LYRICAL EXPRESSION OF FEMINISM:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF EMILY BRONTE AND
HABBA KHATOON

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## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABBREVIATIONS USED</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1-45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter I: SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS</td>
<td>46-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter II: LYRICAL IMAGINATION</td>
<td>65-91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter III: AFFIRMATION OF FEMALE IDENTITY</td>
<td>92-135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter IV: LYRICISM AND DESIRE FOR FREEDOM</td>
<td>136-179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter V: SEMBLANCE OF SUBJECTIVITY</td>
<td>180-210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>211-231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORKS CITED AND CONSULTED</td>
<td>232-247</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABBREVIATIONS USED

BOKP - Best of Kashmiri Poetry
MIL - Medieval Indian Literature
SBP - Selected Bronte Poems
WH&P - Wuthering Heights And Poems
INTRODUCTION
INTRODUCTION

Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte, two eminent women belonging to two disparate races, cultures, languages and milieus make an interesting and profitable subject of comparative study within the framework of comparative literature. Habba Khatoon, a woman of the Himalayan valley, Kashmir in South East-Asia belonging to the sixteenth century, and Emily Bronte, a woman writer of England in Europe of the nineteenth century, in spite of the distance of time, place, and milieu, have many things in common, but the most important thing common to them is that both were women poets. Apparently this common attribute of Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte does not make a strong rationale for a comparative study of their works, but taking into consideration the theoretical notions of the well-defined discipline of Comparative Literature, the study is not only justifiable but also leading to possibilities of understanding the creative faculties of women, in general, and that of the two poets, in particular. Their expressions of self assertion and, eventually, their revolt against the patriarchal society and its ethical and cultural credos that denied freedom to women-folk can be analysed in the light of the texts available in the two languages.
Emily Bronte and Habba Khatoon, in spite of the difference of ages, languages, cultures, and ethos, provide us with a very interesting as well as revealing area of comparative study because there is a striking resemblance of their voices and sensibility in their poetry. The two eminent women poets, occurring in two different cultural and linguistic circumstances are identical chiefly for having chosen the lyrical mode for spacing out the myth of womanhood through their poetic exuberance.

The two poets, in spite of the chronological and cultural difference, are comparable in terms of affinities and divergences in giving expression to womanhood through lyrical mode. This study will, therefore examine the feminist thematics in the works of Emily Bronte and Habba Khatoon as structures of opposition to the central concerns and structures of the cultures and sub-cultures out of which they are written and which they represent and establish that feminism cannot be dubbed as merely a late twentieth century phenomenon but as a mere shadow of the works of these women poets. The focus will be on how lyricism becomes a powerful tool towards self realization and in turn a strong medium to achieve freedom.

Comparative Literature as a recognized interdisciplinary discourse has a solid theoretical basis that makes it possible to
undertake a comparative assessment of any two literatures of any two ages. Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte, despite the visible differences, have many things in common, however, comparative study is not confined to exploring commonalities alone, it embraces contrasts as well.

The term Comparative literature, was used for the first time in 1848, by Mathew Arnold in English when he translated a French term “litterature comparee” used by Villemain in 1829 (Childs 29). Its antecedents can be found in the ideas of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe in his vision of world literature (Weltliteratur). However, as a distinct academic field, comparative literature is quite new. It deals with the analytic comparison, both in terms of similarities and dissimilarities, of any two literatures or works of any two authors of two or more different linguistic, cultural or national entities. It may be mentioned here that comparative analysis may also be applied to any two or more than two works of the same language, produced in the same age or in different ages.

Translation of poetic works from other languages into English has worked as a viable tool for comparative study. When the translator produces dynamic equivalents, the research is stimulated to undertake its comparison in the source language. Fortunately, there are more than
one English translations of many of the poems of Habba Khatoon available that encourage their comparison with the corresponding texts in English.

Scholars in the field of comparative literature, sometimes called comparatists, are supposed to be proficient in the two languages and acquainted with the literary traditions, literary criticism, and major literary texts obtained in those languages. No literary work exists in isolation; it gets influenced by other works and many other aspects of life. The poetry of Habba Khatoon is thus to be considered a part of a long tradition of romantic lyricism that generally assumed mystic significance through intense expression of love. At the same time, her poetry can be best understood when Kashmiri poetry is understood as a part of the extensive range of oriental aesthetic that reached sublime heights in the songs imbued with mellifluous expressions of passionate love. Similarly, Emily Bronte’s poems cannot be appreciated if a reader has no knowledge of the great tradition of the nineteenth century English Romantic poets like Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Shelly and Byron. Her poetry is at the same time to be taken as an individual voice within the framework of western aesthetic that had multifarious media of expression in languages, lyrical poetry being one of such media.
Comparative literature is an interdisciplinary field whose practitioners study literature across national borders, time periods, languages, genres, boundaries between literature and the other arts (music, painting, dance, film, etc.), and disciplines (literature and psychology, philosophy, science, history, architecture, sociology, politics, etc.). An individual poet or writer remains purely an abstraction if she/he is not approached through various directions. A poet is first of all an individual human being in a particular space and time, she/he is determined by her/his roles as a wife, a husband, a father, brother and other relations, and as such involves a psychological approach that may help us understand her/his personality through duration of time. The poet is at the same time a social being with relations to her/his society that determine her/his individuality and are themselves affected to some extent by her/his social role; a sociological approach is, therefore, entailed. Similarly, a writer exists in relation to the ethical, aesthetic, spiritual and cultural values of the community she/he belongs to; a historical approach is, therefore, inevitable. A writer exists in relation to the moment, milieu and race, and her/his creative product also is organically linked to the three determining factors; comparative literature, as such, takes into account all the three factors. In this perspective, there is ample scope of
comparative study in all forms of literature. Alfred Guerard once made a profound remark, “Abolish comparative literature because all literature is comparative” (Rivkin 307).

All this ambiguity in the very concept of comparative nature of literature notwithstanding, the discipline has evolved as a distinct approach and point of view and it is recognized as a well established method of criticism also. Henry Remak defines comparative literature in the following words:

Comparative literature is the study of literature beyond the confines of one particular country, and the study of the relationships between literature on the one hand and other areas of knowledge and belief, such as the arts, philosophy, history, the social sciences, the sciences, religion etc., on the other. In brief, it is the comparison of one literature with another or others, and the comparison of literature with other spheres of human expression. (6)

Thus defined most broadly, comparative literature is the study of literature without borders. Scholarship in comparative literature includes, for example, studying literacy and social status in the people of a community, studying medieval epic and romance, studying the links of literature to folklore and mythology, studying colonial and
postcolonial writings in different parts of the world, asking fundamental questions about definitions of literature itself. What scholars in comparative literature share is a desire to study literature beyond national boundaries and an interest in languages so that they can read foreign texts in their original form. Many comparatists also share the desire to integrate literary experience with other cultural phenomena such as historical change, philosophical concepts, and social movements. Rene Wellek and Austin Warren, the two major theoreticians and practitioners of comparative literature, write:

Comparison between literatures, if isolated from concern with total national literature, tends to restrict themselves to external problems of sources and influences, reputation and fame. Such studies do not permit us to analyse and judge an individual work of art, or even to consider the complicated whole of its genesis; instead, they are mainly devoted either to such echoes of masterpiece as translations and imitations, frequently by second rate authors, or to the pre-history of a masterpiece, the migrations and spread of its themes and forms. The emphasis of comparative literature thus conceived is on externals; and the decline of this type of comparative
literature in recent decades reflects the general turning away from stress on mere ‘facts', on sources and influences. (48)

Literature, according to Rene Wellek and Austin Warren, is determined by the language in which it occurs. Even a layman can distinguish English literature from Kashmiri literature, English literature from French or Russian literature and Kashmiri from Punjabi literature and so on. But a comparatist also takes into consideration the fact that in modern times several literatures occur in the same language. For example in Kashmiri we recognize that Sufi literature is definitely different from Bhakti literature, or literature produced by the Kashmiris living in the valley tends to be different from the literature produced by writers who live away from the mainland. Similarly, we have several literatures in English: American literature, Indian English literature, Caribbean literature and English literature. Existence of multiple voices or literatures in the same language and its multitudinous forms in different languages entails comparative interpretation, evaluation and analysis so that the universals of literature and their impact on human mind are understood. Recognition of the fact that all literature is one, but written in countless languages strengthens the theory and method of comparative literature. It is
immaterial whether there is much common between the target pieces of literature. Comparative literature considers all works of literature as historical documents or monuments of human experience. Mathew Arnold strongly recommended that every serious student needs to know at least one literature besides the literature in his own language. He wrote, “Every great critic should try and possess one great literature, at least, besides his own, and the more unlike his own, the better” (263). Arnold’s emphasis on “the more unlike his own, the better” means that Comparative Literature is more relevant when the two target works or authors under critical scrutiny are dissimilar in terms of language, culture, age, and ethos. When the critic has an adequate knowledge of a language and the literature in it, radically different in conceiving the world, it becomes easier to acquire appropriate knowledge of one’s own language and its literature.

Originality of every work of literature lies in its difference from other works of literature; it comprises of its uniqueness. From this perspective, comparative literature provides us with an inexhaustible scope of studying world literatures without getting hackneyed.

There are at least three basic meanings of comparative literature in the theory developed by Wellek and Warren.
Firstly, comparative literature is most desired in studying the relationship of a written work of literature or an author with the oral literature available in the oral culture. The value of an individual’s written work lies on the one hand in its distance from the oral literature, and at the same time in its genuine relation with it. The lyrics of Emily Bronte and Habba Khatoon are an interesting case for this kind of study.

Secondly, comparative literature is the study of similarities and dissimilarities between two or more literatures; genealogical kinship of languages is no consideration.

Thirdly, comparative literature means comparing a work of literature with world literature, Weltliterature in Goethe’s parlance. The presumption is that all literatures of the world are one literature, constants and variables have equal importance.

The scope of comparative literature was widened when study of literature came into contact with other disciplines of knowledge like psychology, anthropology, sociology, history and so on. Newer sub-fields stress theoretical acumen and the ability of a scholar to consider different types of art concurrently. In this respect “interdisciplinarity”, as Roland Barthes suggests, plays the key role. Barthes wrote:
What is new and which affects the idea of the work comes not necessarily from the internal recasting of each of these disciplines, but rather from their encounter in relation to an object which traditionally is the province of none of them. It is indeed as though the interdisciplinarity which is today held up as a prime value in research cannot be accomplished by the simple confrontation of specialist branch of knowledge. (285)

The discipline of comparative literature has received fresh impetus from various allied concepts and theories such as universal grammar, universal semantics, inter-textuality (Julia Christeva), and inter-disciplinarity (Barthes). The direct influence of all these theories has broadened the horizon of literary studies in all languages.

The notion of interdisciplinary nature of literature was proposed by Julia Kristeva. This notion became the pivotal concept of all post-structural studies. The Post-structuralists assert that it is difference of the text of a piece of literature from other texts that is the significance of that text. Text, according to them, owes its existence to its synchronic and diachronic relations with other texts. No text can, therefore be read, enjoyed or evaluated in isolation. Julia Kristeva in Nations Without Nationalism wrote, “every text takes shape as a
mosaic of citations, every text is the absorption and transformation of other texts. The notion of inter-textuality comes to take the place of the notion of inter-subjectivity” (146). The interdisciplinary nature of the field means that comparatists have to have adequate acquaintance with translation studies, sociology, critical theory, cultural studies, religious studies, and history. This eclecticism has led critics to charge that comparative literature is insufficiently well-defined, or that comparatists too easily fall into dilettantism, because the scope of their work is, of necessity, broad.

Contemporary comparatists in the US and elsewhere re-focus the discipline away from the nation-based approach with which it was previously associated towards a cross-cultural approach that pays no heed to national borders. Given developments in the studies of globalization and inter-reculturalism, comparative literature, already representing a wider study than the single-language nation-state approach, may be well suited to move away from the paradigm of the nation-state. While in the West, comparative literature is experiencing institutional constriction, there are signs that in many parts of the world the discipline is thriving, especially in Asia, Latin America, and the Mediterranean. Current trends in comparative literature also reflect the growing importance of cultural studies in the fields of literature.
The scope of comparative literature was immensely widened by some other academic fields and intellectual and cultural movements like Feminism, Structuralism, Post-structuralism and Post-Modernism. For the present considerations, we shall see how feminism running parallel to comparative literature provides us with the framework and methodology for a comparative study of the works of two eminent women writers belonging to two disparate languages and cultural milieus.

Feminist criticism is a by-product of the western liberalism and feminist thought in particular. Theoretical foundation of feminist criticism is said to be laid by Simone de Beauvoir’s book titled, *The Second Sex*. This was followed by Kate Millet’s *Sexual Politics*, who pointed out sex (based on biological difference) and gender (the result of culture-conditioning) as the pair of components recurring in feminist theory.

Though studies in women’s problems, their social and cultural role and issues of women’s freedom are not new, feminism emerged as a major intellectual and political movement in the twentieth century. The term, in spite of proliferating bulk of studies in the field, is still an ambiguous term. The basic cause of this ambiguity is that there are many different kinds of feminism. There is no agreement about what
sexism consists in, and what exactly ought to be done about it; they disagree about what it means to a woman or a man and what social and political implications gender has or should have. However, motivated by the quest for social justice, feminist inquiry provides a wide range of perspectives on social, cultural, economic, and political phenomena. Important topics for feminist theory and politics include: the body, class and work, disability, the family, globalization, human rights, popular culture, race and racism, reproduction, science, the self, sex work, human trafficking, and sexuality. The term feminism has been variously interpreted by various people. There are some writers who use the term feminism to refer to a historically specific political movement in the US and Europe. On the other hand some other writers use it to refer to the belief that there are injustices against women, however, these injustices have not been identified and listed. The term has a history in English linked with women’s activism from the late 19th century to the present. It is worthwhile that we distinguish feminist ideas or beliefs from feminist political movements. There have been periods in history when there was no significant political activism around women’s subjugation, many writers and intellectuals were concerned with justice for women. As early as in the times of early Greek scholars, woman was a hot subject for debate. The earliest
known feminist, for example, was Plato who wrote that women should be trained to rule (*Republic*, Book V). Aristotle, despite his genius and rational approach to life, vehemently opposed the idea of giving equal status to women. He wrote, “the female is a female by virtue of a certain lack of qualities, we should regard the female nature as afflicted with a natural defectiveness” (15-6). It is not our aim to survey the history of feminism here, but it is pertinent to delineate some of the principal meanings of the term that are most relevant to the present study.

By the mid of the nineteenth century the term Feminism was used to refer to the qualities of females. The First International Women’s Conference was held in Paris in 1892. It was in that conference that the term was used in English. It was an equivalent of the French term féministe. Before this event the term feminism in English is rooted in the mobilization for woman suffrage in Europe and the US during the late 19th and early 20th century, but it was not in favour of women. It is usually referred to as the first Wave of Feminism. The second Wave of Feminism began in the late 1960’s and early 1970’s after being sidelined during the two World Wars. Feminists of the Second Wave broadened the meaning of feminism beyond the struggle for political rights, they resolved to fight for
greater equality in finding opportunities to work, better conditions at workplace, in acquiring and imparting education, and most significantly, respect and dignity at home. With the course of time, new developments took place in various aspects of feminism and they resulted in a Third Wave. Third Wave feminists paid attention to the differences among women due to race, ethnicity, class, nationality, religion and emphasize identity as a site of gender struggle. The central issue common to all the three Waves of Feminism is to resist male domination and gender discrimination.

In spite of the various meanings of feminism, our purpose would be to identify feminism in terms of a set of ideas or beliefs rather than participation in any particular political movement. There have been many feminists across the world whose work was not understood or appreciated during their time. In identifying a core set of feminist beliefs, one may suggest that we should focus on the political ideas because the term was apparently coined to emphasise commitment to women's equal rights. We have to bear it in our mind that commitment to and advocacy for women's rights has not been confined to the Women’s Liberation Movement in the West. The fault with this assertion is that it frames feminism within a broadly liberal approach to political and economic life. It is true that achieving equal rights for
women is a necessary condition for feminism to succeed, but this would not be sufficient. Women’s oppression under male domination does not mean depriving women of political and legal rights. Women’s oppression as a result of male domination is rooted in the very structure of our society and culture, and permeates our reason and analysis. Here it is pertinent to say that sometimes feminism has gained such political connotations as proletarian liberation struggle. Feminism, as liberation struggle, must exist apart from and as a part of the larger struggle to eradicate domination in all its forms. We must understand that patriarchal domination shares an ideological foundation with racism and other forms of group oppression, and that there is no hope that it can be eradicated while these systems remain intact. This knowledge should consistently inform the direction of feminist theory and practice.

In the form of a liberation struggle, feminism is definitely a phenomenon specific to modern times, but taken as a resistance against oppression, feminism existed even when there was no concept of male oppression; women had succumbed to the millennia-old patriarchal notion that woman is produced by Nature as a dainty for man, that woman is the earth and man is the sky. This is how Habba Khatoon sang:
I am the earth and you are the sky,
you are the cover to conceal my secret;
I am the dainty dish and you are the guest,

come and enjoy my pomegranate blooms. (BOKP 34)

Oppression on women was not racial or political, but primarily sexist in nature and what made it more harmful was that women had accepted this sexist oppression as their destiny. This primitive notion is grounded in the universal fact of the eroticization of male dominance and female submission. Before the advent of modern biology, sexism was based on various myths and superstitions. In all patriarchal societies, it was believed that woman is the earth for man to till. They did not know that man and woman are equally responsible for reproduction when the fertilization or merger of male and female gametes in making a zygote takes place. The superiority of man was based on the appearance of the physical act, surrender and mounting, receiving and giving. They did not believe in the fact that woman is not merely the body, but she too has a self and a personality. Simone de Beauvoir concludes the first chapter of her monumental book The Second Sex with the following conclusion:

The enslavement of the female to the species and the limitations of her various powers are extremely important
facts; the body of woman is one of the essential elements in her situation in the world. But that body is not enough to define her as a woman; there is no true living reality except as manifested by the conscious individual through activities and in the bosom of a society. Biology is not enough to give an answer to the question that is before us: why is woman the Other? Our task is to discover how the nature of woman has been affected throughout the course of history; we are concerned to find out what humanity has made of the human female. (69)

In recent times oppression is not seen in terms of sexism alone, it is being interpreted in a variety of ways. There are as many as five kinds of oppression besides sexism: exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and systematic violence. Woman’s acquiescence in all these forms of oppression is a result of her continuous deprivation of the right to express.

Habba Khatoon, the most popular Kashmiri poet, unlike Emily Bronte, has been a subject of numerous imaginative narratives, poems, plays, films, and television serials. In all this body of literature, Habba Khatoon has been a subject of an un-academic and speculative debate as if she were a character of folk myth. She is unparalleled in
representing common woman’s suffering, desires, yearnings, nostalgia, and romantic fervor in verse. Her poetry, most effective when sung in the time-honoured folk tunes, has intensity of sentiments, brilliant imagery and ecstatic mellifluous rhythm. The songs are so swaying that the listener/reader hardly gets time to discover the underlying beauty of experience and theme.

Despite her popularity and eminence, she has remained almost ignored by Kashmiri historians, chroniclers, literary critics, and academicians. Her name figured on the pages of history two hundred years after her death. Abdul Wahab Shaiq (1765) for the first time mentioned her name (Habibah) in his history in Persian verse; he, however, did not give any details about her life and work. Later historians repeated Shaiq’s statement that she was a paramour of Sultan Yousuf Shah Chak who ruled Kashmir for a very brief span of time in the sixteenth century.

Being an integral part of folk memory, various singers of various times have made several interpolations in her popular lyrics. Jagannath Wali wrote a play, entitled Zoon in 1951 on the life of Habba Khatoon in which the playwright, besides changing the events to his convenience, composed a few new songs and ascribed them to Habba Khatoon.
Amin Kamil in his Kulyaati Habba Khatoon, did a commendable job by collecting all lyrics and tales ascribed to Habba Khatoon. Ghulam Rasool Bhat’s book, Habba Khatoon: Tarikh Ke Aine Main, too, is a good work but it also repeats the amorphous, contradictory, and confusing details about her life. A very popular TV film Habba Khatoon, by Bashir Badgami has amplified the myth and then Shafi Shauq’s script for 13-episode TV serial Habba Khatoon was yet another unauthentic story that made her life look like a character of fiction.

A different but convincing profile of Habba Khatoon is found in a mathnavi (a long narrative in couplets) written by Ghulam Mohammad Hanafi (1867-1927). The story of the mathnavi is based on a legend very popular in Kamraz and Gurez. According to Hanafi, Habba Khatoon, originally called Zoon (the Moon) was daughter of a Raja of Gurez who owed a lot of money to one Hayaband, a trader of Lalahome village in Kamraz. Having failed to repay the debts, the Raja gave Zoon in marriage to Hayaband’s son, named Aziz Lone. Zoon was maltreated by her in-laws and she gave vent to her suffering in many a poignant song. One day the king of the time Sultan Yousuf Shah Chak heard her singing while working in her field and was eventually enraptured by her beauty and melody. The Sultan took her
to his palace, got her divorced from her husband, and married her. The romantic and pleasure-mongering Yousuf Shah had not the good luck to have peace as he was constantly at strife with the Mughals who repeatedly attacked Kashmir. The Sultan of Kashmir was ultimately arrested by Akbar and then exiled to Biswak in Bihar. Separated from her lover, Habba Khatoon languished and composed several movingly poignant songs which she sang while roaming from village to village. It was a peasant of Tsandhaar (Pampore), named Abdi Rather, who gave her shelter.

The above account of Habba Khatoon’s tragic life is supported by Prof. Mohi-ud-Din Hajni in his collection of essays in folk lore, titled *Luki ras*.

Emily Bronte, (1818-1848) unlike Habba Khatoon, is one of the most authentic writers in English, mainly famous for her great novel *Wuthering Heights*. Born in a small hamlet in Yorkshire in 1818, Emily Bronte was sent away to a deserted village school (described by Charlotte Bronte in *Jane Eyre*) along with her two elder sisters. She suffered immensely because of their death in the extremely bad conditions of the school. Earlier she had lost her mother when she was just two. Her father, himself a clergyman brought her home and educated her, and her two remaining sisters and her brother himself.
Her father Mr. Bronte taught her religion, poetry, history and even politics. Emily Bronte, being very reclusive and withdrawn by nature, showed passion for fantasy, rhyming, composing poems and creating stories. She, with the assistance of her younger sister Anne, started writing a series of stories about an imaginary island, called Gondal. Being shy of publicity she, like her two other sisters, adopted a pseudonym Currer and sent her poems for publication. Although her poetry did not receive any attention, she continued writing poetry while writing her immortal novel *Wuthering Heights*. She died in 1848 when she was just thirty.

