

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Human Passion Vs. Culture in R.K. Narayan's Novel *The Vendor of Sweets*

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Letter of Recommendation

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Approval Letter

This thesis submitted to The Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Srijana Bhandari, entitled "Human Passion Vs Culture in R.K. Naryan's Novel *The Vendor of Sweets*" has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee.

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Abstract

R.K. Narayan's *The Vendor of Sweets* explicitly portrays the clash between human passion and culture. There arises an irresolvable dispute between the father and son who adheres different beliefs. Mali, the son of Jagan, spoils his father's dream by abandoning the spiritual and moral Indian life. His utmost passion for western culture causes deep pain and suffering in Jagan's life. The imitation of individualistic, materialistic and solitary western life by son leaves Jagan in helpless plight. Mali is more sensitive towards his passion than following his father's orthodoxical and rigid Indian cultural ethos.

Contents

	Page No
Acknowledgements	
Abstract	
I. Indian Culture and <i>The Vendor of Sweets</i>	1
II. Post-colonial Literature and English Studies	19
III. Human Passion Vs Culture in <i>The Vendor of Sweets</i>	38
IV. Conclusion	54
Works Cited	57

I. Indian Culture and *The Vendor of Sweets*

Rashipuram Krishnaswami Narayan, a prominent Indian novelist, has captured the intense passion of his characters and posited it against Indian culture in which *The Vendor of Sweets* has been set. The study attempts to examine the major character, Jagan's resistance to the influence of the western culture on his son. As his son Mali is influenced by modern western way of living, a conflict begins between the father and son and Jagan feels the encroachment of the western culture on the Hindu culture, and he tries to counter the western influence by following eastern Hindu culture and Gandhian way of resistance. So, Jagan's strict adherence to the Hindu culture by committing himself to the *Bhagvad Gita* and by using Indian national products like *Khadi* clothes and herbs reflects his voice of resistance against the western culture.

In the novel, Jagannath, called Jagan, a manufacturer and seller of sweets in the fictional town of *Malgudi* in south India. A widower, Jagan has almost reached the age of sixty, at which Hindus are expected to enter into a life of detachment affairs. Deeply imbued with Gandhian values, he reads from the *Bhagvad Gita*, lives ascetically, and engages in numb experiments. Jagan is a parsimonious and wealthy businessman who secretly counts his earning in a daily ritual and hide. Jagan loves his son but is unable to understand or communicate with him. Repeatedly disappointed by Mali's behavior, his confidence to confront his son and solved the problems of their relationship. Jagan's pride and joy is his son Mali, who abandons his studies in order to try his hand at writing. Jagan's consternation is exacerbated when Mali coolly announces that he is going to America to become a writer. Jagan believes that the west will corrupt his son, who is already hostile to many Indian ways-especially his father's occupations. Mali steals money from his father and sets off.

The Indian culture is found to be very much old. The traditional culture of India (Hindu) has its roots in the Vedas, "the truths suggested in the Vedas and developed in Upanished"(22), said Radhakrishna in his *East and West: Some Reflection*. As F.S.C. Northrop has also written "every idea contained in at least the older Upanishads, with no exceptions, is not used to the Upanishads, but can be found set forth, or at least very clearly foreshadowed in the older Vedic texts" (313).

Religion in the east is the cultivation of the interior life. It is the attainment of spiritual freedom and is essentially the private achievement of the individual won by hard efforts in solitude and isolation on mountaintops and in monasteries, whereas in the west religion is the social phenomena and a matter of the ecclesia in the community. Religion for them is the support for social stability. The western converts religion into a sort of police system for the sake of social order.

In the east, religion is the life of spirit. It is the perception of overness of man with the spirit of truth, love and beauty in the universe. Religion is more a matter of spiritual culture than that of scholastic learning. As eastern religion lays stress on the patience of spirit and the gentleness of soul, vigorous life and active service appear to the west. Eastern religion is mystic whereas western is intellectual. For Easterners, god is not seen, he is everywhere, and his grace is attained by sacrificial deeds.

The influence of Gandhi on Indian writing in English is very evident. The Indian English writer emerges as a very specific 'breed', shaped by the negotiations between cultures. Pankaj Mishra gives an interesting analysis of R.K Narayan as " a colonial who uses certain narrative solutions because he is faced with a chaotic and unformed world " (205) that he doesn't know how to interpret adequately because neither he nor his characters ever really come to terms with modernity.

With a gentle humor quite strange to most western fiction Narayan uses situation comedy and drama to tell what is fundamentally a story the discovery of equanimity in life. The god and goddesses, who are usually introduced at some point in his stories, are not simply exotic emblems for decorative effect but also reminder of a moral pattern. The framed picture of the goddess Lakshmi that hangs on Jagan's wall is an emblem of the protagonist's wealth but at the same time, it is a reminder of the problem that this wealth has not surmounted. The goddess to whom Jagan and his wife once prayed was a reminder of the divine intervention that solved this problem. Similarly, the unfinished stone form of Gayatri that the dye-maker is so determined to complete is the inspiration for Jagan's acceptance of a new plan of selfhood.

The novel begins with Jagan's proposition: "conquer taste, and you will have conquered the self."(7). Although this is a maxim, which he has merely learned by rote from Hindu sages without examining its ramifications, it illuminates the unfolding pattern of his search for equilibrium. Jagan does, indeed, move through various phases of self-denial, and by the end he has, in effect, conquered his dependence on purely material or sensory things. His ascetic withdrawal from the world is a conquest of self, for his commitment is no longer to ideas of business or fame or family fortune but to spiritual balance and self-purification.

The primary purpose of this dissertation is to read *The Vendor of Sweets* applying postcolonial theory. The postcolonial literatures are the product of interaction between imperial social and cultural practice. Postcolonial writers write in order to give expression to the experiences related to colonialism. They write to destabilize the discourse, which supported colonialism directly or indirectly. In these days we can experience empire textually in a retrospective manner through

newspaper, articles, novels or any other form of writing. In this sense empire is a textual exercise. Elleke Boehmer writes:

Colonial settlement too was expressed textually. Writing in the form of treaties was used to claim territory. The text, a vehicle imperial authority, symbolized and in some cases indeed performed the act of taking possession . . . writing served also as instrument of rule, as a means of collecting information and exercising power. (13)

Narayan's *The Vendor of Sweets* exposes intense passion and consecrate it while they are bound the sphere of culture. So, 'The vender of Sweets' beard the possibility of study as a novel of the conflict of passion and culture. Colonial power had left the country in such a position that its people have conceptualized the superiority of west. They take Europe as the source of greatness. In this novel too, the protagonist Jagan is bounded with Gandhian principles and also the representative culture of Hindusim. But his son Mali wants to go to the west to become a writer. A year or two later, he returns to *Malgudi* with a half-Korean, half-American wife, Grace and a grandiose scheme for marketing an electronic novel-writing machine.

The idea of having an empire is very important. Imperialism acquires a kind of coherence, a set of experience and a presence of ruler and ruled alike within the culture. To every great degree, the era at the high nineteenth century imperialism is over. But the impact of the imperialism in the colonized are always lured by the colonizers and their culture because they always find the culture as new and innovative. Imperialism does not end in a point. It continuous from generation to generation through the culture and it becomes the legacy. Present research is an attempt to study *The Vendor of Sweets* from post-colonial perspective, which will be a newer approach to study novel applying a new trend of study.

R.K. Narayan and *The Vendor of Sweets*.

Naryan's stories begin with realistic settings and everyday happenings in the lives of a cross-section of Indian society, with characters of all classes. Gradually fate or chance, over-sight or blunder, transforms mundane events to preposterous happenings. Unexpected disasters befall the hero as easily as unforeseen good fortune. The characters accept their fates with an equanimity that suggests the faith that things will somehow turn out happily, whatever their own motivations or actions. Progress, in the form of western-imported goods and attitudes, combined with bureaucratic institutions, meets in *Malgudi* with lung-held conventions, beliefs, and ways of doing things. The modern world can never win a clear -cut victory because *Malgudi* accepts only what it wants, according to its own private logic.

Naryan was born in a middle class Hindu family in the southern part of India and was brought up in a traditional Indian society. Naryan had his education entirely in south India. Therefore he is "completely of Indian even of south India". (Iyengar 359) The day- to- day life of ordinary middle class people has influenced his literary life. As he was from a middle class family, he was very much familiar with these things. He was from an orthodox Hindu family background and thus grew to be a typical Indian. His art is of "resolved limitation; like Jane Austen, he too is content with his little bit of ivory just so many inches wide" (Iyengar 360). He confines himself to his own society and its surroundings with middle class people and their ordinary life style. He takes a small group of characters from narrow scene and brings them forth in their oddities and angularities and explores the inner countries of their mind, heart and soul. He admires traditional Indian soil with all its spiritual richness in his writing. "He is at his best in depicting social comedy centered on a sensibility

that is truly Indian" (Cawasjee and Shahanne 115). All of his principle characters bear the traits of typical Indian soil. His novels sometimes express different dimensions of life that he has gone through in the process of living.

