

ITHAKA 2019-20
DICHOTOMIES



JOURNAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), MUMBAI



Editors (L -R) : Toshita Sahni, Sruthi Venkateswaran, Jui Chawan, Ishita Puri



Creatives and Layouts: Arfa Sirguroh

ITHAKA

C.P. Cavafy

Translated by Edmund Keeley

As you set out for Ithaka
hope your road is a long one,
full of adventure, full of discovery.

Laistrygonians, Cyclops,
angry Poseidon—don't be afraid of them:
you'll never find things like that on your way
as long as you keep your thoughts raised high,
as long as a rare excitement
stirs your spirit and your body.

Laistrygonians, Cyclops,
wild Poseidon—you won't encounter them
unless you bring them along inside your soul,
unless your soul sets them up in front of you.

Hope your road is a long one.
May there be many summer mornings when,
with what pleasure, what joy,
you enter harbors you're seeing for the first time;
may you stop at Phoenician trading stations
to buy fine things,
mother of pearl and coral, amber and ebony,
sensual perfume of every kind—
as many sensual perfumes as you can;
and may you visit many Egyptian cities
to learn and go on learning from their scholars.

Keep Ithaka always in your mind.
Arriving there is what you're destined for.
But don't hurry the journey at all.
Better if it lasts for years,
so you're old by the time you reach the island,
wealthy with all you've gained on the way,
not expecting Ithaka to make you rich.

Ithaka gave you the marvelous journey.
Without her you wouldn't have set out.
She has nothing left to give you now.

And if you find her poor, Ithaka won't have fooled you.
Wise as you will have become, so full of experience,
you'll have understood by then what these Ithakas mean.

Published January 2020
© ITHAKA JOURNAL, The Department of English
St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Mumbai

Academic Advisors

Dr. Pearl Pastakia
Dr. Prasita Mukherjee

Editorial Team

Ishita Puri
Jui Chawan
Sruthi Venkateswaran
Toshita Sahn

Creatives and Layout

Arfa Sirguroh

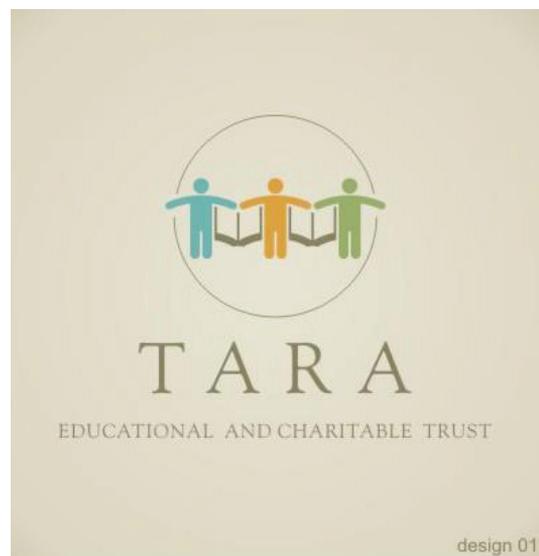
Photography

Aastik Agarwal

Printing

Ketaki Prakashan Pvt. Ltd.

Sponsor



“And now when these two spirits together came, they in the beginning created Life and Not-Life.”

-From *The Religion of Zarathustra* by I.J.S. Taraporewalla (a quote from the Gathas -Yasna 30.4)

To understand the suggested dichotomy, it would help to know that the cornerstone of Zarathustra’s philosophy is the thought that humanity is created to progress Godwards, with the help of the Eternal Law (which He called Asha) as guide. Whatever assisted humanity’s ascent was attributed to the Spirit which supported Life. Whatever hindered the evolution of humanity towards God was attributed to the Spirit of Non - Life and considered synonymous with falsehood.

So well-known is the reference to this dichotomy that the religion of Zarathustra is sometimes called the religion of ethical dualism. However, Zarathustra himself states in Yasna 30.10, that the antithesis would be resolved eventually, with the triumph of Good over Evil saying, “Then indeed shall the support of Falsehood come down and broken shall be its power.” Thus it is seen that the dichotomy is sure to come to an end and Truth prevail.

The authors of the essays collected in this journal seek to examine the idea of dichotomy in the context of literature and related fields. We do hope that their fascinated exploration of the theme would lead readers to delve deeper into the subject and discover new insights.

Dr Pearl Pastakia
Head,
Department of English

EDITORIAL: THE DIVERGING ROADS.

If bedtime stories such as *The Boy Who Cried Wolf* taught our childhood selves the merits of truth-telling over dishonesty, then modern Orwellian allegories, often pored over in literature classes, present to us the contrast between dictatorship and democracy, insanity and sanity. Every story, if analysed closely enough, will reveal to its readers that there is a dichotomy that drives its plot, motivates its characters, or enhances its message.

This year's journal, thus, embarks on an attempt to capture the true range of this eternal theme, 'Dichotomies', by publishing a range of papers that focus on various manifestations of binaries, divisions and paradoxes across medium and genre. The journal opens with Mayank Jha's paper on the Angel/Monster dichotomy prevalent in the portrayal of women in fiction through the ages. Sanika Sawant attempts to understand the distinction between reality and illusion as she examines the texts *Erewhon*, *The Glass Menagerie* and *The Great Gatsby*. Next, Arfa Sirguroh transports us back to our childhood, as her paper examines morality in fairy tales. Farishta Anjirbag's paper, on the other hand, is steeped in reality as she examines Saadat Hasan Manto's representation of gender and religion in his works situated during the partition. The next two papers move out of the realm of prose, as Sruthi Venkateswaran examines the linguistic dichotomy between metaphor and metonymy, while Sonia Joseph examines the various different portrayals of rain in poems by a range of poets. Nivedha Kannan similarly examines works of non-fiction and film as she attempts a comparative analysis of the spirit of nationalism during different periods in Indian history. Next, Durga Shirsat and Vaishnavi Dhas examine dichotomies present in *Siddhartha* by Hermann Hesse. Ultimately, the journal ends as it begins, with another paper on the theme of gender, as Ninjal Savla examines cross-dressing in plays by Shakespeare.

This journal could not have been published without the constant support and guidance of our academic advisors, Dr Pearl Pastakia and Dr Prasita Mukherjee. We would also like to thank Arfa Sirguroh for designing the cover page and the layout of the journal. To all of you who are now setting out on your perusal of the *Ithaka Journal 2019-2020*, we hope your road is full of discovery, pleasure, and joy, in the true spirit of the poem by Cavafy.

Jui Chawan, SYBA
Ishita Puri, SYBA
Toshita Sahni, SYBA
Sruthi Venkateswaran, TYBA

ITHAKA 2019: SCHEHERAZADE'S NIGHTS



SCHEDULE FOR THE PLAYS



9TH DECEMBER 2019, MONDAY

 TIME	 PLAY
2:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Sneha Aunty's Mystery Man
3:30 pm - 4:30 pm	Black Coffee
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm	The Importance of Being Earnest
6:30 pm - 7:30 pm	The Utopia?



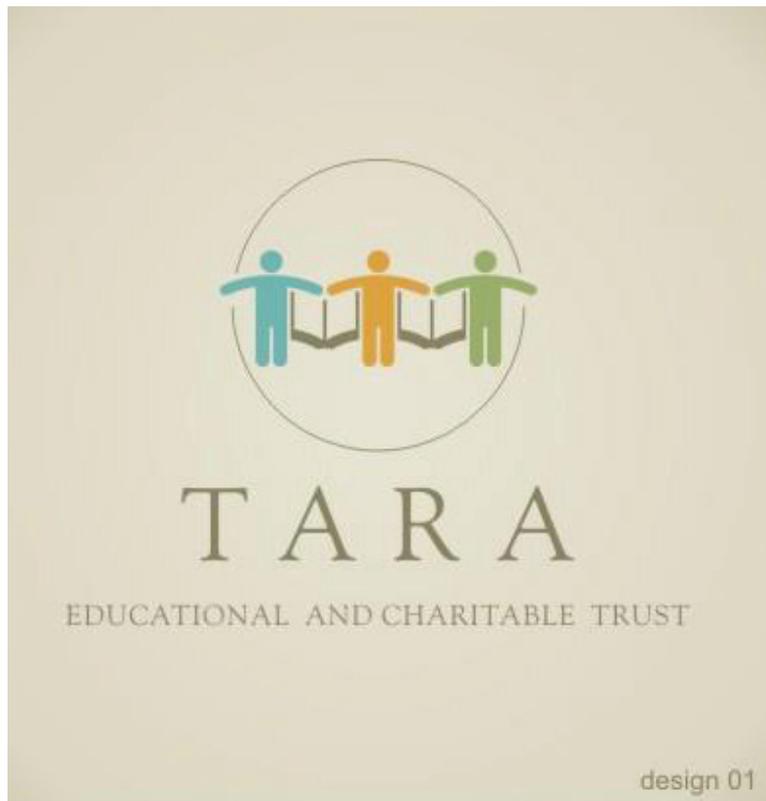
10TH DECEMBER 2019, TUESDAY

 TIME	 PLAY
2:00 pm - 3:00 pm	The Importance of Being Earnest
3:30 pm - 4:30 pm	The Utopia?
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm	Sneha Aunty's Mystery Man
6:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Black Coffee

Tara Educational and Charitable Trust

Tara, a registered Public Trust, solicits your help in providing / lending books and reading material, particularly to Schools in the rural areas of Maharashtra under it's "Pustak Mitr" Scheme. The focus is on schools / institutions / libraries catering to the disadvantaged sections and situated in rural areas, as well as giving an impetus to reading habits amongst students.

Please donate books for onward distribution to Schools, age group 6 years to 15 years, Std. I to Std. X. Please contact us at contact@taraworld.org



CONTENTS

Women Through the Ages : A Dichotomy in Literature Mayank Jha, SYBA	01
An Illusive Reality Sanika Sawant, SYBA	06
Greyest of them all? Arfa Sirguroh, SYBA	11
Honour in Dishonour: The Indian Partition Farishta Anjirbag, FYBA	17
Polar Opposites? : A Linguistic Dichotomy Sruthi Venkateswaran, TYBA	22
Showers of Love and Mirth, Drenching in Woe and Death Sonia Joseph, TYBA	29
India: An Analysis of Nationalism and Patriotism in the Subcontinent Nivedha Kannan, TYBA	35
A Tale of Binaries Durga Shirsat and Vaishnavi Dhas, SYBA	40
The Cross-Dressing Conundrum Ninjal Savla, SYBA	46





Women Through the Ages: A Dichotomy in Literature

Mayank Jha

An Angel/Monster dichotomy in the portrayal of women has traditionally been observed throughout literature. This paper aims to understand and define this trope, and then draw parallels between ancient Greek myths and Victorian Literature in their dichotomized representation of women.

Literature is a mirror of society, a two-way interface that influences and is influenced by society. Ideas emanating on a metaphysical plane are given a physical avatar in the form of literary records. One such idea that has been rooted in tradition, and thus prevalent in literature since the beginning of civilization is the 'Angel/Monster' polarization inherent in the depiction of women in literature.

Ancient Greece has been widely recognized to be the beginning of civilized society, comprising a centralized moral code and a democratic form of governance that laid the groundwork for subsequent ideologies and cultural practices. Thinkers of the time, incidentally all male, consolidated the idea that women were inferior. Women were left without a voice at a time when civilization was being shaped by those who had voices. It was exclusively men who wrote during this period, and thus, via their writing, helped determine the place of women in this society (Carillo-Rush 3).

Coventry Patmore best describes the nature of the "woman as angel". He believed his wife to be the exemplar of Victorian wifehood, and thus wrote the poem 'The Angel in the House' (1854) in her honor. Canto IX of the poem opens with: "Man must be pleased; but him to please/ Is woman's pleasure" (Patmore) which provides the readers a good idea of the nature of the poem.

Hans Eichner, a Canadian author of the late twentieth century, further elaborated on the 'ideal feminine' as he wrote in favor of the 'angel'- "She . . . leads a life of almost pure contemplation. . . a life without external events — a life whose story cannot be told as there is no story.[...] She is an ideal, a model of selflessness and of purity of heart" (Gilbert and Gubar 22). The ultimate objective of the 'Angels of the House' was to marry and uphold their domestic responsibilities. They were to derive their happiness from the pleasure of their husbands.

The selflessness of the angel results in the development of its inverse, the image of the monster. Since a woman was to have no life of her own, she was, sometimes ironically labeled as an entity opposed to life itself. In order to further reinforce patriarchal authority in society, many domesticated angels must perforce be represented as victims of persecution at the hands of equally vilified monsters. These monsters represented all that was sacrilegious and fiendish, ostensibly in order to keep the 'rebellious' tendencies of women in check. "Thus, while male writers traditionally praise the simplicity of the dove, they invariably castigate the cunning of the serpent — at least when that cunning is exercised in her own

behalf” (Gilbert and Gubar 29).

Pandora, considered to be the first human woman according to Greek mythology, was also a victim of the Angel/Monster dichotomy. She exists in two forms. According to Jeffrey Hurwit; a renowned archaeologist, in one form, she is an ‘Earth-Goddess’, shown on Greek vases created prior to the origin of the Pantheon (Carillo-Rush 3). She is, in this avatar, the symbol of purity, virtue, and beauty.

Her second avatar, depicted in Hesiod’s *Works and Days* (c.700 BCE)¹, represents her as a curse on mankind. Prometheus gave man fire, against Zeus wishes, and thus Zeus burdened man with a constant source of misery, or as Hesiod claims, women. Thus, Pandora was birthed and she received the gifts of beauty, peace, and kindness from the Gods. Zeus gave her to Epimetheus in marriage, who as a wedding gift, gave Pandora a ‘jar’², warning her never to open it. However, Pandora defied Zeus’ warning, thus releasing illnesses and hardships that had been hidden by the Gods until then. When the jar was finally closed, only Hope remained inside.

As punishment for Pandora’s transgression, all women thereon were to be strictly and perennially regulated. The ancient Greeks regulated women by forcing them into marriage and allowing them to function only as care-givers. The myth of Pandora exists as a vehicle through which men justify both the superiority of their own sex and the necessity of keeping women restrained.

Similarly, Hebrew texts depict this dichotomy in the myths of Lilith and Eve. Lilith, discussed in the *Alphabet of ben Sirach*, is said to have been created from the same dust as Adam, the first man. Thus there is some equality in the manner of their creation. Lilith further demands that she and Adam enjoy equality in all spheres of life, including a certain autonomy when it comes to making her sexual decisions- a demand that Adam refuses as he considers himself superior (Gilbert and Gubar 35). As these myths were recorded by men, her desire for equality was perceived to be a threat to the social order and hence, she was labeled as humanity’s first monster.

Lilith, thereafter, invokes the “Ineffable Name of the Creator” and seeks refuge in the Red Sea; “a place of ill repute, full of lascivious demons” (Patai 296).. Her subsequent actions go against what society demands of the feminine. She embraces promiscuity and births countless demonic offspring. In her rebellion against God, “ She lays claim to a power to kill human children as well[...] Lilith is now a viable threat to the man-made world, a monster for men and mothers” (Carillo-Rush 9).

The second counterpart to Adam, Eve, was created from one of Adam’s ribs. Thus, right from the event of her creation, Eve is portrayed as being inferior to Adam. She is a counter to Lilith’s demand for equality as she adopted a subservient position. However, her angelic persona is unable to provide her enough credibility in a patriarchal order as she too, like Pandora, is portrayed to be capable enough to destabilize the existing order; for instance- in her actions leading to her tempting Adam into eating the Forbidden Fruit recorded in *The Bible* in the book of Genesis, chapter three, verse six.

The stories of Pandora, Lilith and Eve further consolidate the Angel/Monster dichotomy, proving there to be no potential for the existence of grey area. This binary continues in post- Renaissance and post- Enlightenment texts.

