

**LITERATURE, TRAVEL AND REMINISCENCES IN VIKRAM SETH'S  
FROM HEAVEN LAKE TRAVELS THROUGH SINKIANG AND TIBET****DR.NATARAJU.G**Assistant Professor  
Department of Studies and Research in English  
KSOU, Mukthagangotri,  
Mysore-06**ABSTRACT**

*From Heaven Lake Travels through Sinkiang and Tibet is a travelogue based on Seth's travel through various parts of the People's Republic of China while he was a student at the University of Nanjing, in 1980-82. A very popular subgenre of travel literature started to emerge in the form of narratives of exploration in the postcolonial period. Travel and nature writing merge in many of the works by Sally Carrighar, Ivan T. Sanderson and Gerald Durrell. Travel literature often intersects with essay writing, as in V.S.Naipaul's India: A Wounded Civilization, where a trip becomes the occasion for extended observations on a nation and people. Sometimes a writer will settle into a locality for an extended period, absorbing a sense of place while continuing to observe with a travel writer's sensibility. Examples of such writings include Lawrence Durrell's Bitter Lemons, Deborah Tall's The Island of the White Cow and Peter Mayle's A Year in Provence. From Heaven Lake is an account of Seth's travels and has some rich poetic descriptions of the natural landscapes of China. We have detailed accounts of his interaction with the truck driver Sui and other co-passengers with whom he travels on the long, arduous journey across the Tibetan plateau. Seth plots his book in a communal setting, describing people, conversations, food and natural scenery with a great deal of intimacy. We find a keen eye for detail and appreciation of natural beauty. There is a sense of openness, compassion and honesty in what Seth describes throughout the novel. He makes us a willing participant of trials and tribulations that he has experienced during his travels visa vis the moments of joy and exhilaration with people, places in China, Tibet and Nepal.*

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**'ART' AND 'LIFE' IN JOHN KEATS' "ODE ON A GRECIAN URN"  
(SCRIPT FOR RADIO TALK)****DR. NATARAJU. G**

Assistant Professor

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Mukthagangotri, KSOU, Mysuru-06

**ABSTRACT**

*I am going to present a brief talk on John Keats poem, which is considered as a classic poem of 19<sup>th</sup> Century English Literature. John Keats is considered to be one of the great romantic poets of the early nineteenth century. Keats belongs to the second generation of Romantic poets like Shelley and Lord Byron. As a poet John Keats excelled among his contemporaries in his artistic portrayal and brilliant visual images. Generally Keats' poems capture the contraries such as 'Sorrow and Joy', 'Beauty and Decay', 'Time and Eternity', 'Art and Nature'.*

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John Keats is famous for his "Ode to a Nightingale", "Ode on a Grecian Urn" and "Ode to Autumn."

He admired life in all its facets and explores the true substance of human life. He connects the concepts such as Beauty, Imagination and Truth to the 'excellence of Art'.

After reading the poem, we identify that how the poem celebrates the manifestation of the artistic achievement.

I wish to share a few important lines from the poem.

The poem starts with the direct address to the Urn as;

**"Thou still unravished bride of quietness,  
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,  
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express  
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme"**

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**YANN MARTEL'S SELF : A JOURNEY WITHIN****DR.NATARAJU.G**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Yann Martel's Self explores the possibility of moving beyond the constructed boundaries of the Canadian nation and nationality, into a transnational space where multi-layered identities exist. The novel Self, a fictional autobiography of Yann Martel which discusses through transnational perspectives, the idea of the nation. It draws on the motifs of multilingualism, gender and sexuality. In Self the protagonist constructs his identity by negotiating the borders. Such borders are defined by how people live within certain specific social contexts. Of the binaries such as subject and object, past and present, male and female, the last calls our attention due to gender implications and the attendant political, ideological and emotional conundrums of being a man and a woman.*

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In an Interview Yann Martel answers to a question on form and identity, as follows:

"Could we talk about your first novel, *Self*, which you allude to in the "Author's Note" at the beginning of *Life of Pi* and which I hear you do not really like to talk about? *Self* is preoccupied with the old theme of identity, at least which is how it has been read. And it uses an ancient trope to approach this theme, namely that of metamorphosis. Its first-person narrator goes through a whole series of metamorphoses, turning from male to female to male, transgressing boundaries of bodies, gender, and identity, self and other which, in the book, are also transgressions of form (pages are divided, for instance, and the text is reduced to individual terms like "fear" and "pain"), genre, and modes of perception.

In *Pi* it seems that you are no longer as interested in such transgressions of form and identity?"

YM "Except that *Pi* practices three religions, which is transgressive. *Self* actually was less theory-driven than your question makes it sound like. Reducing it to its simplest form, it is a story of a boy who becomes a woman on his eighteenth birthday.

In the book this is a completely natural process, not the result of an operation. He has no desire to be a woman; he just wakes up being one. Actually, he becomes one over the course of a week while he is traveling through Portugal. His body starts changing and he turns into a

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**CULTURAL STUDIES: A LITERATURE PERSPECTIVE****DR.NATARAJU.G**

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KSOU, Mukthagangotri, Mysore-06**ABSTRACT**

*Literature has had a major impact on the development of society. It has shaped civilizations, changed political systems and revival of cultural values. Literature gives the deeper meaning to human existence. Literature also allows to question some of the most prominent beliefs and examine in today's life, which gives the deeper meaning to human existence. Hence the significance of literature becomes relevant. As a field of study, Cultural Studies has had important effects on the study of literature. It has challenged the idea of canonical literature, and affected the way literary texts are theorized and read. It has introduced interdisciplinary perspectives. It has sought to theorize the role of literature in society in new ways, and to look at literary texts in relation to cultural institutions, cultural history, and other cultural texts, forms, and practices.*

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The idea of culture has an even broader usage, developed from philosophy but given its greatest currency in the social sciences. Culture includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals and custom acquired by man as a member of society. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the word "culture" used to mean "formation of spirit". Some writers used it to mean progress, the improvement of the human spirit, a step towards the perfection of humanity. Others used it to mean "civilization" that is, the refinement of customs and knowledge.

The Victorian writers like Thomas Carlyle, John Ruskin and Mathew Arnold, the most powerful arbiters of Victorian taste, were convinced moral determinists. For them, good art was 'at root' a matter of good morality, directing the sensuous imagination of artist and audience alike; if the artistic vision was true, the technical details of expression would take care of themselves. In taking "vision" in this sense, these authorities effectively denied access to the mystery of art other than by uncritical, unsystematic procedures.

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