He had also been a teacher to provide an economic support to his family in early days of his life and his novel *The English Teacher* provides a wide presentation of the life of a teacher. Similarly Gandhian principles have also influenced his writing as he was living a writerly life during Gandhian revolution of non-violence. That is why many of his novels are based on the ideals of Gandhism like *The Sweet Vendor*, *Waiting for Mahatma*, etc. Commenting on Narayan, Sharan says:

Naryan is no poet and can not give us what Henry James called 'aroma of meadows and lanes' in Hardy but he certainly makes real to us the 'ankle deep dust' in Anderson Lane and raucous noise in market.

Naryan relies more on keen observation and steady accumulation of small details than on evocative description. (5)

Sharan here shows Naryan as a minute observer of things. Similarly, Naryan came to novel writing from journalism. So, journalistic training is evident in the confident ease of his English style and his acute observation of life in India. His ironic dimension is an integral part of his comic vision. He explores tremendous possibilities of comic in common place world of Malgudi. He is eventually a comic ironist who takes a keen interest in Indian life in and around Malgudi.

Naryan is a writer "pure and simple" (Sharan 6). He has no ambitions or pretensions to be dubbed as an idealist. "He writes with complete objectivity with a strange mixture of humor and irony and an underlying sense of beauty and sadness" (Goskalk 284). As India undergoes gradual change and development, and grows with its complexity, so does Narayan's Malgudi in his writings. In course of time,

traditional Indian societies like that of his own get western influences. The ethical codes and conducts and the value of life go on deteriorating and modern western practices being to influence the social life of people being to influence the social life of people. These sorts of social changes have largely shaped and influenced the writing of Naryan. The changes his fictional world Malgudi under goes match the changes outside in the real world.

Naryan's writings basically reflect the "Indian soil and the way of existence" (Sharan 8). Without being didactic, he renders a profound vision in his novels, which has its roots in an ageless rich heritage of Indian culture and tradition. The Indian philosophy of spiritualism has highly influenced his writings. Most of his heroes are simple and traditional. They have a great reverence for their traditional values gods and goddesses and their culture ethics. Along with their daily duties and responsibilities, they also strive for the pleasure of their inner self and for the attainment of a higher understanding of the soul.

Similarly, his exploration of family relationship is the outcome of his own personal experiences as he was brought up in a joint family, which made him familiar with all the family codes, ideals and values. Moreover, his experience of reporting proved inestimable and easily supplied material for his fiction. It also helped independent his acquaintance with human character. His *Swami and Friends* presents the story of an average Indian school boy, which resembles the story of his own when he was a school boy. *The Bachelor of Arts* also indirectly presents his own experiences as a young man falling in love with Rajam and later on marrying her. *The English Teacher*, presenting the philosophy of life and death, is an autobiographical novel influenced much by his own bitter experiences of losing his wife and the

constant efforts of Krishna to communicate with the spirit of his deceased wife shows his own spiritual quest.

R.K. Naryan was perhaps the best known Indian of his day writing in English. His long and prolific career was marked by well-received novels and short stories, almost all of which are set in the fictional backwater town of Malgudi and its environs. *The Vendor of Sweets* (1967), one of the most successful and widely criticized the novel of R.K. Naryan. Since its first publication, many critics have criticized it from different perspective commenting on novel, Nagendra Nath Sharan explains:

Jagan claims to be disciple of the mahatma. He puts on clothes made of self-spun yarn. He uses foot- wear made of the leather of on animal which has died a natural death. He also follows the Gandhian restrictions in his food-habits. He happens to be the author of a book on natural cure and natural diet. (26-27)

The comment emphasized the Gandhian philosophy. The principle of non-violence is major ideal of Gandhism. Gandhian principles have also influenced his writing as he was living a writerly life during Gandhian revolution of non-violence.

Naryan is strikingly Hindu in attitude, custom, demeanor, conversation and practice. His novels confirm to the Indian cyclic view of history. One of the critics Margaret Berry in *South Asian Review* writes:

Naryan is to see into the soul of classical India; dominantly idealistic and mystic on its Dravidian side to some extent life negating and world. Denying, on its Aryan side life-affirming and joyons ,engaged in a caste system founded on individual Dharmas and Karmas and little

concerned with practical public reform; resting in the perceived reality of Brahaman and his myriad manifestations. (73)

Naryan came to novel writing from journalism. So, journalistic training's evident in the confident ease of his English style and his acute observation of life in India. Narayan's writings basically reflect "Indian soil and the way of existence" (Sharan 8). Hence journalistic narrative style is evident in his novel writing. He handles English language successfully. For Naryan, English is an absolutely 'Swadeshi language' he uses 'Bharat brand' of English which suits the prevailing Indian condition. Due to the fusion of humor and irony his technique becomes impression N.N. Sharan says:

His ironic dimension is an integral part of his comic vision. He explores the tremendous possibilities of the comic in the common place world of Malgudi he is essentially a comic ironist who has taken a keen interest in Indian life in and around Malgudi. His humorous portrayal of outer and inner conflicts of man with touches of pathos and irony demonstrates his insight into the human reality it shows his love for values in life too. His novels may appear to be regional at the outset but they transcend their limit and acquire universality they provide fascinating studies of human drama and the little ironies of our daily life. (5-6)

Chinna Dorai similarly opens up an entirely new and fascinating world of gods and goddess to Jagan whose fixed orbit for years had been between the statue and shop and whose mental operation were confined to Mali, cousin and frying. He inspires Jagan to look at himself and his problem from a new angle and to discover eventually an answer to his questions. Jagan himself has realized this and says, "Yes, yes god knows I need retreat. You know, my friend, at some stage

in one's life one must uproot oneself from accustomed surroundings and disappear so that others may continue in peace" (123).

V.S. Naipaul views this novel from the perspective of the character, Jagan regarding it, he explains:

He feels that his home has been 'darted and at last he recoils. He barricades himself against the couple; he seeks with a peculiar excitement; to purify himself. He begins to sell his sweets cheaply to the poor and offends the other shopkeepers. He assembles his staff and reads the *Gita* aloud to them. (30)

Here, he remarks that this novel portrays the spiritual aspects of Jagan and its concern. Likewise K.P. Srinivasa Iyengar views the novel, "He reminds himself that at sixty; one is reborn and centre a new Janma. And being sixty himself, Jagan is ready to give up vending sweets so as to be able to watch a goddess come out of a store" (381).

On the other hand the references to Gandhi, his theory and practice form a significant part of the novel *The Vendor of Sweets*:

As a matter of fact, the novel depicts the degeneration of Gandhian ethos in its central character Jagan. The post independence is represented by his son Mali who has rejected Gandhism in favor of modern technology. His sense of baffling novelty comes in sharp clash with Gandhian values. (sharan 268)

Critics often classify Naryan as arising out the tradition of oral story telling. Hilary Mantel says, "At the heart of Naryan's achievement is this: he respects his characters,

respects their created natures. This is why he can make jokes about them and stay friends with them.” (48)

Reviewers assert that the creation of the fictional Malgudi helps Narayan portray the flavor of Indian life without worrying about the specifics of a real city. Critics attribute much of the popularity of Naryan’s work to his ability to successfully use the english novel form to portray Indian life and Hindu culture. Chitra Sankaran says, “With Naryan’s works the deceptive simplicity of his fiction very often obscures his superb capacity to blend traditional Indian modes with the English novel form.” (49)

While summing up R.K. Naryan’s characteristics as an author, the first thing that strikes us most is the dispassionate manner in which he judges the Indian life of his own times. Like other great artists he also possesses artistic impersonality and serene abstraction from life. Harish Raizada says,

In his novels we have no didacticism, no philosophy, no propaganda. He is an artist pure and simple and interprets Indian life aesthetically with unprejudiced objectivity. It is because of the quality of comprehending reality from the objective heights of a luminous temperament and presenting people as they are without personal bias that he is considered as the most artistic of Indian writers in English and is often compared to Jane Austen and Anton Chekhov. (p.157)

In this way, different critics interpret the novel *The Vendor of Sweets* in their own ways and their interpretation differs from one another. The present study is going to concentrate on portraying the clash between human passion and culture. Especially Jagan, the protagonist of the novel, strictly follows Gandhian ethos. But his son Mali intermixes with western modern life and also abandons his father. He is more

sensitive towards his passion then following his orthodoxical and rigid Indian cultural ethos. It aims at studying how colonial hang over continues to hold sway in postcolonial psyche. Therefore the research will be centered on the same issue throughout to prove the hypothesis. The study will be best on the textual analysis of *The Vendor of Sweets* supported by the theoretical tool pertaining to post-colonialism especially *The Empire Writes Back*.

