda humiliates his authority.

Yet, in the Haldar household, the times were changing. The eldest daughter-in-law tells Jashoda, after the Mistress’s death, “Brahmin sister! The family is breaking up. Second and Third are moving to the house in Beleghata” (p 231). In a traditional lifestyle the entire family lives together in one house like when the Mistress was alive. The idea of sons leaving their parents’ house is a more modern lifestyle. Since the sons and their wives are now in charge and they prefer a more modern lifestyle, they do not have the same appreciation for Jashoda as the Mistress had because the eldest daughter-in-law says, “The last child was weaned, still Mother sent you food for eight years. She did what pleased her. Her children said nothing. But it’s no longer possible” (p 231).

Even though the daughter-in-law offers Jashoda a job as a maid, Jashoda’s new profession does not have the same importance or receive the same amount of respect as her previous profession. Her fate is puzzling because one would think the children she reared would be more sympathetic towards her, especially when Jashoda begins to have symptoms of cancer. Jashoda was practically a mother for these children. The importance of class structure is apparent because the sons and their wives see Jashoda as inferior to them; however, they know she is a Brahmin and are scared of the possibility of a Brahmin dying in their house. Therefore, the horror of a Brahmin death and the fact that Jashoda reared them as children should have lead to a different outcome.

One believes the culture and religion highlighting the importance of Jashoda’s profession, because of the appearance of the Lion-seated in her dream, made her profession more acceptable in society. The class structure exploited her because the wealthier family was using a poor woman to their advantage.

Her fate, however, is ironic because she was the reincarnation of God on Earth and nobody cared for her after her profession came to an end. The Haldar family and her family forgot about her connection with the Lion-seated when they no longer needed her. It is interesting because in the mythological story of Lord Ram, he too was abandoned by some of his family members by being exiled from his kingdom. Both Lord Ram and Jashoda have similar experiences of loneliness, and they both were reincarnations of God.

3.14 Suffragist Discourses

Suffragism was the third step in first wave feminism, which saw women joining the movement in higher numbers than ever before. At the beginning of the twentieth century a great variety of discourses about the female suffragist flourished. Women demanding the vote were represented as ugly, old and infertile, with little or no sex appeal, the third gender(4). Behind this line of reasoning was the idea that women were fundamentally sexual beings, so a woman having had her basic sexual and reproductive needs fulfilled would not engage in feminist politics.

Only those ‘left over’, the old maids, too unattractive to have been offered marriage by any man, would be interested in increasing feminine societal power. Active heterosexuality and parenthood was, according to the Engström discourse, what prevented women from lapsing into feminism and suffragism (Björkenlid, pp. 16-18). Willis claims that in popular New Woman fiction, the heroine is typically young, rich and beautiful (p. 58). Pretty, she is dressing in an exquisitely feminine way and a married mother. This, in turn, fits the prevailing discourse that married women could not be unattractive.

The author uses the old power technique of defeminizing Granny, Shakun, and Munniyaka by thinking disdainfully that they are represented as masculine, unattractive and old maids. In Pande's tragedy, in a minor key K Chacha treat the protagonist as having the profile of a suffragist in his dialogue while discussing nowdays young generations as being less valued and rebels.(Pande. p.106) He even denies her femininity “Come and sit with us a while, we would also like to have the opinion of the so-called younger generation I hear you've become quite a radical, young man.”(ibid) As a suffragist, they could be the model of a lesbian according to discourses of the time. The text informs us that they have become this way; that they were once more feminine. Implicitly, feminist politics and staying single makes a woman masculine.

Shakun, the doll maker, herself claims to have lost interest in eroticism. She plays on the existential fear of men, as she argues independent women do not need them. Rather, all of the male characters were financially dependent on Shakun, the doll maker.

Shakun here delivers what is intended as a devastating critique on behalf of married women: they had to work twice as hard as men if they wanted a profession, as on top of that they had to supervise the household (even if they had maids). Given the value universe of the novel, this can be interpreted as an appeal to married women not to work or fulfil ambitions that would take them away from their wifely duties of overseeing household work.

The narrator describes suffragist wings and their actions. The suffragists are sometimes represented as quarrelsome and scheming. such as the daughter in law of the Hardlerginni in The Wet Nurse, as well as Fathima in the Midnight Soldiers story.

A mother has almost mythical dimensions here: she is the Great Mother who should love her children so dearly and be so physically and emotionally close to them. In this part of the novel it is explicitly stated how a good mother should act: "she stays in her home and lives for her children, to whom she devotes her time and love." (Devi. 42). This is something jashoda expects from the daughters in low of the hardlerginni, and to which she refuses to succumb.

In a society where 'proper woman' equals 'mother', this is the textual strategy to pinpoint the weakness of the suffragist, where she is bound to be most severely criticised. In the daughters in law's refusal to be self-sacrificing mothers, they prove the 'improperness' of the suffragist they represent. The whole plot construction, where those wives repeatedly break the discursive rules of femininity with devastating results for their family, is a critique of the New Woman. The New Woman (5) is represented as masculinised and too rational tolove 'properly'; they can no longer reach their inner reserves of 'natural' females love and warmth.

3.15 Subaltern Class Prevails over Caste

In a class divided society the empowering agent everywhere is money. Money can earn status and social respectability. Despite her upper caste birth, Jashoda in The Wet Nurse is not in a dominating position because her family is awfully poor.

On the other hand the Haldars, who hold lower position in social hierarchy, can dictate terms because of their affluence. It is her stark poverty that compels Jashoda to earn her living by breast-feeding the children of the Haldar family where the daughter-in-laws can afford to refuse to suckle their own children for keeping their figures attractive.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in her essay '*A Literary Representation of the Subaltern*: Mahasweta Devi's Stanadayini (Breast- Giver)' has justly commented on the role of economy in defining subalternity. She argues that even the Brahminical identity of Jashoda is brutalized in this story:

> *This … identity is a cover for the brutalizing of the Brahmin when the elite in caste is subaltern in class. In the case of class-manipulation, poverty (is) the fault of the individuals, not an intrinsic part of a class society, in the case of caste manipulation, the implicit assumption is the reverse; the Brahmin is systemically excellent, not necessarily so as an individual.*
>
> (Spivak 114)

The latter part of the story illustrates how economy prevails over other issues. When Jashoda is no longer needed to foster the children of the family, she is asked to stay with Basini, the under-caste maid-servant of the Haldar-family. Jashoda's caste does not protect her, for Basini arrogantly tells her: "You'll wash your own dishes. Are you my master, that I'll wash your dishes? You are the Master's servant as much as I am "(Devi 61)

When Jashoda is diagnosed with breast-cancer, the Haldars start enquiring about her health, not out of any compassion or gratitude, but only because they are afraid of the after-life; the sin of brahmma-hatya (6). No wonder that such a woman "lay in the hospital morgue in the usual way, went to the burning ghat in a van and was … cremated by an untouchable" (ibid 73).

A close reading of The Wet Nurse will reveal that gender discrimination worsens the state of the female subaltern in every society. Jashoda in Devi's story is a 'gendered subaltern' per se. In her 'Introduction' to Breast-Giver, Spivak writes:

> *In 'Breast-Giver', it (the breast) is a survival object transformed into a commodity, making visible the indeterminacy between filial piety and gender violence, between house and temple, between domination and exploitation*
>
> (Spivak, 'Introduction' vii)

Devi thus finely illustrates the futility of caste purity and caste protection in a class divided society where everybody is running behind money to escape the harshness of misery the lack of such a commodity causes.

3.16 Figurations in The Wet Nurse

This text has dealt so far with a literary archetype from a classical story that also represents some Hindu traditional values. The notion of literary archetype can, however, point not only to a particular character; it may represent a general character type, too. In feminist literary criticism, stereotyped gender character types are often criticized, let us mention at least the type of the witch, femme fatale, etheric lover, or a self-sacrificing mother.(7) In Mahasweta's texts, mother is metaphorized as earth (or mother-country), or earth/country is metaphorized as mother.

In the Indian cultural context, it points to the archetype of Mother Goddess in her various images, the source of all mundane life, unifying creation and destruction, mercy and punishment, symbolizing rebirth and love. In the patriotic discourse, the image overlaps with that of BhārātMātā, Mother India.

A typical example of that figuration may be brought by Mahasweta's short story Stanadāinī (Devi 2004: 81–100), translated as Breast-Giverby Spivak (Devi 2002a: 39–75) and thoroughly interpreted from the perspective of the author's reading, from a receptive reader's perspective and from different theoretical positions — Marxist, liberal feminist, somatization of dominance and gender postcolonial theory.(8)

The heroine has a mythological name, Jashoda, who was the mythological nursing foster mother of the God Krishna. Mahasweta figures Jashoda as a subversive picture of the mythological image. In this respect, the subversion is directed to the archetype of a nurturing and caring woman-mother for whom the ethics of care forms an integral part of her identity.

Jashoda in the short story makes living by breast-feeding her Brahmin children and children of a rich family. She believes to be a part of the family till the moment she falls sick with cancer and dies of it, alone and abandoned in alienated surroundings of a hospital. She is neither respected nor praised for fulfilling the feminine archetype of a caring mother. On the contrary, her behaving in accordance with that archetype destroys her. The text suggests an obvious critical metaphor of Mother India, misused and destroyed by her children.

In her interpretation, Spivak emphasizes, rather than the patriotic perspective, a "critique of the nationwide mobilization of the Hindu Divine Mother and Holy Child" (Devi 2002a: 117). She maintains that "the figure of the all-nurturing Jashoda provides the active principle of patriarchal sexual ideology" (ibid). One can say that Jashoda, in the story, internalized the patriarchal icon of motherhood and the illusion of its divinity; and the more she internalized it, the more she was exploited as a human being, and a female, who was alienated from her own body. The breasts, for her, are not a symbolic source of life, but a real source of death; death without mythological connotations of rebirth and hope.