The persona that emerges in her poems has many characteristics common with the protagonist of her novel *Wuthering Heights*, called Catherine. The poems express her passion for breaking through the contradictions of mundane life, desire for union with the other, an imaginary lover or death, and irresistible yearning for a fuller, freer elemental world of spirit. The poems express a longing to transcend the limitations of social constraints and mortal life. Being a visionary, she has many things common with other romantic poets of the time like Byron and Shelley. However, the overtones of mystical reunion with elemental world make her voice distinct and very individual. It is the
voice of universal feminity infringed upon for many centuries by the phallo-centric world.

Emily Bronte’s poetry has been receiving fresh attention because of the ongoing literary and cultural movements, particularly Feminism and Post-Structuralism.

A famous French theoretician in feminist and post-structuralist criticism G. Bataille, for instance calls Emily Bronte an avant-gardist among the nineteenth century woman poets. Bronte has been targeted as the angry thwarted proto-feminist of the mid nineteenth century. Feminist humanism in the 1960’s and 1970’s read Bronte as a triumph of female agency over patriarchal power.

Emily Bronte existed in an altogether cultural ambience about three hundred years after the death of Habba Khatoon, yet we are convinced that various universals and constants of aesthetic comprehension of life and variables of cultural and linguistic tradition provide us a wide, almost inexhaustible field for comparative studies. Emily Bronte and Habba Khatoon, two woman poets of two different ages and different cultures, are the voices of future being in consonance in their radicalism and passion for liberation.

Thus the perspective of feminism provides us with reason and a method of making a comparative study of two poets of unrelated
cultures, races and milieus. For the present purpose Emily Bronte and Habba Khatoon’s poetry has to be seen and evaluated in relation to the respective literary traditions that have played most vital role in shaping their individual talent and output. No poetry, however innovative it may be, can escape the influence of poetic sensibility that exists in the language of the poet. Tradition in the words of T.S. Eliot, “cannot be inherited, and if you want it you must obtain it by great labour” (7). Explaining the relation of individual talent to tradition he wrote:

No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists. You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead. I mean this is a principle of aesthetic, not merely of historical criticism. (8)

Thus comparative literary appreciation depends on the principle of locating a poet in the broad mosaic of poets, and then finding how that individual poet has made, or not made, any contribution to the tradition. Before we make an attempt to study Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte, it is necessary that each of the two poets is set among the poets that preceded her or lived in her age.
Habba Khatoon’s poetry is, therefore, a continuation as well as deviation from the unique poetic tradition that existed in her language for at least three hundred years before her. The history of the recorded literature in Kashmiri is not less than one thousand years old. In spite of being deprived of state patronage, the literature obtaining in the language shows an amazing diversity both in literary forms and themes. Parallel to the traditions of oral literature in the ordinary speech of the folks, there has been a continuous tradition of elite literature produced by individual creative writers. As early as in the eighth-ninth century, the mystic sages, known as Reshis and Chums, composed aphoristic sayings in scholarly idiom. The extant sayings, known as *Chumsampradaay*, though quite scanty, suggest that tradition of spiritual poetry in the language preceded these mystic verses. Another landmark in medieval Kashmiri literature is *Mahaanayapraakaasha* of Shati Kantha of the 12th century. A string of over 94 vaakhas is read as a well-structured mystic poem. It was, however, in the 14th century that the real history of Kashmiri literature began when a woman poet of extraordinary creative genius, Lal Ded laid a strong foundation of Kashmiri poetry. Her poetry in the form of vaakh (Sanskrit Vaakh or Vaakyani) nevertheless seems to be the culmination rather than beginning of a poetic tradition, unfortunately
irretrievably lost. Here are a few vaakhas of Lal Ded to show the richness of her experience and beauty of her expression:

   With fragile body, I rove in the ocean,
   When shall God listen and take me across!
   as water oozes out from unbaked pots,
   so do I pine to be home again. (*BOKP* 10)

In these vaakh of Lal Ded, we find the central theme of the quest of Love for attainment of God highlighted. Though the soul’s yearnings are profoundly spiritual in nature, the metaphor is passionately human, and interestingly through feminine voice:

   I, Lala, pined away in the search and chase,
   with full intent I approached Him in my nearness;
   I tried to see Him, but the doors were latched,
   Obdurately I lay there with watchful eyes. (*BOKP* 10)

It was not unique of Lala’s vaakhs alone, all mystic poetry of the world imagine the Ultimate Truth as a Male Principle and the desiring soul as the Female Principle. Since Lala was herself a woman poet, her use of the feminine gender has added intensity to her expression.

   While Lal Ded used metaphorical medium for the expression of her inner light that she gained through spiritual meditation, her younger contemporary and disciple Nund Reshi, also known as Sheikh-ul-
Alam, chose the language of the masses to write about the world of men and women and to guide them in the hardest of times in Kashmir history through spiritual amelioration and faith in God’s mercy. He, like his spiritual Guru Lal Ded, wrote in the quatrain form as it was easy to remember. His quatrains are called Shruky (knots). Here is one of his shruks that amply reveal how he used the idiom of the masses to address them in matters of spiritual longing as well as in worldly life:

Understand the one and be one with the One,

The oneness is manifest all around;

Your reason and thought shall not comprehend the One,

Who is there to swallow the gushing river. (BOKP 13)

After the 14th-15th century Kashmiri literature passed through a long period of sterility as the valley was caught up by incessant civil wars and aggressions. Except a body of eroto-mystic folksongs, (songs composed by anonymous poets), quite impressive in terms of quality and quantity, there is nothing traceable from this period. A senior contemporary of Habba Khatoon, Habib-ul-Lah Nawshehri Hubbi (1550 A.D-1617 A.D.) is just one poet whose lyrics are preserved as he was an esteemed saint. His poetry, though quite scanty, is in tune with the lyrical strain of the time. In a stanza from a famous song, perhaps the most popular one, of the most reverend, he says:
“Be!”, He said, and anon all was there
in myriad forms He appeared,
what name shall I give to Him;
let’s go and enjoy the fete. (BOKP 22)

Islamic mysticism, called Tasawuf, was introduced into Kashmiri poetry by Sheikh Noor-ud-Din. The strain of poetry that followed, mainly in the lyrical form, is known as Sufi poetry. Shafi Shauq writes about the Sufi poets:

The Sufi poets believed that the primeval force that caused creation was Love. It was Love that God was always there in time, but veiled from any observation, and it was His love for Himself that He created the diverse creation that He might be known. The whole assemblage is, therefore, a mirror in which the Creator enjoys seeing the reflection of His Beauty. The Sufis, therefore, find every object, big, small, good and bad, and every phenomenon replete with that eternal Beauty. They believe that man’s purpose of living in the assemblage of things is not being a spectator of the creative activity, but being a dynamic force to contribute to the Beauty-led process of being and non-being. (MIL 543)
Parallel to Sufi songs, like the one quoted above, there was a flourishing tradition of Looli Vatsan (love songs). Love is a craving for completion through reunion with a separated lover so that the lover’s alienation ends. While the Sufi songs, using all manner of imagery to suggest physical beauty (husn), desire (ishq) and consummation (fana) in the shape of physical reunion (vasl), the love songs are artless and impulsive expression of the desire for an uncommon beauty alone. The love songs, unlike Sufi songs, do not use occasional scholarly references that would need thoughtful consideration. The language is simple and the imagery is drawn from the surrounding natural world and the world of rustic occupations. However, in love songs too we come across with references to the tales of the past, but all these references, caused by the compulsions of rhyme, are meant to reinforce the lover’s ardour of desire.

A characteristic common to the Sufi and Lool songs is that the lover is invariably an adolescent girl who is immaculate and innocent and the beloved is a nonchalant and hard-hearted man who takes a sadistic pleasure in the pain and suffering of the loving soul. Sometimes it is not quite easy to differentiate physical love (ishq-i-majazi) from spiritual love (ishq-i-haqiqi).
In a popular mystic song *Where Shall I Seek My Friend?* that can be enjoyed as a love song, Habba Khatoon says, “He is in sight or in mind/Where shall I seek my friend?” (*MIL* 675). A folk song, *Call To The Moon* for instance, depicts the pitiable condition of a rustic married orphan girl remembering her parental house. The pathos and music of the poem is swaying:

> The Moon rises and dew drops wash the garden basil.
> 
> O Moon! come down to the hapless girls.
> 
> Those who have their fathers are visited by them,
> And one without a father remains watching in despair.
> 
> O Moon! come down to the hapless girls.
> 
> Those who have their brothers are visited by them,
> And one without a father remains watching in despair.
> 
> Those who have their fathers are visited by them.

(*BOKP* 73)

Kashmiri folk songs were sung by common young girls as well as women in late evenings during the holy month of Ramadan, on the days of Eid festivals, on marriage ceremonies and also during their usual chores, be it breaking clods in fields, weeding, harvesting or collecting fuel in the forests. In all these songs that descended from one generation to another through collective memory Kashmiri women
express their joys, sorrows, woes and suffering. Prof. Shauq writes about the folk songs like the one given above:

Kashmiri folk-songs, variegated in phrase and sentiment, are associated with the life in action: birth, childhood, marriage, sowing, harvesting, and various rituals and festivals. They represent the people’s repressed propensities, subconscious drives, attitudes to the changing natural phenomena, and the social relations in medieval ages; the true history of the Kashmiri people is beautifully and most faithfully recorded in the folk songs of the land. (233)

Thus the tradition of folk songs, on the one hand, and the mystic songs, on the other, shaped Habba Khatoon’s poetic sensibility. Being herself an untutored woman of the countryside, she opted for the former strain that flourished in the language in the form of the vatsun, a heavily rhymed song with variegated versification patterns, recurring refrains and alliterative diction.

A folk song of antiquity that is very close to Habba Khatoon’s delicate feelings and emotional response:

While sauntering in the garden I made nosegays of ivy,

I visited the market place after six months,
There I perchance met my dear father,
.........................
My darling child, you better go in-laws home,
your life you have to spend there,
nothing you are to gain from your parents’ home.

(BOKP 45)
The song, too delicate for translation, depicts the plight of every Kashmiri woman who is destined to leave her parental home that she loves fondly. She remains confined to her in-laws home where she has little freedom to go outdoors. Working in the fields is her only choice of freedom. The parents also willy-nilly accept this inevitable destiny of their daughter. The father’s advice to his darling daughter in the song reveals the pathetic condition of Kashmiri woman who had no choice in shaping her life.

Habba Khatoon inherited this kind of oral lyrical tradition that was a part of the actual social life of the time rather than a form of mystical contemplation. Her poetry is submerged in the oral culture of the time and looks like an inseparable part of it.

The literary traditions in English, though not older than that in Kashmiri, are more diverse in terms of theme and subject matter. Interestingly, the real history of English literature also began from the
14th century with the poetry of Chaucer as it began with the poetry of Lal Ded in Kashmiri. In both languages poetry had had a long history before the 14th century. The basic difference between English and Kashmiri literary traditions, nevertheless, is that while English literature is rooted in the physical world of strife, joys, and sorrows of the people engaged in actual life situations, Kashmiri literature of the past in general remained withdrawn from the physical world and expressed the strife of the soul. The English people, living in a country with a long coastline, were from the very beginning in contact with other nations and had a tendency for adventure and conquering other nations. Its literature, true to its people is, therefore, vibrant and variegated in nature. Kashmiri people, on the other hand, living in the Himalayan valley, almost insulated from the rest of the world by insurmountable mountains, were inclined to remain withdrawn, introverted and mystical.

By the end of the 18th century, when Emily Bronte wrote, English literature had already witnessed several revolutions, showing basic shifts in themes and forms. English poets showed a tendency to abandon the strict Augustan ideals and showed interest in expression of their personal sentiments and feelings. The most visible sign of this new tendency was evinced in their attitude to nature. Some of the
outstanding poets of this new trend are Thomas Gray, George Crabbe, Christopher Smart and Robert Burns as well as the Irish poet Oliver Goldsmith. They heralded the Romantic movement of the 19th century. The Romantic Movement swayed almost all British poets as it coincided with social and political turbulence and revolutions in France, Ireland and the United States. In Great Britain also there was a strong movement for social change and sharing of power. Romanticism in poetry of the time was expressed in the form of revolt against aristocracy and its ethical mores, love for freedom that they discovered in all phenomena of nature, and unhampered and spontaneous expression without subservience to classical prescriptions of diction and order. Some major representative poets of this movement were William Blake, William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Lord Byron, and John Keats. It is usually said that the birth of English Romanticism dates to the publication of Wordsworth and Coleridge’s *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798, but, as mentioned above, the factors that caused this Movement lay outside poetry. Though various poets of the Romantic Movement wrote variously, there are some salient features that mark their poetry to varying degrees. Some of the common characteristics of the Romantic poetry of the 19th century are: use of ordinary language, belief in organic form, love for nature,
nostalgia, and melancholy. Emily Bronte read this poetry and could not escape its influence.

The two woman poets, in spite of having much in common in their poetry, lived their lives in entirely different ways. It is pertinent here to give an outline of the life of each of the two poets.

Habba Khatoon’s life is not documented and remains shrouded in folk legends. Being an accomplished and distinguished woman, she might have remained a part of oral legends after her death. The chroniclers of her time have not mentioned her name. It was some one hundred years after her death, that is in 1756, that a historian Abdul Wahaab Shaiq wrote about her in his book Riyaaz-al Islam:

The renowned king had a singer in his court who was unexcelled in this world. She, called Habba Khatoon, was also a mystic of great accomplishment. Her mellifluous songs were an invaluable treasure always available to the king. Her poetry is full of absorbing cadence, so refreshing that it can rejuvenate even the dead. Every word she used scattered pearls in his court, all her songs were in Kashmiri. Her songs are always with the Kashmiris, they are very popular, but never recorded. All
Kashmiris were delighted by her songs, and they were a source of pleasure for the king Yousuf. (Naji 103)

The popular legend in Kashmir is that Habba Khatoon’s original name was Zoon (the Moon). She was daughter of a peasant of Pampore village. She was married to a rustic yokel in her early teens. She was tormented by her husband and other members of her in-laws home. One day while she was singing of her woes solitarily during an errand, the King of the time Yousuf Shah Chak, was enthralled by her beauty and magic of her song. He eventually fell in love with her. He got her divorced from her husband and married her. (It is also said that he kept her in his court as his favourite concubine.) Being adept in music and poetry, she was called Habba Khatoon in the court. Her happiness was short lived as Kashmir was vanquished by the Mughal emperor Akbar and Yousuf Shah Chak was sent to Biswak (Bihar). She roamed from village to village and sang her songs of separation, sorrow and suffering. The dethroned Sultan Yousuf Shah, himself a good Persian poet, too, remembered her in his melancholic verses, “In yearning for that beauty of pure Kashmiri birth, / My eyes surge with tears like Tarsar and Marsar lakes” (Sufi 230). This legend was further popularized by mass media in the second half of the 20th century through films, television serials and radio plays. However, there is
another narrative associated with this exceptional woman. The story is
the basis of a long mathnavi (a long narrative poem in couplets) by
Ghulam Mohammad Hanafi (1827-1867), titled *Qisa-i-Habba Khatoon*
(The Story of Habba Khatoon). The story is also strengthened by the
tale narrated by Mohi-ud Din Hajni in his book, *Gaamav Menzy Phiery Phiery.* (Rambling from Village to Village, 1971), however, with a
slight variation. It is also supported by the legends popular in the north
Kashmir, particularly Gurez. The summary of the story is that Habba
Khatoon, also called Zoon, was the daughter of a landlord (aristocrat),
called Malik Daaraab of a country in the North. Having suffered a huge
loss in trade, he could not repay money that he owed to another trader,
named Hayaband Lone living in Shahr-i-Khaas (City Proper). He gave
his young and pretty daughter Habba Khatoon in marriage to the son of
the trader; the name of his son was Aziz Lone. Hayaband was happy as
he found her exceptionally intelligent and accomplished. But her
husband, Aziz Lone was frightened of her and complained to his father
that Habba Khatoon was a witch. Aziz Lone was sent away in
connection with some business to the North. When he returned after
one year, he took Habba Khatoon on a trip to Pandach near Srinagar,
but abandoned her there while she slept. Habba Khatoon, in her
despondence jumped into the Jehlum, but was saved by a boatman who
gave her shelter. One day Yousuf Shah Chak saw her while she sang in her melodious voice. He was eventually bewitched by her beauty and melody. He got her divorced from Aziz Lone and made her his beloved queen. Yousuf Shah, who was already having children by his first wife, adored her for her beauty, melody, wit and prowess in music. She also entertained the Sultan by narrating tales to him. Meanwhile, the Mughal emperor Akbar conquered Kashmir and arrested Yousuf Shah Chak. Habba Khatoon fled to Chandhaar where a peasant, named Abidi Rather gave her shelter and treated her as his daughter.

Keeping in view the evidence of legends, the second narrative seems to be more cogent. It is also vehemently supported by late Ashraf Sahil in his write up which appeared in the daily *Greater Kashmir*. He wrote:

Dardistan, being the watershed where the Central Asian languages and culture came into contact with the Indo-Aryan languages and culture, retains many archaic linguistic expressions that cannot be ignored while searching for the genealogical kinship of the Kashmiri language. A glossary of such archaic words, now obsolete in Kashmiri proper spoken in the Valley, is urgently required. Similarly, many places of north Kashmir have
retained names that besides being antique, speak volumes for being intimately related to myths, legends, and history of Kashmir. Some of the names are profoundly symbolic in nature, for example, Harmwakh, Krishan Ganga, Kanzalwan, Tsitarnar, Madhumati, Arin, Burzibaal, Sharda, Pushkar etc. All these places reflect the fact that the mountainous terrain of the North-west of Kashmir was dear to the sages and hermits of the past as it suited them for spiritual meditation. (4)

Whatsoever the historical details of the life of the legendary poet, Habba Khatoon is undeniably one of the most original creative minds of Kashmir. The oldest manuscript of her lyrics extant is preserved in the Research Library under the title *Nagmaati Ahli Hind*.

Habba Khatoon and her poems, on the other hand, still remain submerged in oral myth and legend. However, there are several works that deal with her poetry in relation to her hazy life-sketch. The works worth mention are Jagannath Wali’s play, entitled *Zoon* (1951) Amin Kamil’s *Kulyaati Habba Khatoon*, Ghulam Rasool Bhat’s *Habba Khatoon: Tarikh Ke Aine Main*, a very popular TV film *Habba Khatoon*, by Bashir Badgami and Shafi Shauq’s script for 13-episode TV serial *Habba Khatoon*. Her poetry has also received attention,
though peripheral, by other eminent critics in Kashmiri like M.Y. Teng and Rahman Rahi. However for the present purpose of our study the yet to be published translation work by Prof. Shafi Shauq, an eminent critic and writer of the valley has been used.

The details about the life and works of Emily Bronte, unlike that of Habba Khatoon, are much known. Though she preferred to live in anonymity, being a prodigious woman of the 19th century, almost all major facts of her life have been researched upon and explored.

Emily Bronte was born on July 30th, 1818 at Thornton, Bradford in Yorkshire. She was the fifth child of the six children of her parents. She was only three, when her mother died of cancer. In 1824 she was sent to Clergy Daughters’ School at Cowan Bridge. Her three sisters Maria, Elizabeth and Charlotte were also in the same school.

Emily Bronte and her sister Anne Bronte had a passionate desire for writing imaginative stories. It was during their stay at the school that they together wrote poetry and stories for their imaginary world of Gondal. Few of these poems and stories survive. Having stayed in the Clergy Daughters’ School for over eleven years, she was enrolled at Miss Wooler’s school at Roe Head Mirfield where she stayed for three months only, returning to Haworth in October.
Charlotte Bronte accompanied her when she left for the Pensionnat Heger at Brussels. They learnt French, German and Music there. She continued writing poems during her school days, but being shy, she did not read out any of these poems to Charlotte or anyone else. It was just inadvertently that in September 1845 Charlotte discovered her poems. Emily was angered by the intrusion into her private writings. Her sister convinced her to collaborate on a book of poems. It is said that by this time Emily had started to write *Wuthering Heights*.

Charlotte and Emily wrote and published a book of poems in 1846 under the Pseudonym of Currer Ellis and Acton Bell. The book contained 21 poems of Emily. Her masterpiece novel *Wuthering Heights* was accepted by the publishers Thomas Cautley Newby. The book was finally published in 1847.

Her health started deteriorating in November 1848. She had difficulty in breathing and pain in her chest. On 19 December 1848, Emily Bronte died at 2 o’clock in the afternoon. She was 30 years old. Two years after her death, a new edition of *Wuthering Heights* was printed. The volume also contained her selected poems and a preface written by Charlotte Bronte.
Emily Bronte and Habba Khatoon have been enjoying equal admiration and popularity, the former for her novel *Wuthering Heights* and the latter for her romantic songs.

There are several books on the life and work of Emily Bronte. She published many of her poems during her own life time but under the pseudonym Currer. Many of her poems were published posthumously. The merit of her poetry was recognized many years after her death and her poems are now included in every representative anthology of English poetry like *The Golden Treasury* by F.T. Palgraves and the *Norton Anthology of English Literature*. Famous literary historian James Reeves wrote about her poetry:

Many readers of Emily Bronte will feel that her great novel is by far her finest poem, but the lyrics she published in 1846 have a peculiar bleak intensity and integrity which shine through the conventional early Victorian diction we have already noted in connection with Clough. (175)

Her lovely lyrics have been a hot subject of debate since the emergence of Feminism and many reputed critics like G. Bataile, S. Gilbert, M. Homans, L. Starzyk, K. Wallace, L.R. Williams, Emma Francis and Kathryn Burlinson sought illustrations from her poetry.
Lyricism, feminism, and freedom are related notions and the relation between them has been determined by the literary traditions of poetry in a particular language. Since the tradition of lyrical poetry in all languages emerged from folk poetry, it is grounded in oral medium. All cultures before the advent of modern ways of life were oral in nature, and such, lyrical mode was the primeval as well as the most popular mode of poetic expression. The song form of poetry, called a lyric, is the principal form of poetry. A lyric is a short poem with one speaker (not necessarily the poet) who expresses his/her feelings spontaneously. Generally a lyric is a brief poem about feeling. But there are many forms of lyrics which express complex evolution of thoughts and feeling under a dominant mood. All the emotions expressed spontaneously seem personal emotions of the poet, but most often it is the tradition of free use of musical language that determines the emotions.