II. Post-colonial Literature and English Studies

The term 'post-colonial' covers all the cultures affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day. This is because there is a continuity of preoccupations throughout the historical process initiated by European imperial aggression. We also suggest that it is most appropriate as the term for the new cross-cultural criticism, which has emerged in recent years and for the discourse through which this is constituted. In this sense it is concerned with the world as it exists during and after the period of European imperial domination and the effects of this on contemporary literatures.

The study of English has always been a densely political and cultural phenomenon, a practice in which language and literature have both been called into the service of a profound and embracing nationalism. The historical moment, which saw the emergence of 'English' as an academic discipline also produced the nineteenth century colonial form of imperialism. Gauri Viswanathan has presented strong arguments for relating the 'institutionalization and subsequent valorization of English literary study [to] a shape and an ideological content developed in the colonial context', and specifically as it developed in India, where "British colonial administrators, provoked by missionaries on the one hand and fears of native insubordination on the other, discovered and ally in English literature to support them in maintaining control of the natives under the guise of a liberal education" (17). It can be argued that the study of English and the growth of empire proceeded from a single ideological climate and that the development of the one is intrinsically bound up with the development of the other, both at the level of simple utility and at the unconscious level, where it leads to the naturalizing of constructed values which,

conversely, established 'savagery', 'native', 'primitive', as their antitheses and as the object of a reforming zeal.

A 'privileging norm' was enthroned at the heart of the formation of English studies as a template for the denial of the value of the 'peripheral', the 'marginal', the 'uncanonized'. Literature was made as central to the cultural enterprise of empire as the monarchy was to its political formation. So when elements of the periphery and margin threatened the exclusive claims of the centre they were rapidly incorporated. This was a process, in Edward Said's terms, of conscious affiliation proceeding under the guise of filiations, that is mimicry of the centre proceeding from a desire not only to be accepted but to be adopted and absorbed. The Sheer extent and duration of the European empire and its disintegration after the World War II have led to widespread interest in past colonial literature and criticism in our times. Elleke Boehmer defines colonial literature in his introduction to the *Colonial and Post Colonial Literature*:

It is more general term which can be taken to mean writing concerned with colonial perceptions and experiences, written mainly by metropolitans, but also by Creoles and indigenous during colonial times Colonial literature therefore includes literature written in British as well as the rest of the Empire during the colonial period. (2)

So, colonialism can be defined as the conquest and control of other people's land and goods. Colonialism is over now because their direct ruling over the land has come to and end. In the Colonial period they invented a new type of literature, which is, however still continuing. So it is relevant to mention that type of literature here Edward Said says:

Colonialist literature in contrast was that which was specifically concerned with colonial expansion on the whole it was literature

written by and for colonizing Europeans about non-European lands dominated by them. It embodied the imperialist point of view.

Colonialist literature was informed by theories concerning the superiority of European culture and the rightness of empire. (3)

But post-colonial literature came after the European empire ended. As a result post colonial literature does not simply consist of writing that chronologically came after the independence. Rather, it is the result of interaction between imperial culture and the complex set of indigenous cultural practices. The resistance to imperial domination is through textual form because this mode of resistance does not need weapons, which are not easily available to the poor people of third world. Because of this tension of self-reflection and expression against Western domination, there we can see the exciting and the powerful mixture of imperial language and local experience, and the origin of post colonial theory. Stephen Slemon has rightly expressed:

Post-colonialism, as it is now used in its various fields, describes a remarkably heterogeneous set of subjects, positions, professional fields, and enterprises. It has been used as a way of ordering a critique of totalizing forms of western historicism; as a port manteau term for a retooled notion of 'class' as subject of both post modernism and post-structuralism. (45)

In the writings of post-colonial writers we find the expression being given to colonized experience. They have tried their best to undercut the discourse, which supported colonization. As a result, postcolonial writing is deeply marked by experiences of cultural exclusion and division under empire. It is a way to the reconstruction of indigenous literature. Political nature of language, of race, gender and class are

significant studies of postcolonial writers. In this way we can say that postcolonial literature and theory have deconstructed the Euro-centric thought:

Post-colonial literatures have drawn valuable insight from Saussure's structuralism, Adorno's Marxism, Bakhtin's concept of heteroglossia and carnivalesque, de Man's studies of grammar and rhetoric, Foucault's preconceptions with systems of knowledge/ power, Barthes' textual decoding, Cixous'. Notion of subversive writing, Kristeva's analysis of male symbolic order, Derrida's deconstruction of a transcendental signified, and Spivak's focus on displacement. (Parker 1-2)

In post-colonial era many theorists have pointed out various issues, which are problematic for independent nation, both in short term and long term. African writers have reconstructed the literary, economic, psychological, social and cultural subject positions of their worlds. As an African writer, Frantz Fanon focuses on the realization of political liberation. He objectively studies the instabilities going on in African countries. He is radical in his opinion regarding the idea of colonization. Regarding the forms and functions of his writing, Michael Parker says, "Fanon has emphasized the inter connectedness and uniqueness of African literary and political discourse" (4).

He concedes the importance of valorizing pre-colonial histories and cultures that have been systematically disfigured and developed by colonialism:

It was with the greatest delight that they discovered that there was nothing to be ashamed of in the past, but rather dignity, glory and solemnity. The claim to a national culture in the past does not only rehabilitate that nation and serve as a justification for the hope of a

future national culture. In the sphere of psycho-affective equilibrium it is responsible for an important change in the native. (Fanon 170)

Fanon studies the political clash between colonized and colonizer from the Marxist point of view. He favors decolonization and says it is revolutionary. It is a program of complete of disorder and is a historical process. He says "It can't be understood, it can't become intelligible nor clear to itself except in the exact measure that we can discern the movements which give it historical form and content" (36).

Decolonization is painful because it demands the social structure being charged from the bottom up. He opines that it does not just overthrow the old colony but it follows the old suppression and people will be suffering as in colony. Old tradition will be replaced by new one which will be equally painful to bring into practice. We can equate it with the saying, 'The last shall be first and the first last'. According to Fanon, "Decolonization is always a violent phenomenon. Decolonization is quite simply the replacing of a certain species of men by another species of men with out any period of transition; there is a total, complete and absolute substitution" (35).

In general sense, imperialism means the formation of an empire in which one nation has extended its domination over one or several neighboring nations. Colonialism and imperialism are to some extent similar. Colonialism is a direct form of exploitation of the native land and people. It is a process of exploitation of the foreign land through direct rule and invasion, making the inhabitants of the invaded land the subject people and treating them as cheap labors and slaves, whereas imperialism rules the distant land through economic exploitation. It is an attitude constituted by the west about a distant land which it governs through economic and political dominance. As Said says:

'Imperialism' means the practice, the theory and the attitude of the dominating metropolitan center ruling a distant territory: 'colonialism', which is almost always a consequence of imperialism, is the implanting of settlements on distant territory. (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 46)

Imperialism is indirect rule over the distant countries especially the countries of Third World, by the European power where as colonialism is the outcome of the imperialism which consists of implanting settlements on the distant territory for direct exploitation of both nature and human beings.

When the imperialists entered the land of non-imperialists or native people obviously they show their own legacies. Among them, some are still left as western trademark invading or displacing the indigenous educational system culture and intellectuals at the same time by using previously globalized English. The fact of mission worked in a great deal to displace the language, education system and teaching of language from school to university and later the mission entered in daily life of people. The mission of imperialist was to create their legacy on colonized country in order to create the market for buying and selling of English.