The Angel/Monster Dichotomy is explicitly brought out in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847), which features the gradual transformation of the eponymous character into a passive angel. It also shows how Jane sheds the "unfeminine" aspects of her personality, which, later in the text, find portrayal in the character of Bertha Mason. Bertha Mason thus is a personification of the rebellious, unwanted traits of Jane Eyre and thus of all Victorian women.

In the first few chapters, Jane Eyre is often portrayed as a passionate and opinionated character. However, she develops into the stereotypical Angel gradually through the course of the novel.

Jane observes that from an early age, her 'caretakers' want her to be more malleable in nature. She hears Mrs. Reed saying, "[...] until she heard from Bessie, and could discover by her own observation, that I was endeavoring in good earnest to acquire a more sociable and childlike disposition, a more attractive and sprightly manner— something lighter, franker, more natural, as it were—she really must exclude me from privileges intended only for contented, happy, little children" (Brontë 1).

The domestic education provided by women to their progeny was a potent propagator of the notion of the inferiority of women, carrying forth the same norms which the older generations are themselves restricted by. Thus Mrs. Reed's emphasis on Jane being the perfect angel of the house might have been a result of the conditioning she was exposed to from a young age.

In her youth, Jane is sent to the Lowood Institute, arguably to be trained to be the "Angel of the House". At Lowood, it is Miss Temple who first guides Jane into channeling her inner restlessness towards a more noble cause. Miss Temple is an embodiment of all feminine virtues.

Gilbert and Gubar are of the opinion "It was as if [she were] invented by Coventry Patmore" (344). She encourages Jane to "act as a good girl" (Brontë 70). After having fulfilled her duties as Headmistress, she takes up the role expected of the perfect Angel and leaves the institute to marry a rich man.

Through the character of Helen Burns, Jane learns to put her passion at peace by placing her faith with an authority above human understanding. In doing so, Jane attempts to soothe her rage by resigning herself to fate. It is a result of the teachings of these women that even after Jane leaves the institute and gets a job, she still believes in submission to authority. This tendency of Jane's is best expressed through the following lines:

“Enjoyment: delightful sounds truly; but no more than sounds for me; and so hollow and fleeting that it is mere waste of time to listen to them. But Servitude! That must be matter of fact. Any one may serve: I have served here eight years; now all I want is to serve elsewhere.” (Bronte 101)

It is at Thornfield that she seeks to attain the ultimate form of servitude. She engages in her duties as a governess willingly, and strives to win Rochester’s approval. In the process, she loses her objectivity, and begins to forget his previously undeniable faults and follies when she falls in love with him. As she falls more deeply in love, she becomes more compliant to Rochester’s emotional manipulation. Her meek subservience is most prominent while Mr. Mason is bitten and she is commanded to take care of him. During that moment Rochester is himself aware of his command over Jane:

JANE. I like to serve you, sir, and to obey you in all that is right.
Mr. ROCHESTER. Precisely: I see you do. I see genuine contentment in your gait and mien, your eye and face, when you are helping me and pleasing me—working for me, and with me.” (Bronte 243)

The ‘monster’ in Bronte’s novel is Bertha Mason, the first wife of Rochester. Bertha provides binary opposition to each of Jane’s characteristics- she is the voice of passion to Jane’s voice of reason, she is the dominant personality to Jane’s submissive one, she is the spark of rebellion to Jane’s resignation, she is the Monster to Jane’s Angel.

Despite evolving through the ages, the character of the Monster has, in essence, remained the same. Like Lilith, Bertha too is portrayed as a powerful force of sensuality. Her wealthy background allowed her to stake, just as Lilith, a claim for equality in her marital relationship. However, her refusal to love and comfort her husband (in compliance of gender roles) made Mr. Rochester strip her off her humanity and label her a ‘monster’. Like Lilith, she too had refused to be subservient to the patriarchal order, which led to her dehumanization.

In order to establish and emphasize the dominance of the Angel over the Monster, Jane has been portrayed as being racially superior to Bertha. Bertha’s non-White origins make her vulnerable to suppression as the Victorians perceived the people of the colonies to be barbaric and uncivilized individuals who needed British assistance to develop. Bertha has also been described by Jane as “a foul German spectre--the Vampyre” (301). In the eyes of the society, Bertha is not only barbaric but also monstrous.

The fate of the Monster is destined to be a cruel one, as is the case with Bertha who lives a life of misery and ultimately dies in a destructive fire. The Angel, however, despite having been destined to live a life of trials and setbacks, must be finally rewarded for conforming to the true Victorian order. The angelic subservience of Jane is ultimately rewarded, as she finds herself in a holy union with Mr. Rochester. Despite the academic and societal achievements of the Angel, her role is destined to be confined as a care-taker.

Despite finding herself in possession of a sizable amount of wealth, it is in serving her soulmate that Jane finds the ultimate pleasure.

The images of the Angel and the Monster are masks, developed through centuries of male dominated literature. Female authors must either adopt, assimilate, or attempt to rebel against such patriarchal handicaps before they are to pen down their thoughts. Virginia Woolf understood the struggle entailed in this process. The Angel and the Monster hamper the female writers in penning down their thoughts, and deliver endless taunts to their budding creativity. The female writer must overcome these images before these images defeat her. As Woolf writes, "It is far harder to kill a phantom than reality...Killing the Angel in the House was part of the occupation of a woman writer" (Woolf 286).

Notes

- 1) "Works and Days", composed around 700 BCE by the Greek poet Hesiod, is a didactic poem that is essentially a farmer's almanac, consisting of the instruction that Hesiod gives his brother, Perses, regarding the agricultural arts.
- 2) The idea of Pandora having a box (as opposed to a jar in earlier texts) emerged in the 16th century - perhaps on account of a misinterpretation by Renaissance humanist Desiderius Erasmus, or because he confused the vessel with the box in the story of Cupid and Psyche.

Works Cited

Anderson, Joan Z. *Angry Angels: Repression, Containment, and Deviance, in Charlotte Brontë's "Jane Eyre"*. www.victorianweb.org/authors/bronte/cbronte/anderson1.html. Accessed 28 October 2019.

Brontë Charlotte. *Jane Eyre*. FingerPrint! Classics, 2016.

Carrillo-Rush, Vanita, "Suffocating Under a Sealed Bell Jar: The Angel/Monster Dichotomy in the Literary Tradition" (2012). Humanities Capstone Projects, Pacific University <commons.pacificu.edu/cashu/10>. Accessed 26 October 2019.

Coventry, Patmore. *The Angel in the House*. London, George Routledge & Sons, 1854.

Gilbert, Sandra M., and Susan Gubar. *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1979.

The Holy Bible. King James Version, Dallas, Brown Books Publishing, 2004.

"The Feminist Subtext of Brontë's Novel." *GradesFixer*, 07 Jun. 2018, gradesfixer.com/free-essay-examples/the-burden-of-feminism-in-jane-eyre/. Accessed 26 October 2019.

Woolf, Virginia. "*Collected Essays by Virginia Woolf, Vol.2*" London, The Hogarth Press, 1966.

An Illusive Reality

Sanika Sawant

The belief in the rational and brilliant working of the human mind is so strong that individuals overlook reality. Perception can often fall prey to fabricated truths. In a word full of deception, can one tell the difference between what's true and not? This paper delves into the literary works exposing this illusory facade.

To have utter faith in what we see is nothing but human folly. What we see is rarely a depiction of the complete story. It is merely a fragmented painting, missing the strokes and colours that would otherwise help convey its meaning flawlessly. *Reality* is the state of actuality, whereas an *illusion* is a mental misinterpretation of what is believed to be true. Illusions prevent us from realising the objective truths of a situation and it often takes arduous effort to separate one from the other. "We live, after all, in a world where illusions are sacred and truth profane." (Ali Tariq).

Everyone's narratives seem to be centred around achieving something extraordinary. The source of motivation for homo sapiens seems to be their unquenchable craving for 'perfect.' It has been established that the idea of 'perfect' is nothing but quixotic. Nevertheless, that doesn't stop them from chasing the far-fetched notions of utopian bliss. Through their efforts they wish to make those mere illusions a reality. But in case they are incapable of doing it, their own personal fantasies become a source of distraction and escape.

On ruminating on the realities of the world, can one determine what is true and how much is a mere figment of our imagination? There is a blurred line between the two concepts, making their absolute and imprecise segregation almost impossible. Yet it is intriguing, since it sends us down a spiral of contemplating and evaluating our unique personal constitutions. The ever-changing nature of our realities makes the concept harder to grasp. The scope of illusion in, however not limited to, literature and art is vast and well explored due to the immeasurable, unhindered trajectories it can take and has taken.

In F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, the character of Jay Gatsby represents not only the American dream but also a hyperreality or an illusion. Jay Gatsby is the embodiment of the rags-to-riches story as he manages to recreate himself and his life. His efforts had become centred around acquiring monetary gains and material possessions to enhance his position in society and dramatise his success. Jay Gatsby is a projecting image of the man behind the illusion, James Gatz. Gatsby is nothing but Gatz's attempt at achieving his desires and aspirations by fabricating the truth and presenting it as his reality on a silver platter.

Gatsby's eventual downfall is the result of his failure in separating the authentic from the fabricated. His illusions take on the disguise so well that he is left with a hollow sense of self. This is nothing but the result of chasing dreams that have been morphed by societal expectations and idealised to such an extent that they are disconnected from reality. All the lavish parties, fancy clothes and symbols of wealth and power in Gatsby's life fall apart

on deeper inspection, much like how the falsehoods of his persona are soon unearthed. Although they appear to be very real, they are nothing but a fancy illusion.

Samuel Butler's Victorian novel *Erewhon* is an exemplification of a quintessential mirage. At first glance, the mysterious and attractive nation of Erewhon is as close to utopia as can be, but it turns out to be void of any rationality and teeming with misery. Therefore, *Erewhon* is as much a satire on utopian bliss as a utopian novel itself. The word 'utopia' itself has the capacity to mean different things at different times. Of Greek origin, 'eu' and 'topos' can stand for a *good place*, what it is referred to most often, but can also mean *no place* a pun on the word 'u - topos.' This contrasting feature works unerringly with the book, since the word Erewhon when misspelt backwards unfolds the word '*nowhere*.' This highlights the direction of the book from *nowhere* to somewhere, already alluding to the *somewhere* (Erewhon) being closer to nowhere than it appears. "Despite these apparent flags," as Sue Zemka puts it, "the reader who hopes for utopian revelations from the civilization that *Erewhon's* boorish narrator discovers will be disappointed" (439).

The unnamed protagonist of *Erewhon* is stuck amidst the beautiful, lofty mountain ranges in a country described as the "grandest that can be imagined" (Butler 20). Yet his life is nothing more than lonely, solemn and monotonous. His boredom and curiosity alike prove to be the flame which ignites the fire that drives him to journey across the roaring rivers and the sky-high mountain ranges in order to "win fame and perhaps fortune, by entering upon this unknown world, or give up life in the attempt" (Butler 45). Much like Gatsby, the protagonist's dream was to obtain a better life for himself, one with more wealth and prestige. In his quest for a superior life he stumbles upon the unveiled nation of Erewhon.

Much of Erewhon's narrative is centred around the description of physical attributes. The landscape of the country itself was exquisitely beautiful. Its extensive woods and pristine cities with highly cultivated orchards covered in blossoming chestnut, walnut and apple-trees, were an earthly depiction of heaven for the protagonist. The people of Erewhon were a hardy race, their elegance and physique remaining unmatched. Referred to as the very 'best-bred people,' the Erewhonians seemed to take pride in their personal appearance. The protagonist was abashed in the presence of even the poorest of them all. Describing them he said:

Lastly, I should say that the people were of a physical beauty which was simply amazing. I never saw anything in the least comparable to them. The women were vigorous, and had a most majestic gait, their heads being set upon their shoulders with a grace beyond all power of expression. Each feature was finished, eyelids, eyelashes, and ears being almost invariably perfect. Their colour was equal to that of the finest Italian paintings; being of the clearest olive, and yet ruddy with a glow of perfect health. Their expression was divine. (Butler 80)

Their Erewhonian shrines and deities were also representations of heavenly beauty, strength, youth and the most dignified maturity and old age. The semblance between the deities and the sculpted, god-like bodies of the Erewhonians, was enough to make the

protagonist believe that Erewhon was indeed as grandiose as it seemed. The importance of physical beauty superseded all other facets. This was made obvious when the protagonist's "light hair, blue eyes, and a fresh complexion" (Butler 68) served as his alibi on many occasions. Similarly, on further examination of the institutions of Erewhon, his illusions of utopia were slowly stripped away and he was brought back to the crushing reality of his being.

Erewhon highlights the unreliability of appearances. The laws in Erewhon were regressive and unjust. Crime was not punishable by law since it represented the faults in morals, which were hidden to the naked eye. Any physical ailments or afflictions were subjected to public scorn and imprisonment. Ill luck or mistreatment at the hands of another was not met with expected sympathy, but rather with punishment. Paradoxically, if a person robbed someone, forged a cheque or proceeded to do any activity which would be considered illegal in any country today, they were tended with utmost care at a hospital and provided with solace. These ridiculous laws paved the way for an unfair framework of justice, which also helped shatter the illusion of utopia in the protagonist's as well as the reader's mind.

A physical example of the unreliability of appearances can be seen in the portrayal of the official financial institute of Erewhon, the Musical Banks. They were covered in epic marble, majestic towers of noble architecture and delicate antiquity on the outside, while its insides lay empty and deserted. It appealed to the imagination and left the viewer with an "impression of great peace and plenty" (Butler 179). Whereas, in reality, very few paid heed to this stately institution and most had lost confidence in it, reducing the number of citizens trusting the bank with their money. The Banks got their name from a choir of men that sang songs inside the institute. According to the protagonist, even the melodies sung were "*hideous*" (Butler 180) and disturbing. Thus, nothing about these Musical Banks was attractive other than their exteriors, a *perfect* metaphor for the country at large.

On realising the falsified depictions of perfection in the Erewhonian society, one is reminded of the Stonehenge the protagonist had to pass by while entering the country of Erewhon. "Darker than the clouds looming in the sky," the gigantic grim and grey statues stood as barbaric figures with a "superhumanly malevolent expression upon their faces" (Butler 62). With each gust of wind the statues howled a "ghostly chant" in response to which the protagonist shuddered with fear (Butler 64). Upon later reflection, these savage statues can be deemed to foreshadow the events that emerge later in the novel, not unlike a forewarning.

The hollow heads of these statues functioning as an organ-pipet that directed the winds towards their mouths and aided them in their shrieking cries, can also be used to symbolise the hollow, hypocritical people of Erewhon. Their outward appearance was an ideal device to fool any outsider into believing their fabricated tales of a utopian society, when in fact their reality was just as hideous and repulsive as these savage statues. The statues can thus be considered as a true depiction of the Erewhonians. The protagonist's position in this situation was similar to that of a rat caught in a trap amidst the shrill chorus of unearthly moans; moans that grew louder and more intolerable with every gust of wind.

Identically, the protagonist was trapped in Erehwon and its preposterous institutions from which he soon wished to escape.

This idea of *escape* from a dystopian reality has been explored by Tennessee Williams in *The Glass Menagerie*. Through the means of the fractured world of the Wingfields, the author explores many such naive aspects of the human condition. This heart-warming memory play transports us into the private worlds of the characters in the play, the Wingfield family, where, as Robert Bray states, “desire clashes with obdurate reality, (and) where loss supplants hope” (Williams 15). Tom, his sister Laura, and mother Amanda are the main characters in the play, who are struggling to repress and hide their individual demons from each other. They each create their respective imaginative worlds where they seek to flee to, to escape their hard-hitting realities. The play is especially powerful because it addresses the fear of how, sooner or later, these cultivated illusions will fall apart, and one’s true, vulnerable self will lie exposed. Christopher Bigsby says that, “In *The Glass Menagerie*... the fragile and the vulnerable are seen to be as much victims of their own dreams as of the implacable forces of the real and the unforgiving rhythm of modernity” (52). And much like the illusions in *Erehwon*, piece by piece, the characters they seem to personate break apart.