3.17 'A Wounded Bird' in Tiny's Granny

The story Tiny's Granny (NanhikiNani) brings to light the social and religious hypocrisy of the society. It shows how poverty and circumstances can change people and how the poor girls are sexually exploited by the upper class men and how difficult it is for girls of lower strata of society to live a decent life.

The very beginning of the story brings forth the question of identity into focus. The first line says, "God knows what her real name was," (Shughtai. P.117) as no one ever called her by it. She has no identity of her own and as the years pass, she is called 'Baftan's kid,' 'Bashira's daughter-in-law,' 'Bismillah's mother' and 'Tiny's granny.' She never had a childhood. When she ought "to have been laughing and playing with other children," (ibid) she had started working in people's households.

As the years pass, she tries all trades for a living. She had been a maid, a cook, a beggar and even a thief. The miserable condition of the poor people is brought out in the story. Poor people do not get enough to fill their stomach and Granny, who was living a life of utter poverty, did not leave any opportunity of grabbing food for herself and her granddaughter, Tiny. Everybody knew about her stealing things but nobody questioned as she would "threaten to take an oath on the Holy Quran. And who would disgrace himself in the next world by directly inviting her to swear a false oath on the Quran?" (P.119). This shows that even religion becomes meaningless to the poor since their primary concern is meeting the basic necessities of their life.

The cruelty and hypocrisy of the rich people who hold positions of power is also brought out in the story. Granny puts Tiny into the 'ancestral trade' and Tiny works in the Deputy Sahib's house. Tiny did "job at the Deputy Sahib's for her food, clothing and one

and a half rupees a month" (Ibid. P.120). Granny always stuck to Tiny "like a shadow" but "a pair of old hands cannot wipe out what is inscribed in a person's fate" (ibid). Even 'fate' is cruel towards the poor as Tiny's chastity is violated by Deputy Sahib, the grandfather of three children. This is how Ismat Chughtai describes it in the story:

> *"Tiny, who was supposed to be pulling the rope of the ceiling fan, was dozing with the rope in her hand. The fan stopped moving, the lord and master woke up, his animality was aroused, and Tiny's fate was sealed"*
>
> (P.120-21).

Deputy Sahib was known as a religious man who said his five daily prayers and had provided water vessels to the mosque. This is ironical, as in real life he had no religiosity and the image he portrays in society is completely false and deceptive.

Even society is callous and cruel towards the poor people and does not raise its voice against the injustice and wrong done to the poor. Instead it makes fun of the poor for no fault of theirs. After Tiny's fearful encounter with the Deputy, her Granny comforted the "wounded bird" (Ibid. P.121) with sweets. Instead of sympathizing with the poor girl whose innocence and childhood have been ravished by the Deputy, the women of the society would ask Tiny all that happened to her on the pretext of giving her something like bangles and after hearing the details from her, would laugh out loud. This shows the callous and unsympathetic behaviour of the women who are neither angry with the Deputy's behaviour nor do they try to comfort and understand Tiny; instead they mock at her. The idea of "sisterhood" is thus, demolished as a 'myth' even in this story.

Tiny's childhood is now lost forever and instead of growing into a girl, she directly becomes a woman and not a "fully-fashioned woman moulded by Nature's skilled and practised hand, but one like a figure on whom some giant with feet two yards long had trodden-squat, fat, puffy, like a clay toy which the potter had knelt on before it had hardened" (p. 122). Even the boys pinched her and teased her that she had relationships with many men. All the men share their claim on Tiny as "when a rag is all dirty and greasy, no one minds too much if someone wipes nose on it" (ibid).

This brings to light the fact that after Tiny's terrible encounter with Deputy, other men too consider her as no more than a sexual object. Tiny then runs away to a bigger city as "they say that in places like Delhi and Bombay there is an abundant demand for this kind of commodity" (pp. 122-123). Thus, from an innocent child, Tiny is made into a mere "commodity," an object of sexual recreation for men.

Granny is left alone after Tiny runs away. Granny lies to people that Tiny died of cholera as Granny knows that people of the society would not stop talking about her. The reader also gets an insight into Granny's loneliness who is left with her only companion, the pillow. Fate had always been cruel towards Granny and even the monkeys do not spare her. A monkey steals her pillow and peels the coverings of the pillow and all things stolen by Granny are revealed to the people who then abuse her for her theft: "Thief! … swindler! … old hag! … Turn the old devil out! … hand her over to the police! Search her bedding: you might find a lot more stuff in it!" (p. 127). People abuse poor Granny for petty thefts but they do not raise their voice against the bigger crimes of the rich like the Deputy.

The story also brings out the point that religion and morality have no meaning for poor people who have to struggle daily for meeting the basic needs of life.

3.18 Muniyakka's Plight as a Wife

Muniyakka pictures the life of a woman who had been battered and torn by her husband, sons and destiny. The author Lakshmi Kannan enters into the inner psyche of womanhood and tells a captivating story. Muniyakka's mastered art of soliloquy during her work shows her inner turmoil. It also reflects her routine duties of mopping, sweeping and cleaning.

Muniyakka has a very strange behaviour. She would keep muttering to herself while working. Children call her a walkie-talkie. Most of her mutterings are against her dead husband Bairappa and their three careless sons. Sometimes Muniyakka used to scold all the devotees who stain the stones of the temple with kumkum, sandalwood paste, and the smudgy sprinkling of withered flowers. It would be a free curse for everyone from the mouth of this old lady. She wonders why all these married young women were praying for a son. She had three sons herself and what worthless creatures they turned out to be. Her husband Bairappa drank, gambled, squandered all her hard earned money and finally died, leading a wasted life.

But in spite of all her anger against her dead husband, Muniyakka always celebrates Bairappa'ssraddha. It is more of a love-hate relationship. On this day she has a youthful glow on her face with a large round kumkum on her forehead, flowers in her hair and a clean cotton saree wrapped around her old body. One also wonders whether such celebration is in some manner a celebration of her own liberation. Lakshmi Kannan,

through the portrayal of Muniyakka, emphasizes the finer, sensitive and ever-loving quality of womanhood.

The breach in family bonding would have occurred when her now dead husband Bairappa, squandered her hard-earned money and wasted his life by smoking, drinking and gambling. Muniyakka may have turned from this worthless man to her sons to satisfy her cravings for love. Just as she takes care of the garden now, she would have showered her love on her sons but when they got married they deserted her.

She too prayed like other foolish women. This is one of the oldest rituals known to human kind seeking help in the creation of the next generation. 'The wish for children' says Ploss,' apart from religious and moral motives, is rooted in the instinct of self-preservation of mankind…'(Gisbert 88) Muniyakka too begged for favours: 'Give me a son…great Nagaraj' (Lakshmi.108). Like other women, she too had been foolish and prayed with great faith and had three useless sons, 'Each worthless son, lusting after his own wife…They don't need a mother any more' (ibid).

Of all the human bonds, the maternal bond is the strongest. John Bowlby's in the 'Attachment Theory' speaks of 'the dynamics of long term relationships between humans especially among families…'(wikipedia) which means that human bonds are developed biologically for survival and its psychological aim is for security.

3.19 Conclusion

Religion, cultural aspects and traditions are closely linked themes in Truth Tales. In particular, the women writers illustrate how difficult life becomes for those women who lean too far towards predestination. Kali's publication for women and about women also exemplifies how women from the Third World often are suppressed by men due to their interpretation of religion. For the majority of female characters in the stories, their husbands tend to use religion, myths, and old traditions as excuses, or as weapons, to maintain their leading position in the relationship. On the other hand, through the character of Jashoda, shakun, Halderginni, the authors show how myth and religion can be interpreted and practiced in a sensible way - as a comfortable and soothing support. Thus, also in this chapter about gender, it becomes obvious that power is closely linked to oppression. females' voices are reasoning for liberation, equality and dignity for their selfhood in the different stages of their life; as a child, adolescent, wife, widow, and mothers as well as daughters. The next chapter will display the role of feminist theories in

education. While it is clear that education plays an integral role in individuals' lives as well as society as a whole, sociologists view that role from many diverse points of view. Functionalists believe that education equips people to perform different functional roles in society. The socialization also involves learning the rules and norms of the society as a whole.

Notes to chapter three

(1) Susan SniaderLanser, The Narrative Act: Points of View in Prose Fiction (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1981), pp. 42-43.

(2) Lanser here quotes from an unpublished paper by herself and Angelika Bammer, ‘Censorship, Womenand the text’ (1975, p. 7).

(3) André Béteille Caste, Class, and Power: Changing Patterns of Stratification in a Tanjore Village.University of California Press, 1965.

(4) The ‘third gender’ meant individuals who were considered to be neither women nor men. The ‘third gender’ may be understood in relation to the individual's biological sex, gender role, gender identity, or sexual orientation, such as a hermaphrodite, a neuter or a homosexual.

(5) An icon of changing gender norms, the "New Woman" first emerged in the late nineteenth century. Less constrained by Victorian norms and domesticity than previous generations, the new woman had greater freedom to pursue public roles and even flaunt her "sex appeal," a term coined in the 1920s and linked with the emergence of the new woman. She challenged conventional gender roles and met with hostility from men and women who objected to women's public presence and supposed decline in morality. Expressing autonomy and individuality, the new woman represented the tendency of young women at the turn of the century to reject their mothers' ways in favor of new, modern choices.

(6) “BrahmmaHatya” is a Sanskrit term denoting the “act of killing a Brahmin or Brahmins” which is considered as a major sin.

(7) C f. Cixous 1975; Morris 1993

(8) C f. Spivak 2002: 76–137

CHAPTER FOUR: Teaching Women Literature in Modern University ESL/EFL Class

4.1 Introduction

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Notes to Chapter Three

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter highlighted the thematic representation of the short stories in Truth Tales. Female struggle for dignity, liberation, and survival is the main concern of the female characters. Gender, class, and caste system are reasons behind the Dalit women suffering and agony. The women authors of the Truth Tales seek to empower the Dalit women in particular and the Indian women in general by reinforcing their stream of feminist activist in different fields in society. Empowerment is said to be the primary goal of feminist pedagogy. Empowerment involves the principles of democracy and shared power.