In this collection, Kwame Anthony Appiah says, the broad use of comprador intelligentsia is to elaborate in mission:

Post coloniality is the condition of what we might ungenerously call a comprador intelligentsia of a relatively small, Western- Style, Western-trained, group of writers and thinkers, who mediate the trade in cultural commodities of world capitalism at the periphery. In the west they are known through the Africa they offer; their compatriots known them

both through the west they present to Africa and through an Africa they have invented for the world, for each other and for Africa. (62-3)

Language and Cultures

In terms of historical impact, the English language is perhaps the most useful legacy left over by the British Empire. It is a matter of gratification that the language of rulers never dies with the rulers. The English rulers are still getting success to control over the once- colonized countries, though they have politically left the country free, by means of English language. The imperial education system installs a 'standard' version of the metropolitan language as the norm, and marginalizes all 'Variants' as impurities. Ashcraft Bill says, " language becomes the medium through which a hierarchical structure of power is perpetuated; and the medium through which conceptions of ' truth', 'order', and 'reality become established" (*Empire* 7). The postcolonial attempt is to reject such power, and to establish an autonomous cultural identity uncontaminated by colonial power.

In the post-colonial world, the English language has become one of the languages of India, and has been accepted as a creative medium. English has been accepted as the 'mother tongue' by a group of Indians. That is why rejecting English for their creative medium would limit the post-colonial voices to a small circle. But the writers from once-colonized world are participating in the process of indigenization by manipulating English to suit their own creative needs. Because, colonial languages embody colonial vision, the deviant forms of English are produced in their writing. Salman Rushdie in his novel *Imaginary Homelands* writes, ". . . we can't simply use the language in the way the British did.... it needs remaking for our own purposes" (17). For the purpose, local idioms and the cultural referents from their own culture are taken in the process of remaking. Details of local habits local

customs, and cultural celebration are the characteristics of such writings. "To conceive an independent national identity, postcolonial writers concentrated on recognizable indigenous, or at least other to European representation" (Boehmer 187). This is possible only by national imagination and recreation. To make the pure identity of the indigenous, the cultural formations by the colonial power must be subverted, and this is possible only by using the language in different contexts. Bill also feels that "English language is inherently incapable of accounting for post colonial experience," he further emphasizes, "it needs to develop an 'appropriate' usage" (*Empire* 11) in order to subvert the imperial cultural formations.

The teaching of 'English' as a discipline in universities is the product of high-feelings of Whites to dominate non-English indigenous. The historical moment, which saw the emergence of English as an academic discipline, also produced the nineteenth-century colonial form of imperialism. British colonial administrators provoked by the missionaries on the one hand, and fears of native insubordination on the other, discovered an ally in English literature to support them in maintaining control over the natives under the guise of liberal education. Writer with colonialist attitude and in colonial ink, the literatures produced at the time, advocated not only the superiority of the western culture but also drew the impact that the ruling of the west is necessary for the government to progress:

The institution of 'literature' in the colony is under the direct control of the imperial ruling class who alone license the acceptable form and permit the publications and distribution of the resulting work. So, the texts of this kind come into being within the constraints of a discourse and the institutional practice of a patronage system which limits and undercuts their assertion of different perspective. (Bill, *Empire* 6)

Because of such extreme control of the discourse by the imperial power, and pedagogical education of English in the colonized countries, the imperial power was able to leave the impress of their superiority over the indigenous people. As a result, even after their political independence, the natives has developed the though to evaluate them selves on the basis of the codes and norms that were produced in metropolitan centers.

The white colonizing society removes the indigenous culture to an inferior level by virtue of the superiority of the metropolitan culture it is establishing. A hierarchy of cultural importance and value is imposed by the colonizing power on the conquered indigenous societies. Though the teachers have deep interest on their own culture and literature, and are devoted themselves for the study on their own culture, their teaching remain angelocentric dominated by the assumption that English literature is on the center, and is necessary to student's education.

To control such an extreme influence of English over indigenous people, the post- colonial scholars issued movement against 'English' education. Ngugi in his essay "on the Abolition of the English Department" advocates on behalf of indigenous language and says, " If there is a need for a study of the historic continuity of single culture, why can't this be African? Why can't African literature be the centre so that we can view other cultures in relation to it?" (439).

The postcolonial writers, mainly from the former colonized countries, have felt the need to dismantle this Eurocentric cultural and literary study. In place, they are raising voices for reconstructing their history from their own perspective Ngugi says, " [. . .] education is a means of knowledge about ourselves. Therefore after we have examined ourselves, we radiate outwards and discover people and worlds around

us" (341). Thus, the post-colonial discourses invite the indigenous to value themselves.

To speak a language is to crown the speaker with certain power. "A man who has a language, "Fanon advocates the power of language," consequently possesses the world expressed and implied by that language. What we are getting at plain: mastery of language affords remarkable power" (Black Skin 18). The colonizers got victory not only over the natives' mind and their culture, but they also swept the unique culture of the natives away, and replaced it with their own through the slogans of "civilizing missions." Frantz Fanon in his another book *Black Skin, White Masks* writes:

I begin to suffer from not being a white man to the degree that the white man imposes discrimination on me, makes me a colonized native, robs me of all worth, all individuality, tells me that I am a brute beast, that my people and I are like a walking dung-heap that disgustingly fertilizers sweet sugarcane and silky cotton, that I have no use in the world. Then I will quite simply try to make my self white: that is I will compel the white man to acknowledge that I am human.

(98)

To prove himself human, a blackman, or a colonized native begins to learn the colonial culture and its language. " The wearing of European form of social intercourse; adoring the native language with European expressing; using bombastic phrases in speaking or writing a European language; all these contribute to a feeling of equality with the European and his achievements" (qtd. in Fanon 25). The western language and culture thus suppressed the non-western culture. This discourse of the western elite on the non-western, and their method of teaching the natives with their

own nations, lifted them in the place of cultural superiority. On the other hand, the mind of the natives is filled with "inferiority complex" which is not removed from the mind of once-colonized people, still though, strong advocacy of own national culture has been delivered from the post-colonial scholars:

Every colonial people-in other words, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by death and burial of its local culture originality-finds itself face to face with the languages of the civilizing nation; that is, with the culture of mother country. The colonized is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country's cultural standards. (Fanon 18)

The colonizer, by planting the superiority of its language and culture in the colonized land, shakes the very foundation of native culture. What the post-colonial or the post independent natives get is only the left over of their cultural heritages merged into the culture of their colonial power. Fanon writes in his book *The Wretched of the Earth*, "After a century of colonial domination, we find a culture which is rigid in its extreme, or rather what we find are the dregs of culture, its mineral strata" (238). Though politically independent, the once-colonized countries are left in such a condition that the natives are unable to find any traces of their ancestral heritages. They conceive the culture of their colonial power as their own. The position of aristocratic family is changed to the position of officials, and the working people are again marginalized.

The post-colonial elites, by raising the subaltern class on the fore-front, want to subvert the hierarchy of the ruler/ruled, power/powerless, superior/inferior etc. Language plays central role in this process. The language of the power or the

language of British colonizer, English, is used as the prime resistance to the power.

Bell Hooks writes:

I imagine then hearing in spoken English” the oppressor’s language,” yet I imagine them also realizing that this language would need to be possessed, taken, claimed as an apace of resistance. I imagine that the moment they realized “the oppressor’s language “seized and spoken by the tongues of the colonized could be a space of bonding was joyous. For in that intimacy could be restored, that a culture of resistance could be formed. That would make recovery from the trauma of enslavement possible. I imaging then Africans first hearing English as “oppressor’s language” and them rehearing it as a potential site of réistance. (73)

Bell Hooks is on the opinion that by learning English, the enslaved natives become able to reclaim their personal power that could be developed as a tool to resist the imperial power. By learning to speak English, colonized natives can create a community that is necessary to deconstruct the colonial domination. The once-colonized people have only the broken images of their homelands. They have to form a complete whole of their nation. As Bell Hooks opines, if the natives take English only as the language of the ruling power, they can not uplift themselves from the position of slave. By learning to speak English, the native learns how his culture-self was sunken into the sea. Besides, speaking in English, the marginalized voice is heard by a great mass of people. But, the past-colonial scholars do not want to use the English as their rulers used it. They want to re-make it, so that it can express their voice in an appropriate manner and in an appropriate place. "To heal the splitting of mind and body, marginalized and oppressed people attempt to recover ourselves and

our experience in language. We seek to make a place for Standard English, we create the rupture, broken, untruly speech of the vernacular” (Hooks 77).

In India, in this post-colonial period, English is spoken by a great mass of people. But, the Indian writers have developed the English to fit their own need. The English of their ruler- British differs to the English that is spoken in India. Ashcroft Bill terms such language as ‘English; ‘English’ for standards English, and ‘English’ for the language that has been re-made to fit for the need of once-colonized country. He requests, “we need to distinguish between what is proposed as a standard code English (the language of erstwhile imperial centre), and the linguistic code, English, which has been transformed and subverted in several distinctive varieties throughout the world” (*Empire* 8). This means that the Post-colonial writing have to transform the standard English though can not discard it totally.