Laura seems to persistently retreat into her unrealistic world surrounded by her little glass ornaments, delicately dangerous and fragile like herself. Laura is aware of the frangible nature of her glass ornaments when she says, “Glass breaks so easily. No matter how careful you are” (Williams 150). Yet she can’t seem to notice that she also has been symbolically placed onto her shelf amidst her glass menagerie. Williams uses the unicorn as a symbol for Laura, who doesn’t assimilate into society due to her ‘horn’ making her different from the other horses in the herd. Tom’s escape seems to be limited to the fire-escape and “the movies” (Williams 165). On the other hand, living in an illusive exemplary past becomes Amanda’s present reality, and thus it is ironic when Amanda says to Tom, “You live in a dream; you manufacture illusions!” (Williams 163). They continue to put up walls around themselves, afraid to display their insecurities and accept their inadequacies. Eventually, Tom flees away from the constraints holding him back “attempting to find in motion what was lost in space” (Williams 165). He is aware that his departure would only further his mother’s and sister’s retreat into their solitary fantasies, but that doesn’t stop him from taking the leap to fulfil his own dreams.

The enduring conflict between reality and illusion hence, can hardly be resolved via an easy, universal solution, since it is a much more personal human condition. Throughout the above mentioned works of literature, illusions manifests themselves in different ways though their motive to conceal reality remains constant. Consequently, the subtle dichotomy between what appears to be and the deeper motivations and truth can perplex audiences due to the exceedingly persuasive distortions every illusion can conceive. After all, who can really tell the difference anyway when, in the words of Albert Einstein, “Reality is merely an illusion, albeit a very persistent one.”

Works Cited

- Bigsby, C. W. E. *A Critical Introduction to Twentieth Century American Drama*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP. 1986. Print.
- Breuer, Hans-Peter. "The Source of Morality in Butler's "Erewhon." Indiana University Press. *Victorian Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 3, Mar., 1973, pp. 317-328. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3826037>
- Butler, Samuel. *Erewhon*. Revised ed. Planet PDF (iBook).
- Firchow, Peter Edgerly. *Modern Utopian Fictions from H. G. Wells to Iris Murdoch*. Catholic University of America Press, 2007. ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/britishcouncilonline-ebooks/detail.action?docID=3134768>.
- Fitzgerald, F. Scott. "*The Great Gatsby*." Wordsworth Editions Ltd. Hertfordshire, 2001.
- Montague, Gene. "A Nowhere That Goes Somewhere". National Council of Teachers of English. *College Composition and Communication*, Vol. 13, No. 2, May, 1962, pp. 18-22, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/354533>
- Parrinder, Patrick. Entering Dystopia, Entering "Erewhon." Berghahn Books. *Critical Survey*, Vol. 17, No. 1, Representations of Dystopia in Literature and Film, 2005, pp. 6-21, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41556091>
- Segel, Lawrence. "Beware the "Straighteners" Characters Posing as Quacks in Samuel Butler's Erewhon." *Medical Post*, vol. 33, no. 36, 1997, pp. 23. ProQuest, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/228885715?accountid=145163>.
- Sreenan, Niall. "Dreaming of Islands: Individuality and Utopian Desire in Post-Darwinian Literature." *Island Studies Journal*, vol. 12, no. 2, 2017, pp. 267-280. ProQuest, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/2135082394?accountid=145163>, doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.24043/isj.34>.
- Suckocki, Majorie. "Utopia, Dystopia: The Pragmatic Value of Visions." *American Journal of Theology & Philosophy*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2003, pp. 53-60. ProQuest, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/212169137?accountid=145163>.
- Williams, Tennessee. "*The Glass Menagerie*." New Directions Paperbooks, 1999.
- Zemka, Sue. "Erewhon" and the End of Utopian Humanism. The Johns Hopkins University Press. *ELH*, Vol. 69, No. 2, 2002, pp. 439-472, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/30032027>

Greyest of them all?

Arfa Sirguroh

Traditional fairytale characters have always been categorised as either heroes or as villains. This paper addresses the aforementioned misconceptions and attempts to prove that these characters are, in fact, multidimensional and cannot be dichotomised as “good” or “bad”.

Tales of knights, dragons, beasts, princesses and wicked witches often form a significant part of one's childhood memories. One revels in the reminiscences of reading these stories in books or listening to their being narrated by elders in the family. These stories have since come to life through innumerable movie adaptations, television series and other creative remakes. In recent times, they have also increasingly been subjected to criticism and backlash from different sections of society. Their characters have been accused of being myopically one-dimensional, which generates stereotypes and unrealistic assumptions in young minds.

For far too long, these characters have been classified into two rigid dichotomous categories- “Good” and “Bad”. The preconceived notions are that the hero cannot have selfish intentions and that the villain cannot be compassionate. This leaves no room for the grey (and realistic) areas of their personalities.

The fairytales of Thor, Aladdin, Hansel and Gretel and even Snow White are *bildungsromans* of sorts. As the events of these stories occur, a transformation is observed in the protagonists' personalities. As this transition takes place, movie adaptations of these stories focus largely on how “good” these characters gradually become, completely overlooking their faults. For example, in the Marvel movies, Thor is initially an arrogant young God. However, as the story progresses, his character develops into that of a quintessential hero, who always saves the day, who is ready to sacrifice his life for others; someone who is righteous and can make no mistakes.

In the *Asgard Stories: Tales from Norse Mythology*, translated by Mary H. Foster and Mabel H. Cummings, Thor's anger remains a determining feature of his personality. Unlike the movies, the fairytale does not temper his anger or other negative traits. In these stories, these traits are as integral to Thor's characterisation as his virtues. For example, Thor makes consistent attempts to hurt and even kill a giant, only because the giant fastened the knot of his (Thor's) food sack tightly. In the same tale, he later shows compassion towards a little boy who unknowingly impaired Thor's sheep. Foster and Cummings describe the Thor of the myths in the following words: “Now Thor had a quick temper; every one feared his fierce anger” (‘The Hammer of Thor’, par. 33). He was more feared than respected. He was a hero but not one without flaws. The fairy tales, even with their elements of fantasy, manage, to some extent, to keep their portrayal of human nature realistic.

On the other hand, in the movie, Thor's transformation is static. He realises the

importance of his powers only once he is stripped of them, and is later willing to face the consequences of his arrogance alone. This is when he finally becomes “Worthy” and, once he does, he values his powers immensely and assumes responsibility towards his people. Thor is now no longer arrogant. He has become so humble that he even refuses the offer to be the King of Asgard.

Even the now popular idea that only the “worthy” can wield the hammer of Thor was introduced only in the ‘Thor Annual # 11’ (1983) published by Marvel Comics. In this story, Odin, the King of Asgard, first uses the weapon crafted by Eitri, a dwarf-smith. Odin eventually passes this on to Thor, who must first prove his worth to be able to wield the weapon. The original fairy tales do not identify the summoner of Miölnir, the magical hammer, as a “worthy” man. In the tales, Miölnir was a tool “useful in keeping the giants out of Asgard” (‘The Hammer of Thor’, par. 36) and anyone could wield it, without taking into account the ‘worth’ of the individual (Nichols, par. 2). In the original tales, it was the individual characters’ motivations and not their morality that lead them to their actions and their consequent fates, and there were no overt “morally good” or “morally bad” characters (Nichols para 4).

Thor, in the original stories, never had an overarching motive - for instance, that of only proving himself as shown in the movie *Thor*, or saving Asgard as seen in *Thor: Ragnarok*. He had different motivations in different tales. In one tale, Thor threatens to throw Miölnir after Loki as he had cut off Thor’s wife’s (Sif’s) beautiful golden hair. In another tale, he slays the frost giants because they steal his hammer and ask for Goddess Freyja in exchange. The viewers do not observe such variations of motivations in the movies, which makes it harder for the audience to look past the “good or bad” divide.

Similarly, the character of Snow White, popularised by Walt Disney’s animated feature *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937) is shown to be a kind, innocent, helpful and cheerful character. The exaggeration of her virtues on screen blinds the audience to the nuances of the character as envisaged by the original authors of the stories.

The original tale introduces Snow White as a fair and beautiful seven-year-old. This immediately births the perception that she is “good”. Human society regards innocence and beauty to be synonymous with morality and goodness, however, this understanding is not always accurate. Snow White receives help from the Huntsman not because she was kind and sweet, but because she was a *child* and a beautiful one at that (Sarah, par. 3). Snow White cooked and cleaned for the dwarves not out of kindness, but as payment for the food and shelter they provided her with. Moreover, she goes against the orders of the dwarves in three instances: when she opens the door of their hut for the old woman as she cannot resist the temptation to buy stunningly beautiful combs, corsets and red apples. This only proves that she was a child, and children do make mistakes; and that she is not and cannot be perfect. The fact that the people assume her to be an innocent child is what makes her seem “Good” until the very end. However, what is forgotten is that she does not remain a child by the end.

As the story comes to its “Happily Ever After”, Snow White and her Prince make the evil

step-mother “put on the red-hot shoes, and dance until she dropped down dead” (Grimm et al. 145). This tiny glimpse of vengeance within her speaks volumes about how Snow White too, has darkness looming within her heart- she is not the perfect, pure princess she appears to be at first glance. She also has the potential to inflict pain. But this does not necessarily imply that she is bad or evil. It only goes on to prove that these characters’ actions are motivated largely by thoughts of survival. These tales were told to teach children the real vagaries of life (Abler, par. 4). These fairy tales do evoke morality; however, one cannot infer that their characters are perfectly moral. Therefore, regardless of how “good” Snow White is, she will always have the potential to be “bad”.

Similarly, in the case of Hansel and Gretel, the children command one’s sympathy because they are innocent, and this gives them the reputation of being the “good” characters. The readers are never explicitly told that Hansel and Gretel are good, instead, they are told that the children are up against an “...old woman (who) had only pretended to be so kind; she was in reality a wicked witch” (Grimm et al, 140). When the text explicitly states that a character is evil, the natural assumption is that their counterparts are good characters, especially if it is in a fairytale. Thus, it is not about how truly good or bad a character is, it is about how our minds are trained to perceive them. The dichotomy is thus in our perception, not in the stories. Extensive psychological research on perception has shown that assumptions largely influences perception. Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnston, two of Disney’s core animators, explain in *Disney Animation: The Illusion of Life* that the less the audience is told, the more “they (audience) fill in with their own thoughts” (386).

The story of Aladdin is another example of this phenomenon. Animated features, live-actions, musicals and Broadway shows have convinced the audience that Aladdin is the “Diamond in the rough” (R. C. Musker 00:02:39). The 2019 live action remake of Aladdin is applauded for subverting stereotypes and fixing loopholes from the original movie released in 1992. In the new version, the Genie, played by the American actor Will Smith, lays constant emphasis on a “lot of grey areas” (Ritchie 00:51:22). This idea of the ‘grey area’ recurs throughout the story. However, the live-action movie deals only with the grey area in the storyline and fails to deal with it in the context of the characters, who continue to remain flat. The dichotomy emerges in the very beginning, when the narrator, the Genie himself, is shown to be already in awe of Aladdin and his magic lamp. The audience, therefore, continue to see Aladdin the way the Genie wants them to, and they fail to focus on how immoral Aladdin actually is.

The original fairytale, on the other hand, portrays Aladdin as a “very careless and idle fellow” (“Windermere series” par. 155), unwilling to take on responsibilities and always on the lookout for easy money. The Aladdin of the original tales is careless, greedy, and selfish. Yet, he manages to enter the cave of wonders- a cave that the cinematic adaptations proclaim that only the worthy can enter. This apparent contradiction is resolved when one realises that in the original stories, anyone could enter the cave and retrieve the riches. Thus, despite being unworthy and ineligible to be called the ‘diamond in the rough’, Aladdin is able to enter the cave. The African Magician (popularly known as Jafar) employs Aladdin to perform this task as he is not permitted to take the lamp himself and must receive it as a voluntary gift from the hands of another person. In the original stories, Aladdin relies on the

magic lamp and the magic ring extensively. Despite desiring riches, he is not willing to work hard to achieve what he wants. He resorts to both the Genie of the Ring and the Genie of the Lamp to get food, a princess, slaves, dowry for his marriage with the princess and even a palace.

However, this does not lead to the conclusion that Aladdin is irredeemable. He does share all the riches with his mother, whom he treats with solicitude. He desires Princess Buddir al Buddoor (popularly known as Princess Jasmine) as much as he respects her. When he enters her bedroom when she is all alone, he puts a “drawn scimitar between them, to show that he was determined to secure her safety, and to treat her with the utmost possible respect” (“Windermere series”, para. 181). Although he is selfish and careless, he exhibits care towards those whom he loves, and thus, cannot be regarded either entirely “good” or “bad”.

Such grey areas are also shown in the portrayal of the characters of Hansel & Gretel and Thor. For example, the two children did kill the Witch, an act that can be considered morally reprehensible. However, if they had not killed her, she would have devoured them. Thor had fought against the giants mercilessly, but he did so to protect his people. Yet, regardless of how great a hero he is considered to be, he is not always a benevolent king.

A thread that binds these tales is that all their protagonists are determined to protect their loved ones. This is essentially because all of these fairytales are built on values of family and community spirit. When the Grimm brothers documented their local folktales in the 19th century, their aim was to use them to define the German Volk (people), and unite the German people into a modern nation (Nichols, par. 10). In order to do so, their focus was more on defining right and wrong than good and bad.

Fairy tales help us understand ourselves through their characters who do have imperfections and ultimately, are relatable. This is in direct contrast to the cinematic adaptations of the same, that advocate that a protagonist must be perfect in all facets and a villain, the exact opposite. Undoubtedly, the cinematic universe is currently evolving - the recent trend of making movies from the perspective of the antagonist is a step towards getting rid of this dichotomy. However, it must not be forgotten that this is a dichotomy birthed by the world of cinema itself. Fairy tales have always portrayed the nature of man in a realistic way and offer a perfect balance between reality and fiction, and they do an exceptional job in portraying morality through not-so-moral characters.



Works Cited

Abler, Alice. "The Moral Of The Story." *Vision*, www.vision.org/the-moral-of-the-story-fairy-tales-mirror-society-981. Accessed 10th November, 2019

Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs. Directed by David Hand and Wilfred Jackson. Walt Disney Animation Studios, 1937.

Foster, Mary H. and Mabel H. A.B. Cummings. *Asgard Stories: Tales from Norse Mythology*. Silver, Burdett and company, 1901.

Grimm, Jacob et al. "Hansel and Gretel." *Fairy Tales of The Brothers Grimm*. Floating Press, 2009, pp. 133-144.

Grimm, Jacob, and Wilhelm Grimm. 'Little Snow White', *Household Tales by Brothers Grimm*. Kindle ed., n.p., 1884. pp. 141-146.

Nichols, Catherine. "Why Is Pop Culture Obsessed with Battles Between Good and Evil". *aeon*, 25th January 2018, aeon.co/essays/why-is-pop-culture-obsessed-with-battles-between-good-and-evil. Accessed 30th October 2019.

Sarah. "Good and Evil in Fairy Tales". *Breadcrumb Trails*, 30 December 2014, followingthebreadcrumbtrails.wordpress.com/2014/12/30/good-and-evil-in-fairy-tales/. Accessed 29 October 2019.

Sarah. "Fairest of Them All: A Vicious Cycle?" *Breadcrumb Trails*, 15th January 2015, followingthebreadcrumbtrails.wordpress.com/?s=fairest+of+them+all+a+vicious+cycle. Accessed 29 October 2019.

Thomas, Frank and Ollie Johnston. *The Illusion Of Life*. Hyperion, 1995.

Walt Disney Pictures Presents Aladdin. Directed by Tim Rice. Performances by Alan, Howard Ashman, and Tim Rice. Menken. 1992.

Winter, Milo. *The Arabian Nights Entertainments*. Rand, McNally & Co., 1914. pp155-216.

