

**Review Article**

**TOLERANCE AND DEVELOPMENT: A REVIEW ON LIFE OF THE THIRD GENDER IN BOMBAY CITY**

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**Abstract:**

This research paper checks the third gender's crucial life in the second phase of Bombay, by investigating the novel *Narcopolis* (2012) by an observing plight of Transgender. The taken novel is a remembrance and an autobiography of the author's past twenty years in Bombay who has drowned completely to drugs. This research paper has focused on the main issue of LGBT issues and their achievements through keen observation. From the novel, the characters such as Dimple, Rashid, Newton Xavier and Mr Lee are depicting the picture of Bombay. In particular, it investigates Dimple's relinquished life in the light of addiction to drugs, sex, perversion, love, and death by formation queer. The narrator reaches Bombay from New York City; the underworld city is in particular addiction with opium along with brothel of damned generation in this nation. The narrative transition travels between 1970 and 2004 in old Bombay through following Dimple's life journey. This research paper concludes with Dimple's life addicted to smoking.

**Key words** - Narcopolis, Bombay, Nostalgic, Transgender, Relinquish, Sexuality, Gender

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**INTRODUCTION**

Recollection is a form of replication, which has been adhered in 2012 novel *Narcopolis*; it tries to convey the originality of the events which happened a few decades ago. Jeet Thayil has said, "to create a kind of memorial, to inscribe certain names in stone" so as in *Narcopolis*, he reckoned both intrinsic and extrinsic face of homosexual in Bombay between 1970s and 2000s; from his authenticity, this society could be observing the visuals of homosexual's sub-world in Bombay.

In the interview with Jeet Thayil, Ratnam pointed from Thayil's words that,

"It is only by repeating the names of the dead that we honour them. I wanted to honour the people I knew in the opium dens, the marginalized, the addicted and deranged, people who are routinely called the lowest of the low; and I wanted to make some record of a world that no longer exists, except within the pages of a book" (Ratnam, 2012).

Thayil has told to *The Hindu* in 2006, the Indian newspaper that his earlier life had been addicted to alcohol for almost two decades: "I spent most of that time sitting in bars, getting very drunk, talking about writers and writing, and never writing. It was a colossal waste. I feel very fortunate that I got a second chance" *The Hindu* (2006). So from his own experience in this novel, he tries to give the justification between narcotic addiction and homosexual pain. Comparing third gender's pain in accordance with Jeet Thayil's novel it is understood the way that narcotics are helping to tranquillize the savaged homosexual's mind and it is a preventive medicine to veiled problems.

Throughout the novel narcotics have justified, it is essential to give a better understanding of Indian indigenous culture with the modern technical world. While conveying the theme of narcotics along with sex, death, and perversion, in Indian dogma, it is concerning nature and god. Because conceiving new ideas and technologies considers always against natural law. On the other hand, Indian traditional and cultural values play an ample role in developing the ovation of Indian

doctrine, in *Narcopolis* (2012), it unveils reorganization of fourth world people like Dimple (a transgender), as far as it pictured the enlightened heterosexual society refuses to be compassionate, inclusive, open-minded and humane with the transgender. Since Indian doctrines have been failing to give priority to gender equality, in *Narcopolis* (2012), sexual minorities and gender non-confirmative people have been turning to narcotic for consoling themselves from isolation. So this obstacle about to equal opportunities tends them eluder of this society.

Besides Indian doctrines, the Non-Governmental Organization called Sahodari's founder Kalki Subramaniam points out that there are four lakhs ninety thousand of Indians have been come out as the third gender in 2011 census, but the chances of being a third gender are higher than five times because still as several who stay closeted due to fear of stigma. In India especially transgender people are very commonly have been excluded from schools, jobs, societies and family relations due to their non-conforming gender. So at present, the absence of awareness and lack of education about gender equality, the predominant norms and values of society commute insensitive towards transgender persons. This type of approaches and explorations give more adverse impact on one particular community. In

this study, it can be understood that the majority of the transgender persons turned as beggars and slaves to meet their survival filled with pain and hardships. In order to keep them pain-free, they are addicted to opium as it has been able to numb them temporarily from plight.