Feminist pedagogy challenges the view that education is a neutral cognitive process . Education either functions as an instrument facilitating students' integration and conformity into the logic of the present system, or it becomes "the practice of freedom" teaching men and women to deal critically and creatively with reality and to learn to participate in transforming their world. The practice of freedom emerges through empowerment, yet the patriarchal model generally neglects issues such as empowerment, feelings, and experiences.

English teachers, no matter the grade they are teaching, have always been and will always be dealing with literature in their ESL curriculum. One is positive that most teachers use the computer and the Internet in order to better prepare their lessons. But very few encourage students to use technology for support in their literary studies and even fewer use the computer in a literature-oriented English class.

As technology becomes an embedded medium throughout our daily lives, research into its use for teaching and learning has shifted its focus from the technology itself to how it can support learning theories and approaches. Considering the increasing difficulty teachers of literature encounter today, following a decreasing interest in reading books, one points to the need to motivate students to use different technology resources which can help accomplish their work. Besides the Internet, other virtual media and multimedia resources are available for literary studies.

This chapter will shed lights on the use of technology in teaching women literature in general and the literature written by Indian women in particular. Women used to be almost invisible in history books used in school, and although they now have a stronger presence in textbooks, teachers often have difficulty finding the right additional

resources for teaching women's history. Special attention needs to be paid for choosing developmentally appropriate books and lesson plans that can advance standards-based teaching at the high grade levels. The purpose of this chapter is to address the need for curriculum change as a hitherto neglected way to advance the goal of educational equity. It aims at incorporating feminist theory in the literature curriculum in the hopes of heightening sensitivity to the presence of women's issues in the academic community.

4.2 Twenty-First Century Modeling the Teaching of Literature

Twenty first century is the age of globalization, multiculturalism, telecommunication and digital technology. Education today is considered as an important mechanism and effective means to develop creative and effective human resource (Gould 1993: 148; Rao 1996: 2).

Research on educational theory and students to take decisions, create opportunities, evaluate available resources, work out multiple solutions for effective problem solving and flexible to manage the globalized multicultural world of today (Geertsen 2003; Ruggiero 1988; Feden & Vogel 2003; Halpern 2003). Accordingly, teaching methodologies and pedagogies which are supported and recommended in this regard include critical pedagogy, feminist pedagogy, experiential learning, task-based learning, cognitive learning and social cognitive learning.

These pedagogies prepare students to see the world from multiple perspectives and critically evaluate conventional practices and assumptions and work to bring social change. Students are enabled to develop insight and see how knowledge is constructed and social reality is interpreted and represented.

Literature is an important segment and component of educational institutions and curriculums. Therefore, scholars and theorists such as Wagner (2005), Knapp (2004), Rosslyn (2005), Showalter (2004), and Dresang and McClelland (1999), all agree that the teaching of literature which makes the most sense in the context of twenty first century needs to be student-centered and guided by the research on education in the twenty first century. They discard traditional approaches to teaching and studying literature and recommend approaches which are guided by the contemporary research.

Dresang and McClelland's article (1999) emphasizes the need to incorporate the characteristics of today's digital world in the teaching of literature in order to enable the students to learn information processing skills. Rosslyn (2005) accepts that English as a

university subject has undergone a change with the advent of the twenty first century. Hence it is the need of the time to accept that "the student does think" (p.321) and to redesign syllabuses according to the needs of the students. Wagner (2005) taking the changing social values and structures into consideration suggests that literature should be taught as a tool to teach inquiry and investigation skills and not merely as a source of knowledge. Similarly Knapp (2004) thinks that in the present age the focus needs to be shifted from what texts mean to what students think about them and how they learn.

A growing volume of research is also available which recommends reader response approaches and introduces cognitive teaching strategies, techniques, and activities that promote creative, active, collaborative learning in literature classroom in order to make literary study life-relevant and personally meaningful to students. In this regard Showalter (2004), Egan (2005) and Moore (2002) recommend activities such as mental imagery, gossip, play, mystery, maintaining reading journals and writing response essays.

4.2.1 Traditional Approaches to Teaching Literature

Traditional approaches to the interpretation of literature are called historical, moral and biographical approaches (Guerin et al 2005). Carter and Long (1991: 2) divides these approaches into three models: 'cultural model', linguistic model' and 'personal growth model'. Methodology of these models and approaches serve to develop aesthetic and linguistic understanding of students and help them read history as discussed by the author and poets. Students are trained to "shut out the world from [their] classrooms and [their] minds." (Lindblom 2003: 97). Teaching methodology attempts to facilitate students to read about literature rather than learn to read literature. Hence, the essence of literature which can best work to help build up students' evaluative and creative abilities, is undervalued and neglected. Students are not trained to see how literary texts are contributing in constructing reality through ideological representations. All these approaches, it is observed, fail to enable students to generate their own meanings and evaluate the given information in the text and develop a critical understanding of the world outside their classroom.

These approaches being teacher centered view literature as a species of knowledge. Teachers take it as their responsibility to impart information regarding literary genres, specific socio-cultural context of the text and interpretations of selected critics. As a result students become a storehouse of the information related to certain texts but not

critical and creative thinkers and problem solvers. Students lack the necessary skills to use and process relevant information and analyze and appreciate literature independently. As discussions and colloquiums are rarely arranged in teacher centered classroom, students lack confidence and skills to develop a spirit of collaboration in the class.

4.2.2 Poststructuralist Approaches for Modernity in Teaching Literary Theory

Feminist literary theory aims at developing a critical consciousness in the readers about the operation and functioning of oppressive structures of patriarchal ideology in the text. It enables the readers to actively engage with the text to unearth the ideological and political configurations of textual representation in order to understand the cultural processes in which gender roles are constructed. In the process the readers deconstruct the ideological binary opposition set up between male and female genders in male dominated patriarchal culture. Marxist literary theory also develops a critical attitude in the readers and enables them to recognize and question the authority of hegemonic groups which set exploitative structures for class in a society through literary texts. A Marxist interpretation of the text takes the reader beyond the façade of neutrality and draws their attention to class affiliation and ideology of the author and his representation of social and economic issues. Similarly postcolonial theory informs readers about racial issues through literary texts. Critical reading strategies such as that of colonial discourse analysis, Orientalism and contrapuntal reading encourage the learners to read canonical texts from a different lens which calls into question the universality of the text through a highlighting of the text's complicity with the ideology of imperialism. New historicism helps reader see silences and gaps in recorded histories and critically investigate the established discourses of history.

These poststructuralist approaches are reader based as they focus on readers' active role in the process of reading and interpreting literature in social and political contexts. Drawing their theoretical concepts from a variety of disciplines, the above mentioned critical approaches instill an attitude of reflexivity which encourages the readers to call into question common-sense traditional notions of gender, race, history, class and culture. Instead theory enables the readers to recognize how these categories are in fact ideological and cultural constructs (Culler 1997). Lynn (1994: pp.5-7, 47-52), Davis and Womack (2002: pp. 51-53), and Eagleton (1996: pp.64-76) all support this opinion and agree that Reader-Response approaches of poststructuralist literary theory assign readers

active role in making meaning of literary texts and make texts relevant to their life and society.

4.2.3 Literary Theory as a Pedagogical Tool in Teaching Literature

Literary theory as a pedagogical tool employs the principles of modern approaches to learning and, thus serves to nurture cognitive processing of students, helps them connect the classroom with the world outside the classroom and be active learners. Students are not encouraged to treat a text as sacred object and follow the traditional assumptions and interpretations introduced by teachers or other literary critics.

This can be worked out by helping learners establish a connection between teaching contents and their personal life outside the classroom. Literary theory working on the principle of cognitive learning engages readers independently in the process of meaning making. Students reading literature with literary theory see literature as a part of larger society outside the text and classroom. They are trained to read a text in connection with the social and cultural realities and institutions. This helps them take reading of literature a meaningful activity.

Literary theory making students active and independent readers destabilizes the unchallenged authority of teacher in the classroom. Discussion and dialogue replace lectures and teacher becomes facilitator to promote inquiry and investigation in the classroom. Students do not see text as a source to find the author's belief but a world to be reconstructed and interpreted in the light of their beliefs and experiences.

Literary theory acknowledges the social function of literature. Reader- based approaches outlined above establish a meaningful link between literature and society. Feminist, Marxist, New historical and postcolonial literary theories are all interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary and they promote intertextual readings. Students are trained to cross the boundaries of other disciplines and see how different texts correspond with one another. This leads them to have an understanding of society, its structures and institutions.

4.3 Technology for the Sake of Literature

We all know that there is a certain reluctance concerning computers and the Internet, not only on the part of the teachers, but also of the parents, who consider them a threat for education. When it comes to literature and to reading, teachers and parents unite

their voices and lament that students do not seem to read anything anymore. Hence, the number of learners not reading literature at all is increasing.

Furthermore, research in developed countries indicates a growing number of learners with limited reading skills. Some of them compensate this limited literacy with what Gregory Ulmer calls electracy, (i.e. electronic or computer literacy), Ulmer predicting that, in the future, there will be four types of people: those well equipped with both literacy and electracy skills, those doing better in the world of literacy, those doing better in the world of electracy and those left out of both worlds (1). However, literature is not going to disappear then.

As surprising as it may seem to some tormented teachers and parents, throughout the world. It is quite reassuring: print literature is steadily increasing. Even if print runs may be diminishing, the number of titles and the overall figures are on the increase. Sales volumes of newsstand literature have marked a boom in the recent years, when major newspapers compete to exhaust print runs of universal literature. As Raine Koskimaa points out, 'despite the facts that most households have an Internet connection, that networked computers have entered nearly all classrooms, that many people spend several hours weekly playing digital games, literature and reading seem to be doing fine'(2).