Thus, English language plays a very prominent role in the writings of post-colonial discourses. The post-colonial writers have not only attempted to dismantle the imperial- centered English language, but their sole attempt is to raise those marginalized groups whose identity have been swept away by the imperial power. The marginal speaks in the post-colonial writings.

Post-Independence Society and Literature

The western breeze blew, sometimes directly and sometimes, more significantly, indirectly in Indian society after independence. Before independence the society was agrarian, agricultural, colonized, Theo-centric and Religion-centric. We can see the continuation of ancient tradition and beliefs that have deeper impact on the society. British or English models were the major outside influence on Indian literature and society. After independence Indian writers have shown themselves susceptible to the influence of Europeans (especially Russian) and American model

and also the models from oriental countries. The writers are apt to turn in nostalgia into past and glorify and idealize it or to turn in present gesture of protest if not disgust.

After the advent of independence, more serious writers have shown how the joy of freedom has neutralized by the tragedy of partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 shortly after India got independence from the British colonial rule. Inefficiency, poverty and cumulative misery became the characteristics of the Indian society as well as government. How, after all, mere replacement of White Sahib by Brown Sahib can not affect a radical cure for besetting ills of India. When independence came, writers captured society's communal, linguistic and the castiest passion. Writing of the period reflected mass consciousness of new sense of unity, urgency and stern common purpose and reminiscence of peak movements of the Gandhian era.

Social life in the countryside of India is full of vagaries and varieties, the writers with and observant eyes and an understanding heart found the material spread before them. The writers reflected some of the best studies of social life. The countryside, hillside attracted the creative artist with excitement, perversions, sophistications and violent alternation between affluent and poverty, splendor and squalor. In the post-independent society we found the echo of science and technology and industrial advancement both in society as well as literature.

Many revolutionary writers of the forties have now become Aurobindoties or devotees of Krishna Murti or Vedantists or spiritualists or one type or another. While some other adapts to exploit regional and social themes with local color and flavor. Post-independent writing exhibited the East-West encounter in very interesting manner. The straight narratives and short stories without any philosophical complexities, and it took Hindu psychosis for granted. Writing seems to be realistic

with Hindu system of social predomination. The main problem of post-independent writing and society is the basic conflict between individual and society, past and present and the effects of modernization and westernization in varied aspects of life of society and its inhabitants.

Western Culture and Its Impact

Language is the vehicle for expressing human thoughts; similarly language is used for speaking and writing. Each country in some cases and or each state of country or each religion has a distinct language of its own. Sometimes colonization of new land by the groups of people of parent country causes common language amongst a small group of nations.

A country's literature is closely knit with its culture and in India, on the one hand, western culture was introduced through English language and colonization and on the other hand, Indian culture has its roots from time immemorial. In spite of inroads till the present time was introduced and influenced by the Vedic culture. Literature mainly reflected the commonality of the values and attitudes of the Indian society and people. Because of the first hand experience of English, Indian writers perceived the differences they've experienced from their oriental adjustment to westernization and readjustment again to the oriental society.

As India was under the colonial rule and non-Hindu culture was introduced in India via language and literature of the colonizer, the direct influence of it was seen in the Indian society. The cultural complexes, certain details, stereotypes, and even the words or phrases when skillfully employed can trigger into the existence of western culture, introduced by colonial rule. And the Indian writer's use of English resulted in shock of recognition, alienation from culture and made to recognize the value of

culture only when it is distanced. But the cultural encounter has the positive aspect of expressing an essentially an Indian experience in a foreign language.

The introduction and infiltration of western culture, the study of English literature, and the adoption of western scientific techniques gave jolt to India's traditional life. It nevertheless served nobly into new awareness. The long dormant intellectual and critical impulse was quickened into sudden life, a new efflorescence was visible everywhere and reawaking of Indian spirit went forth to meet with the violent challenge of the values of modern science and civilization of the west. This impact produced unrest and at the same time it had also sustained and stimulated Indian life.

To write in English is to stimulate or manifest the new creative urge in India. That urge had penetrated in the minds of writers and intellectuals at the time that India should follow western culture, science and institution and English would modernize the vernaculars into efficient mode of expression and Indian writers started to follow obediently.

Under the western impact Indian literature began to have a conspicuous feature of having two streams of thought, one upholding the interest of personal and private and the other of community and of the public. The finest articulation of community, personal and private was in the new lyric that grew under western impact. The individual was valorized with new enthusiasm; the writers were equally interested in representing community life. Several writers viewed the growing urbanization as well as breaking up from rural society, particularly its occupational structure as a threat to Indian culture and they looked back toward it with nostalgia. Another group of writers perceived society as the center of Indian life; men and women belonging to that community were the most authentic representative of

community life. The rural communities despite their poverty retain certain moral qualities in contrast to the urban centers, which stand for individualism and alienation. The largeness of canvas is an inbuilt feature of any narrative of any community whether it is representative in the form of whole village with its highly structured socio-economic groups or tribes or community.

Along with the question of modernity, rural-urban societies, East-west relations, two more issues surface with the bang-the women and socially and economically underprivileged section. Indian writing observed the transition of the protagonist from the aristocratic status to the heroes and heroines belonging to middle class and finally to the ordinary and commonplace theme. Likewise, the marginalized, the peasant and the labors were the inevitable manifestations of the changes in the psyche of literary community and society along with the impact of modernization and westernization.

The representation of land and people in Indian literature is as widely as varied as the Indian geography and society itself. Portrayal of mountain and plains, the river and lakes, and forest and arid land with aesthetic power is another feature of literary tradition. Indian literature was chosen at random and writers undoubtedly project varied picture of different regions but none produce the effect of foreignness despite its unfamiliarity to the readers rather than they are drawn to participate in the process of unfolding the known-unknown.

The celebration of particular region is as much as the manifestation of particular regional patriotism as it is a contribution towards the construction towards of a larger space, India. Contrary to the perception that variety of topography is only a strong vindication of regional exclusiveness. It is in fact a constant reminder of the diversity of the Indian life. Like landscape, Indian literature in its totality is also a

representation of variety of social codes, ritual, behaviors, attitudes, and the continuation of the great tradition.

The variety of nature, social traditions and the religious rituals were partly minimized by the writer's growing interest in urban themes. Indian writers changing perception provided them an alternative location and institutions like offices, banks, courts, railway platforms, post offices, colleges, etc as subject of writing. The process of urbanization, initiated by the colonial rule was accompanied by the technological intervention in the rural space. Indian literature presented both rural and urban India quite often as contrasting and hostile areas of habitation. Most of the major works of the Indian fiction have rural location and changing scene of society as their setting. But in most of them again the city penetrates and in some of the cases is woven with artistry vindicating urban rural reality of modern India.

The growth of societies since the nineteenth century created a sense of homogeneity not only because of the introduction of new modes of town planning and architecture but also because of the norms of public behavior and etiquette. The villages too, despite their different tradition and geographical and sociological varieties and diversions had remarkable affinities in the value system of deep structure. The dichotomy of city and village is as old as the day of great epic tradition but from the mid nineteenth century city and village represented social and cultural zones and become a larger discourse that gave Indian literature in particular and in general a special character. The rural India is associated with multitude of peasantry and artisans, the landlords and numerous occupational groups and the tribes. The city provides space for various groups- lawyers, traders, doctors, journalists, political workers, writers and so on - much smaller in number but closer to the corridor of power and more influential in shaping the destiny of the country.

The significance of place in literature started manifesting itself quite strongly in Indian literature as a part of the older natural artifact and also a new set of opposition between East and the West. Though there was no particular reason to associate city with the west and except that new cities and new technological advancement is viewed as the manifestation of British imperial power. In very much the similar way, Gandhi's emergence encouraged the writers to take place as the character, full of innocence and humanity and at the same time to take society as character, which has the continuation of traditional beliefs, customs, values. Along with the change in time and circumstance, Indian life, its societies, manners are also changing owing to the impact of modernization and westernization.

III. Human Passion Vs Culture in *The Vendor of Sweets*

R. K. Narayan's *The Vendor of Sweets* expresses the clash between human passion and culture through its characters. This research focuses on the incompatible dispute that arises between father and son representing two generations, especially the follower of two different cultures. Jagan who believes in the simplistic, cultural and religious life style. Jagan believes in the national culture though his son Mali intermixes with western modern life and also leaves Malgudi for America to learn writing. He is more sensitive towards his passion than following his orthodoxical and rigid Indian cultural ethos.