India's phenomenology of gender identity fails to recognize alternative gender identity. So,

"Transgender people are often driven into the field of sex work because they have no alternative means of employment or survival, leading to high HIV rates among the group. They are not accepted in society and their earnings are much lower than those of the average individual. They face rejection from important supports like teachers or parents and are deprived

of the means of proper education. They also lack sufficient counselling centres and educational institutions where they can be at peace, making the world a living hell for an ordinary gender-confused kid" (Kalki).

So in terms of cultures and tradition, gender is an issue which has been rejected for a long time in India. This diverged gender scale spreads binaries on hetero and non-hetero sexual.

#### RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To study the common practices of LGBT people in India.
2. To study the LGBT characters, their problems and issues as raised and discussed in *Narcopolis*.
3. To study the Indian novel as a means to understand what being 'queer' means.

#### QUEER BASED IDENTITY FORMATIONS

James Day added definition from Anna Marie Jacose's ideas to *queer* as "an identity category that has no interest in consolidating or even stabilizing itself... [Q]ueer is less an identity than a critique of identity" (James Day, 2007). So this phrase enumerates degrading possibilities on queer has been higher in homosexuals than other identities. Moreover commonly *queer* includes LGBTAIQ which represents different sexual orientations in an enduring pattern of attraction, behaviour, desire and drive. So according to *queer*, the inclination is playing a major role to develop intimate emotional and sexual relationships with the same or other sex people to define the sexual representation. To clarifying sexual orientation, it needs to refer the two prominent attachments such as same-sex orientation and opposite-sex orientation in the practice of romantics, physical desires, and attractions to same-sex or other sex.

To appropriate the term '*Queer*', in 1996, Anna Marie Jacose rethinks Halperin's definition which is "*Queer* acquires its meaning from its oppositional relation to the norm. Queer is by definition whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate and the dominant. There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers. It is an identity without an essence" (James Day, 2007). So it has given the statement 'without an essence' persuades the underestimation to one of the socio-communal sexual minorities. Therefore, in 1945, Broadway musical Carousel, Oscar Hammerstein's lyric "You're a queer one, Julie Jordan" (Ibid, 2007) pave the way to represent queer is an ambiguous such as an adjective, noun, and verb. Causing '*Queer*' adjective is conventional and traverses several and it is not easy to answer single and it can be placed on personalities, behaviour, desires, abilities, and ambitions. Another associate link '*Queer*' noun is a discomfort terminology cause of 'homophobia' wherein the power of classification in accordance with 19th century's debate carries out with medical references of 'change or be changed'. But Donald E.Hall reframes the polemic approach on '*Queer*' verb as "to be a man is a lesser version of a woman, to be an effeminate man is a lesser version of masculine man vice-versa homosexual is heterosexual" (Ibid, 2007). And it stirs fear of transitive verb which spread its queerness, converts others, awakens discontent and undermines the system by the influence of attraction or desire.

To reinforce the term attraction and desire, James Day intent to highlight the term 'sex' and gender, such as defining gender, according to Judith Butler's 'Performativity' progresses, it is a socially constructed tool strictly not by natural cultivation. Moreover, Sullivan has refigured that gender as a 'cultural fiction', neither natural nor universal and therefore it is an 'inner sense of self' through the practice of what we are received from our society in an acceptable and permissible way to us to do, be and perform. The growth of gender identification has labelled as a man, woman and the very recent inclusion of 'third gender'. Taking the last part, Sexuality is commonly the understanding of sexual orientation or sexual identity, which linked with biological factors recognized through their attraction and desire. With the former reference calling oneself a '*queer*' reclaims one who serves to unite people who are marginalized because of their non-conformity i.e., LGBT.

#### STATISTICAL DATA ON TRANSGENDER IN INDIA

In 2014 the Supreme Court marked a radical judgment for recognizing transgender people as a 'third gender'. It is enabling protection to all citizens either sexual minorities or sexual non-marginalized. In spite, it reveals disappointments to LGBT activists and makes them feel that some foul play has done on them such as 'the transgender people got a legal recognition; it was not smooth sailing for them because the social stigmas linked to the community continue to exist in the society' (Sabu, 2017).

Despite the disappointment and despair, there are transgender people who achieved in this society in India. For example, Joyita Mondal (Lok Adalat Judge), became a first transgender judge in India from West Bengal, who says

"If transgender start getting government jobs, then their condition will become better, as due to the social discrimination, they are forced to run away from their homes and indulge in age-old hijra activities in India, like dancing in marriages or becoming sex workers" (Mondal, 2017).