The word lyric derives from the Greek word *lyricos* which means singing to the lyre. This etymological root of the word in itself suggests that a lyric is essentially subservient to external music. It is therefore fundamentally a song which is meant to be sung orally in accompaniment of some music. A lyrical poem is a set of verbal expressions that are acceptable according to the linguistic structure of a
language. It is determined by form, articulation, meter and symphony. It has numerous forms according to the subject matter and is intimately related with the cultural activities of a linguistic community. Its power and beauty lie in its conformity with the oral culture which it has thrived in. Orality is, therefore, the basis of understanding the beauty of lyricism.

It becomes imperative to approach the works of these writers historically and trans-culturally for an exploration of the complexities of gender relation. It becomes equally challenging to study whether or not and to what extent the changing interpretative practices both in normal evolutionary pattern and a revolutionary one played a role towards the progression of woman from the romantic damsel (tortured and tormented from within) to an iron lady by shaking up, and in some cases breaking up, philosophical, epistemological and political certainties. Feminist criticism does not remain a single enterprise but a set of related concepts and practices in that it negotiates problems of cultural differences and of relationship with other forms of criticism such as marxism and new historicism.
CHAPTER I

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS
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Though the two poets lived in two different cultural traditions, the social, political and economic milieus were not much different from each other. Even the gap of over three hundred years also makes little difference because times before the advent of industrialism and the ensuing capitalism had remained almost static throughout the centuries. The feudal ages, in all countries of the world had identical means of production, forces of production and the relations between the productive forces. Minor differences in implements, dress, diet and language hardly made any difference: the whole world seems to have been cut to the same shape and size. Economic relations are the basis of society, politics and culture; these relations comprise the means of production, distribution of the produce, and the resulting division of society into classes.

Economics also includes the overall attitude of a people to the forces of nature which determine the result of their labour, shape their destinies and decide prosperity or adversity. People across the world, therefore, had identical notions about the imagined world beyond the tangible material world, the deities and spirits in various forces of nature and rituals of propitiating the forces of nature, harnessing them
to their benefit and also internalizing their presence in the shape of myths and legends. Economic structure and social order of a people are interdependent. The social structures and normative orders define and shape social action, religion, law, rule and the rulers, the urban and rural community, their prejudices, and behaviours. Karl Marx based his theory of dialectical materialism on the changing patterns of the economic structure. He called it economic determinism. According to this theory, wrote Helmut Fleischer, “The thing which we call free will is nothing other than an awareness of the impelling forces which move an individual to action; it taking action, he is not free to change the course his very nature dictates” (27-8). In the light of this broader framework, poetry is an important segment of the superstructure, erected on the economic base, which consists of forces and relations of production. It is the base which creates and conditions the superstructure, not otherwise. Thus we are justified in relating the poetry of Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte to the economic structure of their times and see how it was determined by them. It is not necessary that the poets make deliberate and overt statements about their times, the very texture of their poetry automatically speaks of the conditions which circumscribes their attitudes, behaviours, notions, desires and deprivations.
Habba Khatoon lived in a period between the last part of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century. It was one of the most turbulent times in the history of Kashmir. The rule of the Shahmiri Sultans after ruling the Valley and some adjoining mountainous territories for over two hundred and fifty years was in its final dissolution. On one hand the last descendents of the dynasty, Sultan Shams-ud-Din, Ismail I, Ibrahim Shah II, and Sultan Nazuk Shah, were fighting each other for ascendance to the throne, and, on the other hand, Kashmir was perpetually under the pressure of the expansionist designs of the Mughal emperors. The infighting among the selfish and incompetent rulers and the intriguing nobles fishing in the troubled waters, made the country vulnerable to the war-mongers and political forces in the neighbouring countries. In order to save their power, the last Shahmiri sultans of Kashmir never failed in showing their loyalty to the powerful Mughal emperors. They tried to ingratiate themselves with them by sending them gifts, including their young princesses. After the threatening incursions by Babur and Humayun, the king of Central Asian country Kashgar, named Abu Said Mirza, attacked Kashmir with full force. The attack was led by Mirza Haider Doughlat, a relative of the Mughal emperor Babur. After vanquishing Ladakh in 1534 A.D., Mirza Haider went to Kabul via Badakhshan and
then came to Lahore. He was given a warm reception by Babur’s son Mirza Kamran. He was made the governor of Punjab. Some men of rank from Kashmir solicited his military support to free Kashmir from continuous civil wars and communal tension among the Shias and Sunis. Since the Mirza, Suni by faith, was already ambitious about Kashmir, he launched a major incursion in November 1540. Without meeting any resistance, Mirza Haider conquered Kashmir. Being an astute and sagacious statesman, he did not want to annoy the Mughal emperor of India, Humayun. He, as such, did not rule himself, but chose a meek and submissive descendant of the Shahmiri dynasty, Nazuk Shah to rule as the Sultan of Kashmir, but under his dictation and as a subordinate to Humayun. He thus had a pleasant time in Kashmir without doing any serious business of governance. He, on the contrary devoted his time to write a history of Kashmir in Persian, titled, *Tarikh-i-Rishidi,* considered a masterpiece in Kashmir historiography. He, unlike Mughal emperor Babur, aimed at writing a true account of the times and the history of his royal dynasty in Central Asia; while Babur’s basic intention in writing his *Baburnanma* was to write his memoir. The history has been translated into English by Dr. Denison Ross.
Sultan Nazuk Shah, though under the political umbrella of Mirza Haider Doughlat, could not have peaceful days of rule while he was carrying the crown on his head. He was constantly pestered by the Shia Chaks who were eager to usurp power. Kazi Chak, a very strong tribal lord of Kashmir, befriended the ruler of India, Sher Shah and sought his military support in dethroning Mirza Haider’s puppet ruler Nazuk Shah. This was the time when the Mughals had suffered defeat in India and Humayun was living in Persia as an immigrant. Sher Shah, with the covert help of the Chaks, launched a massive attack, but Mirza Haider defeated him and pushed him beyond the Pirpanjal mountains. Kazi Chak, without accepting defeat, joined his hands with another tribal leader Reigi Chak, and encouraged Sher Shah to invade Kashmir again. Mirza Haider, used all his military stratagem and defeated Sher Shah and his local henchmen, the Chaks.

During Mirza Haider’s rule Kashmir, once again became a centre of manufacture of handicrafts. Mirza Haider invited craftsmen from Kashgar and other parts of Central Asia to give training to the local artisans in various skills, like wood carving, panel-work (khatamband), copper-smithy, papier-mache and carpet making. He annexed all the adjoining valleys like Kishtwar, Rajouri, Ponch, Ladakh, Pakhli and Gurez to Kashmir. In all these military campaigns,
he was supported by his foster brothers, namely, Mulla Qasim, Mulla Baqi, Mulla Abdullah and Mirak. He was very harsh towards the Shia faith and used all his strength to subdue its believers. The Shia Chaks who had enjoyed high status during the Shahmiri times, did not accept his high-handedness and remained consolidating their forces to launch a decisive attack on Mirza Haider.

In 1551, Mirza launched a nightly attack on the conspiring Chak lords at Inderkote (in Wular Lake). In the ensuing battle, an arrow of his own army man Shah Nazir, struck his head. He tried to enter the gate of the Inderkote forte, but a butcher used his axe and killed him then and there. His body was buried at Royal Graveyard near the dome of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin Badshah in the downtown of Srinagar. Famous historian Mohammad Din Fouq wrote his chronogram:

Thus, Mirza Haider ultimately sought shelter in the grave,

He was martyred as a king;

His chronogram is that by the will of God

He attained union with the Ultimate Truth. (Sufi 325)

A contemporary historian of the time Malik Haider Chadauri wrote in his history that after the death of Mirza Haider Doughlat, his kith and kin were provided safe passage to their native land Kashgar. (Mirza Haider Doughlat is now being adored as a national hero of Central Asia).
The death of Mirza Haider emboldened the rebelling Chaks; the last defenders of the Shahmiri dynasty rule Abdi Raina, Syed Mohammad Ibrahim, and Hussain Magre could not withstand their impelling force. The last Shahmiri ruler Sultan Habib Shah was rendered powerless by the Chaks who actually ruled the country. In 1553, while the Sultan was in his court, there was a brief altercation between him and Ghazi Chak’s brother Ali Chak. It is said that the latter stood up, went near the Sultan, took off the crown from his head and placed it on the head of Ghazi Chak; the Sultan was put behind the bars. All other descendents of the Shahmiris were defeated and imprisoned by the strong Chak lords.

Daulat Chak, another strong Chak lord, joined hands with Ghazi Chak and imposed Shia jurisprudence in Kashmir. However, the infight among the Shia Chaks did not let them have a peaceful time. Daulat Chak was killed by Ghazi Chak in 1551 A.D., five months after the death of Mirza Haider.

The rule of the Chak dynasty in Kashmir started in 1553 and lasted for thirty-three years only. Like many other nomadic tribes in early history of the north-west of the Indian subcontinent, the Chaks originally belonged to Swat, a valley between today’s Pakistan and Afghanistan. They were a martial race, well-built and well organized
people. They got converted to Shia sect of Islam, but it cannot be said for certain when; it is generally believed that they accepted Shia faith in the fourteenth century in Kashmir when Mir Shams-ud-Din Iraqi came to Kashmir to establish the sect. The Chaks, having the prowess of rising to power, had gradually carved out a niche in the court of Sultan Zaina-ul-Abidin Badshah who ruled Kashmir for fifty years. Zaian-ul-Abidin’s court was a meeting place of the influential people of all sorts. One of the important courtiers of the Sultan was Shams Chak who is believed to be the first Chak leader to find a place in the politics of Kashmir. Since then the Chaks remained busy in consolidating their strength and using all their political foresight and manoeuvring to emerge as a considerable force which could not be ignored by any ruler of the kingdom.

After becoming the first Chak ruler, Ghazi Chak tried to restore order and peace in the war-torn country. He befriended all the men of power and started consolidating his power with a single-minded determination. He first of all quelled the rebelling powers in the neighbouring valleys like Kishtawar, Rajouri, Gilgit, Pakhli, and Askardu and annexed all these regions to his kingdom. He assigned the job of governing these regions to the best of his people.
However, in spite of being shrewd and austere, he could not have peaceful time to enjoy his rule in his own country. He was persistently annoyed by the ploys and schemes of his own people, particularly the two sons of Reigi Chak: Nusrat Chak, and Yousuf Chak. In north Kashmir he was challenged by a warring faction of other Chaks like Shanker Chak, Behram Chak, and Fateh Chak. They were supporters of Shams Raina, a noble in Sopore, and sought help from the Mughals of Delhi in defeating Ghazi Chak. He however, defeated all rebelling forces. He had to encounter a major resistance in Rajouri where a brother of Mirza Haider Doughlat joined his hands with Yousuf Chak to regain the country that his brother had ruled so successfully. But Ghazi Chak again crushed this uprising and restored his power in Rajouri. After ruling the country for over nine years, he abdicated power in 1563 A.D. and handed over the throne to his brother Hussain Chak.

Hussain Chak, in order to enjoy peaceful rule, used various manoeuvres to remove all those whom he considered his possible rivals. He blinded the son of his elder brother Ghazi Chak, killed Khan-us Zaman who had tried to usurp power while the king was enjoying hunting, imprisoned Mubarik Khan for indulging in a major embezzlement, and arrested Yousuf Chak, who had made Sunnis the
enemies of the king by wounding a Sunni Mulla, named Qazi Habib. In order to have peace with the Mughal emperor Akbar, he extended warm reception to his ambassadors Mirza Muqim and Mir Yaqoob. He also renounced the throne and handed over the charge to his brother Ali Chak. Husain Chak resided at Zainapur where he died in 1572 A.D.

Ali Chak ruled Kashmir by seeking support from saints and darveshs (mystics) and appointed a Sunni scholar Mubarak Baihaqi as his minister. He too had to face many revolts, particularly the one organized by the descendants of the Shahmiris, but using his prudence and military might, crushed all the revolts. He befriended the Mughal emperor Akbar by sending him his nieces with presents. It was for the first time in Kashmiri history that Akbar’s name appeared on the coins of Kashmir. Akbar’s two ambassadors enjoyed high respect in Ali Shah Chak’s court.

Ali Shah Chak depended on the political foresight of his minister Syed Mohammad Mubarak Baihaqi. It was on his suggestion that the king pardoned his son Yousuf Chak who had killed the son of Ghazi Chak. Ali Shah did whatever he could to have peace with Sunnis of Kashmir. However, Kashmiris had to face a natural calamity in 1576 when a terrible famine struck Kashmir and lasted for three years. Ali Chak fell from his horse while playing polo in Idgah and was fatally
injured. However, before breathing his last, he declared his son Yousuf Chak the king of the kingdom. He died in 1579. Syed Mohammad Mubarak Baihaqi continued as the Prime Minister and helped the inexperienced and hot tempered Yousuf Chak in restoring peace.

Yousuf Chak left all serious matters of his rule to his faithful Prime Minister and remained enjoying his pleasure mongering and romantic escapades. The learned minister did not like this and eventually resigned his rank of ministership. The king appointed Mohammad Butt as his new minister. All the opponents rallied behind Syed Mohammad Mubarak Baihaqi, organized a rebellion, and dethroned the king. Yousuf Shah is said to have fled to the jungles. Syed Mohammad Mubarak Baihaqi, however, being unambitious was not interested in power and sent an invitation to Yousuf Chak to resume power. Yousuf Shah considered the invitation a ploy and refused to come back. Syed Mohammad Mubarak Baihaqi relinquished the throne and Lohar Chak, a cousin of Yususf Chak took over as the new king.

Having lost his power, Yousuf Chak was advised by his faithful nobles to seek the help from Akbar. He went to Agra and returned with a Mughal army led by Raja Man Singh and Mirza Yousuf. Lohur
Chak, after ruling for over a year, fled and Yousuf Chak, now a stooge of the Mughals regained his lost throne in 1580. This important event of far-reaching consequences happened in 1580 A.D. Having realised his mistakes, Yousuf Chak tried to befriend his adversaries. In order to ingratiate himself with Syed Mohammad Mubarak Baihaqi, he married one of his daughters to his son, Yaqoob Chak.

In spite of trying all political stratagems, Yousuf Chak could not restore peace in the country. His Chak adversary Haider Chak manoeuvred desperately to dethrone the king. He even instigated Yousuf Chak’s own son, Yaqoob Chak, to assassinate his father and rule. The king as well as his enemy Haider Chak, relied on the help of the Mughals. Meanwhile emperor Akbar, while going to Kabul, desired to meet Yousuf Chak. Yousuf Chak smelled a ruse in the message from Akbar, and did not agree to meet him. This enraged the emperor and he ordered a decisive attack on Kashmir under the leadership of Bhagwan Das, Shahrukh Mirza and Shah Qali Khan. The military expedition was marred by a heavy snowfall, but Yousuf Shah deemed it safer to meet Raja Bhagwan Das at his camp. While Yousuf was away, his son Yaqoob Chak usurped the throne and ruled with the assistance of his nobles. Yousuf Chak met the Mughal emperor Akbar in his court.
The historians are not in agreement about the fate of Yousuf Chak. It is commonly believed that Akbar imprisoned him. But some historians say that, “Yousuf Chak was given a huge estate in Bihar where he lived peacefully and died in 993 A.H. (1585). He was buried at Biswak (Bihar) where his grave is still intact” (Sufi 243).

Yousuf Chak’s son, Yaqoob Chak ruled under an irresistible pressure from the Mughals only for one year. His rule is marked by unprecedented riots between the Sunnis and Shias. The most important killing that triggered new conflict between the Sunni majority and the Shia minority was the execution of the chief of the Sunni community, Qazi Musa.

The country was doomed by chaos and bloodshed. Kashmiri people, already exhausted by centuries old bloodshed and chaos, had no alternative but to invite Akbar to annex the fragmented kingdom of Kashmir to his empire. A delegation of Kashmiri scholars and nobles led by Sheikh Yaqoob Sarfi (the most eminent Persian poet of the time) and Baba Da’ud Khaki, a disciple of Hazrat Makhdoom Sahib approached the Mughal emperor. The two parties agreed upon a treaty in which the following four clauses as quoted by G.M.D. Sufi are the most important:
1. That the ruling prince shall not interfere in the religious affairs, the purchase and sale of commodities, and the rates of cereals.

2. That the dignitaries and officials of Kashmir shall have no Kashmiri, male or female, Hindu or Muslim, as slave.

3. That the inhabitants of the country shall not be molested or oppressed in any way, or begaar (forced labour/corve) exacted.

4. That the nobles of Kashmir having been a source of mischief shall have, for the present, no share in administration of their country. (234)

A mighty army of the Mughals led by Qasim Khan entered Srinagar on June 28, 1586 A.D. Yaqoob Chak tried to resist the aggression, but failed and fled the city. He took refuge in Kishtwar where he died unwept and unsung in 1588. He married Shankar Devi, the daughter of the Raja of Kishtwar, named Bahadur Singh; Muslims called her Fath Khatoon. His dilapidated grave is found in Kishtwar.

The end of the Chak rule is satirized in the following Persian couplet of some anonymous poet:

\[ na \text{ az } Yousuf \text{ nishan didam, na az } Yaqoob \text{ aasaare } \]
\[ azizan-i Yousuf \text{ az gum shud, chi shud Yaqoob raa baare } \]
I saw neither any trace of Yousuf nor any relic of Yaqoob; 

All the kindred of Yousuf disappeared,

who cares to know about Yaqoob. (Sufi 189)

The rule of the Chaks lasted for about thirty-one years, that is from 1555 A.D. to 1586 A.D. Out of these 31 years, Yousuf Chak ruled only for seven years, that too under harassment. The three decades of the rule of the Chaks is known for their frantic attempts to resist the attacks of the Mughals, ceaseless riots between the Shias and the Sunnis, and internecine rivalry for power. The events happened in such a quick succession that no historian could have time to record the condition of the common people. Even Malik Haider Chadora, the only historian of the time gives only an account of the descendents of the Chaks nobles.

When the kings were worried to save their lives, who would bother to write about a poor country damsel like Habba Khatoon who composed songs in the vernacular and, by her destiny, was related to Yousuf Chak who anxiously wanted to save his power and his life. Habba Khatoon came in his life during his romantic wanderings in the mountains and valleys in the north-west, including Gurez. He was already married at that time and had children including Yaqoob Chak. All the histories are silent about the status of Habba Khatoon in his life and the legends are based on conjecture.
The life and times of Emily Bronte, on the contrary, are quite well-documented. She lived about three hundred years after Habba Khatoon in a country that had already come out of the medieval ethos.

Emily Bronte, too, lived in an era that is marked by political and social unrest, although of a different kind. She was born in 1818 when Evangelical Christians were campaigning for an end to slavery and cruelty. Spencer Perceval was the Tory Prime Minister. He was the first Prime Minister ever to be killed. A conspiracy was hatched that the whole cabinet be assassinated, but the conspiracy was aborted when on May 11, 1812 all the conspirators were arrested and executed. The period is also known for incidents of workers’ agitation against industrialism as they feared that they might lose their jobs by the introduction of machines. A large group of industrial workers, called Blanketeers, (as all of them wore blankets) marched from Manchester towards London, but their agitation was crushed. However, in March 1817 a huge crowd of unarmed textile workers of Manchester marched to London and protested in St. Peter’s Field. The administration was tough with them as the army fired on the crowd; eleven workers were killed on the spot and over a hundred were injured. The incident is remembered as Peterloo Massacre. Another major event of the times is the agitation by labourers in 1830 when agricultural workers ransacked
the agricultural machinery to show their resentment against the decision to replace human force by machines. The government suppressed the agitation by hanging several agitating workers and deporting hundreds of them to Australia. The Tory government, sensing major strike by the workers and peasants, used every manner of repressive measures to avoid chaos in economy. The government also initiated political reforms to befriend the working classes. The Duke of Wellington became the Prime Minister of the country and introduced the Catholic Emancipation Act that granted political rights to the Catholics.

In early nineteenth century, there were two types of constituencies in England: rural constituencies and the urban constituencies. The peasants had no right of franchise and only the owners of land could cast their votes. Similarly the two major industrial cities, Birmingham and Manchester were deprived of electing their own representatives for the Parliament. All these discrepancies caused widespread resentment among the masses, but the Tories tried to quell every demonstration in demand of political rights. Masses in both rural and urban areas intensified their demonstration for political reforms. In 1930, the Whigs formed their government and they tried to introduce certain political reforms that aimed at
distributing constituencies more fairly and extending right to vote to the people of Birmingham and Manchester also. The Bill was opposed by the House of Lords, but intervention of the King, William IV, forced the House of Lords to support the Bill and thus the Bill, known as the Great Reform Bill, was passed on June 7, 1832 and was approved by the King.

In spite of the Great Reform Bill in exercise, the working class, both agrarian and industrial, continued to be deprived of the right to vote. The bill did not, therefore, make them happy, and they eventually formed a strong front that put forth their charter, called People’s Charter. They organized a massive protest in Manchester in 1838 and delivered a petition to the Parliament. The petition was rejected. The agitation continued, and the subsequent petitions were also rejected.

The Reforms brought some relief to the workers and as such their agitation died down. It was in 1867 that the British government finally acceded to the workers demand and granted right of adult franchise to the industrial workers. The agrarian workers were also granted this democratic right in 1884.

As we know, Emily Bronte died on 19 December, 1848 at the age of thirty. Though withdrawn from public life, she knew all about the major events in Britian. There is no reference to any of the major
political upheavals in her works. But her times need to be known because her withdrawal from the hum-drum of life can be understood as a sensitive individual’s way of reacting to the world around.

Thus both Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte belonged to the most turbulent times, marked by bloodshed, wars and disintegration of human values. But surprisingly there is no reflection of such conditions in their poetry. Both poets chose to remain away from the madding crowds, and preferred to write only to give vent to their personal feelings, cravings and dreams. As already discussed both poets in fact lived in a rural setting. Habba Khatoon was born and brought up in a village of Kashmir in the medieval times, and Emily Bronte, though born in a town, passed her childhood in Clery Daughters’ School and lived at Haworth. Both of them did not follow the common literary trend of their times and invented their own ways of expression.