What is the potential of digital technology? What is the future of literature? How can teachers keep up with the literary hypertext? We can easily guess that technology activities only have value if they allow students to develop key skills. A plot overview or a character description on websites such as Spark Notes or Wikipedia give students the easy way out when they are faced with a literary topic so they do not seem to help that much. There are, however, resources which can prove highly interesting and motivating for students.

One of the best ways to encourage curiosity among students regarding a certain literary topic is to introduce them to what methodologists call a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

They can be those websites which are designed like spider webs, very well organized and once the learners enter such an environment they cannot leave it without having learnt something.

Examples of such websites are the Victorian Web and the Romantic Circles, which provide thousands of links and references to an enormous quantity of resources, from the e-texts of almost any literary production of the period to detailed descriptions of the social, political, historical and economic context, with cross-references to major literary works. VLEs do not actually save effort on the part of the student but extend possibilities of going beyond the traditional classroom setting. Such an approach places the student at the centre of learning and activates what D. Greenwood calls 'kinaesthetic learning', an essential feature of technology use in English, which 'enables the use of a much greater range of effects, the use of varying type fonts, wide use of colour, the addition of sound and imported graphics, and kinetic effects for example. The potential of such effects has been shown to have a highly motivating effect on students, especially those who are more likely to think in terms of spatial rather then verbal models'(3).

4.3.1 Social Networks for Digital Literature

A new method in teaching this type of learning mentioned above draws the teacher's attention to the importance of the visual element in motivating students to become involved in the study of literature. Nettelbeck points out; online discussions allow students to formulate and reformulate their ideas in response to literary texts and to share them with their fellow students. Discussions on the social networks available for all students in our university such as "Facebook", "Twiter", "Whats app", Hashtags on Instagram and others are of highly importance, if they are used for online discussion purpose, since students are daily connected to at least one of them. (4)

There are other advantages as well:

- Online discussions are a valid pedagogical tool in respect of the text response outcomes;
- Online discussions are successful in encouraging students to 'engage in a reflective activity with someone outside of their normal social groups;
- On-line discussions not only provide students with an additional mode in text response, but also make available to some students a preferred mode of expression.

Coming to terms with the digital era can be a difficult task for English teachers, but it is a challenge that they have to face in order to keep up with the times and manage to provide motivation and necessary skills for their students. For methodologists, it is a question of dealing with e-texts, digital literature, digital publishing and cyber-textuality.

Raine Koskimaa refers to the emergence of a new type of literature, digital literature, which has to be addressed by methodologists as it is complementary to the traditional form of literature. One feels that Koskimaa's explanation of digital literature according to its three different meanings can be useful here:

- Digital Publishing focuses on the production and marketing of literature with the aid of digital technology. It includes such phenomena as eBooks, Print on demand, Audio Books made available on MP3 files, and others.
- Scholarly literary hypertext editions for educational and research purposes. This category includes hyper-textually annotated literary works, as well as multimedia implementations of literary classics.
- Writing for Digital Media. Digital texts are always programmed text: text based on computer code, which makes it behave in a dynamic way. This perspective is called 'cyber-textuality' and the works 'cyber-texts', an umbrella term for different types of digital text, such as hypertexts, kinetic texts, generated texts, texts employing agent technologies and so on.

4.4 Content Knowledge Relevance a Condition for Teaching Women Literature

The interaction between literature and the computer has to deal with texts, but especially with those characteristics which are emphasized by technology: software, audio and video content and so on. One will provide, in this section, some ideas of making women writings more appealing to students.

The first thing to do is to browse the Internet for videos of plays or film adaptations on YouTube or similar websites. Hundreds of films and documentaries are just a click away and watching such a resource seems to be far more motivating for students. Websites represent a gold mine for English teachers who want to spice up their lessons with extracts of films, interviews with actors and directors, etc.

Applications such as Google Earth feature an itinerary function which allows the user to create a virtual trip through different locations, a trip that includes information on each different location and links to further information. This function can prove highly motivating for students when it comes to the study of literary settings. Mainly when student deal with a different geographical culture which he finds difficulties to understand and assimilate its issues, just like the Indian culture for the Algerian students.

The days of teaching literature based on the literary text alone are coming to an end. It is true that teaching literature in the contemporary world, dominated by multimedia, is becoming more and more complicated for English teachers. One feels, however, that technology resources may be the answer to the challenge teachers have to face in order to involve and motivate their students in their literary studies.

Not only Algerian teachers but 'most of the world's English teachers are not native speakers of English, and it is not necessary to have a native like command of a language in order to teach it well' (Canagarajah 1999). 'Some of the best language classes I have observed have been taught by teachers for whom English was a foreign or second language. Conversely some of the worst classes I have observed have been taught by native speakers. Many link the language component to the methodology component, so that teachers practice the language skills needed to implement particular classroom teaching strategies' (Cullen 1994; Snow, Kahmi-Stein, and Brinton 2006).

The role of pedagogical content knowledge is demonstrated in a study by Angela Tang (cited in Richards 1998), in which she compared two groups of English teachers in Hong Kong – one with training in literature and one without such training – and how they would exploit literary texts in their teaching. Some of the differences between these two groups of teachers are seen in the following summary of the research findings.

So we see here that possessing relevant content knowledge made a substantial difference in how teachers planned their lessons. Teachers with relevant content knowledge should consequentially be able to make better and more appropriate decisions about teaching and learning and to arrive at more appropriate solutions to problems than a teacher without such knowledge. However, the central issue of what constitutes appropriate disciplinary knowledge and what is appropriate pedagogical content knowledge remains an unresolved issue, and studies that have sought to investigate the impact of content knowledge on teachers' practices have produced very mixed results (Bartels 2005).

Reinders (2009, 231) points out that depending on the teacher's level of technological expertise, this could involve "being able to first, use a certain technology; second, being able to create materials and activities using that technology; and third, being able to teach with technology." The use of technology in teaching becomes more important in present times because teachers also have to be able to keep up with the technological

knowledge of their students. Young learners today have more access to information and more tools available to them to manage their own learning. Reinders (2009, 236) suggests that "the challenge for teachers will be more one of helping learners develop the skills to deal successfully with the increased control and independence that technology demands."

But teacher learning also involves developing a deeper understanding of what teaching women literature is, of developing ideas, concepts, theories, and principles based on the experience of teaching (Borg 2006). The development of a personal system of knowledge, beliefs, and understandings drawn from the teachers' practical experience of teaching is known as the theorizing of practice. The belief system and understanding they build up in this way helps them make sense of their experience and also serves as the source of the practical actions they take in the classroom. This involves making connections between the concepts, information, and theories from the teacher education courses and their classroom practices; it involves putting theories into practice.

There are many ways in which teachers can engage in critical and reflective review of their own practices throughout their teaching career (Richards and Lockhart 1994; Richards and Farrell 2005), for example, through the analysis of critical incidents, teacher support groups, journal writing, discussion groups, action research, and portfolios. Reflection involves both looking back at teaching experiences, as well as looking forward and setting goals for new or changed directions. Dewey (1933) suggested three attributes that can facilitate the processes or reflective thinking: open-mindedness, responsibility, and wholeheartedness.

Open-mindedness is a desire to listen to more than one side of an issue and to give attention to alternative views. Responsibility means careful consideration of the consequences to which an action leads. And wholeheartedness implies overcoming fears and uncertainties to allow critical evaluation of one's practice in order to make meaningful change.

4.5 Universities; Proliferators of Feminist Theory

Gender studies in universities is expected to explore the ways in which ideas about gender and sexuality shape social roles, laws, institutions and creative work inside the country, and across the globe. Analyze how race, class and ethnic diversity intersect with gender and sexuality and influence the ideas, practices and hierarchies that surround them.

The gender studies program can help you understand and analyze myriad issues affecting equality, sexuality, class, race and overall identity, and how these factors can shape professional, family and community roles. Courses may be available in a number of departments in the arts, humanities and social sciences, including history, political science, English, communications, psychology and sociology.

While there is no doubt that feminist theories emerged from second wave movements in the west, it must also be stressed that U.S. American universities, by accomodating large numbers of feminists, facilitated an extraordinary proliferation of feminist theory in almost all the disciplines and fields of knowledge. The establishment of Women Studies Departments and similar programs in almost all centers of higher learning reflects not only the degree of institutionalization of feminist theory, but also the degree of the normalization of feminist research paradigms in the humanities, social sciences, and other professional fields. Since most non-English writing feminist theorists originally developed their own theories against the background of the authority of British/American/Australian feminist texts.

Mainstream Western Feminist theory was launched by a series of texts. Betty Friedan's The Feminine Mystique (1963), Shulamith Firestone's The Dialectic of Sex (1970), Germaine Greer's The Female Eunich (1970), Kate Millett's Sexual Politics (1969), Robin Morgan's Sisterhood Is Powerful [1970] and Juliett Mitchell's Women's Estate (1971) are among those early texts which constitute the canon of classical feminist theory. Influenced by Simone de Beauvoir's famous dictum that women are not born but made, these texts rapidly accumulated an entire range of descriptive, analytical, and normative concepts which have since become indispensable for serious feminist analysis. These oriented themselves on definitions of women's emancipation, women's liberation and women's oppression.

4.6 Plans for the Teaching of Literature

The students acquire systematic teaching skills and in-depth competence in the designing and planning of university level courses within the field of women literature and Gender Studies. The objectives behind this are as follow:

- To impart knowledge of the various writings as per the course structure of the university, to the students who are pursuing undergraduate and post graduate studies.

- To motivate the students to participate in various activities so as to improve their interpersonal and communication skills.
- To conduct various programs through various co-curricular and extra curricular associations, so as to inculcate an awareness of the environment and social ethos.
- To conduct visits, guest lectures, seminars, conferences, workshops, training programs, etc. on various topics related to the syllabus of the university.
- To motivate the students to participate in the organizing of various events conducted by and in the university, and provide them with a platform to enhance their leadership skills. This will help the students to gather sufficient experience so as to take up significant responsibilities in the future professions.
- To establish linkages and provide better opportunities to the students to gather necessary experience which would help them in their future career.