Jagan, the principal character, is the believer of the Indian national products like herbs and home made clothes. Regularly at five in the morning Jagan gets up from bed, breaks a twig from a *margosa* tree in the back yard, chews its tip, and brushes his teeth. He is opposed to the use of a tooth brush. Narayan writes "Jagan had immense faith in the properties of *margosa*, and in spite of its bitterness, he called it "Amrita", the ambrosia which kept the gods alive; and sometimes he called it "Sanjeevini" the rare herb mentioned in the epics which, help at than nostrils, could bring the dead to life" (20).

This belief of Jagan in national products is his stand of nationalism and his cultural ethos. He believes that the toothbrush is made of the pigtail's hair. He even opposes his wife and son when they simply insist on using the medical pill to prevent the severe headache. Jagan says to his son; "boy, don't go near it; it is poison" (22). He chews *margosa's* bitter leaves once a month as it destroys all bacteria in the system he considers the breeze blowing through the *margosa* boughs as an anti typhoid agent and feels elated when it blows. He collects the yellow flowers of

margosa, fries them in ghee and consumes once a week. He is opposed to the use of modern things as he has no faith in them.

Jagan loves his son dearly and spares every moment carefully so that he won't disappoint his son. He has been both father and mother for the child since the death of his wife. However the son, Mali, does not like his father and talks to him often in short clipped sentences. The reasons of Mali's hostility are psychological that are related to the death of his mother when he was still a small child. When his mother Ambika was suffering from a rare kind of brain tumor, Jagan did not allow her to swallow aspirin to relieve her severe headache. Later when Ambika dies, Mali, still too young to know the real cause of his mother's death, unconsciously feels that it was his father's principles of nature care that killed her. From that day, there begins a barrier between them. This has caused much pain and sufferings to Jagan. Jagan's fatherly feelings are in a greater confusion when Mali says. "I can't study any more"(23). Jagan finds himself in an utter bewilderment. His national pride gets hurt when he further learns from his cousin that Mali wants to go to America to become a writer.

Jagan desires to see his son studying at the college in his own country and to meet each other. The passion for western culture and values makes Mali abandon his study, Indian customs and values. The conflict between materialism and spirituality are displaced, however, by the conflicts with his spoiled son, whose laziness and wastefulness eventually yield to westernization radically at odds with Indian customs and values. Mali's cold contempt for his father's occupation and way of life deepens the gulf of generations. Jagan still hopes that his son will be the graduate. Jagan says: "I was always hoping that he'd be a graduate and that's the basic qualification one should have" (27). He always thinks that everyone should have read at least B.A., he

says that, “if I had passed the B.A., I could have done so many other things” (27). He had to leave the college when Gandhi ordered them to non-cooperate. He spent the best of his student years in prison. Jagan feels heroic, his reminiscent mood slurring over the fact that he had failed several times in the B.A., had ceased to attend the college, and had begun to take his examinations as a private candidate, long before the call of Gandhi. “Writer” meant in Jagan’s dictionary only one thing a “clerk”, an Anglo Indian (28). Even in the state of gap between them, Jagan has a confidence in his son. He feels proud of his son at the thought that he is going to be a writer and serve mankind. He feels a peculiar thrill when he speaks of the service to mankind, the idea that he has learnt from Gandhi. He believes that his son Mali will also cultivate the same kind of principles that he is following: “I hope he will also emulate my philosophy of living, simple living and high thinking as Gandhi has taught us” (39).

Jagan’s orderly world undergoes some sudden changes. The sudden change in the attitude of his son appears like a factor that is likely to shake Jagan off his path in the future but his conflict with his son and the mental upheavals caused by this are his ordeals, the difficult ordeals that he has to encompass in the steady process of his experiences and realization. Jagan has obviously understood that his is not an easy but a difficult path. He is firm, strong and determined in it and moves steadily forward through such ups and downs.

Jagan is much attached to the Hindu culture and religious things too.

Whenever Jagan gets into any trouble, he remembers god, prays and opens the *Bhagavad Gita*, the holy book of Hinduism. The words of the book work for him as medicine. He finds the peace and clam in reading the book. The calm and religious person Jagan is disturbed by his son’s passion for being ambitious and westernized.

Mali is the product of the modern, academic and westernized society. Jagan sends his son to the campus but, the son always tries to drift away from the Indian social cultural and traditional boundaries. Mali's repeated actions of the drifting away really bewilder his father. Jagan Mali collapsed as a result of his much drinking behavior, which is the result of his passion for western culture.

Jagan is much influenced by Gandhi a philosophy of nationalism. Narayan shows the relation of Jagan and Gandhi to show the liveliness in the novel. He writes:

The first time he had heard the word 'service' was in 1937 when Mahatma Gandhi visited Malgudi and had addressed a mass gathering on the sands of the river. He spoke of 'service', explaining how every human action acquired a meaning when it was performed as a service. Inspired by this definition. Jagan joined the movement of freeing India from foreign rule, gave up his studies, home and normal life and violated the British laws of the time. (41)

Mali's plan for moving to America is not completely supported by Jagan. Writing a creative work, the writing of the book and the visit to America doesn't suit with Jagan's view. Jagan opposes the plan by giving the example of the *Ramayana*: "Did Valmiki go to America or Germany in order to learn to write his *Ramayana*?" (45). The talks between Jagan and his cousin always give the information about Mali and his nature and plans. They criticize America. Jagan finds the bad and unmated behaviors of American and Indian culture. American society does not keep any remarkable positive meaning for him. Jagan criticizes American way of life:

They eat only beef and pork in that country. They also take a lot of intoxicating drinks never water or milk [. . .] and the women are free [. . .]. I have seen some of their magazines about films; their women mix

freely with men and snap off marriages without ado, and bask in the sun without clothes. (47)

Jagan feels very sad when he knows that Mali is going to America by the airplane. Jagan almost weeps as he says, "Please tell him to go by steamer. It's safer. Let him be safe. I don't like airplane" (49). It is not only the love that Jagan shows but also his cultural identity of using the steamer. The money counts nothing for Jagan in comparisons to his son as he says, "What is the cash worth to me? It's all for him. He can have everything he wants," (49).

Things are not still easy for Jagan and he has to compromise with the situation. He does not yet know that many more complications are on the way. The liberal soul of a Hindu father always remains with his son in thought and spirit, takes Jagan everyone about America and the presence of his son there. Jagan's endless love for his son makes him a big talker of America though he never likes their principles. Narayan writes "Gradually his reading of the *Bhagavad Gita* was replaced by the blue air mail letters. Pram their study we farmed a picture of America and was able to speak with authority on the subject of American landscape, culture and civilization" (55).

Jagan's way of life gets more difficult and complicated. He worries at the content of the letter; which goes completely against the principles of Holy *Shastras*. At the same time he receives a message about the arrival of Mali with 'another person' as Mali and bewilderment when he sees his son returning home with a half-Korean girl Grace. Along with the arrival of Mali, western influence creeps into Jagan's age old ancient home, making the same house as the place of two different worlds existing there. But Jagan does not show any anger and rudeness to the girl, but instead he asks her "tell me what you want. I will get it. I do not know exactly what

you will like to have” (59). Although the girl is unknown about her own cast, Jagan is of the view that “whatever it is one can only do one’s duty up to a point. Even in the *Gita* you find it mentioned. The limit of one’s duty is well defined” (60).

Whatever the changes come in his house and his son, he never changes himself. Instead, he follows his cultural practices strictly. He cooks his food by himself. He protects Grace by allowing her to mix up with him only because Mali may not like it all the things. But Grace openly appreciates the house of Indian society as she says “this is the loveliest house I have ever seen in my life” (62).

The raising fire for passion of western culture has also influenced the life style of non-western people; they aspire western like irresponsible, individual and solitary life, which has undone the eastern style of living together with family sharing their feelings emotions, joys and sorrows to each other. The individualism or the exhausted sort of lifestyle, which Mali likes much indicates the western way of life style. Everything western is copied and followed by Mali without thinking second time. The passion for western individual life represented by Mali is clearly reflected. Discarding the sharing or group family life of eastern, Mali imitates individual life, he locks himself inside the room and broods something. Similarly, another statemen "Mali had safely locked himself in” (50) proves his preference of western individual life.