The two women poets of extraordinary lyrical genius remained aloof from the turbulent time and chose lyrical mode of expression as a means of complete withdrawal. There is hardly any clue that could be interpreted as an indirect reference to the social and political reality of their time. The two poets were part of the lyrical tradition in their respective languages. Lyricism has its own dynamism and does not follow the logic of the objective reality.
CHAPTER II

LYRICAL IMAGINATION
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The two poets of innovative lyrical genius used to set their imagination free to synchronize with the aesthetic of lyrical expression. Lyrical imagination sets the references to objects free to play without subservience to any accepted logic. Kant calls this type of play, “a free, harmonious play of our cognitive powers of imagination and understanding” (62). The reader or listener of a lyric on the one hand perceives the sense of purpose, and on the other hand, feels impossibility of identifying that purpose. Hence the tension caused by the contrary usage of words creates paradoxes that give birth to surprise and novelty. Every word gets divested of its customary usage and attains freshness. There is a quasi-spatial simultaneity of images and events. The reader feels as if he has already read the poem many times before and each reading gives him the same aesthetic pleasure. His faculty of understanding is not constrained to analysing words and images, but entrusting all cognitive faculties to the given situation which is free from logical reality.

Reading and enjoying lyrical poetry is not therefore a work that requires the use of energy; it is a sort of play as it has been a play with
the poet. The renewable pleasure of experiencing lyrical imagination produces the surprising euphoria. The reader is free from the yoke of compulsion, and aesthetic experience becomes the end in itself. Let us see how lyrical imagination of Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte create inexhaustible aesthetic pleasure of surprise.

In Habba Khatoon’s time, poetry in Kashmiri and Persian was predominantly metaphysical and spiritual in nature that abhorred the world of physical things and dealt with the philosophical notions about the life after death, life before birth, and the nature of divinity; life of the living human being had no significance for them. Habba Khatoon’s poetry is a visible departure from this well established trend; it hails the world of feelings, sensations, colours, sounds, and sights. The physical world consisting of feeling and thinking humans, surrounded by objects of nature in their very physical form and having an integral connection with the human world is seen in its full form. She might use them as metaphors to present a spiritual state, but the things do not lose their significance. Her poetry draws upon variegated aspects of nature. Emily Bronte, unlike Habba Khatoon, was a well-read poet who consciously chose her artistic way and experimented with a clear notion about the themes and technique. But she too, like Habba Khatoon, used a pastoral backdrop for all her poems.
The pastoral, as a distinct form of poetry, is a mode with conventional rural settings, preference for rural folk characters, and use of rustic language. In classical and neo-classical poetry it used Arcadian situations like mountains, valleys, pastures, streams, wild flowers, and dealt with organic relation between humans and the natural world. It sees full meaning of human life when it is not divorced from nature, but is a part of its spontaneity. Depiction of nature, however, not an end in itself, has a metaphorical significance. William Empson in his book *Some Versions of Pastoral* says that pastoral is not just a name of a group of poetic conventions, but a particular structural relationship that represents the complex as the simple. According to Empson, “the best example of a pastoral is found in Lewis Carol’s *Alice in Wonderland* in which Alice like the shepherd of a typical pastoral, tries to understand the anxieties and complacencies of her society” (56).

S.L. Sadhu wrote about this aspect of Habba Khatoon:

We are nevertheless impressed with her familiarity with wild nature: jasmine, basil, musk-rose, dandelion, menthe, cress, water-chestnut, almonds, pomegranates, mulberry, parrots, larks, bulbuls, freshet, stream, etc. Perhaps it is in harmony with feminine nature that she does not involve
gigantic deodars, mighty lions, crafty owls or other gross or coarse objects in finding an utterance for her emotional reaction. When Sakantula departed from the hermitage of Kanaw, she took leave of her companions which included her friends, fawns, parrots, and flowery shrubs. Habba Khatoon’s lyrics seem to convey a similar impression of all life being one, and man, plant, and animal being members of the same family. Basil and jasmine, musk-rose and pomegranate flower, menthe and dandelion, uplands and streams, have been her friends from her early childhood in a sense it is difficult to imagine for the educated girls (and boys) of our day. (49)

Emily Bronte’s poems show the most intense rendering of the embodied presence of nature that anywhere exists in English literature. It prepares one for this fusion of man and nature. Her very early poems show that she must have taken pleasure in catching in words a particular visual impression or a particular mood in nature; as in the following fragment from the summer of 1838:

‘T was one of those dark, cloudy days
That sometimes come in summer’s blaze,
When heaven drops not, when earth is still,
And deeper green is on the hill. (WH&P 302)
Or in the four almost Wordsworthian lines contemporary with those just quoted:

There are two trees in a lonely field;
They breathe a spell to me;
A dreary thought their dark boughs yield,
All waving solemnly. (WH&P 303)

At this stage, contemplation does not always match description. In a poem from October 1837, she starts with a description of what looks like the Haworth setting, “The old church tower and garden wall / Are black with autumn rain” (WH&P 296). And then she gets stuck at the point where she feels, in an eighteenth century manner, that she ought to draw some conclusion, even moralise; and so she gives up, “And as I gazed on the cheerless sky / Sad thoughts rose in my mind” (WH&P 297). Sometimes in the early poems, too, nature is regarded as a kind of Wordsworthian comforter and teacher. In a Gondal poem To the Bluebell, the flower breathes “soothing thoughts” (WH&P 311). But this attitude is soon superseded by a deeper sense of nature as inspiration. The thought of the moors will always unlock emotions, and she says, “They unlocked a deep fountain whose springing, / Nor Absence nor Distance can quell” (WH&P 305). And we have already seen how in the Romantic landscape of her imagination, whether
Gondal or not, wild nature and wild passions fuse. By 1841 inspiration can mean a complete identification with nature:

And thou art now a spirit pouring

Thy presence into all—

The essence of the Tempest’s roaring

And of the Tempest’s fall. (*WH&P* 325)

And in the most haunting of all her poems there is no landscape but an internal one:

He comes with western winds, with evening’s wandering airs,

With that clear dusk of heaven that brings the thickest stars;

Winds take a pensive tone, and stars a tender fire,

And visions rise and change which kill me with desire—

Desire for nothing known in my maturer years

When joy grew mad with awe at counting future tears;

When, if my spirit’s sky was full of flashes warm,

I knew not whence they came, from sun or thunderstorm.

(*WH&P* 357-8)

What Emily Bronte’s poems, even the late ones, may not have prepared us for, however, and what only the writing of the novel seems to have perfected in her, is a handling of nature in which complete and accurate realism co-exists with symbolism. The Gondal civil war poem
which she wrote after completing *Wuthering Heights*, *Why Ask To Know The Date*, is similar to the novel in this respect. Events in the novel are always placed in time and weather: this is equally part of the firm actuality of its action and of its symbolical overtones. There are of course, differing degrees of symbolical use of nature, from the brief note which makes an event more concrete, “a bright, frosty afternoon; the ground bare, and the road hard and dry” (*WH&P* 9), to the setting which is suffused with potential symbolism. Use of myth and archetypes plays the central role in pastoral poetry. In a typical pastoral poem of Habba Khatoon, the persona engaged in spinning is transported by the musical rhythm of her spinning wheel to a world of fantasies. All the myths used in the poem have their independent meaning, but at the same time, may be a reflection of the changing states of human mind that tries to make out shapes out of the shapeless and amorphous world of the energized psyche in an intense moment of creativity, “The moment an iota of youth I got, / the in-laws came to take me away, / heavy were my eyes with dreams sweet” (*BOKP* 54). The poem, essentially about the creative process of poetry, shows various phases of myth-making. However, the poem, at its surface level, depicts the social and domestic condition of a typical Kashmiri
young woman of the past. The girl is just at the threshold of her adolescence.

We find a reflection on the transitory nature of earthly life. The individual gets just an iota of life, but death is always at ones doorstep to take the individual back. The material world is called the in-laws house in Kashmiri mystic poetry. The individual comes from divine abode and is still dreaming of its origin when called back.

Her bridegroom, being boyish, fondly thinks of the gift money, but the bride is indifferent to it. She gets engrossed in domestic chores, particularly late-hour spinning yarn. She is bound to remain spinning until she finishes the allotted quota of wool. Already heavy with sleep, the creaking sound of the spinning wheel makes her dreamier. Eerie dreamy images begin to crawl in her mind, “My mother-in law gave me a handful of coins, / fondly my husband thought of me; / I didn’t know how many were there” (BOKP 54). The voice in the poem does not speak logically and sequentially about itself. The reader is unable to force coherence on the text, we have no option but to accept the poem like a typical dream: a jumble of images, that shift from one locale to the other. We can easily reorder the poem according to our own choice, “The ‘airy-nothings’ from above / descend down to frolic with us” (BOKP 54). This stanza, makes one think about the inspiring
muses (atshhi-ratshhi), literally meaning delicate and wee like the airy nothing in Shakespear’s *Mid-Summer Night’s Dream*, and they come down from the skies. The soul of the poet, thus charged with divine frenzy, begins to give “name and habitation” (*BOKP* 54), to the surges in the stirred unconscious. There is a strange and de-rationalized setting in which the probability of visits of elfins and other supernatural beings is possible. It is a hinterland where there is a lake. The time is night and there is no one to watch. The elfins of the sky slide down to the place, have a bath, frolic to their full and then go back to their unknown abode in the skies. The event, though supernatural, suggests that the creative moments are brief and very personal that happen in a state of complete detachment from the world of common pursuits. And it is an enunciation of the belief that poetry is essentially divine in inspiration:

> The elfins of the skies, slide
> down to dance in the woods,
> having enjoyed their bath,
> leave for their abode. (*BOKP* 54)

The same voice in the same rhythm in the next stanza of the lyric gives shape to a strange image, “The fishes of the deep Wular lake, / swim up to the fast flowing Sindh; / thirsty they were and thirsty they leave”
The fish of the deep lake swim up to enjoy the gushing waters of a river. The fish, in spite of living in water, are thirsty and remain thirsty. The image, having close resemblance with the Freudian concept of creativity, suggests ineffable nature of the movements in the unconscious, the fathom of the lake. The gushing waters symbolises expression in language. Imagination remains always half-said, half revealed, and so the fish of the deep paradoxically remain thirsty. This idea is further amplified by the description of the court of Inder, the God of music and arts in Hindu mythology, “The sleep-loving dancers of Inder’s court, / Always croon in my deep within, / Wearied and dreamy by spinning yarn” (BOKP 54). The singing dancers remain crooning and the conscious mind is not able to decipher the music. The persona, spinning yarn in late night feels heavy with sleep, and the creaking sound of the spinning wheel combines with the music within.

The soul thus comes to the physical world and is engrossed in material gain. The handful of coins given by the mother-in-law to the newly wed girl signifies the allurement of the world. The lover may be understood as the watching Creator who is interested in the good deeds of the individual in the world, but the latter is not sure about his/her achievements that she/he could confidently own and then go back to the eternal home.
The last stanza, again, produces an image of the restive consciousness of the creative soul, “Habba Khatoon has her friends, but crazy, / Always keen to make her mad; / hotter than burning embers are they” (BOKP 54). She is always made crazy by her crazy friends; the crazy friends may signify the inevitability of the creative urge. Her friends, “hotter than burning embers” (BOKP 54), are always with her to keep her busy in seeking expression. Thus this lyrical poem of Habba Khatoon, says Shauq is, “one of the best few poems in Kashmiri” (MIL 564), though not having an exact corresponding poem in the poetry of Emily Bronte, reminds us of several such poems that are about the ineffableness of experience. In her lyrical poem *Loud Without Wind Was Roaring*, Emily Bronte explores the relation between language and the anguished self on the same pattern of inconsistencies and contradictions. The relation becomes mythical and does not lead to any logical conclusion about this primeval relationship:

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Loud without wind was roaring
Through the waned autumnal sky;
Drenching wet, the cold rain pouring,
Spoke of storming winter’s nigh. (WH&P 305)
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Emily Bronte, having communion with the elemental forces of nature in a pastoral setting, seeks to answer various questions that keep her
restless, like *What Language Can Utter The Feeling?* (WH&P 306), and meaning of transient existence of individual things and phenomena in contrast to the Eternal. She identifies her own state of mind with the things of nature.

The poem is about the recollection of the natural world in, “sad minutes moving, / though loaded with troubles and pain” (WH&P 307). The poet uses language to express the “sad minutes” of intense feelings in the medium available to her, which is language. She is persistently conscious of the relation between personal feeling and the language of common use. In the strife to find appropriate language to utter her individual feeling within a particular time and space, she tries to establish relation between language and feeling. It is the problem of representation of an extraordinary self through images of nature that signify a particularized and isolated time and space. The persona of the poem is having a burden of past experience, but the images are from the present. The things of nature communicate with her, like:

> It was scattered and stunted, and told me
> That soon even that would be gone;
> Its whispered, ‘the grim walls enfold me;
> I have bloomed in my last summer’s sun’. (WH&P 307)
In talking at all about Emily Bronte’s poems, one at once runs up against the Gondal question, almost as vexed as the Homeric one. The question is about the degree of subjectivity, what we might call the personal versus the dramatic, in the poems. Gondal and its characters are only masked (and often scarcely masked) projections of a personality trying to materialise its inward wars and loves. Most commentators seem to have felt that some poems are more Gondal than others but that this division does not necessarily coincide with the division between established Gondal and non-Gondal verse; most would say that in *Cold In The Earth* and *Silent Is The House*, both Gondal poems, Emily Bronte is expressing deep personal feelings. The theory that some are exclusively Gondal poems and some exclusively personal derived support from the discovery that, in February 1844, Emily Bronte started to copy out her finished poems into two separate note books, one of which was headed with the inscription “Gondal Poems” (Gaskell 123). The other came to contain such poetry as the homesickness poems from the autumn and winter 1838, the poems on nature and the creative imagination from 1841 and 1844, and meditative poems on hope, despair and the transitoriness of things.
It does not necessarily mean that the non-Gondal poems are more personal, with the autobiographical implications which that word carries. There are, for example, in the non-Gondal notebook four poems of unhappy love, written in rapid succession in the spring of 1840. The first, *Far, Far Away Is Mirth Withdrawn*, a lament for a dead lover with a blighted name, is both in situation and sentiment very close to many Gondal poems; it seems to assume a background story without knowledge of which the feelings in the poem are extravagant. The second, *It Is Too Late To Call Thee Now*, is tauter and more restrained, in its meditation on a lost love; the third, *I’ll Not Weep That Thou Art Going To Leave Me* is freer of Gondal echoes but still somewhat over-weighted with sentiment. But in the fourth, she has arrived at a self-contained love lyric where the mood establishes itself within the poem, and where the haunting effect of simple words looks forward to poems like *Cold In The Earth* as well as to the speeches of Catherine and Heathcliff:

If grief for grief can touch thee,

If answering woe for woe,

If any ruth can melt thee,

Come to me now!

I cannot be more lonely,
More drear I cannot be!
My worn heart throbs so wildly
’Twill break for thee. (WH&P 325)

What is interesting about these poems, seen together, is the way they show us Emily Bronte working on an experience and a mood, whether personal or not, and shaping their expression to its most perfect form. What matters is not whether the poet herself felt, or not, what is felt in the poems; what matters are the poems as explorations of moods and discriminations of emotions. As with Shakespeare’s sonnets, which suffer under a similar autobiographical problem, Emily Bronte’s poems matter, not as experience but as something made out of human experience. If we can agree on this, then we do not need to go from her poems to her novel via a reconstruction of the persons and events of the Gondal saga; we can instead concentrate on how the intensification of thoughts and feelings are anticipated in the poems and how intensification of thoughts and feelings, and their expression, are worked out in the novel.

Language is a human product and its use for the objects of nature reveals its inadequacy. The past experience of the persona is concerned with a pre-linguistic and un-meditated contact with external reality, the persona is conscious of the loss of the immediacy of that
contact in the recollection. What, “Drenching wet, the cold rain pouring, / Spoke of storming winter’s nigh” (WH&P 305), is irretrievable from the waned memory. The poet can at the most try to find similes and metaphors as an approximation to what the objects of nature spoke to the soul in that ecstasy of contact:

All too like that dreary eve,
Sighed within repining grief;
Sighed at first, but sighed not long—
Sweet— How softly sweet it came!
Wild words of an ancient song.
Undefined, without a name. (WH&P 305)

Language is nothing but a third party between feeling and a spatio-temporal fact (an object of nature). Words cannot be an exact copy of the actual feelings and sensations; they can at the most awaken a spell, or unlock a deep fountain that tries to overcome absence and distance.

The poem is thus a series of attempts to recover personal experience of a bygone time by fabricating new texts. The affirmation of relation between self and the other assumes a relation between the lover and the beloved. But the contact happens in a dream. It breaks before reaching the consummation:

‘It was morning the bright sun was beaming’.

How sweetly that brought back to me
The time when nor labour nor dreaming
Broke the sleep of the happy and free!

But blithely we rose as the dusk heaven
Was melting to amber and blue;
And swift were the wings to our feet given
While we traversed the meadows of dew.  

The sudden flashes of the past unleash the reverberation of, “Wild words of an ancient song / Undefined without a name”  

The wild words appear in different equivalents found in outside nature. The primitiveness of the song is suggested by spring and morning, the archetypes of the origin and the beginning. It is the chase after finding the origin and beginning of the ancient song that produces onward movement in the poem. The sole aim is to recapture that origin, though the poet is sad about the impossibility of the pursuit. The poet at the end consoles the pining soul by assuring it reunion in some unknown future:

Well, well, the sad minutes are moving
Though loaded with troubles and pain;
And sometime the loved and the loving
Shall meet on the mountain again.  

(Wh&P 306)
Kathryn Burlinson wrote about the paradox in the song:

If it is the original word that is desired, the paradox highlighted in this lyric is that writing moves onwards in its attempt to recapture. The lyric chases nature yet reveals the impossibility of capturing it in its own time, as language continually imposes its terms and its time. *Loud Without Wind Was Roaring* ends with the poem registering the onward march of time in the movement of a line, “Well, well, the sad minutes are moving”, as it looks forward to the next time — sometime— when, it is promised, a union will take place. (47)

Thus we see that Emily Bronte, like Habba Khatoon, depended on pastoral setting to find local name and habitation for airy nothing: past experience, the felt feelings, the euphoria and, longings for reunion in future. This comparison between the two poets belonging to different ages and milieus can be extended to analysis of many of their other poems. A song by Habba Khatoon, *Having Bewitched My Heart* is an example in which rustic and rural landscape is having close resemblance with many songs of Emily Bronte. The song is a remembrance of the things of the past in moments of tranquillity. She says, “Having bewitched my heart, / you took to some unknown land; /
come back to me O my flower-loving Love” (BOKP 63). This song, (basically meant for singing) in spite of its refrain and word-repetitions, presents to our imagination the rustic environs of the medieval past in which there used to be no hard and fast division between the yearning soul and the changing phenomena of the nature around. People generally free from material cares, in their wild abandon partook in the creative processes of nature and had an organic communion with the elements. They saw their subjective feelings externalized in the fast changing colours and shapes of nature. The forlorn and woeful young woman in the song shares her anguish with her childhood friends while remaining busy in the usual chores in a rural atmosphere, “Come, my play-mates let’s go gather ivy; / one, once dead, does never return, / I wait for my lover’s return” (BOKP 63). They remain loitering in fields, meadows, forests, dales and ravines to gather eatables for the whole family. They sing while working so that their minds are kept amused and relieved of their sorrows. Recurring references to the colours, shapes and sounds of nature give expression to the changing feelings, longings, and sorrows of the young woman who had hardly any choice in shaping her life, all was determined by her male elders and she accepted all her misfortunes as her destiny.
Habba Khatoon, belonging to a remote and impenetrable past, is a representative of her time in the mise en scène of her lyrics, but the drama enfolded in her poetry is universal and time-less.

Emily Bronte, belonging to the recent past, her life well documented, also places the yearning soul and its ephemeral feelings in the things of nature that she envisions as an imitation of her spiritual drama. Although most of Habba Khatoon’s songs have the scope of mystic interpretation, but Emily Bronte, despite the autobiographical element in her poetry, is essentially a mystic poet whose notions about creation, lust, alienation, longing for reunion and final dissolution in the Ultimate are rooted in Christian mysticism. However, it is her art of depersonalisation, what Keats called negative capability, that she, instead of making direct statements about her philosophical musings, foregrounds nature enlivened by her wakeful imagination.

In Bronte’s nature poetry there is a feeling of presence of an eternal power in all the transient and evanescent phenomena. She portrays nature as a parallel to the surges in her stirred soul. It is, however, from Nature that she obtains basic inspiration; she does not impose her state of mind on nature. Her vision is primarily pantheistic as she imagines diverse and multitudinous aspects of the One in the plurality of nature. In one of her poems titled *Oh Thy Bright Eyes Must*
*Answer Now*, the poet perceives a conflict between various attributes of God. The conflict between imagination and reason, and between spiritual needs and mundane cares is presented in the first half of the poem:

Oh thy bright eyes must answer now,
When reason, with a scornful brow,
Is mocking at my overthrow;
O thy sweet tongue must plead for me
And tell why I have chosen thee! (*WH&P* 344)

In the first half of the poem quoted above, the persona is addressed to radiant Angel of her vision who has bright eyes. She asks her to justify her worship to Him. Her Reason in forms of gloom with a scornful brow evaluates her faith and mocks her because, according to the worldly standards, she has been overthrown as she is poor, without glory and achievements. But there is finally acquiescence in the faith in “God of Visions” (*WH&P* 345), in the last two lines. She has faith that He has to plead for her and she therefore has to worship Him:

A slave because I rule thee still,
Incline thee to my changeful will
And make thy influence good or ill—
A comrade, for by day or night
Thou art my intimate delight—(WH&P 345)

In the second half of the poem, she calls the same radiant angel her slave as well as her comrade. He is always with her in her bosom and this perpetual presence gives her intimate delight. The conflict in her mind is conveyed through the expression “Darling Pain” (WH&P 345). It is a temporary conflict between the desire to be free from enslavement and remaining loyal, between apostasy and complete surrender. Dannie Abse and Ernesto Cardenal write about this deep-rooted conflict in Emily Bronte’s works:

It is characteristic of Bronte to place such emphasis on individual power and will. Although this emphasis prefigures the work of later writers in which the self creates its own reality and its own gods, the orthodox road that Bronte chose to follow did not lead her to this extreme conclusion. (27)

The rustic and pastoral setting is in a way essential for expressing purity and wholesomeness of faith and the primeval unity between the finite self and the Infinite manifest all around. An excerpt from a song of Habba Khatoon:

Crying in woods, I am wearied now.