4.6.1 Mission Statement

The crucial mission is to pursue knowledge through academic, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities and develop the learners' personality with a strong value base. The teachers are committed to maintaining a balance between theory and practice. They endure to facilitate the learners to gain knowledge and experience enabling them to achieve meaningful individual development and the wellbeing of society at large.

4.6.2 Objectives of the Institute

The objectives of the institute may be cited below

- To impart knowledge of various subjects to the learners.
- To also offer university post graduate programs in English Literature.
- To inculcate communication and study skills.
- To give awareness of environment and social ethos.
- To prepare the students to take up significant responsibilities in professions.
- To develop students as responsible citizens.

4.6.3 Syllabus: Studies in Women Literature and Feminist Theory

Required Texts : the short stories of Truth Tales: Contemporary Stories by Women Writers of India. Other selected works concerning postcolonial women writings could be of interest in this domain as well.

4.6.3.1Overview

This course is designed to familiarize students with the contributions of women writers to American and British literature and to enable students to be conversant about the contributions of feminist critics to the discussion of women's literature of the twentieth century. students will study very different female authors and works, and one of their objectives is to engage themselves in conversations about the authors and texts in order to construct a genealogy of literary women and their works that speak to issues pertaining to literature and writing, particularly in regard to representations of the female author, female experience, and female identity.

Questions they will ask throughout the semester include: Is it significant that the author is female? What is feminist about this literary work or piece of criticism? What is being contested or reaffirmed in terms of gender, literary merit, values, philosophy, history, class, and race? Students will draw conclusions about the significance of the assigned texts, and they will be able to articulate and situate feminist, anti-feminist, and ambivalent attitudes in treatments of female characters and feminist concerns upon successful completion of the course.

4.6.3.2 Course Outcomes

Understanding society and culture is demonstrated by the student's ability to

- compare and contrast the range of diversity and universality in human history, societies, and ways of life;
- analyze and understand the interconnectedness of global and local communities; and
- operate with civility in a complex world.

After successful completion of this course, students should be able to demonstrate critical thinking, discussion, and writing skills; to engage in close reading; to analyze, assess, research, and synthesize; to establish persuasive and significant connections; to identify, analyze, and interpret feminist issues; to engage in independent and guided investigations of texts; to take ownership of learning.

4.6.4 The Procedure of a Lesson

In one's mind the suitable teaching style most closely resembles what Elaine Showalter identifies as an "eclectic" approach to teaching. Teaching consists of a mixture of teacher-centered lectures and student-centered discussions because the students profit

most from an integrated approach to teaching. Lectures give background and context and allow the teacher to clarify difficult concepts or offer an introduction to or interpretations of a work, to which students respond. Discussions are used as a springboard for conversations between the students, although the teacher works to facilitate (or create if necessary) a balanced discussion.

As such, the teacher is amenable to what Gerald Graff calls "teaching the conflicts," proposing opposing points of view to what has been presented by his/herself or the students. While the teacher articulates his/her positions, s/he believes that discussions provide a space for students to try on and examine their ideas and those of their peers. Active learning is what is desired for students, and s/he works to model active learning in the classroom. Students are expected to participate in class discussions, and a fraction of the overall grade in the courses is dedicated to participation effort.

Research shows that discussion is a particularly effective teaching tool in enabling students to "reach a more critically informed understanding about the topic," enhancing "participants' self-awareness and their capacity for self-critique," fostering "an appreciation among participants for the diversity of opinion that invariably emerges when viewpoints are exchanged openly and honestly," and prompting those involved to "take informed action in the world" (Brookfield and Preskill qtd. in Howard What Does Research Tell Us About Classroom Discussion). Because active participation leads to active learning, students in this course sign up to be discussion leaders for a particular author and text.

Ultimately, the students create a genealogy or constellation of women writers, comprised of creative writers, theorists, and their attendant significant issues or concerns, that are bound together through the students' framing and mapping of writers and their philosophical and stylistic ideas and positions.

4.6.5 Organizing Principles of the Course

Organizing principles of the course include an awareness and understanding of feminist issues, raised in the theoretical articles and explored in the literary pieces through lectures and class discussions, which are amplified by the students' own experiences and examples. We also interrogate textual representations of women, and, ultimately, we consider power dynamics and other feminist concerns while we explore the implications of feminist, ambivalent, or patriarchal representations in our analyses.

In a more traditional manner, we examine and survey the literary, historical, and philosophical trajectories concerning significant women writers. Moreover, in addition to the university learning outcome of coming to a better understanding of society and culture, students should also be able to demonstrate critical thinking, discussion, and writing skills; to engage in close reading; to analyze, assess, research, and synthesize; to establish persuasive and significant connections; to identify, analyze, and interpret feminist issues; to engage in independent and guided investigations of texts; and to take ownership of learning.

The class serves two primary disciplines, literature and women's studies (though it attracts a large number of students from other disciplines, including education, because it fulfills a diversity requirement at the university). To compound this built-in need for versatility in the syllabus and in the classroom, the approach to the course needs to be additionally flexible. In other words, all sections are run concurrently, and all students are involved in learning English and Women's Studies at the same time. However, the design of the course works: indeed, it has proven to be successful in generating student interest and effective in honing their critical reading, thinking, and writing skills, in addition to polishing their understanding of gender and diversity, thereby making them more sophisticated readers and citizens in the world they inhabit. In short, students in this course interpret, analyze, apply, make connections, and synthesize highly stylized texts and complex ideas.

4.7 Conclusion

It was not until one was already immersed in one's magister program, thinking about one's dissertation, that one realized that feminist recovery work needed to take place in the classroom, too. Women in the curriculum – in terms of what's taught in schools – the curriculum – women tend to be missing, in the background, or in second place. Feminists often argue that women have been 'hidden from history' – history has been the subject of men. Research alone cannot perform the cultural work involved in educating students to become informed and critical—liberated, even—citizens. But teaching and education can transform students' understanding, identities, ideologies, and their position in society. And it fosters the desire to explore intellectually, personally, and culturally the myriad ways there are to learn and to know.

Lastly, if everyone participates, then unsafe topics can be broached and accessed, and an atmosphere of respect and collegiality may emerge as well. Feminist theory has always had the practical goal of social change, but the feminist critics have not yet reached English classrooms. At present, its theoretical import has been mostly confined to university research issue.

Notes to Chapter Four

(1) quoted in Koskimaa, R. (2007). Cybertext Challenge: Teaching Literature in the Digital World in Arts and Humanities in Higher Education. vol. 6(2). Sage Publications. p. 171.

(2) Koskimaa, ibid, p. 171.

(3) Brindley, S., Greenwood, D., Adams, A. (2007). Models of Reading in the Secondary Classroom: Literature and Beyond. in Adams, A., Brindley, S. (eds.). (2007). Teaching Secondary English with ICT. McGraw-Hill.

(4) Nettelbeck, D. (2000). Using information technology to enrich the learning experiences of secondary English students. quoted in T. Locke and R. Andrews. (2004). ICT and Literature: A Faustian Compact? in R. Andrews (ed.) (2004). The Impact of ICT in Literacy Education. Routledge Farmer. p. 137.

General Conclusion

This book taught one a lot about the way some Indian families view themselves and the world. The whole concept of preferring boys to girls was not necessarily new to me, but what was so striking to me was the amount of disgust the family directed toward a female. Yet, there are gender pressures in one's country, but they are much more open than those in India.

In this research, one has attempted to provide a broader meaning of narratives of female oppression and resistance. The narratives function as spaces of utterance and agency which include not only the geographical locations of Third World women but also their literary and critical productions and feminist remits. This makes postcolonial women's writing a discourse of socio–literary activism and a conduit for the reclamation of women's voices and bodies which are represented, deconstructed, and reconstructed.

One of the goals of one's research is to read postcolonial women's writing as a transformative and metachronous discourse without overlooking interconnected notions of oppression and resistance, given that they are a complementary part of women's texts and realities.

The transformative role of postcolonial women's narratives underlines the potential of women's (de)constructive voices and standpoints to envision a practical shift in discourses of identity reconstruction and liberation on various levels. Because the shift implies that narratives of female oppression and resistance do not emerge from a vacuum but are tied to women's specificities, the narratives are read in this thesis by establishing a kind of mediation between the local and the literary as well as between events and their causes.

Notions of female diversity and particularity justify one's hypothesis that postcolonial women's writing is a dynamic discourse which has the potential to constitute a cultural, literary, and historical archive of women's subjective experiences and of different authorial concerns and modes of representation narratively reconstructed.

The discourse is produced by postcolonial women writers about several female modalities and is consumed by readers from various cultures. Besides, it does not exclusively represent stories of female oppression; rather, it reclaims women's voices through the use of different themes and structural styles in order to map spaces of resistance. This signals the possibility of producing texts from diverse female margins and

spaces in order to articulate what is suppressed or neglected in the masculine order; that is, female creativity, voice, and body, all of which are brought together in the body of the text.

In conclusion, the study shows feminism is a struggle for equality of women, an effort to make women become like men. The agonistic definition of feminism sees it as the struggle against all forms of patriarchal and sexiest aggression. This study reveals the growth of Indian Feminism and its development. Indian women writers have placed the problems of Indian women in general and they have proved their place in the international literature.

Based on one's discussion and comparison in this research, one has found that there are links between the stories in terms of the three themes of caste, gender and class in Truth Tales.

The linking point of the selected texts revolves around different stages of female's lives such as childhood, adolescence, motherhood, and widowhood. Although it is shared by the texts, the conjuncture is treated differently by the authors because the texts are culturally located and analysed. This is why the shared conjuncture gets more complicated by the power relations affecting women, and by the fact that degrees of agency and choice of action between the principal female figures also differ.

As a result, the selected works offer different narrative conclusions which are not always about (female) liberation as the term "postcolonial" may denote. Such differences denote the metachronous aspect of postcolonial women's writing which neither adopts a monolithic structural mode of representation nor focuses on a single narrative of oppression/transition. They also underline the potential of the narratives to be operative temporarily and spatially in the past, at present, and in the future in order to inspire change, and this justifies one's attempt to re–visit the selected texts.