Mali takes fascination towards the machinery world of America because he cannot get the advanced instruments, equipments here in eastern world. The fast life style of western fascinates him, and then he goes to America for story writing machine and modern writings as well. Mali prefers machinery world of America and asserts “they do everything with machines nowadays. Washing machines have you see one” (82)? Similarly, indicating American fast changing life style, he says with a gesture of disgust:

Oh, these are not the days of your ancestors. Today we have to compete with advanced countries not only in economic and industry, but also in culture. While on the one hand Jagan felt delighted at the way his son seemed to be blossoming after years of sullen silence, he was at the same time saddened by the kind of development he noticed in him now. (78)

Afore mentioned lines echo Mali's adoption of economic, industrial and cultural life of advanced countries because he advocates that his ancestors' time and his present time is very different. Mali has to compete with advanced countries because of the changing nature of time and life style. It is his predicament to follow western mechanical life style.

Mali shows his free and individual life, without giving any information to his father he pretends marrying Grace. According to Indian culture every son or daughter has to take information or suggestions from his/her father and mother. Mali likes to live of free life like westerners so he lives free life and let's Grace to be free from society. It troubles Jagan and says "But a wife must be with her husband, whatever happens" said Jagan (127). But discarding his father's suggestions Mali replies "who are you to stop her from going where she pleases? She is a free going where she pleases? She is a free person, not like the daughter-in-law in our miserable country" (127). In this way, we can clearly see the passion of Mali for the free life style of the west. In the same way, Mali wants to do different kind of business, he ignores to follow his fathers business of selling sweet meats and says, "you expect me to do that? I have better plan than to be a vendor of sweet meat" (89). So Mali's disowning gets at the top when he disowns his father's profession and dreams for another.

Grace's fashionable attitude represents western people belief on artificiality. Not only she converts her materials into modern but also she wears fashionable clothes as "she was wearing a yellow kimono and looked very much like a Japanese she looks different each day" (133). With the help of artificial fashion, Grace looks different each day. She wears a yellow kimono so that she seems more beautiful and fashionable.

To some extent, Jagan takes easily about America and his son's behavior. The optimum indignation of Jagan arises when he reads about his son's experience in America. Mali is changed in Jagan's opinion. The ideology of Mali and Jagan varies to great extent. Jagan compares the American way of thinking, life style and the Hindu *Shashtra*. Narayan writes about Mali's passion for western influence from America and Jagan's response:

I've taken to eating beef, and I don't think I'm now the worse for it. Steak is something quite tasty and juicy. Now I want to suggest why don't you people start eating beef? It'll solve the problem of useless cattle in our country and we won't have to beg food from America. I sometimes feel ashamed when India asks for American aid. Instead of that, why not slaughter useless cows which wander in the streets and block the traffic. Jagan felt outraged. The *Shastras* defined the five deadly sins and the killing of a cow headed the list. (56-7)

Post-colonial Indian society is not totally free from colonial mentality. Colonial power had left the country in such a position that its people have conceptualized the superiority of west. They take Europe as the sources of greatness. Not only Mali but also cousin shows his passion for western culture. Cousin's utter disgust towards his own education system can be seen when he supports Mali during

the time of Mali's tearing the pages of his books. Let me quote some lines to support it as "when he tore the books it seemed very appropriate, our education being what it is [. . .]" (31).

In case of house detraction, people fascinated with the western style. The table, chair, the art and paintings, curtains and mats as well were transformed from the east to west. The westerners were very clever and wanted to expand their business and due to the western influence Indian people used to think that everything made in west is the best. In this way, western modern paintings have occupied their place in eastern world:

He noticed how Grace had transformed the place with curtains, mats, and tablecloth. A couple of modern paintings hung on the walls; Jagan found them bewildering, but said, "Yes", when Grace asked, "Aren't they marvelous?" The bamboo chairs were covered with colored cushions. A little vase on a table held a sprig of tender *margosa* leaves.
(67)

Similarly, they want to be like western at any cost. They don't hesitate to marry a girl without looking her family background and caste. Cousin gives a clear headed statement "get through their marriage very quickly in the hill temple. It can be arranged within a few hours" (139). In this way, cousin suggests Jagan about marriage between Mali and Grace he advocates that Jagan should arrange about their marriage within a few hours in the hill temple. With this suggestion, cousin shows his ambivalence. He not only convinces Jagan about marrying Grace, an outcast girl, but also suggests to go in the hill temple. Here, Grace represents western culture whereas hill temple represents eastern cultural values. So, cousin shows his ambivalent attitude or split personality between Indian culture and western culture.

Jagan's disagreement with the whole idea of his son's scheme and the act of avoiding his son show him a true Gandhian. Between Jagan and his son there are many complications. Jagan is a devout and staunch nationalist but Mali is thoroughly westernized. He eats beef and demands over two lakh rupees from the father to set up a factory for the manufacture of story writing machines. He defies all that is moral and ideal for his father. Even then Jagan does not exercise his violent authority over his son. He adopts the way not of confrontation but of passive resistance in dealing with him. Iyengar in his book *then Indian writing in English* quotes Gandhi reflecting on *Satyagraha*, "I won't hate you, but I won't obey you when you are wrong. Do what you like. I will match my capacity to suffer against your capacity to inflict the suffering my soul force against your physical force. I will wear you down by good will" (256). Jagan follows the same path. He does not simply kick his son out and lock the door for him forever, when he is against the other's will. He also resists on the idea of his son peacefully, simply ignoring his constant efforts of persuasion. He says to himself, "Gandhi has taught me peaceful methods and that is how I'm going to meet their demand" (86). He is aware that his son is subtly exercising power on him to make him part with cash. However, he meets the situation "by ignoring the whole business; a sort of non-violent non co-operation" (86). On the other hand instead of inflicting pain on others, Jagan chooses to suffer himself, "He was being haunted. When he passed in and out of the house, he felt his steps were watched, his face being secretly studied for a 'yes' or 'No' Grace gazed at his face meaningfully. Mali if he was at home, kept coming into his quarters on some excuse or other" (82).

Jagan is time and again disturbed by Mali and Grace but again he meets these disturbances passively "by shutting his eyes and muttering some incantations" (82). For him prayer is a sound way of isolating himself. When he hears Mali or Grace

open the front door, he goes far into the backyard of the house or sometimes even lock himself in the bathing shack.

Jagan opposes the proposal of Mali to become even the principal promoter of Mali enterprises. The opposition is not merely the rejection of being the new mode of businessman but it is also the resistance of his own traditional sweet making business. He does not want to bring any changes in his business. The now enterprise becomes the main attack on his nationalistic and cultural view. He rejects the son's proposal; he opposes son who is totally grasped by the western mod of culture. Jagan likes the Indian traditional business productions and consumptions. Narayan writes "He wore a loose 'Jibba' over his dhoti both made of his material spun with his own hand. He draped his shoulders in a khaddar shawl with gaudy, yellow patterns on it and he shod his feet with thick sand its made out of the leather of and animal which had died of old age" (9).

Cast is one of things that matter mostly in eastern countries. Eastern people don't marry or hesitate to marry to the castle that does match to them (his/her). Here is also a tendency of being superior or inferior in terms as castle. Above all they pay more attention on castle. But west embodies freedom and knows not any caste much and attempts to protect his caste and traditional life:

It is purity that is important yesterday I came early to see that pure cow's butter was melted for frying. I won't touch buffalo butter, though it may be cheaper. Gandhi was opposed to buffalo products. I had sent one of the cooks to collect cow's butter from Koppel, he came back at five in the morning and I came straight in before eight in order to melt it right. (90)

Likewise, Jagan is aspiring to die peacefully. Regarding it, he says, I'm prepared to die peacefully on my seventieth birthday" (118). Due to the arrival of another culture he is feeling suffocated, so his suffocation shows that he is not happy with the present situation. So he desires to preserve the eastern culture and sings a loud Sanskrit song. Similarly, he is also trying to make a statue of a Devi. Perhaps he is conscious of his own culture and he is seeing his culture fading. He does not want his culture be faded.

Youngsters are fascinated to mimick the western culture no doubt but there are adult people too who seemingly hate western culture but in worldly get fascinated and take pride of. The influence of English language increased in eastern people after the colonization, when the Europeans expanded their territory, the spreaded their English language too all over the world. Thought Jagan tries to defend eastern language unconsciously, he aspires English language too.

In Hindu culture reading *Gita* becomes a ceremony to the people. People from distant places come to listen to him. He makes his identity like a god. Everyone becomes happy when they find the place by his feet "the bearded man edged nearer and sat on the platform at Jagan's feet" (98). Jagan is happy when he replies, "so that more people may enjoy the eating of sweets" (99) to the question about the cheapness of the sweets. Mali wants to make a large profit making business but Jagan is happy to serve the more people as far as possible. Jagan destroys himself by serving the people. Jagan is more influenced by *Gita* and says, "I can help you to get the supplies if you like. As lord Krishna says in the *Gita* it is all in one's hand. Make up your mind and you will find the object of your search" (99). Jagan is much influenced by *Gita* and cannot tolerate other cultures' ideology and religions. Jagan feels regret when he counts that he has not visited the nearby temple for months. He feels bad about his

business, which stopped him. He takes the business as the monotonous job of frying and cash counting. He even does not feel good about his traditional business in front of the serving to the God.