Does he never bother to heed?
More intense is my desire with every breath,
the pain has made me wear away,
bit by bit my form decays;

Does he never bother to heed? \textit{(BOKP 56)}

The historians are inclined to relate every song of Habba Khatoon with her life that was full of extraordinary events and great misfortunes. She was an ordinary country damsel married in her early age to a cruel husband and then destiny made her a consort of a romantic king, Yousuf Chak. Her good fortune lasted only for a few years, as Yousuf Chak was defeated in war, taken as prisoner and exiled to Bihar. But a dispassionate reader finds a persona in every song which is to be envisioned amid the unfamiliar medieval world in every detail. The persona of the song quoted above, is deeply despondent, has renounced the world, and wanders aimlessly in woods and dales. She is lacerated by the pain of separation, yet the pain is paradoxically, like “Darling Pain” \textit{(WH&P 345)}, of Bronte, which is very dear to her. The rustic setting of each poem of Habba Khatoon reminds of the imaginary locale of the characters of Gondal Poems of Bronte. The persona of Habba Khatoon’s poem is a contrast to the surrounding environs that are full of spring vitality, freshness and new beginnings, the pleasure mongering lovers are in wild abandon; she alone on the contrary, is
woebegone, decaying bit by bit, swinging and swaying in her feebleness and about to get finally annihilated. She is a rebirth of Echo, a nymph of Greek legend who wasted away in her love for heedless Narcissus; only her voice had survived forever. This Echo like voice of Habba Khatoon is heard in all her songs, and she has actually become an incarnation of Echo for Kashmiri speaking people; her melancholic and nostalgic calls have been the most loved legacy of this people for over four centuries. Habba Khatoon, like Bronte, places her persona in a pantheistic sort of ambience in which the forms and events in natural world evoke corresponding movements and music in the inner world of a wakeful soul. Her famous poem *Come Back O Flower Crazy Love*, already discussed, is the best example of this method of projecting inner states of mind and yearnings in the shape of the states of Nature. Emily Bronte, consciously uses pantheism as poetic approach to the problems of life. Her famous poem, titled *Remembrance* describes nature as a parallel to the state of the mind of the persona. The cold, snow-covered hills symbolize the uninspired and frigid state of mind of the persona, while the cold blowing winds in the moors signify the free feelings of the human soul. The violent and unrestrained storm is a projection of the turbulence caused by the knowledge of inspiration from the Supreme:
And thou art now a spirit pouring
Thy presence into all---
The essence of the Tempest’s roaring
And of the Tempest’s fall--- (WH&P 328)

Her feelings get energized as “feeling’s fires flash” and the “glorious wind” “kindles” her gaze. She is thus transformed into the essence of the Tempest’s “roaring” (WH&P 328). The drama of human soul enacted by the forces of nature in their essential nature is most beautifully portrayed in Emily Bronte’s novel Wuthering Heights. The novel, called a lyrical novel in English, is a never ending drama played by a wakeful human soul in the assemblage of things of primeval nature. In between the two extremes Heathcliff and Catherine I and II, there are other characters which symbolize various human passions. The novel is beautifully set in a pristine and rustic ambience. An excerpt from the novel which is full of sights and sounds of wild nature:

I cannot express it; but surely you and everybody have a notion that there is or should be an existence of yours beyond you. What was the use of my creation, if I were entirely contained here? My great miseries in this world have been Heathcliff’s miseries, and I watched and felt
each from the beginning: my great thought in living is himself. If all else perished, and he remained, I should still continue to be; and if all else remained, and he were annihilated, the universe would turn to a mighty stranger: I should not seem a part of it. My love for Linton is like the foliage in the woods: time will change it, I’m well aware, as winter changes the trees. My love for Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks beneath: a source of little visible delight, but necessary. Nelly, I am Heathcliff! He’s always, always in my mind: not as a pleasure, any more than I am always a pleasure to myself, but as my own being. (47)

Explaining her feelings for Heathcliff and Linton to Nelly, Catherine tries to give adequate expression to her feelings through language. She inevitably has to take recourse to the images of natural ambience. She compares her love for Linton with the leaves of trees which are shed with autumnal wind. But comparing her love for Heathcliff, she says that he is like an immutable rock beneath the surface of the earth. He is her necessity and the cause of her being. She is inclined to identify herself with her love for Heathcliff. It is that energy that makes her exist. If all else ceases to be and he alone remains, she would feel that
she exists. But if Heathcliff is dead and the world remains, it will be rendered meaningless for her.

Both Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte introduce a speaking subject, but the lyrical constraints of their poetry make them feel the unreality of that subject, and instead produce dramatic pictures in the outside nature. Since they lived and wrote in the rural environment, much before the development of urban industrialization, their poetry bears many elements from the pastoral poetry. Their poetry cannot be called pastoral in the technical sense of the word, but pastoral imagery adds beauty to their lyrics.
CHAPTER III

AFFIRMATION OF FEMALE IDENTITY
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The two women of the medieval times, although belonging to two different cultures and languages have given vent to their feelings, deprivations, dreams, fantasies, flights of imagination, and aspirations through much similar poetic expressions. The differences, as sharp as similarities, also help us know how female psyche gets influenced by the moment, milieu and the race. Their poetry is a result of all those psychic processes that are centred in their respective minds, accessible only through the texts that have many other inter-textual connections when seen against the background of the diverse literary traditions.

There can be disagreement on the fact that the creative mind has tremendous significance in a creative work, but the creative work in itself may be a sort of mask, or, as T. S. Eliot and other formalists believe, an escape from personality. Dreams and fantasy play important role in the making of a poem, particularly of Emily Bronte and Habba Khatoon, but a poem is not identical with an actual dream. Creative process is much similar to the process of a dream. In both, there are three essential processes going on concurrently:

- Condensation: Concentration of emotive significance in any one image or a set of images;
- Substitution: Because of free flow of images, one image gets the place of another image of different significance; and
- Displacement: Vicarious fulfilment of wishes makes fantasy take the place of reality and produce pleasure.

Ego is constructed through imaginary precepts and narcissistic fantasies that are the driving forces in the process of making an individual’s mind and these driving forces come through language that exists in society. According to Lacan the pre-oedipal stage, in which the child at first does not even recognize its independence from its mother, is also a preverbal stage, one in which the child communicates without the medium of language. Then the child enters the mirror stage. The child comes to recognize itself and its mother, later other people as well, as independent selves. The child begins to perceive aggressions of another. The child is also able to have sympathy with another being who is being hurt, he cries when another cries. The mirror stage finally ends when the infant begins to recognize the other as not a reflection of I but as another I; the child enters the stage of developing a social ego. Lacan wrote:

This moment in which the mirror stage comes to an end inaugurates, by the identification with the imago of the counterpart and the drama of primordial jealousy (so
well brought out by the school of Charlotte Buhler in the phenomenon of infantile transitivity), the dialect that will henceforth link the I to socially elaborated situations.

It is this moment that decisively tips the whole of human knowledge into mediatisation through the desire of the other, constitutes its objects in an “abstract” equivalence by the cooperation of others, and turns the I into that apparatus for which every instinctual thrust constitutes a danger, even though it should correspond to a natural maturation – the very normalization of the maturation being henceforth dependent, in man, on a cultural mediation as exemplified, in the case of the sexual object, by the Oedipus complex. (Rivkin 181-2)

Lacan calls this stage the Imaginary Stage. This stage is followed by the Oedipal stage in which the child is conscious of the gender difference between the mother and the father as separate selves. The child is attached, though no more biologically a part of mother’s body, emotionally to the mother. The father is perceived as a rival. It is the stage which is augmented by the child’s acquisition of language. Since language is essentially figurative or symbolic in nature, words become things. In this stage a male child submits to what Lacan calls the “Law
of the Father” (Rivkin 183). The boy enters more easily into the symbolic order than do the girls because girls have a long-lasting feeling of continuity with mother. It is here that the difference between the gender based psychology starts and thus necessitates a gender-based psycho-analysis that is in itself grounded in language. Lacan argues that a child's recognition of his or her gender is intricately tied up with a growing recognition of the system of names and naming. The father’s relationship to the child is established through language. The system of marriage and kinship is all names. It is these names that become the basis of ethics, moral order, property rights and what not. Thus naming or language becomes the basis of gender based world of human being.

Thus gender, for Lacan, is intimately connected in the mind of the developing child with names and language. Or, rather, the male gender is tied to that world in an association analogously as intimate as is the mother’s early, physical (including umbilical) connection with the infant.

There are four different phases of the method of interpreting literary works in relating the work with its creator. These are:

1. The creative process is akin to dreaming awake: as such, it is a mimetic, and cathartic, representation of an
unconscious impulse or desire that is best expressed and revealed by metaphors and symbols.

2. Then, the juxtaposition of a writer’s works leads the critic to define symbolical themes.

3. These metaphorical networks are significant of a latent inner reality.

4. They point at an obsession just as dreams can do. The last phase consists in linking the writer’s literary creation to his own personal life.

According to this approach to works of literature, the author cannot be reduced to a ratiocinating self, which would create a space and time to give location to his memory. He is not his own biographer.

Existential perspective demands that an individual woman is treated as an individual human being, that is, like a male human individual, product of an historical and cultural context. Although every individual human being is essentially infinite and of unpredictable behaviours, he or she is, for the sake of convenience in recognition, is a set or bundle of accessible features or traits. This is clearly evidenced when we do not talk of generalizations but restrict our study to particular human beings, especially two creative personalities who are highly particularized through the texts of their
writings. Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte are two such highly individualized individuals.

Biographical information about the childhood of Emily Bronte reveals that she did her housework with a book propped up on the kitchen table. It is often said about her that she ought to have been a man. Her biography reveals a hysterical picture of Emily at Haworth, as if she had been exiled from love, with a man’s soul in her female body, hell tormenting her and her poetry adding to the torment. However, the basic impulse behind her work was the limitation of not being a man. All comments seem, more or less formidably, to indicate that she was a woman deeply caught in the feminist dilemma. But in fact, if we turn to her writings, we have no evidence that Emily Bronte ever, consciously or unconsciously, resented the limitations of her sex. Her writings suggest nothing but absolute acceptance of her lot in the parsonage where she was a very busy and industrious housekeeper, doing all the ironing for the house and making all the bread.

There was an intrinsic paradox in her nature that this resolute contentment with her place in life co-existed with rebellion. In fact it was a rebellion against the whole human condition. Never, except in the exile poems inspired by her period as a governess, does her poetry speak of, or imply, frustrations in her actual social-domestic position;
and even in those poems it is not her sex or her status she laments, but
the separation from the parsonage and the moors. The frustrations
expressed in her poetry are the profound and incurable ones, akin to the
human condition: her demand in the poems for liberty and integrity,
“Through life and death, a chainless soul / With courage to endure!”
(WH&P 328), is too absolute to be motivated by, or directed towards
the alleviation of, any one particular ill. Her most piercing cry:

Oh dreadful is the check – intense the agony
When the ear begins to hear and the eye begins to see;
When the pulse begins to throb, the brain to think again,
The soul to feel the flesh and the flesh to feel the chain!

(WH&P 358)

laments the return from a mystical moment of spiritual liberation, the
pain of re-discovering the limitations of humanity.

She turns the world created by her imagination into a vehicle of
moral satire, which is aimed at no particular abuse but condemnation
of a whole world:

I’ll think there’s not one world above,
Far as these straining eyes can see,
Where Wisdom ever laughed at Love,
Or Virtue crouched to Infamy.
Where, writhing ’neath the strokes of Fate,
The mangled wretch was forced to smile;
To match his patience ’gainst her hate,
His heart rebellious all the while;
Where Pleasure still will lead to wrong,
And helpless Reason warms in vain,
And Truth is weak and Treachery strong,
And Joy the shortest path to Pain:
And Peace this lethargy of grief,
And Hope a phantom of the soul,
And Life a labour void and brief,
And Death the despot of the whole. (WH&P 333)

The central oppositions in her poems are enslavement and freedom (the image of the fettered or caged spirit being one of the most frequently recurring ones), reality and imagination and vice and virtue. The same is true of Wuthering Heights, where not only is there no concern with one sex being superior or inferior to the other, but where traditionally masculine and feminine qualities and attitudes are entirely subordinated to time complex of opposites formed by the Earnshaws and Heathcliff against the Lintons, the Heights against the Grange. “Nothing”, says Charlotte Bronte, in her Preface to Wuthering Heights,
commenting on the alleged femininity of Edgar Linton, “moved her more than any insinuation that the faithfulness and clemency, the long-suffering and loving-kindness which are esteemed virtues in the daughters of Eve, become foibles in the sons of Adam” (WH&P xlix). Cathy and Heathcliff are woman and man but, more importantly, they are joint rebels against the human condition, with a desire and will as absolute as those of the Philosopher in Emily Bronte’s poem of that name:

No promised Heaven, these wild Desires

Could all or half fulfill;

No threatened Hell, with quenchless fires,

Subdue this quenchless will! (SBP 74)

Needless to say, we have no pronouncement from Emily Bronte on the woman question. Her work stands, as her life, self-contained and self-explained, even less affected by the social and literary pressure of her time than that of either of her sisters. Every new reading of her work confirms that quality of Blakean independence which can be summed up by saying that she is stronger than a man, simpler than a child and her nature stands alone.

As two distinct individual human beings, no more reachable as possible targets of any psychoanalytic analysis as living human beings,
Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte, who lived their lives in two time-slots of the past and existed in relation to their respective cultural and social situations, are reachable through their verses handed over to us through written or oral records. Here we have to be consistently cautious of the fact that the two women of the past are two distinct textual entities not two corporeal beings with their psycho-somatic existence; psychoanalytic approach has to delimit its approach in accordance with this limitation. Contemporary literary discourse has finally made it clear that the text of a literary work is never the equivalent of the person who has produced that text; it is rather an autonomous reality that takes its shape through the medium of the artist. In the words of Eliot:

The poet has, not a “personality” to express, but a particular medium, which is only a medium and not a personality, in which impressions and experiences combine in peculiar and unexpected ways. Impressions and experiences which are important for the man may take no place in poetry, and those which become important in the poetry may play quite a negligible part in the man, the personality. (8)
Julia Kristeva, herself an eminent woman, envisaged texts as functioning along two axes: the horizontal axis determines the relationship between the reader and the text, and vertical axis comprised by complex set of relations of the text to other texts. She gave this intricate relationship the name inter-textuality. According to this concept texts of all sorts – oral, visual, literary, virtual contain references to other texts that have contributed to their production and signification. She wrote in *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, “…every text takes shape as a mosaic of citations; every text is the absorption and transformation of other texts. The notion of inter-textuality comes to take the place of the notion of inter-subjectivity” (146). Roland Barthes also theorized the idea of interplay of numerous texts in a literary text, but his way of presenting it is much different:

The discourse on the Text should itself be nothing other than text, research, textual activity, since the Text is that social space which leaves no language safe, outside, nor any subject of the enunciation in position as judge, master, analyst, confessor, decoder. The theory of the Text can coincide only with a practice of writing. (290)
Text, according to Barthes, is a complete departure from the notion of representation. In his opinion the text is a process not a state or an object. It does not completely fit in any traditional genre; generic hybridism is its essence. There is irreducible multiplicity in it and breaks all the defined boundaries of old genres.

A study of texts of women writers is also away from representation of individual self as it is universally determined by gender. The fundamental characteristic of feminine writing is the expression of emotion rather than the actual experience. Expression of emotion is culturally determined which means that the way a person shows his or her emotions, is defined by socially enforced display rules. The literal expression of emotion is not purely individual accomplishment, but an aspect of the cultural conditions. By using language the woman writers are under the impression that the expression stands for them or it becomes their identification. It, on the contrary is the male-centred culture that speaks through them. Margaret Homans wrote about this dilemma of representation of woman through literal medium:

Yet another view of the literal, of literal language and of women’s identification with it and with nature, is possible if we make the effort to look at the situation from women’s
perspective. Women might, and do, embrace this connection, not for the same reasons for which androcentric culture identifies women and the literal but for reasons having to do with women’s own development and identity, even though that identity is never entirely separable from culture as a whole. The literal is ambiguous for women writers because women’s potentially more positive view of it collides with its devaluation by our culture. I will argue that the differential valuations of literal and figurative originate in the way our culture constructs masculinity and femininity, for the literal is associated with the feminine, the more highly valued figurative is associated with the masculine. (127)

Representation by women poets and prose writers, particularly before the emergence of feminism as a movement of transgressing male-centred cultural constructs was determined by their position in the language of the time. The expression of female identity was not free from the linguistic constructs already created and popularized by men writers. When the female writers used these constructs, they simply took pleasure in recycling them in their passionate way. Their emotion translated into literal and figurative construct were nothing but unquestioned acceptance of the constructs.
So far as general emotions are concerned women are the more emotional sex. A common and universal feature of women’s emotion according to feminist psychologists is that women are experiencing passive emotions such as loneliness, nostalgia, sadness, happiness, fear, and surprise more strongly. Masculine emotions are generally anger, resolve, desire, and active participation. Socialization of men and women happens throughout lifetime in the expression of emotions. The elders in a family and social group play the vital role in furthering socialization. The seniors admire girls for being sensitive and emotional, while as they appreciate boys for dominance and lack of most emotional expression. Emotions are decoded verbally or through non-verbal acts. Psychologists have established that women are skilled at decoding emotion using non-verbal cues also. Facial expression, tone of voice, and posture are some non-verbal cues. Studies have shown girls evince their ability to decode emotions very early in their infancy. This has a bearing on literary expressions also. Women writers generally tend to give unhampered and spontaneous vent to emotions and avoid decoding them. The poetry of Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte provides us with a potential field of study to elaborate the premise. Some of the emotions common to the two poets are:
alienation, nostalgia, narcissism, masochism, desire for dissolution, and love for fantasies.

Alienation, in the songs of Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte, is essentially caused by the cessation of psychological attachment with the mother. Though separation of the child from the womb of the mother is an inevitable result of birth, and cutting the umbilical cord, the shock of separation is stronger in female children than in the male ones. The Oedipal tendency, or return to the origin is common to both sexes, but in girls’ behaviour and approach to life, it is more manifest.

The theme of alienation in two poems of the two poets bears interesting parallels. Habba Khatoon sings:

I am not happy with my in-laws people,
come to my rescue O my parental kin.
I left my home to fetch water
Alas, the pitcher I dropped and it broke;
send me a pitcher for the pitcher I broke,
or you send me the cost of the pitcher. (BOKP 34)

This is a typical feminist poem showing obsession about the past. Girls remain in their emotional stage for a longer time as compared with boys. The child-bride in the above poem of Habba Khatoon, like biblical Ruth, is married in a house that is far away from her parental
house and is surrounded by people who have no emotional bond with her, they are strangers to her. Her marriage is nothing but arbitrary severance of her infantile affinities with her mother and father. Until she is herself the dominant member of the new house, she is treated just as addition to the new family. She is forced to give up her childhood fantasies and accept the economic, cultural, and reproductive responsibilities of a married woman. Thus in a patriarchal society, marriage of a girl has nothing to do with her choice. Her marriage is an arrangement made by her parents and her in-laws.

The poem of Habba Khatoon quoted above, like many of her other poems, is a portrayal of the plight of a newly-wed girl. The cultural setting is that of the highly patriarchal medieval times, not much remote from contemporary rural atmosphere in Kashmir. She is yet to surrender her childhood and acquiesce in the new reality at her new house. She is left all alone in her struggle for finding a space in the new social and cultural network of relations. Whatever she does is critically assessed in terms of her capacity to succeed in her routine domestic chores:

In childhood I was struck by pallor,

how painful it is to go uphill!

while gathering herbs, a potsherd pierced my foot,

it aches as if salt is rubbed on a wound. (BOKP 34)
In the first stanza, the child-bride in her bout of nostalgia calls her father and mother and expresses her grudge that she is a victim of force at her in-laws. Still expecting succour from her parental house, she yearns to go back to her nears and dears at her original home.

In the second stanza, the married girl is frightened to think of the punishment she is sure to undergo as the earthen pitcher she was carrying on her head has fallen and is broken. The incident refers to the culture when women had to travel long distances to get potable water from rivers, springs or wells. They generally carried two to three pitchers balanced on their heads and tread the unkempt roads. Since the girl has no excuse and is sure to face the wrath of her cruel mother-in-law, she makes a pathetic call to her father’s house to send her a new pitcher or the money to buy a new pitcher:

My mother-in-law pulls my hair,
it hurts, it is worse than death;
I had napped against the slat of the wheel,
the axle of the wheel eventually I broke. (BOKP 34)

The image in the third stanza is also highly pathetic. The newly married woman is still a child. She is friendless and sent to do all sorts of drudgery like going to the forests to fetch wood for fuel, gather wild vegetables for the family, breaking the clods in the tilled fields and
look after the grazing cattle. A sharp potsherd pierces the foot of the barefooted girl, and bleeds. The pain is acute and there is no immediate remedy.

In medieval society the mother-in-law was usually very harsh to her daughter-in-law. The newly married girl in the poem under scrutiny is shown in a perplexing situation. Being wearied for having attended to all manner of chores during the day time, she spins wool or cotton on the spinning wheel till late night. Lost in memories and fantasies, she is unable to avoid sleep and eventually has a sweet snooze. She leans against the wooden spinning wheel and, as a result of her burden; the fragile axle of the wheel is broken. The loss shall be unbearable for her mother-in-law and she has no words to explain her slackness. Her mother-in-law shall drag her by pulling her hair and inflict her pain. Apprehensive of punishment, the girl in her hurly-burly vainly hopes salvage from her parents’ home:

Friendless I am, pining in wait,
the burden of my grief is seeking a vent,

Habba Khatoon thus composed this song;

listen O heedful kin of my home. (BOKP 34)

These lines state the purpose of composing the song. It is only through songs that she can give vent to her grief and pain. It is a revealing clue
to the psychic need of poetry that through sublimation of grief, it gives relief.