These links are particularly visible in cases of oppression and discrimination. In most cases the links are between two of the various concepts, for example between caste and class or gender and class, but sometimes, all three themes are linked at the same time. Hence, one's conclusion coincides with the theory of Spivak, who claims that women from the Third World are the most vulnerable, as they often are discriminated against due to their race, their gender and their class. The concept of power is closely linked to all of the three themes.

To a large extent, the main points of the writers emphasize the role of the British Empire in South Asia and the difficulties which followed colonialism - both on the universal and the individual level. Hence, they stress the consequences of the postcolonial period, and the fact that colonialism has delayed and prevented Third World countries from taking part in the dynamic development and progress of the West. The writers' main interest is to illustrate discrimination in relation to caste, gender and class. In particular, their project has been to give voice to the subaltern women of the Third World, who suffer the most.

The different narrative conclusions in the previous chapters point to differences not only in ways of representing women but also in degrees of agency, inequality, and choice of action between the principal female figures. This adds a great deal of interpretive variety and complexity to the texts which defy neat conclusions about homogeneous female oppression which the reader makes. Through female characters such as devi's Jashode, shakun, shubha, matilda, El Saadawi's Firdaus, and Rhys's Antoinette, the selected authors represent different experiences and models of women, where a woman is traditional and modern, oppressed and rebellious, silent and active.

Female diversity emphasises that postcolonial women writers portray female characters who are reflective of "the social ills as well as the cure. Their novels imply that women must begin the process of change by internalizing their own versions of social and economic equality" (Uraizee 224). This explains why the authors appropriate negative female images and roles constructed by dominant discourses such as patriarchy and nationalism. The appropriation of these images is a central issue in this research and is explored through a deconstructive, cultural reading of the texts.

For instance, although both women are subordinated by gender, among other power structures, Shubha who is a middle–class woman in Smoke does not experience the same socio–economic hardships experienced by Matilda, in Midnight Soldiers; who is a lower–class woman. This example highlights the differences in the authors' concerns and modes of representation. For Iyengar, the colonial legacy, class, and female sexuality determine the construction of the female body in Tragedy, in Minor Key, while for Devi gender power relates to colonisation, class, and the modernity–tradition tension exemplified in the theme of motherhood in The Wet Nurse.

Therefore, it is important to locate postcolonial female narratives within their different contexts in order to read them through the contexts which produce them. Here one points to the necessity of promoting postcolonial women's writing as "a grounded theory" in order to deal with race, gender, and class dynamics as "more dense and delicate than those categorical terms often imply" (Robolin 85).

Texts are being discussed from feminist and postcolonial point of views, which already proved quite productive and adequate to track down different forms of situated sociopolitical critique voiced by a genealogy of committed women.These writers have broken the barriers of the "Established" pattern of language used by the earlier writers.They have shown in their works that there is not one language but many more are there, as there are multi cultures.

In light of the aforementioned issues, the guiding spirit of Chapter One has underlined the aforementioned issues through a theoretical lens. It discussed feminist theoretical issues which share certain aspects with postcolonial women's writing and hence have guided its choice as the research subject. Both underscored the need to expose the variable powers which produce diverse female voices and texts. This necessitated the attempt to deconstruct the global sisterhood model in order to locate alternative models of theorising women in more heterogeneous and relational ways. The models envision various routes of transformation in theoretical and literary discourses.

Chapter Two is that postcolonial women's narratives have the potential to reclaim different female voices and standpoints, and that developing localised readings of these narratives is an effective avenue of female transition. This has consolidated the argument that female diversity, connectivity, and difference shape the narratives of postcolonial women writers which deploy various themes and structural styles in order to represent women. Therefore, it is important to read postcolonial women's narratives not exclusively as sites of subordination but also as rich reservoirs of stories about female recuperation and self–assertion, made possible through the written word which creates resistant spaces out of confining ones.

Chapter three analysed Truth Tales as a postmodern and postcolonial text whose narrative format, language, and female characters make it a rich example of a Dalit woman's reclamation and acceptance of her body and identity. The chapter analysed woman's oppression as caused by socio–sexual and racial tensions which are inscribed on

her body and mind. Given that gender issues such as sexual fragmentation can be mediated through thematic, linguistic, and narrative styles, the chapter dealt with the female body and language as confining/resistant spaces.

Meanwhile, chapter four highlighted the benefits of using information and communication through technology. It and also suggested a better use of the social networks for the sake of literature. It provided the teacher and the learner with new ideas to adopt reformed methods and strategies to make readers of the world and critical thinkers contributing to establish equality, respect and development of the country inside and the world outside. Change is embedded in current processes of change in Academia and society. The theoretical work is combined with practical exercices in teaching, in course design and in ways to negotiate the integration of new course modules in teaching programmes.

The discussion helped one focus on women's potential to shift toward liberation and self–assertion raising their voices through diverse avenues such as writing as an outlet for pain and anger, motherhood, and enven through silence.

Truth Tales successfully highlighted without prejudice what feminism is all about, not only liberation for women but it is also equality of the sexes.

The works of emergent writers have ceased to give attention to patriarchy as the only system that subjects women to oppression. Consequently, their works show a great deal of consciousness, serious concern and interest in their political, economic and social environments. The writers' state of social consciousness is depicted in their novel; Truth Tales as they identify the ills in the society and thus makes an attempt to correct the perceived socio-economic and political imbalances. The most frustrating of these societal ills are caste and class.

The stories illustrate the mental strength of their female characters. Their positive and optimistic view of life seems to be prevailing throughout all difficulties. Finally, it is interesting to indicate what kind of feminist message the stories communicate. The authors' project is to give voice to subaltern women who have been silenced through history. Through this mission they make the stories of Indian Dalit women known. This knowledge is valuable information for privileged white people, in order to be able to understand and help in the best way possible. Furthermore, their message is evidently that women must never give up fighting for freedom and respect, in spite of their suffering and

difficulties. They must struggle to free themselves from male power and try to obtain the same rights as men. This requires that they participate in society. Education and work are factors which will make them stronger and independent in this respect.

Future visions

This research has sought to explore the significance of the cultural analysis and criticism of postcolonial women's texts for the recuperation of women's voices in diverse postcolonial locations. It has focused on the potential of postcolonial women's texts to function as critical tools for transforming the status of marginalised women across cultures. The texts, as effective tools, seek to build a democratic society in which women and their writing become an indispensable part of the larger struggle of society across several aspects of human experience such as politics, history, gender, class, and sex. For this reason, one's suggestion for further research visions in the area of critical, cultural analysis is twofold.

Firstly, cultural and literary criticism can be employed as an integrated discourse in order to study other cultural and literary productions such as art, plays, museum, and photography which are useful tools of critiques and also a historical archive. One adds to this suggestion the adaptation of women's narratives to be produced as stage performances, TV series, and films in order to reach a wider audience. In fact, the different ways of receiving a literary or cultural production invite us to rethink an alternative method to represent women's narratives with the aim of empowering other women in various locations and situations. This suggestion lends a wider dimension to the notion of a woman's space of enunciation.

A woman's text, both written and oral, signals the presence of other sites which are reflective of her experiences of oppression and resistance. This research vision is directed toward the study of various techniques of representation which deal with gender issues such as identity politics, memory, sexuality, colonisation, and transformation. The aim of this suggestion is not only to create and remember women's narratives but also to make use of the socio–artistic, emotional, and revolutionary aspects of women's daily experiences depicted in the aforementioned representations/narratives. This helps stimulate our critical thinking and mobilise our awareness and affect about the complex issues and struggles facing women today, locally and globally.

In this way, postcolonial women's writing tends to be not only oppositional and challenging but also critical and transformative. Its mode of resistance underlines the function of the written word as a conduit for challenge and opposition as well as for reconstruction and progress. The second research vision explores the connections between women's studies (gender), literature, and culture within the academy. This vision has a pedagogical goal related to one's future position as a female lecturer of English Literature from the Third World (Algeria). One is inclined to argue that there exists a lack of awareness or emphasis on the issue of women's studies and feminism included in the curricula taught in diverse institutions in Algeria. This issue relates to the methodology of using technology in teaching women's studies for undergraduate and postgraduate students of English Literature in one's home country, thus, adherin the twenty first century

The works of emergent writers have ceased to give attention to patriarchy as the only system that subjects women to oppression. Consequently, their works show a great deal of consciousness, serious concern and interest in their political, economic and social environments. The writers' state of social consciousness is depicted in their novel; Truth Tales as they identify the ills in the society and thus makes an attempt to correct the perceived socio-economic and political imbalances. The most frustrating of these societal ills are caste and class.

English language is no more the asset of native users or writers only. Non-native groups, crossing the national, racial and cultural borders, have been generating a kind of sensibility and yet a separate identity in the use of English language and in creative writings. A sense of ownership of this language has grown. In such non-native perspective, English is not a monopoly of only the native speakers and writers. Although English literature by English native speakers is great, literature produced in English by non-natives is of no less value. It has global and universal quality and circumstantial significance.

In fact, literature is such a phenomenon with its wonderful universal appeal and artistic literary qualities that it needs no exact knowledge and information of the culture or the society it belongs to. Literature could be enjoyed for its great literary values and universality.

The teacher has to become a good communicator, for example, in the teaching of the famous book Truth Tales : Contemporary Women Writings of India. Even if the Indian Dalit women are not seen by people from other countries. The reader of Truth Tales needs

not to go to India to see the Dalits. Real work of art and proper selection and effective methods of teaching can make the learning interesting and comprehensive. If one learns literature with perception, he can learn even more. The aim is now to have the ideal and holistic view, through the study of literature for any discriminate learner who values imaginative experience regardless of country, culture, or gender.