References

Aloff, Mindy. "Disney's 'Snow White' at 75." *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, vol. 89, no. 1, 2013, pp. 238–244. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/26446669.

Davis, Amy M. (editor). *Discussing Disney*. Indiana University Press, 2019. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvqc6k2q.

Gillan, Joanna. "Exploring the True Origins of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs." *Ancient Origins*, 12 October 2015, www.ancient-origins.net/myths-legends/exploring-true-origins-snow-white-and-seven-dwarfs-004150. Accessed 24 November 2019.

Goddard, Sally. *The Genius of Natural Childhood*. Hawthorn, 2011.

Honour in Dishonour: The Indian Partition

Farishta Anjirbag

In the context of the Partition era, this paper will explore how Saadat Hasan Manto's contradictory representation of honour in religion and gender ultimately equalizes all human beings in their capacity for violence.

The 1947 Partition of British India was not a clean break. It was a painful tearing apart of a society, of people from their homes, of citizens from the rationality that the nationalist movement had so strongly propagated, and of humans from their humanity. Dichotomization of the subcontinent had created two rival states in whose streets the joy of independence struggled to coexist with the death and destruction of Partition. Amidst this chaos, Saadat Hasan Manto attempted to maintain some semblance of sanity. Manto's stories and sketches reflect a sense of inescapability in this divided society, rife with warped notions of honour. His works highlight how the protection of communal integrity had led to disgraceful massacres at the time. They lay insightful emphasis on the individual identities of men and women by separating their honour.

Every religious doctrine propagates its own versions of morality - ideals of love, peace, and brotherhood - which religious followers try their utmost to observe. The Partition of British India tested the limits to which these principles could be truly fulfilled. Proud religionists were consumed by a fanatical loyalty to their 'faith', using religion to justify their barbarism.

Created in a time of religious bigotry, Manto's works are remarkably free from communal bias. In Alok Bhalla's words, they are "more realistic and more shocking records of those predatory times [than those of his contemporaries]" (qtd. in Roy 20). They underline the hypocritical fashion in which religious ideologies were practised during the Partition. His characters are adamant on conforming to communal norms and fulfilling religious demands - becoming, in their own eyes, virtuous devotees. Yet, this seems to fade away when dealing with people of other religions, who are pillaged and slaughtered unhesitatingly. Religious honour in Manto's stories is thus countered by human dishonour.

This is especially apparent in Manto's short sketch 'For Necessary Action'. In an attempt to escape riotous attacks, a couple hide themselves in their basement. Driven by hunger, they surrender to the people who have seized their house. However, the new occupants refuse to kill them. "They were Jains, but after mutual consultations, the fugitive couple was handed over to residents of a neighbouring locality 'for necessary action'" (Manto, "For Necessary Action" 146).

In sum, "the fugitives perish eventually but the religious obligations of the pacifists are duly fulfilled" (Hasan xxiii). There is a clear distinction between the Jain occupants' honour in following their religious doctrines, and their simultaneous dishonour to the same.

Interestingly, this sketch deviates from the traditional portrayal of Hindus, Muslims, or Sikhs as perpetrators. Manto's choice of Jain characters can be attributed to their rigorous doctrine of non-violence, which makes the hypocrisy and iniquity in their actions stand out starkly against the backdrop of their religious beliefs. Ultimately, this shows how people who view themselves as being noble devotees are reduced to the same level of callousness as their neighbours. Their attempts to follow their religious philosophies are rendered futile because of their defiance of the same.

In this hypocrisy of religious rectitude, there is one doctrine that is ubiquitous in Manto's works and his characters, regardless of religion. It is the principle of brotherhood. Each character stands united with his or her community. However, as observed in '*For Necessary Action*', this unity is not extended to outsiders. The short sketch entitled '*Modesty*' shows a group of rioters hijacking a train to kill all the passengers who belong to the other religion. Following this slaughter, they treat the remaining passengers to "a feast of milk, custard pies, and fresh fruit", and apologetically tell them: "we were not able to offer you the kind of hospitality we would have wished" (Manto, "Modesty" 158).

Intra-communal unity is hence juxtaposed with inter-communal disunity, to express an overall redundancy in religious brotherhood if it begets discrimination among people. Ultimately, coming together against a rival community neither proves nor bestows superiority, but instead creates antagonism and a grave loss of humanity. In this sketch, Manto refrains from identifying the characters by their religion, because, "...to Manto, what mattered was not what religion people were, what rituals they followed or which gods they worshipped, but where they stood as human beings" (Hasan xxii). He successfully conveys that any religious community is liable to engage in violence and superficial brotherhood. None can be deemed superior to the other on the basis of its philosophies. "In these stories, Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs are all guilty of murder, of inhumanity. The catastrophe is general" (Mueenuddin x).

Manto's fanatical characters all view themselves as being good members of the highest community. They derive their 'honour' from compliance to religious instructions. However, in the larger picture, which Manto was famous for always presenting, there is actually no prestige in murdering, assaulting, and raping one's fellow human beings. By creating this dichotomy between honour and dishonour in religion, he brings his proud characters down to a level of savagery, which remains the same, irrespective of their beliefs.

Manto's establishment of similarity, however, is not restricted to religion, but also extends to gender and sex. He wrote freely about female individuality, which became all the more valuable during the Partition. "Women became the worst victims of Partition. Hundreds upon thousands of them were raped, killed or abducted" (Hasan xvi). Moreover, countless women who lived through these atrocities to return home were in fact rejected by their families. They were considered 'contaminated' as their chastity had been violated; they were considered to have defaced their familial glory. To prevent this grave disgrace to the

men in their lives, many women preemptively killed themselves or were killed by their male relatives. They were encouraged to accept death and were celebrated as martyrs. To quote Mahatma Gandhi on this subject:

I have heard that many women who did not want to lose their honour chose to die but at least they have gone with courage. They have not sold away their honour. (388)

A sexually assaulted woman brought discredit to her community, while the perpetrator was glorified in his. Her presence was believed to pollute the purity of her religious household. She, then, was not protected for her own sake, but for the sake of her community - not attacked for her own misdoings, but out of spite for her male co-religionists. Her honour and shame was not her own. It was an extension of the integrity of her family and of the men in her life. Consequently, there was no real distinguishing factor between the honour of men and women.

In opposition to these orthodox views of the era, several of Manto's short stories feature women with independence and self-respect, who are aware of the right to their own dignity. He creates a dichotomy between the honour of a man and a woman, establishing in bold expressions of female sexuality, ability, and power, her distinctive and individual respect. One of his most renowned stories, 'Colder Than Ice', features a woman's violent and uncharacteristic (in relation to the time and circumstances) expression of her voice. After eight days of no contact, Kalwant Kaur's husband Ishwar Singh remorsefully returns home. He has raped a beautiful Muslim girl who, in a dramatic twist, had turned out to be dead all along. Furious, Kalwant stabs him in the neck with his *kirpan*, and Ishwar dies at the hands of his exacting wife.

Most notable in this story is the character of Kalwant Kaur, whose beauty is described without objectification: "Her eyes were sharp and bright and over her upper lip there was a faint bluish down. Her chin suggested great strength and resolution" (Manto, "Colder than Ice" 17). Kalwant's fortitude comes across in her fiery and ill-tempered questioning of her husband, which is interspersed with bouts of sympathy over his remorse. Further, Kalwant indulges in sex as freely as her husband does. In Simantini Dey's words, "She is a sexual being, and unlike other women characters written during that time, she is neither submissive nor coy while expressing her sexual desires."

In those times, it was considered discreditable for women to break their images of chastity - to treat sex as a means for their own pleasure, rather than just the pleasure of their partners. Yet, there is nothing shameful about Kalwant's character as she embraces her sexuality, still commanding the same reverence as in the beginning of the story. Her expression of her honour is most explicit in her brutality towards Ishwar Singh. She is unable to accept the fact that a strong, beautiful, and deserving woman like her had been so easily deserted and betrayed. Her husband's infidelity is a source of personal humiliation and she expresses her outrage violently. To be found in her violence is a strong statement against the prevailing social and religious norms - Kalwant's dignity stems from her own

self-respect. She thinks for herself and is guided by her own thoughts and emotions.

While Kalwant's actions are reprehensible, the message of the story lies in the fact that they are no more objectionable than Ishwar Singh's. Neither of the two can be villainized more than the other. Both acted violently to assert their honour. Where Ishwar's compunction and disgust at his actions humanizes him, Kalwant's sporadic sympathy towards her husband's condition humanizes her.

Yet, it is not true that Manto's only equalizing portrayal of women was in making brutes out of them. Kalwant's violence seeks to equalize women with men by revealing their equal capacity for cruelty. In 'Mozail' Manto makes a hero out of the eponymous female protagonist. Mozail's story is testament to a woman's courage and independence in determining her own fate. She is a reckless Jewish woman, who treats her Sikh lover, Tarlochan, with relative indifference. Unconcerned with cultural standards of morality, she bends only to her own will, risking (and eventually losing) her life to rescue Tarlochan's fiancée from communal attacks.

Mozail has multiple lovers throughout the story, often at the same time. Her behaviour and actions are not governed by societal expectations of an ideal woman. She does not believe in the concept of communal integrity; she wears revealing clothes, indulges men to the extent she pleases, and outrightly mocks other people's religions. Her honour stems from her personal independence and her prioritization of humanity and individuality over religious identity. It is this belief that allows her to sacrifice her life for Tarlochan and his fiancée's safety. In the grand scheme of things, Mozail died more venerably than many of the women who were celebrated for their preemptive deaths during the Partition.

While Mozail's expression of honour is very different from Kalwant Kaur's, the freedom that they enjoy binds them together. Their honour is their own, detached from that of the men in their lives. Accordingly, it can be said that Manto's overall aim was to project Kalwant and Mozail not as women (in the then conventional implications of the word), but as human beings with equal (and distinct) dignity, equal humanity, and equal chances of losing that humanity, as any man. In Raza Rumi's words, "Women and their stories become literary devices for Manto to reaffirm and reiterate his humanistic vision" (84).

Manto's stories are bold narratives of the conflicts during Partition. His depictions of honour in religion and gender seek to bring all people at par with each other. His disregard for outward shows of communal righteousness shines through in the bestiality of his self-branded 'noble' characters, reducing even the most venerable to either victims or perpetrators - people caught up in mindless violence. His representation of female characters remains largely uninfluenced by gender roles. A woman is as independent and capable as a man, giving the two sexes equal standing. In a world fraught with hypocrisy and hatred, Saadat Hasan Manto's dichotomies of honour compel his readers to look at his violent characters not as Hindus, Muslims, or Sikhs, men or women, but as human beings with equal tendencies for nobility and cruelty.

Works cited

Dey, Simantini. "Manto, the Feminist: Here's a Look at the Women in the Author's Stories and His Life." *News 18*, 23 Sept. 2018, www.news18.com/news/movies/manto-the-feminist-heres-a-look-at-the-women-in-the-authors-stories-and-his-life-1885949.html. Accessed 12 November, 2019.

Gandhi, Mohandas Karamchand. "Speech at Prayer Meeting." *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Publ. Div., Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1997, pp. 387–389.

Hasan, Khalid. "Translator's Note." *Mottled Dawn: Fifty Sketches and Stories of Partition*, by Sa'adat Hasan. Manto, Penguin Books, 2011, p. Xxiii.

Manto, Saadat H. "Colder than Ice." *Mottled Dawn: Fifty Sketches and Stories of Partition*, translated by Khalid Hasan, Penguin Books, 2011, pp. 17–21.

—. "For Necessary Action." *Mottled Dawn: Fifty Sketches and Stories of Partition*, translated by Khalid Hasan, Penguin Books, 2011, pp. 146.

—. "Modesty." *Mottled Dawn: Fifty Sketches and Stories of Partition*, translated by Khalid Hasan, Penguin Books, 2011, pp. 158.

—. "Mozail." *Mottled Dawn: Fifty Sketches and Stories of Partition*, translated by Khalid Hasan, Penguin Books, 2011, pp. 58-72.

Mueenuddin, Daniyal. Introduction. *Mottled Dawn: Fifty Sketches and Stories of Partition*, by Saadat Hasan Manto, Penguin Books, 2011, p. ix-xiv.

Roy, Rituparna. "Introduction." *South Asian Partition Fiction in English: from Khushwant Singh to Amitav Ghosh*, Amsterdam University Press, 2010, pp. 13–31.

Rumi, Raza. "Reclaiming Humanity: Women in Manto's Short Stories." *Social Scientist*, vol. 40, no. 11, 2012, pp. 75-86, www.jstor.org/stable/23338872?read-now=1&seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents. Accessed 12 November, 2019.

Polar Opposites? : A Linguistic Dichotomy

Sruthi Venkateswaran

This paper shall look at Roman Jakobson's proposed dichotomy between metaphor and metonymy by examining the use of these tropes in various works of poetry and prose. It shall also look at instances where Jakobson's dichotomy fails to hold true.

“As you set out for Ithaka
hope your road is a long one,”

- C. P. Cavafy, “Ithaka”

“And raise all Ithaca to aid our cause”

- Homer, The Odyssey, Book II (18)

Each of these lines make reference to the title of this journal— and in each line, the word “Ithak(c)a” performs a different function. In the lines from Cavafy, “Ithaka” can be read as a metaphor, representing the destination of a journey that one undertakes through life. In Homer¹, meanwhile, it functions as a metonym, Ithaca here representing the *people* of Ithaca. This paper shall endeavour to look at the dichotomy between these two tropes of metaphor and metonymy.

In his seminal essay “The Metaphoric and Metonymic Poles” (1956), Roman Jakobson argues that the metaphoric and the metonymic are the two poles of language that correspond to the features of similarity and contiguity respectively. Jakobson's postulation was seminal in several ways—it was the first time that metaphor and metonymy were actively dichotomised. Earlier, the two terms were typically unified under the sub-heading “tropes and figures” (Lodge, “Metaphor and Metonymy” 79). Furthermore, Jakobson's paper was the first to give equal weightage to both tropes (Dirven and Porings 1). Historically, there had been a tendency to consider metonymy to be but a sub-category of metaphor - Aristotle in his *Poetics* writes “Metaphor consists in giving the thing a name that belongs to something else” (25). Aristotle goes on to qualify four types of metaphor, out of which one of them is “(the transference of name) from genus to species” (25), or, in other words, from a larger category to a smaller one, which is the trope that is referred to today as ‘metonymy’. It was only with Jakobson that the trope of metonymy came into its own.

Seeking now to understand why the tropes were dichotomised by Jakobson – he writes, as briefly mentioned earlier, that when “one topic lead(s) to another...through similarity” (76), such discourse can be termed metaphoric in nature. Harry Berger Jr. describes the metaphor as being structured in an “A is B/A is not B” format (5), as the metaphor equates two things that are not the same. For example, in these lines from Robert Frost's “A Hillside Thaw” – “..The sun's a wizard/ By all I tell, but so's the moon a witch” (293-4) the poet projects some features/aspects of his ‘B’ objects (wizard, witch) onto his ‘A’ objects (sun, moon), on account of him perceiving some similarity in their rather distinct natures. Relevant

to the definition of metaphor, is that it involves two concepts that are conceptually “distant” from each other, such as the sun and a witch, thereby inhabiting two “domains” (Kovecses 175).

Metonymy, meanwhile, has been understood by Jakobson as the trope that emerges when topics lead from one to another via contiguity. An example of this trope is seen in the aphoristic “The pen is mightier than the sword” where the “pen” is a stand-in for writing, similarly the sword for violence. However, here, the pen is clearly contiguous to the discourse around writing. As Zoltan Kovecses puts it, “It is a basic feature of metonymically related vehicle and target entities that they are ‘close’ to each other in conceptual space” (173), and thereby inhabit only one “domain” (175). In *North and South* (1854) by Elizabeth Gaskell, there is constant use of metonymy in referring to of workers as “hands,” for example: “The law expenses would have been more than the hands themselves were worth” (Gaskell 147). Here, “hands” occupies the same domain as, and is contiguous to the bodies of the workers themselves.