The world of reference of Emily Bronte’s verses has hardly anything common with the medieval ethos of Habba Khatoon’s poetry. And since she did not belong to the rural peasantry, the agrarian imagery does not become the vehicle of expression. Nevertheless, attachment with the past and the close relations and friends departed is a recurring theme in her verses. As discussed earlier, she too did not have the joys of nearness with her family members and was sent away from home. The pangs of separation did not leave her till her death. It is said that she was most homesick among the Bronte sisters. Linda Marilyn Austin wrote about her unrelenting homesickness:

Emily Bronte suffered from homesickness during the few periods she lived away from Haworth. She left home just four times in her short life. When she was six years old, she followed her older sisters Maria, Elizabeth, and Charlotte to the Clergy Daughters School at Cowan Bridge in nearby Kirkby Lonsdale. After about six months Elizabeth and Maria contracted typhoid, and Emily went home. Ten years later in 1835, she accompanied Charlotte
on her first teaching position to Roe Head, a boarding school.

In accounts of her life, Emily Bronte did not adapt to the regimen of the school day away from home, and at the time Charlotte blamed most of her declining health on overwork and exhaustion; homesickness was a posthumous diagnosis. Of her sister's "white face, attenuated form, and failing strength", during the sojourn at Roe Head, Charlotte remembered, in 1850, "Nobody knew what ailed her but me. I felt in my heart she would die if she did not go home, and with this conviction obtained her recall". Charlotte did not use the current medical term for homesickness, as "nostalgia." (596)

Emily Bronte here says:

Sleep brings no joy to me,
Remembrance never dies;
My soul is given to misery,
And lives in sighs. (*WH&P* 298)

This small poem, like many other poems of Emily Bronte, is an unrestrained outpouring of her alienation and anguish. The poem is too simple and beautiful to withstand interpretation. In stanza one there is
an open lament on the loss of sleep. Instead of bringing relief to her
anguished soul, sleep drowns her in sighs and sobs because sleep stirs
remembrances of the past:

Sleep brings no rest to me;
The shadows of the dead
My waking eyes may never see
Surround my bed. (WH&P 298)

In stanza two, the poet speaks about the agitation in her restive soul as
she visualizes the faces of the dead. She feels as if all her nears and
dears, no more living in this mortal world, throng in and surround her
bed. Eventually, sleep heralds no hope, but makes gloom more
horrifying. Normally sound sleep has a rejuvenating effect as it relieves
the body and mind of fatigue and replenishes body with fresh energy.
On the contrary, the poet says that sleep makes her despondence and
despair crushing and finds herself sailing in a dark sea. She does not
even dream of any sympathetic friend, she, on the contrary, dreams of
her old estranged friends staring at her with sneers and scorn for her
deprivation and suffering. The heart of the anguished soul is torn with
pain. It was expected that sleep would bring back soothing harmony to
her; it deepens her desire for eternal sleep through death so that she is
no more tormented by failing bouts of sleep.
Despair, whether existential or objective, is an integral part of woman’s condition. We can have many explanations, historical as well as social, but it has become the destiny of woman. Having consigned all her responsibilities, freedom, and future to the will of her husband, she has no future of her own and she clings desperately to the past. And when she is deserted even by her husband or lover or some force of circumstance deprives her of her protector, she has no option but to remain a wailing woman. The comment on women’s acquiescence in surrender and lack of the concept of freedom produces hopelessness, dread, despair in their psyche that characterizes her destiny. Simone de Beauvoir wrote about women’s psychological despondence:

Women’s fate is bound up with that of perishable things; in losing them they lose all. Only a free subject, asserting himself as above and beyond duration of things, can check all decay; this supreme recourse has been denied to women. The real reason why she does not believe in a liberation is that she has never put the powers of liberty to a test; the world seems to her to be ruled by an obscure destiny against it is presumptuous to rise in protest. (613-14)
Habba Khatoon in this passionate song sings:

Who the rival of mine enticed you away,
why this odium for me?
Renounce your anger, hatred, and chagrin,
is not your heart ready? Why this odium for me?

(BOKP 23)

In this poem, we find an interesting expression of the universal cravings of narcissistic stage of a young woman that many a time leads her to abnormal behaviour. The young girl loves her own body to the extent of becoming an object and she loves to see herself as an object, “By midnight I keep the door open for you to come / I wish you came in, though only for a while, / there is no hurdle, you alone dither, why this odium for me?” (BOKP 23). She has an unconscious drive to become a prey to a man, often an elderly one who could be her admirer, protector and guide. Simone de Beauvoir again writes about this behaviour of the young girl:

This bent for the impossible frequently leads the young girl to fall in love with a man who is interested in one of her friends, and very often it is a married man. She is readily fascinated by a Don Juan; she dreams of subjugating and holding this seducer whom no woman has
ever retained for long; she nurses the hope of reforming him, though she knows she will fail, and this is one of the reasons for her choice. Some girls become forever incapable of real and complete love. Throughout their lives they will seek an ideal impossible for realization.

(373)
The lover in Habba Khatoon’s poem quoted above is already married or is in love with some other woman. She beseeches him to give up his odium for her and possess her. She loves her body and is ready to surrender it passively to her dream-man. Her narcissism reaches the stage of masochism when she invites the lover of her fantasy to come secretly to her room and enjoy himself to his full satisfaction. She craves to discover and assert herself in her surrender to the will of the stone-hearted, apathetic and arrogant man. She feels her bosom burns in her passion, and implores her “dream lover” \( BOKP \ 23 \) to alleviate her pain and suffering. She has pretty “almond-like” \( BOKP \ 23 \) eyes, but flooded with tears.

The narcissistic girl present in the above poem of Habba Khatoon, like Catherine in Emily Bronte’s \textit{Wuthering Heights}, is an ardent lover of nature. She identifies her physical existence as one of the beautiful objects of the unconquered and un-trammelled. Thus she
is like fresh white snow at mountain peaks that secretly melts with the advent of spring warmth. She is immaculate like newly burgeoned ivy of the garden. She is at the same time sad that her dream-lover does not appreciate her value and have her as a passive prey before her beauty withers.

Although there is no experience of desertion of a lover in the poetry of Emily Bronte, the psychological despondence finds expression in many indirect situations, generally with an impersonal voice. This is beautifully suggested in one of her Gondal poems, *F. De Samara To A.G.A*:

Light up thy hall! ’Tis closing day;
I’m drear and lone and far away—
Cold blows on my breast the north-wind’s bitter sigh,
And oh, my couch is bleak beneath the rainy sky!

*(WH &P 303)*

The poem has an extraordinary setting appropriate for the despondence of the persona with extraordinary desires. All the visual data suggest that the passionate woman is a disembodied lover yearning to see the face of her love for the last time. In the very first stanza, we imagine the forlorn woman lover in a locale that is deliberately de-rationalized to make her longings probable. It is a wintry dusk and everything is
getting engulfed by the dark. The lady asks her attendant’s to light up the hall inside the house. The image suggests that she has been braving chill in her waiting for her estranged lover. She is unmindful of the freezing cold and drenched clothes. Her couch is outside the house and it too is drenched by icy water:

Light up thy halls – and think not of me;
That face is absent now thou hast hated so to see –
Bright be thine eyes, undimmed their dazzling shine,
For never, never more shall they encounter mine!

(WH&P 303)

The persona of the poem expresses her dismay for having lost her youthful beauty. The charm of her face has faded away and she is therefore reluctant to show her face to her lover. She, however, prays that the ardour of her love may never fade and he be always fervent with love and her eyes remain brilliant with his desire:

The desert moor is dark; there is tempest in the air;
I have breathed my only wish in one last,
one burning prayer–
A prayer that would come forth although it lingered long;
That set on fire my heart, but froze upon my tongue.

(WH&P 304)
This stanza externalizes the state of mind of the persona. The whole moor is seen covered by darkness and is raging with tempest. The similitude suggests the spiritual condition in which the earthly existence is moving towards annihilation and the eternal reality begins to dawn upon the awakened mind. There is no more any fascination in the material world and only a prayer for salvation from the illusion of reality can relieve her from despair. Love being the most dominating psychological reality of womanhood, when she directs it towards man, she in fact is desirous of finding God in him. A poet like Emily Bronte, who was destined to remain deprived of man’s love, thus expressed it in terms of mystic expressions. She, therefore, prays for her reunion with her Lord. Her remorse is that she remained deluded by the material world and was late in giving vent to her prayer:

And now, it shall be done before the morning rise:
I will not watch the sun ascend in yonder skies.
One task alone remains – thy pictured face to view –
And then I go to prove if God, at least be true!

(\textit{WH&P 304})

In the last stanza, the speaker resolves to withdraw completely from the world and free herself of all delusions; her resolve not to see the next morning sun shows that she wants to remain confined to her inner
spiritual world that she had wrongly neglected. She wants to be face to face with God so that she is convinced that there is at least one abiding truth when all other truths have proved mirages.

In Habba Khatoon’s lyrics, the mystic notions are less fervent. In her songs the exulting in the beauties of the worldly life is given spontaneous expression. But true to her feminine nature, she has longings to attain eternity through consummate reunion with the Eternal. She envisions the physical world as a vast playground full of enticements to keep the soul engrossed in it. But ultimately the realization dawns upon the soul, but penitence and guilt overwhelm it for being late in realizing the error. In a song that gives vent to woman’s psychic dilemma, Habba Khatoon says, “For a play I went outdoors, but remained rapt there; / unmindful I was that the day was to set” (BOKP 45). Woman’s narcissism assumes the narrative of mystic concept of permanence and transience. The archetypal permanence is the state of oblivion, or a condition before the appearance of consciousness. Absence of language in this inexplicable mystic truth is generally depicted as the paradise when man enjoyed highest position in the hierarchy of cosmic order. Poetic imagination sometimes portrays it as the eternal abode or, in feminist aesthetic, the parental house when a girl enjoys abundance of love and knows no
worries of the world. The poetic conceit may also depict it as mother’s womb when in absolute forgetfulness there was no sense of alienation. The oedipal drive always makes her nostalgic and keeps her yearning to go back to the abode. But individual’s involvement in the mundane strife gradually deprives him/her of the sweet remembrance of the privileged position and his consciousness takes overlaying of the material cares. But ultimately, flashes of the lost position appear in mind, but the poet feels that it is late, metaphorically, the sun has set.

In Emily Bronte’s poem, *The Sun Has Set*, we find a close resemblance with the rise and fall of the psychic energy in the poet’s stirred imagination. The poet realises at the end of a long journey, she has to go back to her abode. Reminding of Wordsworth’s *Ode On Intimation Of Immortality*, the poem is set against the background of natural phenomenon. The imagery of the poem is quite subtle, free from overt statements about the philosophy of being and nothingness:

The sun has set, and the long grass now
Waves drearily in the evening wind;
And the wild bird has flown from that old grey stone,
In some warm nook a couch to find. (*WH&P* 293)

In the opening stanza we find the speaker, who is the awakened mind of the poet, become conscious of the setting sun. The setting of the sun
is the metaphor of the end of possibilities of attainments. It is the psychological state in which an individual realizes the finitude of life and or failure in the worldly trial. The agitated mind is in contrast to the other objects of nature that have no consciousness of their roles, and follow a natural course of life. The evening wind produces waves in long grass, and the waves symbolize the flow of remembrances. Similarly the solitary bird which has spent all his day in soaring free and enjoying the boundless joys of freedom from cares, is finally home, “the warm nook a couch to find” (WH&P 294). It is only the restive soul of the speaker that is aghast for being late in utilising the allotted time meaningfully. The thought of the unpreparedness of the lonely human soul bears a sharp contrast with the blissful bird.

The sense of loneliness and being belated is amplified in the next two stanzas. The image of setting of the sun behind the misty hill and breezeless glade suggests ineffable state of mind. The approaching dark, haze and motionlessness intimate the speaker’s consciousness of the end of her possibilities and inability to give form to the amorphous state of mind, her remorse and sorrow. The only way to articulate this state is to find correspondences in external objects of nature. All around there is dreadful stillness as if death has benumbed all; the only sound audible is the sighing of the wind that comes far away “over the
healthy sea” (\(WH&P\) 294). It seems as if this is intimation from eternity, because the sea is a symbol of the origin and the end:

But now, when i had hoped to sing,

My fingers strike a tuneless string;

And still the burden of the strain

Is ‘Strive no more; ’tis all in vain.’ (\(WH&P\) 294)

In the concluding stanza, the poet expresses her dissatisfaction with her creative accomplishments. In a traditional note of humility, she says that she could not realize her dreams of producing such enduring verse that would give her never-fading fame. Her visions of ardent fancy could not find sublime expression because, as she feels, she did not really know the art of giving it an adequate form. She envisions herself as unskilled musician who has the fervour of producing music but becomes conscious of her lack of adroitness in producing a meaningful note by striking the strings of the lyre.

Consciousness of being watched and jeered upon for incapacities is common to all women in the male dominated world. Women poets, following the poetic aesthetic of man’s world, express sorrow for being ineffective and unaccomplished. It is pertinent to quote Sandra Gilber and Susan Gubar in this context:
For all literary artists, of course, self-definition necessarily precedes self-assertion: the creative “I AM” cannot be uttered if the “I” knows not what it is. But for the female artist the essential process of self-definition is complicated by all those patriarchal definitions that intervene between herself and herself. (Rivkin 596-7)

Woman’s perpetual anxiety of being watched by hungry and voyeuristic male eyes is a result of her intrinsic narcissism. She has an ambivalent relation with her body: on the one hand she loves it as her only possession that she can use as a means of enticing man, and on the other hand, she hates it for depending on man to discover its beauty. This develops masochistic tendencies in an unmarried girl. It has been observed that many teenager girls prick their bodies with pins, pencils, and other pointed things. They may in extreme conditions cause serious injuries to themselves. And it is not surprising that teenage girls, when irked by their parents, or feeling failure in love or examinations, easily strangle themselves to death; such stories are a regular feature of news papers. Girls’ obsession about their bodies surrounded by ogling eyes of males is beautifully expressed in this Habba Khatoon’s song, Forever, A Young Girl I Am In Desire:

Every particle of my body is love for him;

Forever, a young girl I am in desire.
He once watched me over the fence;
I wished to adorn him with a shawl of fleece;
but why does he sulk and keep away? (BOKP 101-2)

This tendency in seeking pleasure in looking at a female body is called scopophilic instinct. Talking about modern films, Laura Mulvey wrote:

In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure, which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote to-be-looked-at-ness. Woman displayed as sexual object is the leitmotif of erotic spectacle: from pin-ups to strip-tease, from Ziegfeld to Busby Berkeley, she holds the look, plays to and signifies male desire. (Rivkin 589)

It is amazing that a rustic Kashmiri woman poet, Habba Khatoon was so bold to give expression to this state of “to-be-looked-at-ness” over three and half centuries ago. The whole poem is a dramatic representation of the love relationship of a determined lover and a bashful girl in a medieval rural culture. The lover, unrelenting in
possessing the girl and bringing his passion to consummation approaches the girl on different occasions. Since the ethical norms did not allow open trysts of lovers, the chasing lover, braving all dangers, approaches the girl secretly. Since the speaker in the poem is the girl herself, she takes pleasure in indulging in recapitulating how the determined lover uses various means to have a look at her. She narrates the whole series of her lover’s attempts to be near her and finally possess her. The backdrop is a rural house which has a fenced compound, a thatched roof, a penthouse type of under-roof space, a rent in the roof, one or two windows, gables and a couple of rooms. The lover furtively approaches her and the girl, too, is inclined to surrender. The hunt finally ends up in the fulfilment of the passion in a moonlit night near the waterhole of the village. The lover is then left craving to see him again. The refrain in Forever, A Young Girl I Am In Desire reminds us of the knight in the immortal poem of John Keats La Belle Dame Sans Merci; the lovelorn and woebegone lover in Habba Khatoon’s poem is a female though. A young girl’s narcissism is intimately related to her propensity for masochism. She always delights in daydreaming and imagining herself as an object of man’s desire. In certain pathological conditions, her fantasy leads to a desire for the impossible.
Emily Bronte, as a conscious poet with her definite philosophical posture, does not yield to the customs of oral poetry as Habba Khatoon does. She avoids the repetitive refrain and the additive elaboration of oral lyric. She concentrates on one particular feeling, focuses an appropriate image and consciously maintains restraint in the use of words. Human love does not appear in physical and worldly form in her poetry, but is totally internalized as a narcissistic tendency. Narcissism, as a fundamental attitude of all women, makes Emily Bronte regard her ego as an absolute end and take refuge in it. She was a young woman and did not have the opportunity of having the experience of conjugal life, and as such, she visualizes and understands herself as an image in the universe reduced to mirror. She imagines the world outside as a meaningless chaos. She adores her image in the imagined mirror and tends to rule over space and time. She is solitary and supreme in all her feminine rituals of self-worship. Her narcissism does not let her become an object of male’s hunt, as we see in Habba Khatoon, but a house in which dwells her Lord. In her non-Gondal poem *The Philosopher* she makes Self a “little frame” in which “warring gods” dwell:

O Thy bright eyes must answer now,

When Reason, with a scornful brow,
Is mocking at my overthrow;

O thy sweet tongue must plead for me

And tell why I have chosen thee! (WH&P 344)

The opening stanza is addressed to the internalized love, which in a later line in the poem is also called phantom thing. The poet is jeered at by Reason for having abdicated worldly pleasures, and chosen her God housed in her own being.

The sense of having lost everything that this mundane world could provide her with is repeated in the second stanza. She asks her Lord to help her in framing a befitting answer to the scornful Reason.

The third stanza is an explanation of what she has wilfully to abjure, “wealth, power and pleasure’s flower” (WH&P 344). The following stanzas in the first half also present the conflict between imagination and reason, between spiritual needs and earthly possessions. All the worldly values prevalent in a society can interpret this kind of withdrawal as an overthrow, but the narcissistic poet who has made her soul the shrine to house her Lord, is not feeling any remorse to have shunned the common path and chosen an unconventional way of life:

So with a ready heart I swore

To seek their altar-stone no more

And gave my spirit adore
Thee, ever present, phantom thing –

My slave, my comrade, and my king! (WH&P 345)

The fifth stanza is the beginning of the second part of the poem. In this stanza the poet presents her internalized Love in three forms- my slave, my comrade, and my king. Emily Bronte expresses three conflicting aspects of the same reality- he is her slave because she has confined him to her soul; he is her comrade because he is so near her so as to always console her ache, and, finally, he is her king because he directs and dictates all the states of her mind and her desires. With all these three manifestations, the internalised love is a phantom thing, a reality that she has herself made. Yet she feels haughty to have achieved this internalization of the imagined love:

My Darling Pain that wounds and sears
And wrings a blessing out from tears
By deadening me to real cares:
And yet a king – though Prudence well
Have taught thy subject to rebel. (WH&P 345)

In the penultimate stanza, the poet explains how her internalized phantom love is her king that has supreme power over soul. Calling him her “Darling Pain”, she shows how he lacerates her soul to shed tears. Her tears are a form of blessing from her Lord because tears strengthen her resolution to remain consistent in her renunciation.
Accepting the unconventional path, deemed her overthrow by her society, is in her opinion, her way of rebelling:

And am I wrong, to worship where

Faith cannot doubt, nor hope despair,

Since my own soul can grant me prayer?

Speak, God of Visions, plead for me,

And tell why I have chosen thee. (WH&P 345)

In the last stanza she pleads her Lord to convince her that she is right in having chosen to have her own way of worship. She is contented with her way because it leaves no scope for doubt and despair. She has not to go to any impossible space where her prayer could be granted, it is her own hallowed soul that grants her prayers.

Commenting on the poem *The Philosopher*, Dannie Abse and Ernesto Cardenal wrote:

In the non-Gondal poem *The Philosopher* there is a description of “warring god” within the “little frame” of the speaker’s physical self. This image could easily serve as a metaphor for much of Bronte’s poetry. Within the confines of poetic structure she attempts to hold conflicting forces and related images. *Oh Thy Bright Eyes Must Answer Now* is a significant poem in the Bronte’s
cannon, for it clearly sets forth the dimensions of these conflicts. (486)

In Bronte’s poetry, the reader has always a feel of the presence of an outside power which has permanence in contrast to the ephemeral things, and the poet. In her famous poem *No Coward Soul Is Mine* she evinces her conscious choice to dwell in visions. She feels that “Being and Breath” can never be destroyed even if the whole cosmos is reduced to a cipher:

No Coward soul is mine,

No trembler in the world’s storm-troubled spheres!

I see Heaven’s glories shine,

And Faith shines equal, arming me from Fear.

(*WH&P* 360)

This poem is a typical example of poet’s mystic annihilation in the eternal cosmic process of being and nothingness and affirmation of self. Individual existence of a thing or phenomenon is in a flux, it makes no sense whether it is apparent or invisible. The prevailing spirit, called “Being and Breath” (*WH&P* 360), is the existence of indestructibility of nature, at the micro-cosmic level, as well as macrocosmic level. The mystic comprehension of relativity of being and non-being and their inexorable inter-convertibility is the underlying principle of all Bronte’s poems that manifest a pantheistic vision.
Mysticism is in a way an essential aspect of womanhood. If human love is denied to a woman or the circumstance do not allow a woman to have her lover always with her, she tries to adore divinity of God in herself. She internalizes the whole cosmic drama of the grand outside in her own finite being. Her soul seems to her God’s couch and all her faculties emanate from Him and are directed towards Him. It is the physical or fleshy existence that is the basic veil between the mystic woman’s consciousness and the majestic Deity enthroned in her own soul. Many studies in psychopathology reveal that women generally develop erotomania when they are confronted with inextricable confusion between human lover and God.

In Kashmiri poetry, much before Habba Khatoon, the first saint-poet in the language, Lal Ded of the 14th century, expressed her joy and thrill in having attained inextricable union with the Ultimate, but the limitation of verbal medium made her express her feelings in erotic images. She, for instance said:

In wee hours I conversed with my Love,
And endured the pain in yearning for my Lord;
I lulled my Love to awaken him,
I merged with him and hallowed my body. (BOKP 24)

We can find many parallels between such mystic exhilaration and ecstasy of a woman saint poet Lal Ded and the sayings of other woman
mystics of the world like Rabia Basri, Mirabai, St. Angela of Foligno, and many others.

An excerpt from the text of St. Angela of Foligno in which Jesus speaks to her awakened soul:

My sweet girl, my daughter, my loved one, my temple, my daughter, my loved one, love me for I love you, much, much more than you can love me. Your whole life: your eating, your drinking, your sleeping, all your life finds favour in my sight... My daughter, my sweet spouse, I love you very much. (Beauvoir 684)

Although we do not find any of such fervid declarations in the songs of Habba Khatoon, but the ecstasy of erotic union with the phantom lover assumes mystic dimension. In one of her popular songs, she says:

Pretty posies I make for you, come and enjoy my pomegranate bloom.