After all, women have come a long way although there is still plenty of road to be travelled. The ultimate goal is to increase an understanding of women's experience, both in the past and present, and promote an appreciation of women's value in the world. Then, 1) are women fairly and fully (or represented at all) in this literary work? 2) does any gender stereotyping or silencing affect the overall effectiveness of the text? 3) and how does the text treatment of sexual roles and relationships and ideas of masculinity and femininty perpetrate or subvert past and present notions? By those measures, one would open avenues for future researches on this literary work and pave the way for future projects.

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Glossary

Glossary 1: General Concepts

These words are characterized by extremely controversial definitions . The ones provided here are usually considered as the most suitable.

Acculturation : the process of becoming adapted to a new culture . Second language learning is often second culture learning .

Alienation : is a turning away ; estrangement ;the state of being an outsider or the feeling of being isolated , as from society; in psychiatry a state in which a person's feelings are inhibited so that eventually both the self and the external world seem unreal .In law, it is the transfer of property , as by conveyance or will , into the ownership of another, the right of an owner to dispose of his property .

Assimilation : when cultural groups give up their heritage cultures and take on the host society's way of life . Cultural assimilation refers to giving up a distinct cultural identity , adopting mainstream language and culture Economic – structural assimilation refers to equality of access , opportunities and treatment .

Assumptions : are facts that individuals are capable of representing mentally and accepting as true, they are manifest to an individual that are perceptible or inferable by an individual .

Binary opposition: a concept borrowed by structuralists and post-structuralists identifying a contrasting pair of signs.

Colonial literature : is often self-consciously a literature of otherness and resistance and written out of the specific local experience .

Cross-cultural : includes a comparison of interactions among people from the same culture to those from another .

Crossing the linguistic border : the border-crosser develops different speaking selves that speak for different aspects of his identity. Simply said it means that you decenter your voice.

Cultural identities : there are porous representations and are contingent on the author's singularity. The particular relations of writers to culture, the complex contexts within which they write , are always inscribed in the literature itself .

Culture : is a way of life. It might be defined as the ideas, customs, skills, arts and tools which characterize a given group of people in a given period .It is a repertoire of socially transmitted and intra-generationally generated ideas about how to live, to think and to behave. Cultural models are thus inherited from the preceding generation through socialization and they are learned intra-generationally and through imitation, teaching and from the media

Deconstruction :the tendency of binary oppositions within a text to shift or reverse their valuation.

Discourse: a literary work is rooted in a cultural and rhetorical context in which meaning is a collaborative construction involving author, text, culture and reader.

Enculturation : learning your personal culture from others .

Essentialism : It is the belief in the authentic essence of things . Essentialist critique is the interrogation of the essentialist terms . In the post-colonial context , it is the reduction of the indigenous people to the idea of what it means to be African , Arabic … To Salman Rushdie , it is required that sources , forms , style , language and symbols belong to an unbroken tradition . Nationalist and liberationist movements reduce the colonizers to an essence which invert or ignore the values of the ascribed features .

Ethnic identity: is defined as the personal dimension of ethnicity or how one identifies oneself.

Ethnicity: is the sense of peoplehood derived from distinct commonalities.

Existentialism : denotes things active rather than passive. Sartre said that man can emerge from his passive condition by an act of will.

Gender Identity : The gender to which one feels one belongs, a continuous and persistent sense of ourselves as male or female.

Hegemony : A term used mostly by Marxist critics to delineate the web of dominant ideologies within a society. It was coined by the Italian theorist Antonio Gramsci; this refers to the pervasive system of assumptions, meanings and values that shapes the way things look, what they mean, and therefore what reality is for the majority of people within a given culture.

Hybridity : is transgressive, it refers to the integration or mingling of cultural signs and practices from the colonizing and the colonized cultures .

Identity : is always in process .It is a word carrying with it connotations of rootedness (to engage in various aspects of being an individual within a world which is plural)

Ideology: dominant values, beliefs, ways of thinking through which culture understands reality. Similar to the phrase cultural mythology , it usually represents in tacit fashion the prevailing views of a particular class. Examples of ideology relevant to American culture: gender roles, value of capitalism, constitutional rights protecting individual liberties... But for Marxist, it includes the shared beliefs and values held in an unquestioning manner by a culture. It governs what that culture deems to be normative and valuable .It is determined by economics . Ideology exerts a powerful influence upon a culture. Those who are marginalized in the culture are most aware of the ways in which an ideology supports the dominant class in the society. Those who enjoy the fruit of belonging to a dominant group of the society are filled with what Marx called false consciousness and are not interested in the ways in which an economic structure marginalizes others.

Integration: a term which also implied assimilation but allowing for some linguistic and cultural residues. It can take place when the environment is favourable. The environment, to state John Dewey's own definition, consists of the conditions that promote or hinder, stimulate or inhibit the characteristic activities of a living being. Watts , 1962:2

Intercultural understanding : going beyond your own culture , understanding others' perspectives and points of view , assisting each other worldwide .A profound change in thoughts , perceptions and values can lead to changing how one views culture and one's place in it.

Intraculturality : occurs between individuals of the same culture .

Literary Canon : the group of texts deemed to be major texts of literary tradition.

Metaphor : a figure of speech in which one thing is described in terms of another

Modernism : rejected the old Victorian standards of how art should be made and what it should mean (Woolf , Joyce , Eliot , Kafka and Rilke were the founders of the 20th century modernism) and emphasized fragmented forms and subjectivity in writing (stream of consciousness) as well as in visual arts .

Modernity : appeared first in the 19th century in sociology to distinguish antiquity .

Modernization : Historically , this term was used to replace Westernization in the recognition of the universal meaning of the modernizing process . This latter originated in Western Europe and has fundamentally transformed the rest of the world. First used in North America by a sociologist, Talcott Parsons, in the 1950s. Forces such as Westernization or Americanization are to engulf the whole world under the labelling modernization thought of as being probably more scientific and neutral. Huntington, 2000:257

Orientalism : means a system of representations framed by political forces that brought the Orient into Western learning , Western consciousness and Western Empire . The Orient is a reflected image of what is inferior and alien, i.e. other to the West. Said claims that the Orient cannot be studied in a non-Orientalist manner but the would-be concerned would focus on the culturally consistent regions and that the Oriental is to be given a voice and not be given a second hand representation.

Other : The other is anyone who is separate from one's self . The existence of others is crucial in defining what is normal and in locating one's own place in the world . The colonized subject is characterized as other through discourses as primitivism as a means of establishing the binary separation of the colonizer and colonized and asserting the naturalness and primacy of the colonizing culture and world view .

Othering : It describes the various ways in which colonial discourse produces its subjects . Many critics use the spelling interchangeable , but in either case the construction of the other is fundamental to the construction of the self .

Patriarchal : An assumption of feminist criticism that culture is rather ruled with its institutions and traditions so structured to promote masculine values and to maintain the male in a privileged position

Perception : Reader's insight or comprehension of a text. From different critical perspectives, the reader's perception of meaning can be a passive receipt , an active discovery or a creative construction .

Post-colonial / third world : academies reacted to the term post-colonial more favourably than to the pejorative third world, administrators welcomed it as less threatening than

Imperialistic or neo-colonialistic . Post-structuralists and post-modernists readily provided it a sympathetic audience .

Post-structuralism : in literature reveals that the meaning of any text is unstable .

Protagonist : is the central figure of a story (e.g. anecdote, novel), and is often story's main character. Often the story is told from the protagonist's point of view. The protagonist's attitudes and actions are made clear to the larger extent than for any other character.

Representation : has a semiotic meaning in that something is standing for something else. Representations are constructed images that need to be interrogated for their ideological content. There is always an element of interpretation involved in representation . There are negative images that can have devastating effects on the real lives of marginalized people.

Sexism: defines the ideology of male supremacy, of male superiority and of beliefs that support and sustain it. Sexism and patriarchy mutually reinforce one another.

Sexuality : is a transnational issue .It is regarded as an innate human drive but its expression differs according to cultures . Sexual behaviours have different meanings and outgrowths in different societies .

Socialization: is the dynamic process that brings human beings into the human group, causing an individual to internalize the values, mores, traditions, language and attitudes of the culture in which they live.

South Asian : Nowadays it is the most popular term to refer to people from the area in and around the Indian Subcontinent , including the modern nations of Bangladesh , Pakistan , India and Shri Lanka .

Status quo : The class relationships determined by the base and reflected in the superstructure of a society . The ideologies of a culture work to keep those relationships .

Stereotype : when one judges people one naturally generalizes, simplifies and categorizes them. The classification is called stereotyping. Such stereotyping limits one's width of perception , while at the same time slowly killing one's ability to inquire and learn about others . Stereotyping is very useful in perpetuating self-fulfilling myths about people . So every body is an agent of change , the inner self should be allowed to modify and recreate . Subaltern: Everybody who has limited or no access at all to the cultural imperialism is thus

subaltern . G.C. Spivak points that speaking is a transaction between speaker and listener, but it does not reach the dialogic level of utterance.

Third World : is a rather pejorative way to mean post-colonial world. It was first used in 1952 by Alfred Sauvy, the French demographer.

Transnational feminism : has enabled women's organizations from the South and North to organize jointly around a wide range of issues that have generated new problems and challenges .

Trope : any literary or rethorical device as metaphor which consists in the use of words in other than their literal sense.

Understanding : understanding oneself , one's action , thought , behaviour , mind , feelings , surrounding , nature , is a process . The natural learning occurs when there is interest, curiosity and enthusiasm .

Women's emancipation: freedom from oppressive restrictions imposed by sex , self-determination , and autonomy.

Glossary 2: Indian Concepts and Notions

Ambedkar, B.R. : (1893-1956) was named Baba, Babasahib ou Bhim by his followers. He was born in the caste of untouchable Mahar of Maharashata and was the first leader struggling for untouchables'dignity and education.