Roman Jakobson’s theory of metaphor and metonymy also proposes an interesting dichotomy in the importance given to each of these tropes in prose and poetry. Towards the end of his essay, he writes:

The principle of similarity underlies poetry; the metrical parallelism of lines or the phonic equivalence of rhyming words prompts the question of semantic similarity and contrast; there exist, for instance, grammatical and anti-grammatical but never agrammatical rhymes. Prose, on the contrary, is forwarded essentially by contiguity. Thus, for poetry, metaphor, and for prose, metonymy is the line of least resistance and, consequently, the study of poetical tropes is directed chiefly toward metaphor.² (82)

Here, Jakobson points out that it is the very structure of poetry, with rhyme, meter, and punctuation serving as important devices, that makes poetry essentially metaphoric. This idea can be juxtaposed with that of W.K. Wimsatt, who points out that rhyme is most effective when similar sounding words with widely divergent meanings are paired together in metrical verse (Lodge, “Modes of Modern Writing” 88). For instance, in these lines from “Valediction: Forbidding Mourning”, John Donne writes:

If they be two, they are two so
As stiff twin compasses are two;
Thy soul, the fixed foot, makes no show
To move, but doth, if the other do.

Here, his brief lines are punctuated in such a manner to bring forth a startling similarity between lovers’ souls and a pair of compasses. Thus, a “poet is constantly diverted from combining items in a natural, logical or temporal succession by the arbitrary demands of the metrical form he has elected to employ” (Lodge, “Modes of Modern Writing” 89), and this is the first of the reasons that metaphor is used extensively in poetry.

Elsewhere in his essay, Jakobson states “The primacy of the metaphoric process in the literary schools of romanticism and symbolism has been repeatedly acknowledged...”(77-78). From this, one can conclude that romantic poetry in particular tends to the metaphoric pole. An interesting argument forwarded by some critics is that a poet often uses metaphor in order to make “a poem seem universal and timeless” (Sajé 47). This tendency towards timelessness is a predilection of the Romantic poets –the Romantic poet Shelley notes in his *A Defence of Poetry* “A poet participates in the eternal, the infinite, and the one; as far as relates to his conceptions, time and place and number are not” (Shelley 6). An instance of such a timeless metaphor is seen Shelley’s “Time”, where he writes – “Ocean of Time, whose waters of deep woe/Are brackish with the salt of human tears!.” Here, a metaphoric comparison is made between time and an ocean, and yet, this definition does not require any context or markers of time and space to be comprehended.

Jakobson qualifies his writing about prose too: “it is the predominance of metonymy which underlies and actually predetermines the so-called ‘realistic’ trend” (78). Indeed, such metonymic tendencies are present in the works of realist authors like Charles Dickens and Elizabeth Gaskell. The example from *North and South* stated earlier can be examined in this context. Referring to workers by the impersonal and dehumanizing “hands” is an act of reification, and is perhaps an implicit comment on the treatment meted out to the labour force in Industrial England. This comparison holds more weight when one takes into account the argument that metonymy, unlike metaphor, is grounded in the historical context that creates it (Sajé 48). While this is a potentially disputable argument, it does hold true in some instances.

For example, in the early chapters of Dickens’ *Oliver Twist*, there is a reference to a gentleman in a white waistcoat who perennially looks at Oliver with contempt, and whose constant refrain is “I know that boy will be hung” (Dickens 58). John R. Reed argues that the gentleman in the white waistcoat is a metonym for the privileged classes as a whole, pointing out that he is nameless, and thus without individuality, that the white waistcoat was a typical feature of the dress of the gentleman of high social status (419), and that his attitude towards the poor Oliver was highly reflective of the general attitude of the privileged towards the poor at that time (420-21).

However, there are times when Jakobson’s dichotomy does not hold true. Metonymy, and not metaphor, is often the driving force for poets such as Philip Larkin. As famously pointed out by David Lodge³, “many of his poems have no metaphors at all...and in what are perhaps his finest and most characteristic poems, the metaphors are foregrounded against a predominantly metonymic background” (Lodge, “Modes of Modern Writing” 217). For instance, in his poem “At Grass”, there is a stanza:

Silks at the start: against the sky
Numbers and parasols: outside,
Squadrons of empty cars, and heat, (Larkin 100)

In order to fully appreciate this poem, one has to understand that “silks at the start” is a metonym for jockeys atop their mounts (Gibbs 64), as are “numbers and parasols” and “squadrons of empty cars” for the audience gathered to watch the races. Similarly, David Lodge has pointed out that works of modernist prose, such as *Ulysses* by James Joyce and *To the Lighthouse* by Virginia Woolf tend to the metaphoric pole. (Lodge, “Modes of Modern Writing” 126).

A major strike against Jakobson’s theory has been levelled by the post-structuralists, who argue for “the erasure of the dichotomy between metaphor and metonymy” (Fludernik et al. 385). Gerard Genette avers “Far from being antagonistic and incompatible, metaphor and metonymy support each other and interpenetrate one another” (qtd. in Culler 215). He argues that Marcel Proust, for instance, perfectly interweaves metaphor and metonymy in his works. Genette argues that in *In Search of Lost Time* by Proust, when the steeples of Saint-Mars-le-Vêtu are metaphorically described as fish with red scales, it is because they are by the sea (a metonym). This description, thus, is a metaphor birthed out of metonymy (Culler 214-15). Similarly, in “Leda and the Swans” by W.B. Yeats:

A shudder in the loins engenders there
The broken wall, the burning roof and tower. (306)

Here, the “broken wall” and “the burning roof and tower” bring to mind the ravaged Troy during the Trojan war, and hence function as metonymies. On the other hand, the first line of this excerpt can function as a broad metaphor “connecting the rape of Leda to various themes of historical catastrophe and violent rebirth.” (Hiloidari 23)

Another argument against the dichotomy could be that Jakobson was exclusively taking Western literature into consideration, and his dichotomy is not applicable to world literatures at large. For instance, A.K. Ramanujan points out that often in Indian poetry in general, and in Tamil poetry specifically, there is a “metonymic universe” in existence, “where nature and man are related to one another for they are made of the same stuff” (Ramanujan, “Some Thoughts” 121). In another essay, he quotes a poem by Alankuti Vankanar, part of the *Kuruntokai*:

You know he comes from
where the fresh-water sharks in the pools
catch with their mouths
the mangoes as they fall... (Vankanar qtd in Ramanujan, “Form” 207)

Here, Ramanujan argues, the lover (the “he”), is metonymically compared to the shark – Ramanujan goes on to deem this an *Ullurai*, “a metonymous metaphor” and a special feature of classical Tamil poetry (Ramanujan, “Form” 207). Similarly thought exists in philosophy like that of the Bantu which believes in the contiguity of all reality. Fr. Tempels, in his influential book *Bantu Philosophy*, writes “Human beings considered outside of the ontological hierarchy of the interaction of forces is inexistent in Bantu conception” (qtd. in Okam 183). Poets such as Aimé Césaire were greatly influenced by such philosophy

(Okam183) that privilege a “one-domain” approach over a “two-domain” one, and thus, their poetry will not conform to Jakobson’s dichotomy.

Isaac Newton famously stated “If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of Giants.” Despite the recent criticism levelled against Jakobson, it cannot be denied that he is to a large extent the giant on whose shoulders all subsequent criticism and scholarship on the theme has rested. The tropes of metaphor and metonymy can thus perhaps be visualised as a pair of intertwining lines that diverge in the theories put forth by some and converge in those by others, often criss-crossing and sometimes overlapping.

Notes

1. Saying “In Homer” instead of “in lines from Homer” is another example of metonymy.
2. It is interesting to note here that poetry tends to metaphor, and prose to metonymy. Jakobson is not stating that in poetry one will only find metaphors, but avers that it is metaphor that will be the primary device in poetry, and vice-versa.
3. David Lodge was a supporter and not an opposer of Jakobson’s theory, and yet this was an observation he made.

Works Cited

Aristotle, *Poetics*. Translated by Ingram Bywater, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1920.

Berger, Henry Jr. *Figures of a Changing World: Metaphor and the Emergence of Modern Culture*. Ew York, Fordham University Press, 2015.

Cavafy, Constantine Peter. “Ithaka”. Translated by Edmund Keeley. *Poetry Foundation*. www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/51296/ithaka-56d22eef917ec. Accessed on 1st Nov. 2019.

Culler, Jonathan. *The Pursuit of Signs*. London, Routledge Classics, 2001.

Dickens, Charles. *Oliver Twist*. Penguin Books Ltd., 1966.

Dirven, René and Ralf Pörings, editors. *Metaphor and Metonymy in Comparison and Contrast*. Berlin, Mouton de Gruyter, 2003.

Donne, John. “A Valediction Forbidding Mourning”. *Poetry Foundation*. www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44131/a-valediction-forbidding-mourning. Accessed 28 Oct. 2019.

Flundernik, Monika et al. "Metaphor and Beyond: An Introduction." *Poetics Today*, Vol. 20, No. 3, 1999, pp. 383-396

Frost, Robert. *Complete Poems of Robert Frost*. Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1964.
Gaskell, Elizabeth. North and South. John Lehmann Ltd. 1951.

Gibbs, Raymond W. "Speaking and Thinking with Metonymy". *Metonymy in Language and Thought*, edited by Klaus-Uwe Panther and Günter Radden, John Benjamins Publishing Co., 1999, pp. 61-76.

Hiloidari, Pori. *Metaphors and metonymies in the major novels of D H Lawrence*. 2001, Gauhati University, PhD Dissertation. Shodhganga.

Homer, *The Odyssey*. Translated by Alexander Pope. Edinburgh, John Ross and Company, 1870.

Jakobson, Roman. "The Metaphoric and Metonymic Poles". *Fundamentals of Language*. By Roman Jakobson and Morris Halle, Mouton & Co., 1956, pp. 76- 82.

Kovecses, Zoltan. *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2010.

Larkin, Philip. *Collected Poems*, edited by Anthony Thwaite, Faber and Faber, 2003.

Lodge, David. "Metaphor and Metonymy in Modern Fiction". *Critics Quarterly*, Vol. 7, Issue. 1, 1975, pp. 75 – 93

Lodge, David. *The Modes of Modern Writing: Metaphor, Metonymy, and the Typology of Modern Literature*. Edward Arnold, 1977.

Okam, Hilary. "Aspects of Imagery and Symbolism in the Poetry of Aimé Césaire." *Yale French Studies*, No. 53, Traditional and Contemporary African Literature (1976), pp. 175-196

Ramanujan, Attipate Krishnaswami. "Form in Classical Tamil Poetry." *The Collected Essays Of A.K. Ramanujan*, edited by Vinay Dharwadker, Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 197-218.

Ramanujan, Attipate Krishnaswami. "Some Thoughts on 'Non-Western' Classics: With Indian Examples". *The Collected Essays of A.K. Ramanujan*, edited by Vinay Dharwadker, Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 115- 126.

Reed, John R. "The Gentleman in the White Waistcoat: Dickens and Metonymy." *Style*, Vol. 39, No. 4, 2005, pp. 412-426.

Sajé, Natasha. "Metonymy, the Neglected (But Necessary) Trope." *The American Poetry Review*, Vol. 38, No. 1, 2009, pp. 47-50.

Shelley, Percy Bysshe. "Time". *Poetry Foundation*. www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45141/time-56d224858f450. Accessed 28 Oct. 2019

Shelley, Percy Bysshe. *Defense of Poetry*. Edited with an introduction and notes by Albert S. Cook, Boston, Ginn and Company, 1890.

Yeats, William Butler. *Delphi Poets Series: W.B. Yeats*, Delphi Classics, 2012.

Showers of Love and Mirth, Drenching in Woe and Death

Sonia Joseph

In British poetry, the appreciation of rain has been complicated and bittersweet, as it has been associated not only with romance and mirth, but also with gloom and death. This paper shall explore the richness and diversity of rain poetry, the geo-social factors influencing it and its treatment by various British poets like Dame Sitwell and Edward Thomas.

“Rain is one of the most ambiguous states of nature. Each person interprets it in his own way and revives it in a unique manner.” — “Valencia In Bloom” (Paolino)

Human beings are known to be romantic creatures. They not only observe the beauty of nature, but also appreciate and document its enchantment. Human life is biologically and socially shaped by various kinds of natural phenomena, one of the most influential types being the weather. Each season has a powerful and relative impact on the mood of people. Thus, it is not surprising that there has been an abundance of poetry on the subject of the seasons. One of the most popular subjects chosen by poets is ‘rain,’ because of the wide range of emotions it evokes.

In England, the oldest example of rain poetry available is ‘Westron Wynde’ which follows a romantic theme. It is a famous song composed in Middle English that can be traced back to the Chaucerian or Tudor era:

Westron wynde when wyll thou blow,
The smalle rayne down can rayne -
Cryst, yf my love wer in my arms
And I yn my bed agayne!

- Anonymous (“Westron Wynde”)

The poet awaits the rainy winds and it reminds them of their lover; thus rain sets the mood for romance. The lines show the poet’s longing for the company of his lover. Perhaps, it could have been the song of a farmer beckoning the rains.

Rain is also used as a metaphor or a simile in poetry. For example, in Robert Rorabeck’s (author of "Tolkien's Heroic Quest") ‘Flower In The Rain,’ the poet compares his lover to a wildflower, and expresses a desire to fall on her like rain. By doing so, his goal is:

Scaring all the old bees away from
Pollinating your bed
Scaring all the fake men off who
Can only stand the sun (Rorabeck).

In the poet's opinion, his lover's other suitors are like hovering "bees" (Rorabeck), whom he wishes to drive away. He believes their allegiance to her to be rather ephemeral. The poet, on the other hand, would stand by her side always. As flowers are rejuvenated by raindrops, the poet also achieves in painting a promising picture of a healthy relationship.

The second half of the poem becomes erotic:

And in the meadow
I bend down and kiss your petals wetly
Falling all over you
Letting your pistil slip into my mouth. (Rorabeck)

The "meadow" is the bed, where love is made. All the actions indicated by verbs such as "kissing," "sucking off your honey," "plucking" and "pulling" (Rorabeck) are reminiscent of human aspects of love-making related to foreplay, oral sex and intercourse. The poet expresses how he wants to make love to his partner gently, like a rain drop falling on a flower. A raindrop on the petal of a flower, is undoubtedly a very gorgeous sight, thus producing a very enticing image. Since flowers are considered a symbol of love, flowers and rain make a truly romantic pair.

Another example of using rain as a simile can be seen in Edward Thomas' 'Like the Touch of Rain,' where the lover herself is compared to rain. This poem is dedicated to the poet's friend, Eleanor Farjeon, who was rumoured to be in love with him. But according to Eleanor's biography of Edward Thomas titled "The Last Four Years", he did not have anything beyond a deep platonic relationship with her (Faber & Faber). To the poet, she is as pleasant as a raindrop that "falls on the skin, hair and eyes" (Thomas, "Touch"). It takes him by surprise as its arrival is sudden, yet gentle.

With the love of the storm he burns,
He sings, he laughs, well I know how (Thomas, "Touch")

The "love of the storm" in his heart, is a metaphor that aptly describes the burning passion and intensity of his love. In the last stanza, he describes their parting ways, as a door shut between him and his love, the "blessed rain" (Thomas, "Touch"). The last line was inspired by the breakup of his friendship with Eleanor. Thus, in the poem, he compares his lover to rain, for her companionship was like showers of blessings to him. In the Bible, rain is indeed considered a form of blessing from God (Deuteronomy 28:12).