I am the earth and you are the sky, you are the lid to cover the secret. (BOKP 23)

This song replete with erotic images, expresses woman’s unconscious tendency for voluntary surrender to a male of her own fantasy. In this respect, it may be mentioned here again that corporal existence of womanhood has been universally projected as immanence that is
craving for unity with the transcendence. Zaehnar, the author of a monumental book on universals of mysticism, titled *Mysticism: Sacred and Profane*, wrote, “The sexual image is particularly apt since man when penetrates the woman, is both within and without her, just as God who dwells at the deepest point of the soul also envelopes it and covers it with his infinite love” (151-2). Commenting on this universal principle of mysticism A.N. Dhar wrote:

> It may be pointed out here that the marriage analogy was actually intended to convey just a hint of the “mystic rapture” that is inexpressible in ordinary language. The intention does not seem to have been to glorify the love between man and woman as such as to suggest the supreme significance of divine love. (57)

Habba Khatoon, in order to express the same propensity takes recourse to romantic lyrics because there is no other alternative in language. The ornate imagery used in the poem represents the virgin female lover as the earth, clad in fast fading, beautiful nonetheless, verdure and blossoms. All the images are intricately related by the underlying psychic urge for surrender. The male principle is first depicted as the sky to cover the frail and flawed reality. He is the guest and she the delicious food in stanza one. Similarly in the second stanza, there is an
allegorical reference to Laila, the legendary lover of Majnoon in oriental romance. She, like a Black Night (meaning of Laila) lit a lamp in dark night, suggesting archetypal darkness. She in the ardour of passion loses all her conscious restraint and surrendered to the beams of light. God is an ever burning candle and the poet compares herself with a crazy moth that gyrates around the flame till it is consumed. In the third stanza, she is again represented as plentiful summer, but all is fast fading. She calls her nonchalant lover Bulbul, a symbol of lover of blossoms. In the fourth stanza, she is like the cosmic music resounding through bass and treble; She is a continuous cry that expects hearing. She at the same time is convinced that her love will not find her deficient of anything: she is a shop replete with all pretty things. The Creator is then compared with a potter who goes on making pots on the inexorable wheel. But the pots produced, that is, the creation in general, are not of the same merit. Some are dexterously made and there are many that are defective. In the final stanza, Habba Khatoon is again eagerly waiting to receive her lover (God) with a garland of artfully made garland of fine filaments of fresh cotton flowers. The last line is a suggestion to read the song as a series of hints to the meanings that are inexpressible in ordinary language, “Habba Khatoon sang verses full of suggestion” (BOKP 23–4).
To conclude, poetry of Emily Bronte and Habba Khatoon reveal all the basic constants in the nature of womanhood; the variables are only in the consciously assumed personalities. Most of these permanent features are integral part of her nature because she is destined to be a woman; but many of the features are a result of the role apportioned to her by society. Her relation to man in various social milieus and cultural conditions has produced in her certain traits that are universal. Such traits are persistently being strengthened by man’s attitude to her since the very beginning of life; girls and boys are treated differently, whatever be the social, economic and cultural context. The most obvious of all these psychological realities is her being emotional in defiance to reason. Her emotional nature manifests itself in all her roles in society. In poetry, which is essentially based on emotions, woman’s poetry is an unhampered outpouring of emotions. Verses of Emily Bronte and Habba Khatoon reveal how emotional nature assumes the shape of oedipal drive towards the origin. Return to the origin takes the shape of withdrawal from outside and professed narcissism. Narcissism in its turn assumes the form of loneliness, nostalgia, melancholy, ennui, and mystic ascent of their Self—the basic substance of countless melodious songs obtaining in all languages, particularly in the verses of Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte.
CHAPTER IV

LYRICISM AND DESIRE FOR FREEDOM
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LYRICISM AND DESIRE FOR FREEDOM

Lyricism, feminism, and freedom are related notions and the relation between them has been determined by the literary traditions of poetry in a particular language. Since the tradition of lyrical poetry in all languages emerged from folk poetry, it is grounded in the oral medium. All cultures before the advent of modern ways of life were oral in nature, and as such, lyrical mode was the primeval as well as the most popular mode of poetic expression. The song form of poetry, called a lyric, is the principal form of poetry. A lyric is a short poem with one speaker (not necessarily the poet) who expresses his/her feelings spontaneously. Generally a lyric is a brief poem about feeling. But there are many forms of lyrics which express complex evolution of thoughts and feelings under a dominant mood. All the emotions expressed spontaneously seem personal emotions of the poet, but most often it is the tradition of free use of musical language that determines the emotions.

The word lyric derives from the Greek word lyricos which means singing to the lyre. This etymological root of the word in itself suggests that a lyric is essentially subservient to external music. It is therefore fundamentally a song which is meant to be sung orally in
accompaniment of some music. A lyrical poem is a set of verbal expressions that are acceptable according to the linguistic structure of a language. It is determined by form, articulation, meter and symphony. It has numerous forms according to the subject matter and is intimately related with the cultural activities of a linguistic community. Its power and beauty lie in its conformity with the oral culture which it has thrived in. Orality is, therefore, the basis of understanding the beauty of lyricism.

Walter Ong (1988) has explained and elucidated how orality works on collective memory or the mnemonic basis of a culture, and formulaic or clichéd expressions become the components of all literary expressions. Since song is essentially a collective form of literature and originates from group performances, individual creative talent is dominated by the psychodynamics of the community. We can summarise Walter Ong’s statements about oral forms of literature as follows:

1. Expression is additive rather than subordinative.

2. It is aggregative rather than analytic.

3. It tends to be redundant or copious.

4. There is a tendency for it to be conservative.
5. Out of necessity, thought is conceptualized and then expressed with relatively close reference to the human world.

6. Expression is agonistically toned.

7. It is empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced.

8. It is homeostatic.

9. It is situational rather than abstract.

The first trait of lyrical poetry suggests that it being oral in nature, it has no fixed form. It does not have a beginning, middle and an end. The ideas and images used in the poem are not subordinate to a well-defined structure. We can add lines to it or delete some lines from it; the structure will be hardly affected. It depends on the relative proximity with the oral folk poetry. In Habba Khatoon’s lyrics, there is not much difference between her way of expression and that of the folk poetry that had had a very long tradition in the language. For instance, in her lyric *Come, O My Carefree Lover Of Flowers!* the country damsels with a slight poetic propensity can go on adding new stanzas to it, because the lyric is simply a succession of the changing phenomena of nature and permanence of passion. Similarly, the poem *Anticipation* by Emily Bronte is open ended too:
How beautiful the earth is still,
To thee--how full of happiness?
...........................................

Of youth's delight, when youth is past,
And thou art near thy prime? (*WH&P* 354)

The second characteristic of lyrical poetry as suggested by Walter Ong refers to the universal characteristic of lyrics – that every lyric has to be evaluated in its totality. Being subservient to a mood and the corresponding music, it cannot be analyzed for better appreciation. The audience has to feel the mood and partake in its rhapsody or gloom. Emily Bronte’s poem *Hope* is to be read in one reading and enjoyed in its entirety, not in its parts:

Hope was but a timid friend;
She sat without the grated den,
Watching how my fate would tend,
Even as selfish-hearted men. (*WH&P* 363-4)

The poet has given the strength of hope that it helps us face the ordeals of life with fortitude. But this hope that ought to have been with every living soul, is sulking away from the poet. It does not give her company she direly needed it. Like a callous man, it remains nonchalant even when the poet suffered, wept and found no strength of
forbearance. An analysis of the poem in fragments is bound to harm its melancholic tone. It is to be sung or read without intellectual way of critical examination of its constituents.

Similarly, any song of Habba Khatoon is essentially meant to be sung or enjoyed while singing. This is best exemplified in her song, *All The Hinterlands Are Filled With Bloom*:

> All the hinterlands are filled with bloom,
> you are yet to heed my call.
> Blossoms have swathed all brooks and lakes,
> let us go capering to the pasture land,
> jasmine abounds in closed gardens;
> you are yet to heed my call.
> The far off hamlets are all burgeoned,
> let us revisit our parental homes,
> lilacs have bloomed in groves there;
> you are yet to heed my call. *(BOKP 96)*

The short lyric sings of the exuberance of spring. It is the time of capering about in full abandon and not to sit indoors. She craves for the company of a friend who could partake of her ecstasy, but her friend’s indifference makes the fleeting joys of spring a source of pain. Any
further analysis of the immediate constituents is bound to harm its total impact.

The third salient feature of lyrical poetry, according to Ong, is its copiousness. The lyricist does not remain rigorous in selection of words and expressions. Abundance and profusion in lyrics make them conform to the demands of oral poetry. The text hardly matters, it remains a communal act closely associated with one or the other communal ritual or agrarian activity. Emily Bronte’s poems are, however, less copious than those of Habba Khatoon.

The fourth trait of oral poetry is that, being mnemonic in nature, it conserves its feelings and expressions. It does not allow any scope of experimentation. What is memorable is to be memorized. There is no possibility of departure from the tradition. All songs of Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte are profoundly traditional and, as such, conservative. The simplicity of feelings and spontaneous expression make them immune to change with the changes in social milieu and changing economic structure of society. In this regard lyrical poetry differs from elite poetry, the hallmark of which is to be experimental in conformity with individual experience, a particular social, economic and cultural situation.

The fifth trait of oral/lyrical poetry, according to Ong, is that every poetic composition is a comment or series of comments on an
idea that is clearly stated. The body of the lyric comprises illustration from human life. Most of the illustrations are highly cliched and a result of convention. Emily Bronte’s poem *Hope Was But A Timid Friend*, is a typical example of this. She says, “Hope was but a timid friend; / She sat without the grated den” (*WH&P* 356). The very first line of the poem brings to surface the theme of the poem, and the substance comprises traditional similes: hope is a timid friend, hope sulks and does not remain constant in giving support, hope guards us from the dangers of the world around, but when it comes to actual encounter with danger, she surrenders, hope beguiles us by singing us sweet songs, but when most needed, it grows silent, so on and so forth. Similarly, Habba Khatoon’s any song can be an appropriate illustration of Ong’s generalization. Her songs are based on refrain, and the refrain is a statement on the poet’s self or on the world around her. The stanzas form a concatenation of illustrations. The poem can be extended, that too endlessly, by talking of other flowers or birds of spring; the mood is that beauty and youth are short lived. This recalls to our mind the famous lines of Emily Bronte’s poem *Fall of Leaves*, “Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers away’ / Lengthen night and shorten day” (*WH&P* 370).
The sixth generalization about the lyric is that it is agnostically toned. It means that it is free from the strict adherence to the religious scriptures. Whatever is said or intimated by the oral lyric is free from narrow rules and obligations of any particular religious creed. Any lyric which bears any kind of reference to any religious personage or religious event, is not secular in essence, but if it has the overpowering beauty of music, and can be sung and enjoyed on the basis of its music and beauty of simplicity, it is a lasting piece of lyrical poetry.

Lyrics are empathetic and participatory in the sense that poet’s distinct individuality or self does not become an obstacle in its being a legacy of a group. In fact the I used in a lyric is a false self; it is the self of any member of the group. Like a ritual, the lyric is an expression of mutual bonds, conventional performances, and participation in various situations of day-to-day life. Contrary to intellectual or elitist poetry, the lyric does not bear the stamp of the poet’s personality, erudition, individual experience.

The eighth characteristic, according to Walter Ong is that it is homeostatic. It means that every lyric, like any other aspect of oral culture, has a tendency of or strength of remaining unaffected by the changes in the conditions around it. It refers to the internal consistency
of the lyric. As an illustration of this property we may cite the following lyric of Habba Khatoon:

   Once, my love held and pulled me by my wrist.
   All my necklaces are broken loose.
   For a feast once I visited my aunt’s house,
   prettified with ornaments I was in full,
   the hug made the ornament pierce my bosom.
   All my necklaces are broken loose.  (BOKP 87)

The items of dress, ornaments, fetes, and secret meetings with the lover are no more in vogue and the present-day readers may find this kind of lyric meaningless, but sweet. The strength of the lyric lies in the very presence of the past.

   The last feature of lyrical poetry as a representative of the oral culture is that it is situational rather than abstract. The lyricist foregrounds various activities of normal worldly life. The artistic use of ambiguity or oblique reference, is not acceptable to lyrical poetry. Any of the songs of Habba Khatoon can be cited as an illustration of this fact. It is true of Emily Bronte’s songs as well. For instance the references to situation is best exemplified in her song, titled The Old Stoic:

   Riches I hold in light esteem,
   And Love I laugh to scorn;
And lust of fame was but a dream

That vanished with the morn. (WH&P 328)

The poet enunciates the central idea of the lyric that freedom alone is the highest ambition of her soul. She then amplifies this desire of her soul by stating clearly that all worldly riches, fame, worldly love—all else sought in this world is as futile and meaningless as a dream that vanishes when the night is over. She therefore prays to God for just one thing that is to unburden her soul from all such gratuitous material things and grant her soul full freedom. The freedom sought by the poet is both of her body as well as soul. She wants to endure with forbearance this worldly life by possessing a chainless soul. Since Emily Bronte belonged to a later time, she was more conscious about the use of words. The theme of despise for wealth and fame is a stereotype in English poetry.

Oral culture has to descend from generation to generation. It therefore, depends on collective memory of the linguistic community. The above qualities of oral literature enhance its power of getting amalgamated with the collective memory and increase its abiding nature within the social and economic milieu before the popularity of written or printed literature. The advent of printing was the beginning of the literate- literature which bears the imprint of the individual
creative mind and does not need the mnemonic dynamism. Its quality and credibility is determined by the printed text that is recognized by the qualities of individual form and expression. Individual talent is hardly a matter to be reckoned in oral literature because everything is dictated by tradition. The group performance plays its role in its continuation and, as such, gets influenced by it. Being open ended in form, it can accept all sorts of interpolations during the performances of the singers of various generations. Only those works of creative literature have remained safe from interpolation which were consigned to the manuscript form.

Lyricism in poetry works on various linguistic trajectories and devices that have universal acceptance. The use of all these devices forms the conventions of lyricism in a particular language. A convention is a rule or practice based upon general consent and upheld by society at large. A convention is an arbitrary rule or practice recognized as valid in any particular art or discipline, such as use of rhymes, word repetition and refrain. When we read or listen to a song, we have various expectations with the use of all these devices, and appreciate even the slightest novelty or innovation in their use.

Lyrical poetry is also based on stock characters, stock situations and stock responses:
- Stock character: character types of the genre of song, e.g., a lovelorn maid deserted by her lover, an innocent damsel fallen in love with a stranger, a girl languishing for her parental abode, a woman identifying herself with the romantic heroines of the legends of the past, the male lover presented as a knight, a prince or a callous beau, and so on and so forth.

- Stock situation: a country damsel tormented by her in-laws, agricultural labour, participation in some festival and secret trysts with her childhood lover, a married young maid meeting her father, boy-meets-girl, the eternal triangle, the innocent proves himself or herself, craving for death or fear of death, shock on the fast fading beauties of nature, and so on and so forth.

- Stock response: highly cadenced expression, use of alliteration and assonance, stock similes and images, reflection of the subjective states in the states of nature, erotic and mystic metaphor suggesting union between the loved and lover, death as resolution of all conflicts, indifference of people around, torments by the community, withdrawal from the outside world and discovering the real in the soul itself, and so on and so forth.
Thus we see that lyrical poetry across the languages, cultures and ages follows the same principle. The tradition can be traced down directly from Sappho the famous poet of ancient Greece. Sappho was born on the island of Lesbos. She is believed to have been born sometime between 630 and 612 BC, and she died around 570 BC. Most of her poems have been lost, but the surviving fragments have given her immense global reputation. She is believed to have lived a lustful life and hailed all the beauties of the mortal world. All her poems are highly passionate and subjective in nature. For instance in a poem by Sappho, titled *Hymn to Aphrodite*, she writes, “Immortal Aphrodite of the shimmering throne, / daughter of Zeus, weaver of wiles” (Cox 33). David Campbell has briefly summarized some of the most arresting qualities of Sappho's poetry; he wrote:

> Clarity of language and simplicity of thought are everywhere evident in our fragments; wit and rhetoric, so common in English love-poetry and not quite absent from Catullus’ love poems, are nowhere to be found. Her images are sharp—the sparrows that draw Aphrodite’s chariot, the full moon in a starry sky, the solitary red apple at the tree-top—and she sometimes lingers over them to elaborate them for their own sake. She quotes the direct
words of conversations real or imaginary and so gains immediacy. (262)

Lyrical poetry, right from the earliest theorizing about poetry, has been associated with ecstasy or sublime in the critical idiom of Longinus. It is that power of lyrical poetry that transports the reader from the world of loss and gain, from all considerations of good and bad to an imaginative reality which gives him complete freedom from the routine world. Longinus (213–273 AD), wrote about lyrical poetry that it transports the reader or the listener, or liberates him from the mundane world. He wrote, “the first and most important source of sublimity is the power of forming great conceptions” (Roberts 14). But about the aesthetic impact of lyrical poetry according to Longinus is that it leads to freedom. Or in other words lyricism in itself is a mode of substitute of freedom or craving for freedom. Longinus wrote:

The Sublime leads the listeners not to persuasion, but to ecstasy: for what is wonderful always goes together with a sense of dismay, and prevails over what is only convincing or delightful, since persuasion, as a rule, is within everyone’s grasp: whereas, the Sublime, giving to speech an invincible power and an invincible strength, rises above every listener. (Roberts 16)
Thus we see that the sublime, for Longinus, was only means of seeking evasion from reality. However, we must not forget that according to Longinus lyrics like other forms of literature, have a moral function also, that is through ecstasy they model a soul. In this way the treatise *On The Sublime* has an ethical purpose also. Sublime is not possible for all, it is the product of a great soul. The sources of the Sublime are of two kinds: inborn sources- “aspiration to vigorous concepts” and “strong and enthusiastic passion” and acquirable sources- “rhetorical devices”, “choice of the right lexicon” and “dignified and high composition” (Roberts 10).

The concept of Longinus about sublime poetry, in this sense, bears close resemblance with that of his great predecessor Aristotle. In his *Poetics* he wrote about lyrical poetry that it originated from Dithyrambs which produced frenzied ecstasy or trance like mental state and liberated man from all concerns of life. In ancient Greece, lyric poetry had a technical meaning- it referred to a verse that was accompanied by a lyre or any other stringed instrument. The lyricist was distinguished from other poets and playwrights, lyrics were an essential component of their dramas. The lyricist of a drama wrote trochaic and iambic verses accompanied by flute rather than a lyre. Some eminent poets of Hellenistic Alexandria are especially famous
for their lyrics, Sappho, Alcaeus, Anacreon and Pindar are, however, the most outstanding.

Throughout the medieval ages, lyrics in all languages were accompanied by flutes and stringed instruments of various types. Generally the song remained subservient to the music. However, the lyrics of abiding poetic value made instrumental music subservient to them. It was the musicians’ art to discover the inherent music of a song and then devise the musical scheme accordingly. Many of the songs, as we know in Kashmiri, have a rhythm and tune that have become inseparable from the lyrics; Habba Khatoon’s songs, too, have their fixed tunes; any attempt to deviate from them cannot produce the same aesthetic impact. These rhythms and tunes are familiar to every Kashmiri and cannot be described in English. It is only the native speaker of the language who can understand this.

In English, too, lyrics have a very long history; their history begins with the beginning of the literary tradition in the language. The earliest lyrics in English are alliterative songs, which are hardly intelligible to modern readers. It is only the rhythm that fascinates us. The underlying system is based upon accent, alliteration, the quantity of vowels and patterns of syllabic accentuation. Various forms of permutations on a base verse were also used to enhance musical
effects. All these lyrics used two poetic figures, viz, kenning, an often formulaic phrase that describes one thing in terms of another, and litotes, that is a dramatic understatement employed for producing ironic effect.

All classical lyric poetry in English has a recurring pattern. In every lyric a shepherd speaks of love and is overheard by audience. Northrop Frye in his *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*, describes this rhythm as associative rather than logical. He calls them a product of dreams and the subconscious. It closely resembles chant, babbles and dream utterance.

Lyrical poetry assumed great popularity and respect as a distinct mode of poetry when Wordsworth and Coleridge made lyricism the basic mode of their writing and gave it a solid critical foundation by publishing their *Lyrical Ballads* in collaboration. Wordsworth’s Preface to the book is one of the seminal works of literary criticism in English language and there are numerous poets throughout the world who follow his literary canons. The book is believed to be the foundation stone of a long revolution in English poetry, called Romantic poetry. Wordsworth’s Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads* (1801) was the manifesto for Romanticism. The following passage from this epoch making essay sums up some of the fundamentals of lyricism.
Wordsworth wrote, “The principal object, then, proposed in these poems was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible in a selection of language really used by men” (7).

The basic notions of romantic lyrics, according to Wordsworth are:

- Common people engaged in their common life activities are the subjects of lyrics.
- The common people of rural areas are the real subjects of their poetry because they live in closer proximity with nature and are humble and simple.
- The language of common rustic people used in their routine life has to be the language of lyrical prose.
- The common usage of words has to be given a tinge of imagination so that they become more suggestive.
- Common things and incidents are to be presented in such a way as liberates their intrinsic but hidden wonder.

This manifesto of romantic poetry was universally accepted as a revolt against the hard and fast rules of classicism that had made poetry subservient to pedantic use of words, unnecessary grandeur and far-fetched metaphors. The rules of classical norms had taken poetry away
from the actual life and thus made it redundant. The repetition in terms of themes and expression was mind blowing and it seemed that poetry like many beauties of the past was a thing of antiquarian interest. The English romanticism brought it back to its soil, that is, the real life of the real people, and energised it with fresh vitality. Laying emphasis on things of ordinary observation, but charged with poet’s imaginative power, and rejecting the false elitism of classical poetry, it sought closer ties with the lyricism of oral poetry. Thus Wordsworth’s poem *Solitary Reaper* or any of the poems of *Lucy* series could be easily read and enjoyed as folk song if the author were not known.