Gandhi is a national leader for him. He takes Gandhi as the leader who can solve the economic and psychological ills. Jagan follows the path of Gandhi; uses the *Charkha* (spinning wheel) and takes pleasure in it. Narayan writes, “Gandhi had prescribed spinning not only for the economic ills of the country, but also for any deep agitation of the mind” (121). When Mali opposes the reading of the *Gita* by his father, Jagan resists saying “I am a new personality and have to speak now tongue” (121).

Jagan takes Grace as a problem when he knows about their unmarried relationship. Jagan thinks that if they are unmarried and live together, it is very bad. In Hindu culture, unmarried couples cannot live together. He takes the advice of the cousin and makes a plan for their marriage ceremony. He opposes their style of living. He cannot accept the western mode of youths living. He takes them to the temple and compels them to perform marriage ceremony in the eastern Indian cultural way. He does not like Mali who even does not know about his own wife. Mali let her go everywhere freely even in the night. Jagan questions, “Was this how a man kept track of his wife?” (127). Jagan is furious about Mali’s lying about his marriage when he finds a beef-eating Christian girl for a daughter-in-law, he feels most shameful. His day passes with complete obsession. The stress of his son’s marriage leads him to his own past. He recollects the every events of his marriage. As he cannot do any harm to his son, he juxtaposes his past life. The silent and shamefulness were the jewels of his time. Narayan writes, “Jagan’s father had set his elder son to accompany his and had

commanded Jagan, ‘Don’t stare at the girl. I have seen her and I know she is good looking. Don’t imagine you are a big judge of persons’ (149).

Jagan’s own marriage was full of relations, cultures, experiences and love. In contrast to this, Mali had a marriage in unknown castle, irrelevant religion and culture. R.K Narayan wants to glorify the Indian culture nationalism by presenting the two types of culture by juxtaposing them in the same context. The matter of dowry, feast, and customs are part of Indian marriage the whole journey of marriage ceremony becomes the complete representation of India. The marriage contains the reciting of sacred Mantras. Not the beer parties, Jagan even takes sex as the natural thing.

Narayan writes:

Nature had never meant sex to be anything more than a means of propagation of the species, that one drop of white blood was equal to forty drops of red blood, and that seminal waste and nervous exhaustion reduced one’s longevity the essence of all achievement being celibacy and conservation. (166)

Jagan gives emphasis upon the familiar relation. The relation should be sacred. The sex should not be taken as the mere way of enjoyment. He takes the relation as pure and fertile; on the other hand, Mali defines the relation in mechanized way. Mali defines the relation in mechanized way. Mali defines the relation in the monetary matter. Jagan never fails in his struggle. He counters the idea of his son by presenting his history. He even remembers that the son is the blessing of the *Badri Yatra*. Jagan takes Mali as the fulfillment of the prophecy. He even delivers an offering of Mali’s weight gold to the god on *Badri Hill* at his birth. Jagan believes in “God and prophecy” (172). A new son in God and at his birth.

When Mali gets married to Grace, he does not care about the cast of her but his father does not want to accept her as his daughter-in-law easily. Though he praises her goodness, he hates about her caste simultaneously. He speaks two different and controversial statement at once, which prove his devotion of Hindu culture.

But I feel it is my home that is being dirtied mail is my son. Grace is not my daughter-in-law (138) and “I am not doubting her goodness” (136). Similarly, Jagan’s cultural and religious attitude can be seen throughout the novel. Most of the time, Jagan spends his time reading the *Bhagavad Gita* and talking about philosophical matters, but later he replaces his reading of the *Bhagavad Gita* from reading of blue air letters sent by Mali.

Jagan recovers his composure and attains enough of mind to see the case of Mali, with objectivity and detachment. Even the cousin, seasoned in the art of persuasion, fails to make him take an active interest in Mali's case or change his resolve to retire from worldly engagements. His refusal to return home and be involved again in his son's confusing affairs is firm and final. Even the cousin, who has known Jagan through and through, is amazed at the transformation in him:

I am going to watch a goddess come of a stone. If I do not like the place, I'll go away somewhere else. I am a free man. I have never felt more determined in my life. I am happy to have met you now, but I'd have gone away in any case. Everything can go on with or without me. The world does not collapse even when a great figure is assassinated or dies of heart failure. Think that my heart has failed. That is all. (184)

Thus, the rising fire of western culture has influenced the life style of eastern people. They aspire western-like irresponsible, individual and solitary life which has undone the eastern style of living together with family sharing their feelings,

emotions, joys and sorrows to each other. The individualism or the exhausted sort of lifestyle which Mali likes much indicates the passion for western way of lifestyle. On the other hand, Jagan tries to counter the western influence by following eastern Hindu culture and Gandhian way of lifestyle.

IV. Conclusion

People in post-colonial country suffer from cultural, traditional and religious pang. R. K. Narayan has tried his best to explore such kind of cultural wound in *The Vendor of Sweets*. Narayan's voice targets Indian people who try to erase the original Indian cultural ethos. The result of passion for western culture in the novel leads to the cultural disparity and family disintegration which shows the gap between two generations.

In the course of a long and steady journey, Jagan passes through many ups and downs in his life. Despite many twists and turns, he never changes his philosophy up to the end when he renounces the world and goes into a retreat. Jagan is the product of typical Indian national figure, Gandhi and has always been influenced by his philosophy. Jagan regularly reads the *Gita*, uses the Indian products, like herbals, Neem, Khadi and spins the *Charkha*. Narayan presents Jagan as a simple man and shows him evolving to be an enlightened one in his spiritual and cultural path. Similarly his strong attachment to natural life also makes him a real follower of pure Hinduism. He does not use a toothbrush but brushes his teeth with the twigs from *margosa* tree. He thinks that the twigs of *margosa* chewed and made into brush not only remove dirt but also strengthen gums and purify blood. On the other hand, his son Mali is much influenced by western life style. Mali wants to do creative writings in the machine work. Mali brings a half-Korean and a half-American girl to his house without marrying her and keeps her as his wife. He declares that he eats beef and keeps a Christian girl. But Jagan opposes such activities. He takes them to a temple and makes them get married in the Indian way.

Jagan proves that the Indian cultural tradition and heritage is strong enough to counter the invading cultures. By showing this, Narayan celebrates the Indian identity

and Hindu culture. Jagan never leaves the traditional business of sweet making even loss and also distributes the sweets to all. On the other hand, his son, Mali aspire western food relegating their own healthy and nutritious food. The passion for western culture and values merely spoils Mali in alcohol and mechanical life. He cannot keep his wife as wife. The ideology of Indian culture is needed to reunite them. Jagan manages everything for them about their life.

This act of Jagan highlights the victory of Indian culture and tradition. In his view, the western culture is cheap, everybody can use and adopt it, but the Indian culture has its own identity and context. Mali's return from America makes Jagan's life difficult but it can also help him realize the need of a turn away from the life of wordly objects. Jagan chooses Gandhian way of non-violence to respond to Mali's attempts to take money with him. He ignores the whole scheme of Mali's business. Showing Jagan denying the whole project of the Mali, Narayan does not present a cowardly father as it appears to be. He avoids the sight of Mali and Grace rather than involving in an argument. He chooses to suffer himself rather than giving trouble to others. Jagan's such responses show him a real follower of Indian culture.

All such events lead Jagan finally to the state of self realization and the renounces the world for the spiritual start of his life. He gives up the whole business of vending sweets and goes into a retreat to live the life of a recluse. He feels free and determined in his mission. He is happy and confident on the part of the decision he has taken. He leaves behind the domestic tension and trouble and holds a deep trust in his mission. The son, business and home do not bind him anymore now. He is firm and determined in his path. He does not change his decision even after he hears that Mali has been arrested by the police. He hands over the responsibility to cousin and

goes to his retreat to live in his own way. He gives up the life of worldly engagement and chooses the path of spiritual realm.

Thus, Narayan writes with the genuine power of Indian culture because he had sufficient honesty towards India. Narayan supports the Indian tradition and cultures. Without original culture, man cannot run smoothly and be satisfied. This novel *The Vendor of Sweets*, celebrates the originality of Indian culture. It emphasizes the tradition, culture and religions which are the true assets of the mankind. Narayan is successful in presenting the clash between human passion and culture.

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