On the contrary, in some cases, it has been observed that rain induces a dull mood. In England, unlike India, the weather is rather unpredictable. Winters in England are known to be harsh, as temperatures dip to zero degrees celsius and daytime sunlight lasts for a few hours. The darkness and the dampness have been known to set in an atmosphere of gloom. Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is an infamous mood disorder that affects people living in cold regions. Research commissioned by The Weather Channel and YouGov states that,

in the UK, at least 29% of adults experience symptoms of SAD in the winter, “ranging from low energy levels, to low self-esteem and anxiety ...highlighting the strong links between the weather and wellbeing” (Molloy, “Seasonal Affective Disorder: 1 in 3 people suffer from SAD” .2014).

The poem, “The Rain and The Wind” by William Ernest Henley, reflects such discontent with the weather-

The rain and the wind, the wind and the rain --
They are with us like a disease:
They worry the heart, they work the brain (Henley)

The repetition of “rain” and “wind” (Henley) has been made deliberately to emphasise his loathing for the bad weather, which seems frustratingly inevitable. The wind and rain are like “diseases” (Henley) that one can never escape. These ailments take a toll on the mind and the heart. There are instances of personification observed in the lines talking of how the stormy weather causes the window panes, to “shriek” (Henley). Even the “helpless trees” (Henley) are not spared by the mighty gusts of wind that “savage” them. The poet thus portrays the winds as cruel and barbaric. He wonders what one gains from the drab sight of the cloudy skies, as it hides the starry skies and “ruins the grace” (Henley) and the beauty of the sunrise. It is clear that he absolutely detests the rainy weather and can see no goodness or beauty in it worthy of appreciation.

In the final stanza, the poet talks of how the rain and wind have been in existence since forever and will continue to do so. Here, it is interesting to note that he is now talking of storms on a deeper level- in the sense of a stormy life, full of ups and downs. He invites the readers to “hunch over the fire” (Henley) and meditate with him. He dares them to revive their dreams and hope, and to not fall into despair, before the “storm” (Henley) of life can render their blood “chilled and thinned” (Henley) and make them long for death. The fire, providing light and warmth in the chilly storm, represents hope, which is the refuge one seeks during difficult times. (“The Rain and the Wind - - William Ernest Henley”)

Rain, especially in the winter, makes people very vulnerable to flu (Robson). In times before advanced medicine, people often died after contracting various types of flu. Perhaps, this could have resulted in ‘death’ emerging as a major theme in rain poetry.

‘Rain’ by Edward Thomas, is an example of rain poetry based on the theme of death. Written during World War I, this poem gives a glimpse into the poet’s mind as he mourns the deaths of his fellow soldiers. It seems as if his grief is further aggravated by the weather outside, and this creates resentment in him towards the rain and his surroundings. The poem begins:

Rain, midnight rain, nothing but the wild rain
On this bleak hut, and solitude, and me
Remembering again that I shall die

And neither hear the rain nor give it thanks (Thomas, "Rain")

The weather adds to the poet's grief, and he has to endure all his tribulations alone. He is also reminded of his own mortality- of his own impending death. He goes on to contemplate what it would be like to never relish the rain, an experience he does not want to lose. The poet also bestows a divine property on rain, as he feels that the rain blesses him and cleanses him spiritually.

The poet also considers "the dead that the rain, rains upon" (Thomas, "Rain") to be lucky. Those who are alive, suffer in grief and loneliness, which makes them feel as if they are trapped in a place between life and death- a condition he likens to that of stagnant rain water between two reeds (Webb 43). He feels that the rain has drained him of all other desires, leaving only a peculiar "love of death" (Thomas, "Rain"), that is inescapable and "perfect" (Thomas, "Rain"). Thus, he believes that death shall never "disappoint" him (Thomas, "Rain"). In fact, his biography records him having contemplated suicide multiple times and he had attempted it once in his lifetime ("The War Diary Of Edward Thomas"). As the poem also shows, Thomas had a rather complex relationship with both rain and death. He begins by disliking them, but as the poem unfolds, one cannot miss the fondness he has for rain, as well as for death .

Dame Edith Louisa Sitwell's "Still Falls The Rain" is another anti-war poem, inspired by the bombing of London by Germany during World War II, as indicated in the subtitle "The Raids, 1940" (Misko 57). In the poem, the poet compares this event to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, as both the events depict the suffering of innocent. Here, rain is used as a backdrop for death and destruction. In the first stanza of the poem, rain is described using words such as "dark", "blind", and "black" (Sitwell). Through these adjectives, the poet is trying to convey how humans have been blinded by hatred and greed, at the cost of brotherhood and peace. In the next line, "blind as the nineteen hundred and forty nail/Upon the cross" (Sitwell) the poet compares the rain to the nails by which Jesus was crucified. Misko adds,

"The rain, moreover, is shaped like the nails, sharp and elongated; but both the rain and the nails have been perverted from their original nature and symbolism: from the purification and fertility of the rain and from the means of construction and creation of the nails. Instead, both mirror destruction and death." (58).

Later, there are parallels drawn between the falling rain and the spilling of Christ's blood, which symbolizes the medium through which mankind has been redeemed. The rain in the poem could also represent the bombs that fell over London during the Blitz of the Second World War. The blood shed by Christ and the victims of war are portrayed as the price paid for human greed. Therefore, the rain in this poem is, as Ellen Misko suggests, "a rain of wickedness, of punishment and of drowning, of destruction and of death" (Misko 57).

Rain is absolutely necessary for sustaining vegetation and other forms of life on earth. Today, battles are fought on a different front than in the 1940's. Global Warming and Climate Change threaten all living beings, promising a bleak future ahead. Such phenomena also influences seasonal poetry. An example is the poem "Acid Rain" by David Darbyshire in which shoots and roots start dreading the rain because it no longer denotes nourishment, it now heralds decay and destruction (Darbyshire). In literature, no other phenomenon of weather could perhaps offer the versatility that rain does in poetry. As Anthony Hincks cleverly points out, "Rain may stop you from going out, but it doesn't stop you from looking inwards" (Hincks).

Works cited

Darbyshire, David. "Acid Rain." *PoemHunter.com*, 21 Oct. 2005, www.poemhunter.com/poem/acid-rain/. Accessed Nov 22. 2019.

"Edward Thomas." *Faber&Faber*, 20 May 2010, www.faber.co.uk/9780571269891-edward-thomas.html. Accessed Dec 5. 2019

"'Go Now': A Poem by Edward Thomas." *Interesting Literature*, 13 Nov. 2018, interestingliterature.com/2018/11/24/go-now-a-poem-by-edward-thomas/. Accessed Nov 2. 2019.

Griffith, Richard R. "69. Westron Wynde When Wyll Thaw Blow." *The Explicator*, vol. 21, no. 9, 1963, pp. 129–133, doi:10.1080/00144940.1963.11482365. Accessed 05 November 2019.

Hincks, Anthony T. "Rain Quotes." *Goodreads*, www.goodreads.com/quotes/tag/rain?page=10. Accessed Dec 5. 2019

Holy Bible: the New American Bible: Family Edition: Red Letter Edition. Catholic Bible Press, 1988.

Misko, Ellen. "A Study of Dame Edith Sitwell's "Later Poems: 1940-1945"." (1972). *ecommons.luc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2210&context=luc_diss*. Accessed Oct 30.2019.

Molloy, Antonia. "Seasonal Affective Disorder: 1 in 3 People Suffer from SAD." *The Independent*, Independent Digital News and Media, 24 Oct. 2014, www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/health-news/seasonal-affective-disorder-1-in-3-people-suffer-from-sad-9814164.html. Accessed Nov 25. 2019.

Robson, David. "The Real Reason Germs Spread in the Winter." *BBC Future*, BBC, 19 Oct. 2015, www.bbc.com/future/article/20151016-the-real-reason-germs-spread-in-the-winter. Accessed 25 Nov.2019

Rorabeck, Robert. "A Flower In The Rain". *PoemHunter.com*, www.poemhunter.com/poems/rain/page-1/2463256/. Accessed Oct 30.2019.

Stillwell, Edith Louisa. "Still Falls The Rain". *PoemHunter.com*, www.poemhunter.com/poems/rain/page-1/343116/. Accessed Oct 30.2019.

"The Rain and the Wind -- William Ernest Henley." *The Rain and the Wind -- William Ernest Henley*, wonderingminstrels.blogspot.com/1999/06/rain-and-wind-william-ernest-henley.html. Accessed Nov 16. 2019.

"The Rain and the Wind." *Representative Poetry Online*, University Of Toronto, rpo.library.utoronto.ca/poems/rain-and-wind. Accessed Nov 16. 2019.

"The War Diary of Edward Thomas." The War Diary of Edward Thomas | The National Library of Wales, www.library.wales/discover/digital-gallery/manuscripts/modern-period/the-war-diary-of-edward-thomas/. Accessed Nov 22.2019.

Thomas, Edward. "Like The Touch Of Rain". *PoemHunter.com*, www.poemhunter.com/poems/rain/page-1/33321/. Accessed Oct 30. 2019.

Thomas, Edward. "Rain". *PoemHunter.com*, www.poemhunter.com/poems/rain/page-1/16480/. Accessed Oct 30. 2019.

"Valencia in Bloom Quotes by Elena Paolino." *Goodreads*, www.goodreads.com/work/quotes/73764110-valencia-in-bloom. Accessed Dec 5. 2019.

Webb, M. R. "'Yet Not Unhappy For Its Lack': The Poetry Of Edward Thomas." *English Studies in Africa*, vol. 16, no. 1, 1973, pp. 43–44., doi:10.1080/00138397308690688. Accessed Nov 22.2019.

"Westron Wynde." *Poetrynook.com*, www.poetrynook.com/poem/westron-wynde. Accessed Oct 30. 2019.

India : An Analysis of Nationalism and Patriotism in the Subcontinent

Nivedha Kannan

This paper aims to analyse the dichotomy between nationalism and patriotism in British India and India as is seen today. While Rabindranath Tagore's views on Nationalism will be used to strengthen the theoretical claims and explore the dynamics of British India, Rakeysh Mehra's Rang De Basanti will be employed as an analytical tool to examine concepts of nationalism and patriotism in modern India.

"Ab bhi jiska khoon na khaula, khoon nahi woh paani hai, jo desh ke kaam na aaye woh bekaar jawani hai"¹ (Mehra 00:01:07 - 00:01:16)

These are the lines of Indian revolutionary Chandrashekar Azad, one of the many bravehearts who courageously resisted the Crown's rule in the Indian subcontinent. He is known to have proudly proclaimed that he would die for the nation, but, if need be, also kill for the nation. Azad's India saw oppression, violence and subjugation by a foreign power. However, the India of today is the world's largest democracy, a world leader, an embodiment of cultural pluralism and most importantly, a free country. It is, therefore, essential to ask where the average Indian of today stands in terms of his attitudes towards the nation. Does he love the country? Is he indifferent to it? Will he fight for it? Will he kill for it? And if he does not, will he be called an 'anti-national'?

These are only a few questions surrounding the multifaceted debate about patriotism in the country today which an Indian citizen can engage and identify with. However, this bone of contention has not sprung out of nowhere. When one traces the historical origins of patriotism, one is taken right back to the thoughts of revered poet and philosopher, Rabindranath Tagore. Tagore is known, amongst many other things, for his unique views on nationalism and how it harms the fabric of a country. He has summarized his thoughts beautifully in various pieces of literature, both overtly and covertly. His renowned poem, 'Where the Mind is Without Fear' reflects a similar interpretation which entails what, according to Tagore, should be the most celebrated ideals of people all over the world. This highly nuanced poem reflects his perspective on concepts such as nation and nationalism.

Tagore urges all of mankind to break the shackles that institutions impose and urges one to hunt for greater potential. The intrinsic differences among human beings are dangerously accentuated by "narrow domestic walls" (Tagore, "Mind is Without Fear" 3) that is, the physical and geographical boundaries that nation-building created. According to him, Indian nationalism was but a poor borrowing from the West as it ignored the unique cultural setup of India. The inadequate understanding of this has led us into the arid desert sand of ignorance and morbidity. What is required of humanity is to find a clear path of reason, to know, to do and to grow. To him, it was the ideal of peace, harmony and the spiritual unity of humankind that was to be the way of the world. He advocated these thoughts in the lines, "Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action/ Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake" (Tagore, "Mind is Without Fear" 7-8).

While patriotism comes with an eagerness to acknowledge and correct the deficiencies of the state, nationalism demands blind loyalty and ignorant faith in the ideal of the nation (Vashishth & Surendran). Tagore explains the same in his novel, *The Home and the World* (1916), "I am willing to serve my country; but my worship I reserve for Right which is far greater than the country. To worship my country as a god is to bring a curse upon it" (Tagore, "Home and World"). These ideas can be used to examine the nationalistic and patriotic attitudes in British India and the India of today.

British India was an era of atrocious subjugation and subordinate treatment meted out to Indians in their own homeland. As Shashi Tharoor puts it in an 'Era of Darkness', "We literally paid for our own oppression." Starting 1857, with the Sepoy Mutiny, there was a general air of dissatisfaction and contention with the East India Company that only grew in the next couple of decades. These years also gave birth to the greatest revolutionaries the country had seen. British India saw two broad leadership camps. One was represented by leaders like Bhagat Singh, Chandrashekar Azad and Lal Bahadur Shastri who condemned everything that the Empire stood for and urged the masses to 'Indianize' themselves and capitalize on their indigenous identity. The other faction included leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and to a certain extent, Rabindranath Tagore, who held their motherland in the highest regard but were also open to accepting, growing and learning from what the West had to offer.

India, at that time, needed both these contrasting viewpoints. She needed self-reliance and reassertion of her identity as advanced by the earlier leaders, but she also needed to function in line with the very powerful Empire and negotiate carefully to earn her freedom. Neither of them can be labelled as patriots or nationalists because this analysis of the same pertains to a free India, an India with voice, reason, opinion and a supposed democracy. What they fought against and what we are seeking to fight against is a dichotomy in itself. "History belongs in the past; but understanding it is the duty of the present", explains Tharoor. The aim is to understand this with modern India's strongest tool-cinema. (291)

Today, amongst many other things, cinema yields the power to influence the masses in a unique way, especially in a country like India. Acknowledging the unquestionable hegemony that Bollywood occupies, many filmmakers have used their films as a medium to put across several impactful messages. One of them, Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra, did the same with his masterpiece, *Rang De Basanti* (2006).

Rang De Basanti did more than adequate justice to its tagline "A Generation Awakens". The movie remains one of the best examples of impact and awakening of the masses till date. It is loosely based on the alleged misappropriation of funds by the Indian Defence Ministry in the purchase of the MiG-21 fighter aircraft which killed about 78 IAF pilots from 1995-2006 (Mehra 02:43:11 - 02:43:23). The movie revolves around a group of ambitionless and carefree college students who are roped in by a British filmmaker to document the courageous struggle of 5 Indian revolutionaries. The students, though initially indifferent, begin to absorb more of the characters they are playing and see more of them in their own selves. The untimely death of their friend, an IAF pilot, in an air crash, leads to a realization

among the six as they proceed to tackle the ‘system’. How they do so and the consequences of the same forms the broad plot of the film.

Despite the fact that the movie was released more than a decade ago, it continues to mirror the society we live in today. In the first thirty minutes of the movie, the audience is introduced to the age-old antagonism of the Hindu and the Muslim, perpetuated and reinforced for personal and political gains. Laxman Pandey despises Aslam because of his faith, calls him a “Pakistani” and asks him to ‘go back’. Laxman works for a right wing Hindu political outfit that bases its vote bank on this polarization. Present day India is the best or rather the worst manifestation of a divide that has always existed, but has never been this heightened. The 27-year old Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute and the increasing number of mob lynchings are events that hold testimony to this fact. This fragile situation is made worse by both right-wing and left-wing polarized groups, a biased media, power-hungry political parties and a general lack of awareness and misinformation perpetuated by excessive use of social media.

