

Envisaging the paradigm of Cyber Culture

Anjali Vijay

Assistant Professor, Department of English, St. Cyril's College, Adoor.

Abstract

Digimodernism has been revolutionized with in the cultural panorama. Cyber culture knots with technologies that attribute a number of fundamental concepts and outlines the cyber cultural narratives. One of the main upshot is the confluence of cultural studies and media, culture seeks its authorization in the technological parameters. Digital technology within the media culture transmit data which enables the reproduction of cultural representations. Virtual space generated by computer network functions as a new medium. Technological impingements have transformed the cultural stratifications of society into an information society which intensify the reconceptualization of progress in the contemporary scenario. Digimodernism which designates the cultural effects of new technologies as well as the impact of computerization on texts and the arts. The features which entailed on digimodernist texts are Onwardness, haphazardness, evanescence, anonymous, social and multiple authorship. Alan Kirby who calls this cultural paradigm as digimodernism because of the corollary effect on its technical mode and the inherent use of thumbs and fingers. It also analyses how they renovate the cultural paradigms with new ideas on texts, focuses on the notions of author. The advent of technology and digital media have opened a new horizon to the literary contours. By comparing different modes of narration and genres, it can speculated the impetus of technology, media, digital versions on literary works and the variance in writing different mode of writing and cultural paradigms. The works such as Black Box, Five Point Some One and Pather Panchali exhibits these pivotal concerns.

Key Words: *Cyber culture, Science Fiction, Trans-humanism, body, Digimodernism, Technology*



There has been a jest where digital technology encounters textuality and text is articulated by the use of fingers and thumbs. Its impact is discernable in internet, soap operas, films, reality shows, blogs and social networks. Hypertexts is constituted by a series of textual blocs that are allied by electronic links consent us to construct a paradigm of multiple pathways by the operation of networking nodes. Cyber culture or digimodernism have amicable impact on literary artefacts. Traditional piece of narration relies on author centered notions whereas the plunge of digitization implies on foot noted commentaries, hyperlinks, textuality. Myriad forms of reality explored the relationship between the virtual and physical world. Cyber culture creates a technology oriented bicultural environments displays interest in the arena of artificial intelligence and biotechnology that designed science fiction and cyber fiction. With the advent of digital media, Cyber culture tends to rely on post-humanism where technology operates rather than humanistic notions but affects actual identities of individuals. Booming technological advancements expands in the globalized world.

Cyber narratives start to become like a booming enterprise than print media. The narratives of print media may be linear, filled with yarns of individual instances, but Cyber narratives are action packed, brief, comprehensive and specific and it shared with tactics afforded by cyberspace. In the digital scenario, it's important to relocate the literary narrative and decipher its changing contours it demarcates the end of author-text notions because of hypertext, electronic textuality with their multiplex mode of production it altered the perspectives of textuality in the age of virtual reality. This study analyses about the explosion of digital media, technological spurting's and its impact on cultural aspects within the framework of literary artifacts. Technology perforates not only in the socio-cultural domains but on the literary narratives too. It can be speculated by analyzing various specimens of literary works that belongs to different period of time by specifying their mode of narration.

An incredible grace of writing is apparent in the fictional gamut of Jennifer Egan. Being a contemporary American Fiction writer and Pulitzer Prize winner of 2011, she stands unsurpassed among other literary figures. Her literary oeuvre propelled with great critical acclaim. It reveled with a sheer sense of ravishing vibrancy and immaculate perceptions. Egan's incipience as a writer can be found in her works such as *The Invisible Circus* (1995), *Emerald cities and other stories* (1997), *The Keep* (2006) and *A Visit from the Goon Squad* (2010), *The Black Box* (2012). *Black Box* was a retrospective science fiction, which exhibits new versions of digital media that is Twitterature, an amalgamation of twitter and literature which illustrates its succinctness and perspicacity. First published as a form of tweets. Science Fiction project advancement in technology and demarcate drastic change in order to prognosticate how these technological changes affect the cultural decorum. The efficacy of social networks and modes of blogging helps to transform messages in a multi-dimensional way.

The rapid boom of technological advancement, transformation of information using human body for some operations which constitute as the central thread of the story. It projects writers concern about the national security of America. Trans-humanistic apprehensions, metamorphosis of human body by means of technological parameters play a paramount role in the story of *Black box*. Trans-humanism advocates the advancement of a panoply of technologies which presumably enhance human intellectual abilities by merging human and machine. According to Max More "trans-humanism is the continuation and acceleration of the evolution of intelligent life beyond its currently human form and human limitations by means of science and technology guided by life prompting principles and values" Shulamith Fire Stone and Donna Haraway's writings elaborates these trans-human concepts, cyborg women, eradication of gender.