Mondal's word strongly express the frustration and all-over India it has stirred slight anguishes among the non-heterosexual community. According to Sabu who refers little strong about other transgender achievers like K Prithika Yashini who felt as a woman's soul trapped in man's body so she underwent Sex Reassignment Surgery for becoming the third gender and took legal struggle for becoming a sub-inspector of police eventually succeeded in the deserved position at Dharmapuri police station, Tamilnadu who come as a first trans-sub-inspector in India. In Kerala's, Kochi Metro Rail Ltd. deployed twenty-three transgender people for the welfare of the marginalized and neglected community moreover planning to give employment to another 60 more in fore coming days. On Nov 13, 2017, Ganga Kumari appointed as a transgender constable through Jodhpur High Court's justice though she qualified in 2013.

On the other side, it has been estimated that there are 4.9 lakhs third genders people are living according to the 2011 census in India. But Kalki appeals that it is an extreme disappointment since the voter's registration process only of 28,341 people who registered on belonging as the third gender". Nagarajan gives the statistical notes of third gender people in the 4.9 lakhs data, there are 66% of them identified as are living in rural areas and villages. The census data revealed that the literacy level is very low among them in the community which is just 46%. So comparably to 74% literacy in the general population, it is very low. Anjali Gopalan (Naz Foundation) expresses her despair on this low literacy rate,

"I am not surprised that the literacy rate is so low because it is not uncommon at all for people of transgender to drop out of school because of the harassment and discrimination they face" (Nagarajan, 2014).

And refers to transgender statistical accountability in India by Rema Nagarajan, it has been identified as the highest proportion of the third gender population 28% in Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh followed with 9%, Maharashtra and Bihar on 8% each, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal on 6% acquires both, Tamilnadu gets 4% along with Karnataka and Odisha, Rajasthan accounted of 3% in the total population and Punjab gets the low amount of 2%. The proportion of those working in the transgender community is only 38%. In this case, only 65% of the total working population are main workers with comparison to 75% of the general population.

"This is a beginning and we are proud that the census could draw out part of the truth and establish that the transgender community exists and that their literacy rate is very low. They have also established that transgender children exist. It is now up to the government to bring in policy to ensure that they are not discriminated against and that they enjoy equal rights like any other children," said Kalki, (Nagarajan, 2014).

According to Venkat third gender is not yet treating as gender and it is currently treated as a separate by-gender because

41% of all employed third gender persons in India are reported their occupation as 'Other'.

### MARGINALIZATION: ANALYSING DIMPLE AS A THIRD GENDER

Being a sexual minority in India is stereotyped as a sin in the land of orthodox. About *Narcopolis* (2012), Koteswar says "it speaks of a deranged, starved and epileptically wisdom that's crawled to the surface from the bottomless pit circling our rudderless culture to reveal its true face. It ends with a picture of the city as it is today and it points towards a possible future. The book begins and ends with the same word, 'Bombay', and in some ways, the city is the central character" (Koteswar). In nostalgia, the novel makes a painting of sexual minorities in India with rude face, in a place of loved children and loving elders, of monsoons and mangoes and spices. It has emphasized the meaning of the right to education, dwelling, income, work, and security. So resounding homosexuals, the accuracy on treatment is meaning to ridiculous. So it covers bigger important for LGBT community such as transgender literally never got equality except for few unskilled works. Through the study most often it has emphasized that transgender people are engaged in most often begging and prostitution. In the inference of *Narcopolis* (2012), Dimple's job is to prepare Opium Pipe and being a fulltime sex worker rather than a worker. In her wordings,

"She said: Woman and man are words other people use, not me. I'm not sure what I am. Some days I'm neither, or I'm nothing. On other days I feel I'm both. But men and women are so different, how can one person be both? Isn't that what you're thinking? Well, I'm both and I've learned some things, to my cost, the kind of thing you're better off not knowing if you mean to live in the world" (Thayil, 2012).

Now it raises questions on possibilities of measurement on tolerance and endurance of transgender in this communal part, but drugs like opium and others parallels contribute as a remedy to recover everyday troubles of nights. Besides intoxication 'forgetting' is a social process of frustration and suppression, because all transgender people are sustaining their pain and suffocation inside their premises.

"She was learning to live with pain. It was always there, on her shoulders and her back. The opium reduced it to something manageable, but she woke with pain" (Thayil, 2012).