Another important aspect that the movie explores is the pervasive apathy towards the nation amongst the youth of today. Karan Singhania comments, “*Yeh deshbhakti ki baatein bahut boring lagti hai*”² (Mehra 00:29:18 - 00:29:19). Karan represents a huge mass of the population that adopts a general attitude of condescension towards the institutions of the nation and the problems faced by it. As Aslam casually remarks, “What’s there to be proud of in India? Its corruption, poverty or unemployment? (Mehra 00:29:54 - 00:30:00)

Ajay Rathod, an IAF Pilot, is a character who stands out from the rest. He does not approve of the mere shunning of the system but instead advocates doing something to reform it. Ajay’s character is placed on a pedestal from the first scene onwards - he preaches, he guides and he captures the essence of what modern India is missing- that real loyalty towards the nation lies in recognizing and discharging one’s responsibility as a citizen. Love for India does not have to directly translate to hate for her adversaries. It does not have to manifest in the vehement shunning of dissenting groups or turning a blind-eye to the wrongdoings of the country, as perpetuated by its representatives. It has to entail respecting the country, taking a stand and speaking up for it in the face of internal or external threat, acknowledging the country’s mistakes and looking for ways to fix it. It has to have fearless rationality and reason and acceptance of humanity as its highest ideal.

However, all is not right with the movie. The form of patriotism depicted here is extremist, it professes immense love for the nation but it is also aggressive. It justifies violence as a tool to propagate nationalism, as indicated by the killing of the Defence Minister by the six friends. This patriotism takes inspiration from yesteryear’s revolutionaries who chose aggressive measures against a foreign authority but what it fails to distinguish is that the present authority is a government elected by popular mandate.

Rang De Basanti was a one-off release in 2006. Not a lot of movies were addressing issues of nation and nationalism. However, in the past 5 years, 37 Bollywood films were made with the nation as the core theme (Jha 2019). One of these films, *Airlift* orchestrated

what being an Indian means for the common man of today. It follows Ranjit Katyal, a wealthy businessman based in Kuwait who is often derisive towards Indians. However, politically driven consequences - of Invasion of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein's Iraq - lead him to acknowledge his identity as an Indian and gain a newfound respect for the country.

There is an evident chasm between British India's patriotism and the attitudes of India as we know them today. British India, in spite of being a nation in the embryonic stage, displayed a sense of unity and togetherness for a cause that was bigger than themselves. Today's India has tremendous global potential. But it also has a misconstrued rhetoric that uses the country as a pawn to legitimize an act of violence, justify brutality and spew hatred. This antagonization fails to realise is that India's beauty lies in her plurality, her ability to accommodate an incredible diversity and her strength as a unified force in the face of foreign threat. The inconveniences present today are bound to dampen this unique fabric and leave us with nothing but shreds of the same cloth.

A very compelling statement by Tharoor in *An Era of Darkness* perfectly captures where we stand today, "When we hurt (kill) people, we feel compelled to pretend that it is for some higher cause. It is this pretence of virtue, I promise you, that will never be forgiven by history"(Tharoor). He rightly reiterates what Tagore spoke of almost half a century ago: Fearless rationality, reason and acceptance of humanity have to be man's highest ideals and while the motherland must be held in the highest regard, it is not beyond reproach either. What Rang de Basanti showed us was one side of the coin. But it is important to flip the coin and take on the other side with the same acceptance as well.

Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen explains, in *The Argumentative Indian*, his capabilities approach which postulates that the real essence of human development lies in an individual's capacities. The country is not too different either. India's real development lies in what she can do and what she can be. And any country is only as good as her people. Therefore, we find ourselves at a precipice where we have to make decisions that will serve as tipping points leading to widespread transformations. Acknowledging this, it is important for the India of today to create an environment conducive for the prosperity of the India of tomorrow. Indeed, there is great truth in what Ajay Rathod said, "*Koi bhi desh perfect nahi hota, usse behtar banana padta hai*"³(Mehra 00:30:02 - 00:30:04)

Notes

1. "People in youth are insignificant for the country if they don't raise their voices in times of need"
2. "I find patriotism-centric talks boring."
3. "No country is perfect. It is nurtured for betterment by its people."

Works Cited

Bhushan, Nalini, and Jay L. Garfield. "Rabindranath Tagore, 'Nationalism in India' (1917)." *Oxford Scholarship*, Oxford University Press, 22 May 2015, <https://www.oxfordscholarship>.

com/view/10.1093/acprof:osobl/9780199769261.001.0001/acprof-9780199769261-chapter-2. Accessed 21 October, 2019.

Jha, Lala. "Bollywood taps political issues to cash in on national sentiment." *Livemint*, 04 November, 2019, <https://www.livemint.com/industry/media/bollywood-taps-political-issues-to-cash-in-on-national-sentiment-11572890870638.html>. Accessed 08 November, 2019

Rang De Basanti. Directed by Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra, performances by Aamir Khan, Soha Ali Khan and Siddharth, UTV Motion Pictures, 2006.

Tagore, Rabindranath. "Gitanjali 35." *Poetry Foundation*, <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45668/gitanjali-35>. Accessed 20 October, 2019.

---. *HOME AND THE WORLD*. BLURB, 2019. Accessed 21 October, 2019.

Tharoor, Shashi. *An Era of Darkness*. India, Aleph Book Company, 2016

Vashisth , Neha, and Vivek Surendran. "Nationalism vs patriotism: Do you know the difference?" *INDIATODAY*, 25 April, 2017, <https://www.indiatoday.in/fyi/story/nationalism-patriotism-difference-people-973461-2017-04-25>. Accessed 20 October, 2019.

References

Joshi, Namrata. "Bollywood as National(Ist) Cinema: Violence, Patriotism and the National-Popular in Rang De Basanti." *Taylor & Francis*, 07 December, 2009, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09528820903371123?scroll=top&needAccess=true&journalCode=ctte20> . Accessed 17 November, 2019

Quayum, Mohammed. "Tagore and nationalism." *The Daily Star*, 11 May, 2013, <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/tagore-and-nationalism>. Accessed 20 October, 2019.

A Tale of Binaries

Durga Shirsat and Vaishnavi Dhas

This paper aims to focus on two major dichotomies that form the crux of the book 'Siddhartha' by Hermann Hesse : eastern versus western philosophy and the spiritual V/S material distinction symbolized by the river.

“Story, as it turns out, was crucial to our evolution - more so than opposable thumbs. Opposable thumbs let us hang on; story tells us what to hang on to.” - Lisa Cron

One cannot deny the importance of storytelling. It has always been an effective medium to communicate, engage with, influence, teach and inspire people. Every story has different elements. One such essential component is that of binary opposition. Humans are driven to take sides and find closure and balance. In fact, psychologist Arie Kruglanski coined the term “need for cognitive closure to refer to an individual’s desire for a firm answer to a question and an aversion towards ambiguity” (Kruglanski 2). Binary opposition helps to battle this ambiguity and makes it easier to find reconciliation between two opposing ideas and to find meaning through difference. This becomes crucial to storytelling because humans make sense of ideas by putting them into categories, which aids them in better understanding what those ideas actually convey. Hence, it is no wonder that such opposition is employed everywhere, from folk tales to contemporary cinema. Be it the recurrent good-evil motif ubiquitous in children’s literature, or the distinction between the Oriental and the Occidental world, literature is made up of binaries galore. Its exploration provides one with a way to understand how one makes sense of the world. Thus, binary opposition becomes an important tool to deconstruct the complexities of the world around us.

One such literary piece which is a celebration of dichotomies and paradoxes is *Siddhartha* (1922) by Hermann Hesse. The text recounts the spiritual evolution of the protagonist, a man named Siddhartha living in India at the time of Gautama Buddha. The book is essentially a *bildungsroman* that chronicles the development of Siddhartha’s character and his journey within and his spiritual understanding of himself. What sets this book apart is the fact that it conveys, in brief, the very essence of what it means to explore the dualism and the polarity of human existence. Hesse says in *Siddhartha*:

“the opposite of every truth is just as true! One-sided is everything that can be thought with thoughts and said in words-everything one-sided, everything half, everything is devoid of wholeness, of roundness, of oneness.” (124)

These words acknowledge the existence of “opposites”, yet shatter the foundations on which dichotomy is built by exposing the true nature of equality. *Siddhartha* is not only an acknowledgement of the binaries of human existence but also an acknowledgement of the reconciliation of these binaries. This very aspect of the book makes it a quintessential example of dichotomy.

Siddhartha brings out the opposition in the Eastern and Western spiritual thought and philosophy. This distinction underscored in the novel stems from the author's personal experiences. Hesse was the descendent of Protestant clergymen who had served as missionaries in India. Unlike his European counterparts, Hesse had deep respect and a clear understanding of Eastern philosophy and thought. However, he did not consider either of them as perfect or superior to the other.

The political atmosphere during the creation of the book is particularly significant here. Hesse's text was published after World War I in 1922, and has an underlying message of the spirit of brotherhood and unity, irrespective of racial differences. This was rare at the time when most texts were characterised with a sense of disillusionment with war and feelings of despair and hopelessness. Hesse's experience caring for German war prisoners in Bern is what made his perspective unique. In his essay, *A Bit of Theology* (1932), Hesse writes:

In the search for truth, nothing will be so valuable and comforting as the realization that beneath the division in race, colour, language and culture there lies a unity, that there are not various peoples and minds but only One Humanity, only One Spirit. (Hesse 1932)

Thus, his writings can be considered to counter the overwhelming feeling of nationalism and imperialism prevalent at the time and also reflect the influence of Eastern thought.

In the book *The Geography of Thought* (2003), the social psychologist Richard Nisbett writes about how his student pointed out that the Easterners view the world as a circle and the Westerners view it as a line. This could mean that the Eastern people have a more holistic approach to the world with the belief that change occurs only to move back to a prior state while the Western people think of the world as simpler and more deterministic. These differences are also highlighted in *Siddhartha*. Initially, *Siddhartha* has a quintessential Western approach to things when he wants to move ahead in his quest of awakening and wants to achieve nirvana. At the end, he realizes :

And when I learned that, I looked at my life, and it was also a river, and the boy *Siddhartha* was separated from the adult *Siddhartha* and from the old man *Siddhartha* only by shadow, not by substance. (94)

He understands that the separation of his manifestations is immaterial because the changed *Siddhartha* is a mere reflection of the present *Siddhartha* and all that he was and he would be is contained within him.

Structuralism is the belief that things cannot be understood in isolation - they have to be seen in the context of the larger structures they are part of (Barry 39). It posits the concept of binary opposition and tends to reduce the complexity of human experiences to certain underlying structures that are universal. The same has occurred to western spiritual thought as it is often standardised. Distinguishing between good and bad is a fundamental element of

thought in many religions and cultures. But structuralism classifies things as good and bad and views it as polar opposites. Whereas post-structuralism theories critiqued the favouring of one arm of the opposition over the other. Good cannot be defined without reference to bad, and bad cannot be defined without reference to good. Therefore, good can never be completely good and bad can never be entirely bad. Contrarily, Eastern philosophy which celebrates multiplicity and contradictions provided some relief from the constrictions of Western thought (Cherian 21). The skepticism of post-structuralism counters and questions the grounds of Western philosophy. Thus, Eastern philosophy is in a sense closely akin to post-structuralism while Western philosophy leans more towards structuralist thought. Hesse expresses this idea in the novel. His feelings can be clearly seen in the words from the text:

all of it together, all voices, all goals, all yearnings, all sufferings,
all pleasures, all good and evil - the world was everything together.
Everything together was the river of events, was the music of life.
(118-119)

Another significant aspect is that of the river which forms an essential component of the book. It creates the required dichotomous effect that helps propel the narrative. The river plays a crucial role in the development of Siddhartha's character, forming the base of the *bildungsroman*. Siddhartha encounters the river when there is a transition happening in his life. Right from the beginning, the river's importance is clearly emphasized with Siddhartha performing his daily chores at the riverbank. "Sun tanned Siddhartha's light shoulders on the riverbank when he bathed, when he performed his holy ablutions, his holy offerings" (3). However, the river reveals its dichotomous nature when Siddhartha sets out on his personal journey. After Siddhartha leaves Govinda, his childhood companion and Gautama, the enlightened one, to find 'his goal', he comes across 'the river', a natural water source. It is this 'river' that becomes the physical divide between the two worlds: 'geist', the spiritual world, and 'natur', the material world. When Siddhartha crosses the river, he does not merely cross it physically, but also crosses the divide between the aforementioned worlds metaphorically. He enters a world full of material pleasures when he goes to the town and leaves behind an ascetic life. When he crosses the river again to come back, he leaves behind his material life to continue with his quest to find realization. This fact is also acknowledged by Siddhartha. He says :

I want to remain by this river, thought Siddhartha, it is the same one that
I crossed while going to the child people. A friendly ferryman ferried
me then, I will go to him. From his hut my way once led me to a new
life, which has now grown old and died-may my new way, my new life
start out from there! (89)

It is also fascinating to note that the river symbolizes both 'the death' and 'the re-birth' of Siddhartha. The river is the place where the old materialistic Siddhartha dies and the spiritual Siddhartha awakens thereby marking a new phase in his life.

Siddhartha had wanted to drown in this river, the old, weary, desperate Siddhartha had drowned in it today. But the new Siddhartha felt a deep love for this streaming water and he resolved not to leave it again so soon. (88)

Apart from that, the river is also a source of inexhaustible learning. Be it his realization of the fact that “time does not exist” (94) or his acceptance that “the world was everything together”(119), all that Siddhartha learnt was from the river. The river quenches his spiritual thirst. It is also ironic to note that although Siddhartha refuses to accept a teaching because of his belief that “no one is granted deliverance through a teaching!”(32), he accepts the teachings of the river.

The river is, interestingly, also a witness to both the meetings of Siddhartha and Govinda, his childhood friend. Those two meetings clearly highlight the contrast in Siddhartha’s personality and his state of mind. The first meeting occurs when Siddhartha is at the nadir of his life and when he is still trying to figure out what to do. While the second meeting occurs when Siddhartha is able to understand himself better which can be considered the zenith of his life. All these aspects clearly indicate that the river was an important construct which help explains the character of Siddhartha and its development. In the words of Joe Gerson, “The river is the river of all life.” (Gerson 11)

Rivers have played an important role in Indian texts mainly because of their mythological and geographical importance. Rivers are considered to be divine in Indian culture and “Metaphorically and metaphysically the ancient mythologies refer to water as the container of life strength and eternity” (Singh 210). This can be one of the reasons why Hermann Hesse chose the river to be the site where Siddhartha’s transition takes place. Thus, the use of the river in the text also explains the influence of the Eastern way of life where the river becomes an important construct.

Siddhartha is a book having many contrasting ideas. Be it its opening line, “In the shade of the house, in the sunshine near the boats on the riverbank” (3) which highlights both the shade and the sunlight, at the same time, acknowledging the contrast between the stability of the house and the constant movement of the boats or the multiple facets of Siddhartha’s personality. *Siddhartha* provokes thought about the mythical divide between the Eastern and Western worlds while also cleverly employing “the river” (an important symbol in Indian texts) as the confluence of two diverse worlds: spiritual and material. At the end, it also leaves us with a pertinent question about the effectiveness of words in the search of truth. Ergo, this makes *Siddhartha* a book that celebrates the dual nature of things.



Works Cited

Barry, Peter. *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. Second edition. Manchester University Press, 2002.

Cherian, Justin. "Derridian Logic, Categories and Strategies in Herman Hesse's Siddhartha." *The Literary Herald*, Vol. 4, Issue 3, October 2018, Stable URL : http://tlhjournal.com/issues.php?issues_id=18. Accessed on 1 Nov. 2019.

Cron, Lisa. "Lisa Cron > Quotes." *Goodreads*, https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/5356632.Lisa_Cron. Accessed 1 November 2019.

Foster, Allan. "Nature Storytelling : The Importance of Binary Opposites". University of Toronto. 2000.

Gerson, Joe. "Siddhartha: Contradictions and Enlightenment". *Peacework*, Cambridge Vol. 34, Iss. 377, Jul/Aug 2007, pp. 10-11.