Buddhism : spread over various countries, Burma, Tibet, China, Japan . One of these schools was founded by Prince Gautama, who became Buddha, also called Butsu after enlightenment. Buddhism had divided itself into two schools: the Hinayana (closer to the teaching of Gautama) and Mahayana (closer to idolatrized Hinduism)

Caste : the divisions into which Hindu religion is divided. Brahaman (priest) Kshatriya (warrior) , Vaisya (trader) and Sudra (unskilled workers). Untouchables were out of these castes. The sanscrit word is jati.

Dalit : means reduced , oppressed

Dalit Literature : Literature against Untouchability

Dayan : witches

Dharma : conformity to religious law, custom and duty or one's own quality or character

Djiva : twice born

Gandhi, Mohandas Karamchand (1869-1948) : was a peace-lover, a preacher of love, brotherhood and unity. He believed in his philosophy of passive resistance and humility.He was compelled by the social problems within India. He campaigned against Hindu intolerance towards the Untouchables who were considered as outcastes.

Ghazal : a Persian lyric poem consisting of from 6 to 26 lines

Guru : a preceptor giving personal religious instruction.

Hindu: means those who keep away from the path of violence

Hinduism : Hindu thought evolved the idea of a trinity consisting of Brahma, The Creator, Vishnu, the Preserver and Shiva, the Destroyer.

Hindu nationalists : claim they promote traditional values such as chastity , spirituality . The most expensive Hindu nationalist organization is the Rashtria Iwayamsewak Sangh and its women's wing , the Rashtria Sevika Samiti . They strategically use sexuality to provoke emotions and channel them into violence against Indian minorities .

Indian widow : lives the rest of her life observing the strict codes of conduct laid down for widows of her caste and community.

Infanticide of female : The decision to kill a female or a male baby on the ground of its sex is intimately bound up with culture specific construction of gender , kinship and economic structures as dowries and patterns of inheritance .

Kali : is an echo of the woman warrior's fierce virginal autonomy ; In this context, she is considered the forceful form of the great goddess Durga. Kali is represented as a Black woman with four arms. In one hand she has a sword , in another the head of the demon she has slain, with the other two she is encouraging her worshippers. Kali's four arms represent the complete circle of creation and destruction which is contained within her. She represents the inherent creative and destructive rythms of the cosmos. The sword is that of knowledge and freedom. Her three eyes represent the sun, moon and fire with which she is able to observe the three modes of time: past, present and future. (Kali is the Sanskrit term for time)

Karma: belief in the quality of action

Languages of India : while English due to India's colonial past, is embedded in educated Indian circles and enjoys associate official status in the government system, it is not largely spoken. Hindi , in the Devanagari script, is the only official federal language of India, though the other tongues are endorsed as co-official by the central government . There are the Dravidian languages of Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada and Telugu; and the Indo-Aryan languages of Bengali, Marathi Urdu, Gujurati, Oriya, Punjabi, Assamese, Kashmiri , Sindhi and Sanskrit. Recently, Nepali and Konkani languages were also added to the register of national languages.

Mahila thanas : women's police station

Mazbi: an Indian poor sub-caste

Naaley : tomorrow

Natha : practice in which women are getting married several times

Purdah : seclusion is not practised in all Muslim countries. Women have their own part in the house called zanânah as men possess their own section mardânah which is usually located in the front of the house so that males could not see or meet the womenfolk

Punjab : a former province in North West India, now divided between Punjab (in India) and West Punjab (in Pakistan)

Raj : rule , reign, domination

Samsara : belief in reincarnation

Sati : bride burnt alive

Sakti: denotes the universal feminine creative principle and the energizing force behind all male divinity including Shiva (Lord of destruction)

Sikhism : it was founded in the Punjab in the 16th century by Guru Nanak (guru: teacher) who refused to recognize the supreme authority of the Brahmanical priests and the caste system. Their sacred book is the Grant Sahib

Sita : epitomizes marital fidelity, wifely loyalty and dutifulness

Vedas : the holy scriptures of the Hindus, date back to the beginning of Indian civilization and are the earliest records of the whole Aryan race. They are the perhaps the oldest written text on the planet today . They are supposed to have been passed through oral tradition for over 10,000years. They came to us in written form between 4-6,000 years ago. Aryan beliefs and daily life are described in the four Vedas, collection of poems and sacred hymns, composed in about 1500 BC . The Vedas, meaning knowledge, are divided into the Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvaveda concerned with rituals and philosophical hymns to the deities and the elements. Velutha : Malayalam word meaning the white one. The Untouchables are generally dark skinned. They are probably made to name children thus so that the white baby in the landlord’s was not affected by evil eye.

Appendices

Appendix A

Mahasweta Devi

Mahasweta Devi was born in 1926 in the city of Dacca in East Bengal (modern day Bangladesh). As an adolescent, she and her family moved to West Bengal in India. Born into a literary family.

In 1997, as a form of recognition for her constant artistic crusade for the benefit of fair treatment of indigenous tribes by Indian society, Mahasweta Devi received Ramon Magsaysay Award, the most prestigious distinction in the field of journalism, literature and art in Asia. Devi has been the recipient of several literary prizes. She was awarded the Jnanpath, India's highest literary award in 1995. In the following year, she was one of the recipients of the Magsaysay award, considered to be the Asian equivalent of the Nobel Prize. She currently resides and works in Calcutta, India.She has also donated the prize money from both the Jnanpath and Magsaysay awards to tribal communities and continues to use her work to further the position of these groups in India.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak insists that Devi's work suggests a model in which activism and writing can reflect upon each other, providing a necessary vision of inter-nationality. Major Awards1979: Sahitya Akademi Award (Bengali) for Aranyer Adhikar.

• 1986: Padma Shri1996: Jnanpith Award
• 1997: Ramon Magsysay Award for Journalism, Literature and the Creative Communication Arts
• 1999: Honoris causa from the Indira Ghandi National Open University
• 2006: Padma Vibhushan2010:Yashwantrao Chavan National Award
• 2011: Bangabibhushan •
2011:Hall of Fame Lifetime Achievement SAHITYABRAMHA

Appendix B

Lakshmi Kannan

Lakshmi Kannan is a bilingual writer who writes in English and in Tamil using the pen name Kaaveri for Tamil. She is a novelist, short story writer, poet and a translator. Lakshmi Kannan has a B.A. (Hons), M.A. and Ph.D in English and American Literature.

Council visitor to the University of Cambridge for the Cambridge seminar, a writer-in-Residence at the University of Kent at Canterbury on a Charles Wallace Trust Fellowship and a participant in the International Writing Program, IOWA, USA. Lakshmi Kannan has participated in various international conferences in Canada, the Netherlands, United States of America and the United Kingdom.

Some of her short stories have been published in French, English, German, Spanish, Arabic, Hindi and many other Indian Languages.

Some of her translated English works which have been incorporated as a part of my research are, “India Gate and other stories” (1993), published by Disha Books, Orient Longman Limited, “Glass Walls”, “Simone de Beauvoir and the Manes” (both of which are long stories which were published independently in a magazine) and a novel, “Going Home” (1999). Her other works include “Parijata and Other Stories”, translated from the Tamil original into English by National Publishing House, Delhi, 1992, “Rhythms”, short stories translated from the Tamil original, published by Vikas, Delhi, 1986 and her recently published “Nandavan and Other Stories”, translated from the Tamil original into English by Orient Blackswan, Delhi, 2011. Besides these, her anthology of poems include, “Exiled Gods”, published by Arnold-Heinemann, Delhi, 1985, “The Glow and the Grey” (1976) and “Impressions” (1974), published by Writers Workshop, Calcutta.

Appendix C

Ismat Chughtai

Ismat Chughtai (1915-1992) Born in 1915 in Badayun, a small Indian town, to a well-to-do family, ISMAT CHUGHTAI began writing about topics that were considered taboo in conventional Muslim society long before being published, but kept her writing hidden because of her traditional parents.

Her first and most famous published story, “Lihaaf” (“The Quilt”), which involved a lesbian relationship between the beautiful wife of a wealthy landlord and her servant maid, outraged and awed many. At first presumed to have been written by a man, “The Quilt” was considered pornographic by the then British government and Chughtai was charged with obscenity. By 1943 she devoted her career to writing, and became a member of the Progressive Writer’s Group. Chugtai has also written one other explicitly feminist novel Ziddi (The Stubborn One) and a number of short-story collections: Chotan (Wounds), Kaliyan (Buds), and Chui Mui. She died in India in 1992.

Chughtai wrote in Urdu and was early on associated with the Progressive Writers' Association. She was a friend of Manto's, and often compared to him, so this post is in some sense a complement to my earlier post on Manto. Manto's inspired take on Chughtai in his essay on her, included in a splendid collection called Ismat: Her Life, Her Times (Edited by Sukrita Paul Kumar and Sadique), is well worth reading. Some of Manto's comments about Chughtai's status as a woman writer are a bit controversial (Manto was no feminist; he wanted Chughtai to write like a woman). But others are witty and affectionate:

Appendix D

Mrinal Pande

Mrinal Pande (born 1946) is an Indian television personality, journalist and author, and till recently chief editor of Hindi Daily,Hindustan. She left Hindustan on August 31, 2009. She is appointed chairperson of Prasar Bharati, the apex body of official Indian Broadcast Media. This appointment came on January 23, 2010.[1] She also hosts a weekly Interview show, titled 'Baaton Baaton Mein' on Lok Sabha TV. She is the daughter of the Hindi novelist Shivani.[2]

Earlier she worked for Doordarshan and STAR News. She has also written a few short stories. She was the editor of the popular women's magazine Vama from 1984-87. Mrinal Pande, was born in Tikamgarh, Madhya Pradesh. She studied initially at Nainital and then completed her Master's degree from Allahabad University. Later on she studied English and Sanskritliterature, Ancient Indian History, Archeology, Classical Music and theVisual Arts at the Corcoran in Washington DC. Her first story was published in the Hindi weekly Dharmyug, at the age of 21. Since then she has been consistently writing, apart from working in media, both television and press.

She spent several years on the National Commission for Self-Employed Women, inquiring into the conditions for rag-pickers, vegetable sellers and domestic help.