Black Box conglomerates the features of a science fiction and spy-thriller caricature which apprehends the notions of a futuristic society. The story which describes about a female

spy agent inserts some artificial chips in her body as a part of her mission. Being sent as a spy by the American agency to collect some valuable information from their targeted enemy depicted as 'Designated mate'. The efficiency and sacrifice of a beautiful cyborg women and her body which has been technologically used by authorities for working as a recording device and data storing machine by gaining access into criminal inner sanctums. Egan whose caricature of a technologically modified female character which shares some of the views of Donna Haraway's essay 'Cyborg Manifesto'. The female cyborg in the *Black Box* is an epitome of the futuristic ideals of dystopic world and shows the exuberance of human power by associating productive energy with technological strictures.

The agency collects data through cyborg bodies which are equipped with recorders in the ears, cameras in the eye signals, transmitters in the backs of knees, plugs and ports for executing data heaves of phones and other digital devices. Unnerving operations are granted by the security agent to some beautiful women, whose target is to locate potent and frightening men who stay in obscurely in exotic regions. The futuristic spy's have various physical implants to aid their beauty which includes a device that records her movements, thus delivering a biopic of her mission for those who sent her. If a beauty dies while concealing information, data will persist inside her body. The prime Intension is to get the body to a geographic hotspot where government agents can retrieve the information packed receptacle.

The body is vital to the narrative that undergoes transmutations and imply an important significance. Technologically enhanced body automated to complete a task by incessantly fighting against human impulses, the disposable body used as a black box, as an instrument for storing and transforming information and also used as sexual objects. These are the different facets by which body plays a central role in the narrative. Also presents an environment drenched by electronic technology and its fictional representations. Cyberpunk re-consider about the drastic ideas of time, reality, materiality, community and space. It's more a product of technological based images and simulations. Egan's explorations of the new media in the form of a serialized narrative altered the vicissitudes of sophisticated notions and integrated the high-tech-aided narrative form of the new digital media culture. The plusses and inclinations of traditional story telling have been conveyed through the digital formats. The sociological percepts of over-riding narrative forms in the contemporary popular image culture are discernable in the story.

While reconnoitering the narrative facets of some of the novels such as *Five Point Someone* of Chetan Bhagat, *Pather Panchali* of Bibhuthibhushan Bandopadhyaya with *Black Box*, it can be pointed out that there exist some differences in the narrative strategies after the explosion of technological advancements Five Point Someone interweaves the slice of autobiographical writing and IIT campus scenario and its harsh education system , effects of technological studies on students, expeditions of youngster's, monotonous system of teaching. When looking into the narrative structure of dialogues and characterization, it has been depicted in a witty, humorous way and in a provoking manner. The colloquial speech which marks an undelineable appeal. Most of the stories of Bhagat reflect the ordinary situations and experiences. The narrative in this story which underpins with several punch lines strikes with simple ambience, genuine characters and incidents oscillate between real and absurd characters with the pace of autobiographical account. There are some instances which presents the helplessness of the professors to handle the brilliant students who stances some challenging questions based on their common sense. Professor Dubey explains "the definition of a machine is simple. It is anything that reduces human effort. Anything so, see the world around you and it is full of machines". A student Ryan asked "Sir, what about a gym machine like a bench press or something that doesn't reduce human effort. These humorous questions motivate individuals to think beyond textual aspects. And to be away from the dystopian cultures.

Pather Panjali is an inexhaustible work by Bibhuthibhushan Bandopadhyaya which transcends cultural and linguistic barriers. The novel describes about the experiences of everyday life. It delineates the spiritual, moral, psychological growth of individuals in the context of contemporary social systems. Realistic features resonate through the novel. It features the verisimilitude of innocence in the framework of ecology. The essence of the novel lies in its adventure commitment and discovery. It enhances the realm of human consciousness with a pinch of naturality without any influence of digital media, traverses in a world between intuitions and wonder. The novel which composes in a mosaic narrative form which have the episodic structure include the vernacular languages, characters are an epitome of spontaneity. The particular sense of rhythm and repetition bequeaths upon the experience of rural life. The eternity of nature is relevant in the prose narratives of the novelist. Though the characters face the deficiencies of hardships but are not under the clutches of materialism. The series of story which shows natural appeal of characters and their fresh vigor. The cultural heritage of Varanasi and Bengal hovers and *Pather Panchali* vestiges as a classic piece of Indian literature for its representation of how social and cultural commotions determine individual character. The novelist who explicitly comments on social and cultural concerns by fabricating a realistic paradigm and notions of sentimentality quite disjointed and episodic, this facet is absent in postmodern and digitalized novels. The tranquil beauty of Bengali atmosphere with an eco-spiritualistic attitude renders throughout the novel. The interrelation of man and nature permeates through the novel.