Hesse, Hermann. "A Bit of Theology"(1932). *My Belief : Essays on Life and Art*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 1974

Hesse, Hermann. *Siddhartha*. Penguin Books, 1922. Translated by Joachim Neugroschel, 1999.

Kruglanski, Arie and Webster, Donna. "Motivated Closing of the Mind: Seizing and Freezing". *Psychological Review*, Vol. 103, No. 2, 263-283. (1996) <https://www2.psych.ubc.ca/~schaller/Psyc590Readings/Kruglanski1996.pdf>.

Nisbett, Richard. *The Geography of Thought*. The Free Press, 2003.

Singh, Rana. "Water Symbolism and Sacred Landscape in Hinduism: A Study of Benares." *Erdkunde*, Bd. 48, H. 3 (Jul. - Sep., 1994), pp. 210-227. Stable URL : <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25646594>. Accessed 30 November 2019

Other References

Butler, Colin. "Hermann Hesse's "Siddhartha": Some Critical Objections." *Monatshefte*, Vol. 63, No. 2 (Summer, 1971), pp. 117-124. Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/30156543>. Accessed 31 October 2019.

Johannes Malthaner. "Hermann Hesse. Siddhartha." *The German Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (Mar., 1952), pp. 103-109. Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/401276>. Accessed 31 October 2019.

Molnár, Géza. "The Ideological Framework of Hermann Hesse's Siddhartha." *Die*

Unterrichtspraxis / Teaching German, Vol. 4, No. 2 (Autumn, 1971), pp. 82-87 Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3529722>. Accessed 31 October 2019

Peterson, Lani. "The Science Behind The Art Of Storytelling." *Harvard Business Publishing*, <https://www.harvardbusiness.org/the-science-behind-the-art-of-storytelling/>. Accessed 30 November 2019.

The Cross-Dressing Conundrum

Ninjal Savla

This paper aims to explore the dynamic motif of 'Cross-dressing' in Shakespearean plays. It predominantly focuses on the cross-dressing of female characters, which posits avenues to subvert the gender dichotomy prevalent in Elizabethan society.

They shall [see us], but in such a habit
That they shall think we are accomplished
With that we lack. (Merchant of Venice, III.iv.60-62)

Appositely emphasizing the escapade of cross-dressing, this dialogue exemplifies the construction of gender identity through gender performance and attire. In addition, it highlights the gender disparities perceived in society. Consequently, the dialogue is a pertinent illustration of 'Cross-dressing' in Shakespearean plays.

Conventionally, gender is perceived to be a dichotomy. This forms the basis for the binary that underlines crossdressing, which refers to the practice of wearing of clothing intended for a different gender. This dichotomy is reinforced by the cultural metonymy associated with gender-specific clothing. Thereby, clothing categorises the body with regard to sex and social status, sustaining the power dynamic between the genders (Bierman 2013). Therefore, clothing is not merely a way to cover one's body but also one of the ways in which we perceive and determine identity (Shahid 2013). Therefore, attire is the principal element of cross-dressing.

Clothes are the medium through which socially assigned roles can be both obeyed and defied. Hence, the implications of cross-dressing on identity become especially intriguing when a woman dons 'quintessentially' male clothing. William Shakespeare, in his comedies, has often portrayed females cross-dressing, as seen in *The Merchant of Venice*, *Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It*. In each of these plays, the characters of Portia, Viola and Rosalind, respectively cross-dress. This enables them to don an alternative identity that contrasts the archetypal gender roles and liberates them from being confined in a patriarchal paradigm. As Dusinberre has said, "A woman in men's clothes is changed by her male dress because it allows her to express desires and delights which society suppresses." (233).

In *The Merchant of Venice*, Portia evolves from a woman who has surrendered her own fate to three caskets to absolving Antonio from Shylock's bond. She discards her female attire and embraces the disguise of a male lawyer named Balthazar. This enables Portia to leave the domestic realm, assigned to women, to enter the law courts of Venice, the world of men. Elucidating her crossdressing, Portia enunciates that others "Shall think we are accomplished/ With that we lack" (Merchant of Venice, III.iv.61-62). This not only refers to others believing that Portia and Nerissa are endowed with the physical characteristics of males, but also refers to the notion that only men were surmised to be intelligent, wise and

witty. Portia further expounds her ploy to Nerissa:

When we are both accoutred like young men,
I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,
And wear my dagger with the braver grace,
And speak between the change of man and boy
With a reed voice, and turn two mincing steps
Into a manly stride." (Merchant of Venice, III.iv.63-68)

I have within my mind
A thousand raw tricks of these bragging jacks
Which I will practice. (Merchant of Venice, III.iv.76-78)

"Portia's brilliant success in convicting Shylock represents a direct subversion of the traditional social order" (Dreher 134). Portia represents none of the traditional feminine virtues: soft, docile, obedient, passive, maternal. She is strong, decisive and infinitely wise (Dreher 129-135). Exalting Portia, Vera Jiji affirms, "Not only does she control events throughout the play, she controls her sex at will. She moves from female to male, and back to female not under the pressure of external events (as Julia, Viola, Rosalind, and Imogen do), but by her own choice of time and circumstance" (qtd. In Dreher 129). According to Shahid, by successfully challenging patriarchy, Portia's status shifts from a "Heroine" to a "Pseudo-Hero" (36).

In *Twelfth Night*, Viola, having lost her father and brother, adopts a male garb as a practical means of survival in an alien environment. She says:

Conceal me what I am, and be my aid
For such disguise as haply shall become
The form of my intent.
I'll serve this duke. (I.ii.53-55)

In order to lead an independent life, it is essential for Viola to earn her own means of sustenance. Since women were not permitted to work in the court, cross-dressing as Cesario, facilitates Viola's entry into Duke Orsino's court. Therefore, Viola assumes control of her own life and she does not succumb to the trope of becoming a damsel in distress. Instead of getting married and submitting to another authoritative male figure, she transforms herself into a "Pseudo Male" (Shahid 41). Via cross-dressing, Viola becomes an active participant in both, the court and the play, a privilege other women did not receive.

Viola's crossdressing is conspicuous when Orsino notes "Cesario's" feminine beauty:

Diana's lip
Is not more smooth and rubious; thy small pipe
Is as the maiden's organ, shrill and sound,
And all is semblative a woman's part. [I.iv.31-34]

Despite adopting a facade, Viola laments the unintended consequences of her disguise, when she becomes aware of Olivia's newfound affection for Cesario, she says, "Disguise, I see thou art a wickedness" (II.ii.27). In making distinctions between herself "as I am man" (II.ii.33) and "as I am woman" (II.ii.35), Viola reveals to the audience that the situation "is too hard a knot for me to untie" (II.ii.38). This displays her guilt in counterfeiting her identity as Cesario. In addition to being a strategy that emancipates Viola by subverting the gender roles, her cross-dressing augments the mayhem in her life. This mayhem, which is the catalyst for most of the comedy in the play, provokes the audience into questioning traditional gender norms. The tact and ease with which Viola transforms into a new persona, leads one to question the extent of dichotomy between genders. It also provokes one to deliberate the veracity of the oft quoted adage, 'You are what you wear.'

In *As You Like It*, Rosalind's uncle, the Duke, banishes her from the kingdom and forces her into exile in the wild. In order to survive in the Forest of Arden, she cross-dresses as a man named Ganymede. Since "Beauty provoketh thieves sooner than gold" (I.iii.107), Celia suggests hiding their beauty and highborn status by dressing as peasants. This inspires Rosalind's idea of dressing as a man and she says:

Were it not better,
Because that I am more than common tall,
That I did suit me all points like a man?
A gallant curtal-ax upon my thigh,
A boar-spear in my hand, and in my heart
Lie there what hidden woman's fear there will,
We'll have a swashing and a martial outside—
As many other mannish cowards have
That do outface it with their semblances (I.iii.121-129)

Rosalind saying that she shall hide her "woman's fear" (I.iii.126), promotes the orthodox notion that women are naturally fearful. Nonetheless, Rosalind also admits that there are many "mannish cowards" (I.iii.128) who sustain the facade of a warrior by merely carrying a sword and a spear. However, in actuality, they also experience fear and hence their appearance contrasts their feelings. Therefore, conventional masculinity as exhibited by apparent bravery is not a disguise adopted only by Rosalind (while cross-dressing) but also by "mannish cowards" (I.iii.128).

Rosalind's cross-dressing also initiates a reversal of roles in the play. Rosalind is initially described as being too subtle, patient and silent; whereas Celia plays an active role. It is Celia who suggests going to the Forest of Arden to find Duke Senior. However, as the play progresses, Celia is reduced to watching, mocking, and eventually mimicking Rosalind. As soon as Rosalind is in the forest, in the guise of a man, she is the one who takes control. Rosalind "adopts masculine behaviour: she initiates conversations, negotiates finances and arranges marriages" (Graupner 23). A weary Rosalind in the forest admonishes herself to behave like a man and to not cry but to be courageous and comforting towards the female, being in this respect more masculine than Touchstone, who is the 'real' man in the

trio (Graupner). Thus she says:

I could find in my heart to disgrace my
man's apparel and to cry like a woman, but I must
comfort the weaker vessel, as doublet and hose
ought to show itself courageous to petticoat. (2.4.4-7)

Cross-dressing provides Rosalind liberty and safety from her uncle's threats. As Ganymede, Rosalind is also empowered to pursue her romantic interest. Rather than waiting to be wooed by Orlando, Rosalind subverts the limitations regarding courtship that society imposes on her as a woman. With boldness and imagination, in the guise of a young man, she pretends to be Rosalind, encouraging Orlando's romantic pursuit.

Discussing the female protagonists in *The Merchant of Venice*, *Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It*, it is propounded that cross-dressing "liberates the female body" of the male gaze (Shahid 5). Cross-dressing unveils the real 'She' self, uncompromised of any cultural or gender stereotypes (Shahid 49). Paradoxically, although cross-dressing implies that one dresses as the opposite gender, it uncovers the female self to its fullest assertion. Therefore, "Disguise makes a woman not a man but a more developed woman" (Dusinberre 233).

Contrastingly, cross-dressing in theatre is deduced to be associated more with male privilege and position rather than a woman's desire to gain privilege or position. Cross-dressing remained a male prerogative since men were the only ones allowed to cross-dress, according to the rules of the theatre of the time. In addition, while cross-dressing was evidently criminalised in real life, it was acceptable when men played the roles of female characters on stage (Bierman).

Moreover, the cross-dressers, namely, Viola, and Rosalind, Portia, ultimately do not transgress the social boundaries for "the characters falter in their rebellion at the end to return to the preexisting social order by changing back to their female selves in order to marry males" (Bierman 3). Their reversion to their original stature of noblewomen dressed in feminine garb only allows them the limited agency of the title of wife (Bierman 33-34). Therefore, cross-dressing becomes a means to an end, especially in the case of Viola, not an explicit choice to subvert gender roles (Bierman 27).

Furthermore, Shakespeare uses cross dressing as a comic device. The primary purpose of Viola, Rosalind and Portia's cross dressing is deception. Due to the ambiguous addressal of the transcendence of social roles, these characters lack the agency to become self-actualized characters who can maintain and hold the positions garnered by their cross-dressing (Bierman).

Deviating from the traditional notions of masculinity and femininity, Shakespeare's female comic heroes can also be perceived to be androgynous characters. Incorporating masculine traits such as boyish clothes and a reedy voice, without losing their femininity, allows these characters greater expression and development. Portia, Viola and Rosalind

triumph in their androgyny, combining an active, witty assertiveness with their capacity for empathy. Their androgyny enables them to confront men on their own terms and resolve social discord. (Dreher 115-142). The androgyny is supported by Dusiherre's view that "Disguise draws men and women together in the comedies through their discovery of the artifice of difference which social custom sustains" (265).

Ultimately, the cross-dressing of female characters becomes even more intriguing due to the fact that female characters were played by young boys. The dramatic license of putting a young man into the role of a desirable young woman, especially one who chooses to cross-dress, challenged the conventional heteronormativity, since off the stage, the very idea of a homoerotic liaison would be scandalous. Furthermore, the boy actor encouraged the dramatist to observe the similarities between the sexes, the way in which boyishness itself formed an element in femininity. Nevertheless, he also made it necessary for them to "understand what made the sexes different if they were to evade the accusation that the heroine was a kind of monster, a palpable boy parading a skirt" (Dusiherre 233).

"All clothes are a form of disguise" (Dusiherre 233).

In conclusion, this observation on the motif of crossdressing, opens avenues for further rumination on the nature of disguise and leaves one to contemplate if theatrical disguise could be a revelation of truth about men and women.

Works Cited

Bierman, Anastasia. "*In Counterfeit Passion*": *Cross-Dressing, Transgression and Fraud In Shakespeare And Middleton*. 2013. University of Nebraska - Lincoln, MA Thesis. Online, digitalcommons.unl.edu/englishdiss/73/. Accessed 5 Dec. 2019.

Dreher, Diane. *Domination and Defiance: Fathers and Daughters in Shakespeare*. University Press of Kentucky, 1986.

Dusiherre, Juliet. "Disguise and the Boy Actor." *Shakespeare and the Nature of Women*, Palgrave Macmillan, 1996, pp. 231-271.

Graupner, Elisabeth. "Cross Dressing and the Depiction of the Fe Male in Shakespeare's Comedies." *Academia*, www.academia.edu/35384758/Cross_Dressing_and_the_Depiction_of_the_Fe_Male_in_Shakespeares_Comedies. Accessed 5 Dec. 2019.

Legatt, Alexander. "Sexal Disguise and the Theatre of Gender." *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespearean Comedy*. Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Rackin, Phyllis. "Shakespeare's Crossdressing Comedies." *A Companion to Shakespeare's Works*, vol. 3, Blackwell Publishing, 2003, pp. 114-136.

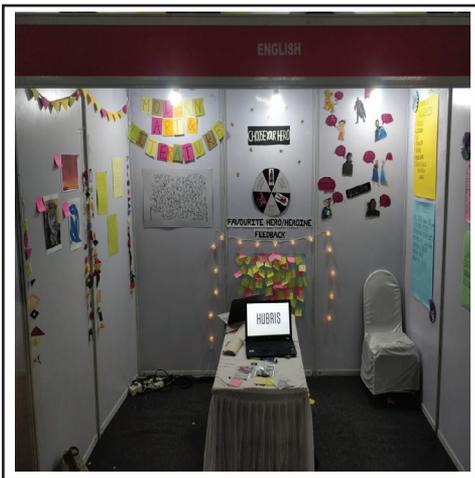
Shahid, Tasnim. *Exploring the Concept of Cross-Dressing in Shakespeare' Plays: Uncovering the SHE*. 2013. BRAC University, Thesis. Online, dspace.bracu.ac.bd/xmlui/handle/10361/2954. Accessed

Shakespeare, William. *As You Like It*. Oxford University Press, 1977.

—-. *The Merchant of Venice*. Spark Publishing, 2003.

—-. *Twelfth Night*. Oxford University Press, 1938.

GLIMPSES OF THE RUSA SPONSORED EXHIBITION - XYNERGY 2019



The stall of the English Department

Interaction at the stall



Some of the Feedback received

It was worth visiting the English department part of the exhibition! Very interesting content!

NICE INITIATIVE
TAKEN BY
YOU!!


It was an amazing experience — I liked this as an event... Very innovative and creative...

A fruitful time spent! Well explained to a literary-naive crowd.

The volunteers out here are real happy cheerful bunch of peeps. Grateful to have them as servers.

great experience!
Language, Art
Film, Song
music, debates
All.

Great efforts! Widened by perception of what literature is really about!

It was a very exciting exercise with a lot of learning about perceptions and characteristics of a person in general. Talking about terrorism provided motivation & ways their victims feel.

The stall was very creative. Lot of interaction. Keeps you busy. FUN! Learning



Amazing effort put in and great display of career options! Very relevant examples!



Graduating Class of English Literature 2019-2020