Choudhry (2013) points out that "buried Dimple's poignant memories are an unloved childhood, her abandonment, and sale to a priest by his widowed mother, her transformation into a eunuch, her betrayal of Lee, and a deeply suffering by the Chinese army man who had escaped his torturous country in a stolen jeep. Lee has discovered and driven himself out of the frying pan into the hellfire of India, a filthy and chaotic land of Bombay. He has smoked opium to reduce the interminable pain, as his father, taken Dimple into his fold and rescued her from the sickening pain, launching her on the irreversible journey atop smoke pipes. Dimple has graduated well in the intricacies of smoking opium and moves out of the whorehouse to a room above to Rashid's den" Choudhry (2013).

As such survival is a challenging assignment is often violated, in fact, the analysis of this novel brings their condition of can't get dwellings, despite, prevailing also as slums and have not's. So instead, it gives physical sufferings and mental diseases so they can't be occurring proper medicines and complete recovering. In spite, doctors treat as an untouchable due to their Transgender identity as well from red-light slums consequences severe sick. The doctor trespasses the doctrine ethic from his profession by treating Dimple with untouchable way, it highly hazardous situation for her,

"The doctor wore glasses with gold frames and he didn't actually examine her. He didn't touch her at all, not even to shake hands, as if he knew her, knew where she lived and what she for a living and the exact amount of opium she took on a daily basis, and even if he made no moral judgment about her

life, he had made a medical or personal judgment, which he had every right to" (Thayil, 2012).

So they revive their ideology of general hospitals and forget ever about it instead started to prefer own medicines (drugs and opium), in another approach, she has learned to prepare the pipe by own. It gives pleasure than anything from society since she is living among heterosexual.

"Lee told Dimple he was sick. He had a grating in his throat and he didn't want to go to a hospital because there was no point, he knew what it was. He said he needed opium for its pain-killing properties, just she did. He had a list of aches and pains. It was a bond between them, the itemizing of pain. In pain, he said, as if it were a country. As if he were saying, I am in Spain" (Thayil, 2012).

So, therefore, there is no surviving and dwelling to transgender, and marginal identity has not contagious forever. Practically these people are sexually marginalized and intentionally brought them as such an opium addiction. "Revolution must follow the revolution without interruption. I'm tense before midnight but I take sleeping pills and feel better, try pills" (Ibid, 34). Ultimately Dimple cognizes the situation of society and adapts with those indifferences next she leads her life as such. Commemoration of Dimple exaggerate the reality of transgender isolations and sufferings,

"Dimple understood the exact nature of Janice's suffering. To know you were unloved by your parents, it was a wound that would never heal. Nothing Dimple did forget her early life could change this fundamental fact. She was always under the sway of it. It never went away. She would think she was okay, but she was not. If she was not sleeping enough or if she was anxious, it would catch up with her, as fresh and wet and red as it had ever been. In the scene when brother and sister are finally reunited in a village in Kathmandu, Dimple made no effort to hide her tears. Others were crying too, men and women, entire families weeping together as they munched their popcorn and sucked noisily at bottles of Thumps Up and Fanta" (Thayil, 2012).

As it is motioned in Dimple's word, the interiority of Dimple's personal life is in altogether helpless and baseless. Though she had a proper family and relatives, due to her identity on homosexual anticipation has brought into darker sight of life. The conflict between her life and death swings in the middle of the ferocious river which is like either to die or waiting for death. So the search of sources of life to a transgender in mainstream society is, of course, a thing of searching resources in the wasteland. Ultimately Dimple instead of forgetting her past and start a new life she practises to forgive her past and practices to live the same life with tolerating the pain. So nowhere she gets relief in her life as a fellow human being with other humans.

### CONCLUSION

However, the result of the study is trying about sort-out a way out for the struggled life of the third gender in Bombay city among mainstream society. According to this research study, it argued an original picture of Jeet Thayil's *Narcopolis* (2012) in the discussion of gender minority's Harassments, Gender identity, Queer space, Marginalization, Homelessness, Identity crisis, Mental stigmas, Stereotyping and Equal Opportunities. So sexual minorities are longing for socio-communal resolutions to the new life which should be established the liberalization and equalization throughout the marginalized land. Thus further rigid action to be needed to the favour of homosexuals, so it could be done for alarming the issues for LGBTs life. Unless understanding them, people of many Dimples' life never ever be got relief from difficulties.

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