Black Box, *Five point someone*, *Pather Panchali* can be analyzed through the spectacle of cultural and spatial diameter. It is evident that textual fluidity in the hyper textual culture unravels in the course of narrative strategies of *Black Box*. Whereas the narratives of *Pather Panchali* exhibits the myriad of realism and relies on the mystic notion of nature. *Five Point Someone* shows the system less life of technology, feeling of trust and hope, straight forward dialect without the confluence of grandiloquence and magnanimous style of writing, popular culture are evident in the story.

Modern society has been oscillated by the supremacy of cyber culture. *Black Box* an engrossing tale which shows the surveillance of technology. Technology has afforded ordinary people a chance to glow in the cosmos of human achievement. The fiction which was depicted as a deliberate sequence of pithy psychological dispatches, it can be viewed as an amalgam of manual of instructions and a mission log recited and recorded in one's body in order to complete a spy mission. The writer uses second person narrative, deploy the pronoun 'you' structure in the novel. There are some short dialogues addressing as 'you' for the protagonist's name, which is an embarrassing fact. Egan's *Black Box* does not detain itself to a single tweet and also amplify the scope and realm of flash fiction. Moreover, it intensify an image culture emphasizing the stigma of beauty on the contemporary cultural background As twitter narratives never reverse chronology and conversations between tweets, unrelated events are pierced upon through the medium. This is evident in *Black Box* which merges the textual dictates of Twitter and autonomous perceptions. She deployed the consecutive narrative time, its clipped, eloquent phrasing, and its atmosphere of breath taking through mysterious implication. The story moves by implementing guidance for the spy workers to co-ordinate their actions. It predates as a serial narrative but casts the shadow of mystery.

"You will be infiltrating the lives of criminals.

"You will be in constant danger.

"Some of you will not survive, but those

Who do will be heroes

"A few of you will save lives...

It first published as a series of tweets and appears to be like a prose poem because of short, pithy sentences. As the sentences, replete with quotation marks shows the firmity of protagonist and she has been enforced for severe security actions. The narration of events through short packed sentences in a serialized manner evokes a sense of hybridized cultural facet of cyber culture. It projects the futuristic ideals of a dystopian world and electronically fledged world.

Cultures are not pure, authentic and locally bounded, they are the syncretic and hybridized products of interaction across spatial and transcultural parameters. Transferring information by means of social networks, micro blogs which helps to prosper the civilized cultures. Cyber culture exists within the pace of globally networking system fetched all social functions in a sudden explosion. In the present scenario, the digital versions of hypertext extended the scope of cyber space and the virtual resources of a text. The gendering of techno culture makes aware of decentralizing possibilities. In the globalized world, culture permeates and expands the scope of its studies in varied identities and representations. The transnational dimension of cultural transformation makes the process of cultural translation a complex form of signification. The machinery and operations of language are central concerns for cultural studies. The investigation of culture has often been regarded as virtually interchangeable with the exploration of meaning produced symbolically through signifying systems that work like a language. Advent of digital media adds more implications to Cultural Studies.

References

- [1] Aciman, A., Emmett, R. *Twitterature: The world's greatest books in twenty tweets or less*. London: Penguin (2009)
- [2] Barker, Chris. *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice*. London: Sage publications (2008)
- [3] Bhagat, Chetan. *Five Point Someone*: Rupa, 2014. Print. Clark, T.W, Tarapada Mukherji. Pather Panchali: Song of the Road. France: U of Indiana p (1968)
- [4] Clark, T.W, Tarapada Mukherji. Pather Panchali: Song of the Road. France: U of Indiana p (1968)
- [5] Coming Soon: Jennifer Egan's Black Box. The New Yorker. 23 May 2012. <https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/coming-soon-jennifer-egans-black-box>
- [6] Harley, John. *A Short History of Cultural Studies*. London: Sage publications (2003)
- [7] Harraway, Donna. Simians, *Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology and Socialist Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century*. New York: Minnesota press (2016)
- [8] Hayles, Katherine N. *How we Become Post human; Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature and Informatics*. London: U of Chicago p (1999)
- [9] Kirby, Alan. *Digimodernism: How New Technologies Dismantle The Postmodern and Reconfiguring our Culture*. U.S.A: Continuum (2009)
- [10] More, Max. *The Transhumanist Reader*. New York: Blackwell (2013)

About the author



Anjali Vijay is an Assistant Professor in Department of English, St. Cyril's College, Adoor. She has actively participated in various National seminars. Her areas of interest are Transculture, Post colonization, and Postmodernism.