The lyric, titled *Solitary Reaper* is perhaps the most perfect example of the aesthetic of lyricism. We can find numerous correspondences of this poem in the oral folk poetry in the two languages, but Wordsworth as a very conscious poet with a profound philosophy has given the lyric a beauty of form that is unparalleled. The diction of the poem is lucid that makes the poem akin to a folk song. But the beauty of the song is in its suggestiveness and not in its surface meaning. This critical notion is made clear by the very substance of the poem when he says that the solitary reaper’s song is unintelligible to the listener, yet it leaves behind music in his mind that remains reverberating for a long time. It is reader’s faculty to find his
own meanings in the poem and seek delight in them. The words of the reaper’s song are in keeping with Wordsworth’s famous critical notion that poetry is “spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings” (46). Since the words are incomprehensible to the speaker, his attention is free to focus on the tone, expressive beauty, and the blissful mood it creates in him.

After having discussed the rudiments of lyricism, it becomes imperative to illustrate how lyricism functions as a form of expression of the desire for freedom in all woman poets, and for the present purpose in the poetry of the two poets Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte.

Lyricism is a desire for oblivion and reunion with the elemental nature. Women, burdened by the customs of patriarchal notions of modesty, seek their freedom, though momentarily, in wild abandon and merger with forces of nature. In a typical song, All The Hinterlands Are Filled With Bloom, Habba Khatoon says:

The far off hamlets are all burgeoned,
let us revisit our parental homes,
lilacs have bloomed in grove there;
you are yet to heed my call. (BOKP 96)

In yet another song of Habba Khatoon, images drawn from the common phenomena of nature suggest the transience of humankind
and the world of this ordinary life contrasted with the permanence of nature, “O advancing spring, / here I beseech you, come to my parental house, O my love” (BOKP 23). In this short lyric the speaker’s aspiration for the reunion with the elemental force to attain permanence is suggested in a series of images. In the first image, there is a passionate call to spring. The spring season has been an archetype of regeneration and the beginning of new cycle of life from the very beginning of poetic imagination. The poets of all ages in all cultures have therefore hailed spring because it ends dissolution and augers new creative surge. The poet, therefore, wants to enjoy every moment of spring’s re-creative process and transcend all the limits that deprive human beings of pleasure. Pleasure is seen as an unhampered participation in the vivaciousness of spring. Like a hedonist, the poet wants to be as free as imagination itself, free like airy nothing of Ariel in Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*. Archaeology has shown that the earliest poets were all hedonists. According to Freud, this urge for seeking pleasure from the essential reunion with natural phenomenon can be explained in the light of his concept of pleasure principle which is a contrast to the death principle. It is an individual’s instinct to seek pleasure and avoid sufferings in order to satisfy his or her biological and psychological needs. According to Freud, pleasure principle is the driving force of the Id. Hence Habba Khatoon says:
Gorgeously blooms the lotus in the lake,

Flowers bloom only to wither.

I, too, pine away for you,

Come to my parental house, O my love. (BOKP 23)

The image of the lotus blooming in the water is a symbol of the natural spontaneity of life. The freshness of the flower in the vast lake suggests the solitariness of the unfulfilled desire. The flower perilously exists in the lake that gives it birth, but within a short span of time, after its withering away dissolves into its essence. The flower is man’s psychological urge for the emancipation, but the lake is perpetually waiting to make it disappear after it shows its full bloom. Thus the invincibility of the pleasure principle against an equally invincible death principle permeating all the existents is portrayed in the lyric of Habba Khatoon. She, therefore, advocates that every moment of life be considered valuable as the chariot of the time is uncontrollably moving fast. She asks her love to understand this before his temples grow grey and he loses his glory:

When the temples turn grey and glow fades, too,

Yet my Love is callous not to heed,

time may bring you down from the throne.

Come to my parental house, O my love. (BOKP 28)
In the lyric of Habba Khatoon, cited above, the lament on destined privation and misery is a constant skewed yearning for joys and happiness of life. By enduring all suffering and pain she has set an example of love. She has become an incarnation of desire and passion.

Emily Bronte, too, seems to be a strong advocate of hedonistic engagement with life. Both in her lyrical poetry and *Wuthering Heights*, described as a lyrical novel, she craves for a life of passions. The biographical details about her life, unfortunately cut short, reveal that she was herself much like Catherine of her novel. Stevie Davies writes, “Impairing the force of this gift, was her stubborn tenacity of will, which rendered her obtuse to all reasoning where her own wishes, or her own sense of right, was concerned” (*Emily Bronte* 17). Destiny had made Emily Bronte a woman of finer sensibility. Yet in her lyrical moments, she imagines herself a great navigator, explorer of new-found lands, sailing to her imaginary world of Gondal. In her lyric *O Between Distress And Pleasure* we find such lyrical ejaculations of her undaunted urge for freedom, “I will be an Ocean Rover, / I will sail the desert sea” (*WH&P* 351). In yet another poem *How Clear She Shine*, she longs for voyaging the immensities of the starry sky:

> While gazing on the stars that glow
> Above me in that storm-less sea.
I long to hope that all the woe
Creation knows, is held in thee! (WH&P 345)

This indomitable urge to vanquish the void is expressed in many other
lyrical outpourings, like *There is no Room for Death, No Coward Soul
is Mine* or in the lyrical speech of Catherine in *Wuthering Heights*. Her
love for Heathcliff is nothing but the self-devastating passion of a
romantic mind.

There is identification of man and nature, there are moments
when man becomes a principle of life, intense, lost to mortality, but
increasingly we are referred back to man as a moral being. Even the
philosopher’s desires in *The Philosopher’s Conclusion* to break
through the human situation by a loss of identity are ultimately placed
by himself, as in the last stanza he sees his life in terms of,
“vanquished Good, victorious Ill” (WH&P 347). The voice of a very
orthodox and simple piety gets stronger in her later poems, measuring
life in terms of good and bad seeing death in the Christian terms of
salvation and damnation. In a poem from the summer of 1839, a
Giaour-like figure of a damned man, whose eyes like Heathcliff’s have
a basilisk charm, is introduced for the possibilities he offers of creating
an atmosphere of mysterious horror. In a poem from the spring of
1844, a damned man is treated entirely in terms of the life he has
wasted and the youthful virtues, “courage and truth, a generous breast
where love and gladness lay” (WH&P 340), which he has wilfully
perverted in the cause of pleasure. A development towards a stronger
moral consciousness is particularly clear if we look at the poems which
at various times she wrote about imagination. In 1841, the poems—
*Shall Earth No More Inspire Thee* and *Aye, There It Is*, imagination is
seen as freedom, raptness and ecstatic liberation. It dwells on the
propensity of how wildly fancy plays a role which is a criterion of
moral goodness. But in the two poems from the autumn of 1844, in
which she directs herself to the imagination, seeing it as something
apart from herself, it is looked at squarely as escapism, “I trust not to
thy phantom bliss” (WH&P 344). In the beginning of the poem
*Imagination*, she feels, “weary with the long day’s care”, but soon
realizes that she can make the influence of the imagination good or ill
but that its function is that of an anodyne, “deadening me to real cares”
(WH&P 343-4). From the poems it would seem that by the time she
came to write her prose tale, she was very conscious of the opposition
between the a-morality of her creative imagination and the moral rules
by which life must be led. To write a novel, then, would have meant a
new departure where life in moral terms could be worked out more
fully—where, in fact, her creative imagination could embrace morality.
Emily Bronte’s poetry as a whole suggests particular emotional intensity around certain imagined experiences. These which completely overlap the division between the Gondal and non-Gondal poems are of two main kinds. One is to do with intense longing for one who was beloved and is dead. It leans, as it were, backward. The other is to do, too, with intense longing, but here it is self-centred and forward-or outward-leaning, a desire to be liberated-by death, by nature or by the imagination-from the bonds that enslave the spirit. There is nothing in the poems like Cathy’s assurance of identity with Heathcliff, “I am Heathcliff” (WH&P 110), though there is a passionate love and love-hatred; and there is nothing like Heathcliff’s assurance that he is to be reunited with the spirit of Cathy. But the Cathy-Heathcliff relationship seems to have sprung from a new combination of these two emotional complexes. The poems can help here, too, in illuminating the ambivalence of that relationship. Perhaps the best guide to this is to be found in the word wild. It occurs in at least one-third of all the poems, or fragments of poems, Emily Bronte ever wrote— and in some of these poems more than once; it occurs practically every time as an emotional centre in those two contexts of passionate grief and of ecstatic reaching out for freedom. In many poems, particularly the early ones, wildness is a feature of the
landscape—the sea or the moors or, above all, the wind. It also refers very often to human emotion, and these two uses are intimately linked: the wild winds, or the clouds which rush dark and wild are associated with the wild anguish of despair, or the passions wild, or the hearts wildly pining of the figures in the landscape. In one poem the wind’s wild voice makes her glad heart bound wilder still. At times she avoids cliche (for wild is, of course, a favourite Gothic adjective) and achieves a peculiarly haunting effect by making wild modify another adjective. Cathy is described wildly wretched when in her delirium she discovers that she is exiled from childhood and from Heathcliff.

The fusion of the human and the natural is best seen in the famous poem of mourning and longing, *Cold In The Earth, And The Deep Snow Piled Above Thee*. “Cold in the earth, and fifteen wild Decembers / From those brown hills have melted into spring” (WH&P 348), where wild derives its effect from its ambiguity—the Decembers are wild and snowy, but they have also meant wild, repining to the mourner. Similarly in the freedom-poems, nature and human experience meet—“the wild sky-lark” in *Loud Without The Wind Was Roaring* suggests the spirit’s imagined flight back to the moors from “exile afar” (WH&P 305-6), and in a very early poem of December, 1836 the landscape:
High waving heather, ’neath stormy blasts bending
Midnight and moonlight and bright shining stars
..........................................................
All down the mountain sides, wild forests lending
One mighty voice to the life-giving wind— (SBP 42)
provides the impulse for the experience of, “Man’s spirit away from its
drear dungeon sending, / Bursting the fetters and breaking the bars” (SBP 42).
It is the earliest appearance in her preserved writings both of the
fully realized wild landscape and of the idea of the spirit escaping from
imprisonment. For all its excited turbulence, its sing-song rhythm and
facile alliteration, this poem yet anticipates by nine years the well-
known lines of mystical ecstasy:

Then dawns the Invisible, the Unseen its truth reveals;
My outward sense is gone, my inward essence feels—
Its wings are almost free, its home, its harbour found,
Measuring the gulf it stoops and dares the final bound.

(WH&P 297)

These two poems taken together—the experience in the first proved on
the pulses, but only half understood, in the second acutely realised, to a
point beyond understanding-describe a curve of development similar to
that contained within the scope of Wordsworth’s Tintern Abbey, the
growth from those wild ecstasies which the poet did once know and now catches a glimpse of in the wild eyes of his sister, to:

That serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,—
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul:
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things. (Palgrave 254)

The wild has archetypal attractions— it represents the pitch of emotional experience and it vitalises one to the point where it liberates one from the imprisonment in physical bondage, “this shattered prison” (WH&P 115), as Catherine calls it. In such Romantic wildness, nature and man meet. All this is, of course, the attraction of the story of Catherine and Heathcliff. This very attraction has in it the seeds of repulsion. Semantically the word wild has a kind of ambivalence— it has the emotionally positive associations of the free, beautiful and romantic; but it also has the negative ones of dangerous, ravenous, mad—or, indeed, as Catherine describes Heathcliff to Isabella, “fierce,
pitiess, wolfish” (WH&P 120). Emily Bronte placed wildness morally
in a poem—prayer where she defines it by contrast:

O may I never lose the peace
That lulls me gently now,
Though time should change my youthful face,
And years should shade my brow!
True to myself and true to all,
May I be healthful still,
And turn away from passion’s call,
And curb my own wild will. (SBP 69)

Habba Khatoon, too, in her uncouth manner, expresses her lyrical
romantic passion for winning the heart of a callous lover who, like
Heathcliff, is a source of little visible delight. She seeks her liberation
in getting annihilated in desire:

Every particle of my frame
a little girl, I’m desire for him.
Over the compound fence he watched at me,
I would wrap him with a fleecy shawl;
What grudge keeps him away?
Peeping through the door he watched at me.
Who was the one to escort him to ours?
Now I pine in his desire.

I, a little girl, am desire for him. *(BOKP 92-4)*

Obsession about death and decay is a leitmotif of lyrical poetry. Lyrical poets, with love for the sensuous world, are especially obsessed about death. Lyricism seeks to achieve tragic sense of life by engaging readers/listeners in contemplating the inevitable end of all the joys and delights of this mortal world and then think of eternal oblivion after death. Every religion has its own tale of afterlife; the fundamental notion common to all these tales is that every human being shall be liberated from the material cage and get transformed into soul that shall have eternal existence. Soul is sometimes used as a synonym of spirit. Soul denotes a more worldly and less transcendental aspect of a mortal person. Soul has an affinity for negative thoughts and images, whereas spirit seeks to rise above the prisons of life and death. Another word generally used as a synonym of the soul is psyche. However, in lyrical mode of poetry, the notion of death is on the one hand, man’s consciousness of the tragic sense of the world, and celebration of freedom, on the other. By singing of the end of life, the lyricists lament on the loss of the world of sensuous delights. The verses of both Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte are replete with the images of the evanescence of life and celebration of every moment of life. In one of
the lyrics, Habba Khatoon compares death as an inevitable journey from the paternal house to the house of the in-laws, “When the middlemen finally arrive at my home, / nothing of this possession shall be of any use to me, / freshly embellished, I shall be driven through the market” (BOKP 56). The whole lyric is an epiphany of leaving this world and entering the other. She has a sudden manifestation of the essence of something; in a spiritual flash she envisages herself as a bride:

O my second home, I relinquish all for you.

In a palanquin I shall be given a ride,

my daughters and daughter-in-laws shall sing me as a bride,

all shall pray for my well being there. (BOKP 56)

The coffin shall be her bedecked palanquin and the wailings of her kith and kin shall be their farewell song. In the sudden revelation of the end of her worldly life, she imagines her world as an old mansion that shall cave in. The journey to the abiding abode shall be a solitary journey because it is to be endured by the individual soul. The support of all the kindred shall get reduced to a naught:

The priests and sages shall assemble,

the permit of the holy verses shall be bestowed on me,

all shall finally savour a feast;
O my second home, I relinquish all for you. *(BOKP 56)*

In the funeral rites the poet envisages a sumptuous feast which shall be enjoyed by all, including the priests. The only permit to the other world shall be the religious verses that the priest shall read to her departed soul. Thus the brief life in this material world is considered a sojourn or a holiday when compared with the eternal life to come, “I, Habba Khatoon, pray for exemption from the infernal flames; / O my second home, I relinquish all for you” *(BOKP 56)*. She finally realizes the vanity and futility of this life that is never to abide. The worldly life, though very brief, burdens the soul with sins and merits it for retribution in the flames of hell.

Emily Bronte’s poem *Death That Struck When I Was Most Confiding* shows her ambivalence with death. On one hand it is one stroke that deprives the person from having the pleasures of physical existence, and on the other, it augurs a new phase of the same individual in the form of an immortal spirit. Underlying the small lyric, we can find the binary opposition between the soul and the spirit. Although, the two words are traditionally synonymous, her poetic intuition visualizes a clear demarcation between the two. The soul lives in the thickness of things and has the delight of being the organic
power of having intimation with the physical world. She calls this confiding:

Death, that struck when I was most confiding
In my certain Faith of joy to be,
Strike again, Time’s withered branch dividing
From fresh root of Eternity! (WH&P 349)

The biographical information about Emily Bronte reveals that she was not a well read poet. Charlotte Bronte wrote in her “Biographical Notice of Ellis and Action Bell”:

They had no thought of filling their pitchers at the well-spring of other minds; they always wrote from the impulse of nature, the dictates of intuition, and from such stores of observation as their limited experience had enabled them to amass. (WH&P xlv)

In this remark, Charlotte Bronte tried to convince the readers that her two sisters were innocent for not having imbibed any influence from other poets, intellectuals and artists. But we know it for certain that Emily Bronte did visit Brussels in 1842, where she was definitely influenced by contemporary philosophy, poetry and music of the continent. It is not therefore surprising that her intellectual comprehension of life and death is in consonance with the continental
philosophy. She like Hillman believes that spirit is the state of the conscious individual in afterlife, cosmic issues, idealistic values, hopes, fears and universal truths, while soul of the individual dwells in the thick of things in the material world. The soul has faculty of feeling pain, joy, sorrow and confusion.

Emily Bronte envisions death as a mighty strike that rips the soul apart from its natural abode. It gives sorrow and guilt; the former is a result of getting separated from the golden blossom and the latter the result of the fall of pride of being verdant, “Sorrow passed and plucked the golden blossom, / Guilt stripped off the foliage in its pride” (WH&P 349). Although death is apparently annihilation of the life in terms of soul getting deprived of the pleasures of living in the mortal world, it is the beginning of a new phase that is immune to destruction, for it attains immortality in the form of spirit, “But, within its parent’s kindly bosom, / Flowed forever Life’s restoring tide” (WH&P 349). The poet therefore does not mourn the loss of gladness. She is not grieved to see the nest deserted and the song struck silent. She has a new vigour of hope which whispers to her winter will not linger on:

Little mourned I for the parted Gladness,

For the vacant nest and silent song;

Hope was there and laughed me out of sadness,
Whispering, “Winter will not linger long.” *(WH&P 349)*

The loss of sensuous pleasures of the soul in the natural world of things, called vacant nest is soon compensated by a new blessing of euphoria for attaining unending bliss in the form of spirit. The transformation is called a never ending spring which shall not be vulnerable to any adverse wind or blast. The intimation of immortality is being in persistent contact with the Ultimate truth, the real abode, “Love and its own life had power to keep it / From all ‘Wrong, from every blight, but thine!’” *(WH&P 349)*. The lyrical treatment of the sudden transformation of the soul into immortal spirit is found in the last two stanzas. The poet, addressing Death, says that all the verdure and blossoms of the tree of life have been devastated as if some pestilence has seized it. The destructive process of Death is merciless in severing the soul’s ties with the temporal world:

Heartless ‘Death, the young leaves droop and languish!

Evening’s gentle air may still restore...

No, the morning sunshine mocks my anguish—

Time for me must never blossom more! *(WH&P 349)*

The poet finally beseeches Death to do her another favour: She asks Death to destroy the mortal frame also so that in its place new boughs may flourish. The sapless branches of the dead tree might become nourishment for new growth:
Strike it down, that other boughs may flourish
Where that perished sapling used to be;
Thus, at least, its mouldering corpse will nourish
That from which it sprung- Eternity. (WH&P 350)

Much like Emily Bronte, Habba Khatoon, though in an unrestrained form of the lyric, hails death as liberation from the mortal world which is full of sorrow, pain, anguish, guilt and suffering. In her lyric The World Is Futile, Listen O Golden Finch, she identifies her personal suffering with that of the whole humankind, “I lay my life at your beauty’s altar. / Yet you are wont to oblivion” (BOKP 45). Absence of an identifiable self in lyrical poetry is one of its principal traits. The lyrical poet is the voice of the whole community. Death as cessation from life and end of the rowing of the soul in the ocean of temporal world has been a collective archetype. The tale of every individual life is an addition to the eternal sorrow for the loss and a yearning for permanence.

The lyric, in spite of many inconsistencies for the constraints of rhyme and alliteration, has a surface import: the world is vain and nothing is to be gained. The recurring refrain, “Yet you are wont to oblivion” (BOKP 45), is emphasis on man’s getting aroused from forgetfulness. Life is seen as a transitory phase between one waking
and the other. The soul has intimacy with the origin before coming into the material world, and finds the same intimacy with the origin in afterlife. This construct of spiritualism has been a leitmotif with all mysticism across the cultures. But there are many binary opposites of this enunciation. Life is called a golden finch which suggests that it is given to wild ecstasy and getting enticed by the beauties of the world. Life is beautiful and full of enchantment for the frail soul. One has to take the journey all alone and the friends and relatives are not to be relied upon. This very reminder is an assertion of the fact that man is afraid of his loneliness and gets support and strength from others. The poet’s lament on the very birth to this world and her relation with her parents is affirmation of the meaning of life. The birth is seen as an unavoidable consequence of the original sin. It is called the “earlier business” (*BOKP* 46), because man’s coming to this world entailed many responsibilities. Calling life a burden to be endured suggests that the individual life has meaning only by shouldering the responsibilities. The love for freedom is called the “fire of love” (*BOKP* 46). It is this fire one has to share with others in this world. All depends on the predilection of the individual whether he wants to get consumed in the light or in the heat of the fire; light and heat are two binary opposites of fire.
The lyrical outpouring of Habba Khatoon under the sway of phonic music of language and the established structures of Islamic mysticism is sorrow on the transience of life, but at the same time celebration of the freedom in afterlife. Since poet uses the language of his social reality, it is bound to create melancholy.

Lyricism of the two poets under study is marked by an ostensible subjectivity. Both Emily Bronte and Habba Khatoon have used ‘I’ as the principal speaker in their poems. M. H. Abrams in *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature*, finds at the core of the modern sense of the term, “a speaker who expresses a state of mind or a process of thought and feeling” (97-8). This is in agreement with Wordsworth’s famous and often quoted definition of lyrical poetry that it is “spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings” (46). It is, therefore, a commonplace of the criticism and history of lyric poetry to associate this genre with subjectivity. Subjectivity is tangible in the lyric *To Imagination* (1844) of Emily Bronte. In this lyric the poet rejoices the presence of Imagination in the shape of a never-failing friend always with her. It is this freedom of union with love against all odds of the rational world:

When weary with long day’s care,

And earthly change from pain to pain,
And almost, and ready to despair,
Thy kind voice calls me back again.
O my true friend, I am not alone
While thou canst speak with such a tone! (WH&P 343)

Imagination gives the poet fortitude to bear all pain and anxiety that are a result of her engagement with the world around. Whenever she feels that her strength is failing her, Imagination is there in company to encourage her and overcome her despair. Eternal association of imagination with poets is an ancient construct that is given a different form by Emily Bronte by calling it her true friend who always accompanies her:

So hopeless is the world without
The world within I doubly prize—
The world where guile and hate and doubt
And cold suspicion never rise—
Where thou and I and Liberty
Hold undisputed sovereignty. (WH&P 343)

The poet’s desire for freedom is not realized in the outer world which she finds hopelessly alien. She finds her freedom within her own mind because she does not face guile, hate and doubt there; she is free from suspicion. The customs of the world so callously unfeeling have no
overpowering scope because in her withdrawal she has the euphoria of having the best company: the poet’s self, imagination and liberty:

What matters it that all around
Danger and guilt and darkness lie,
If but within our bosom’s bound
We hold a bright unsullied sky,
Warm with ten thousand mingled rays
Of suns that know no winter days? (WH&P 343)

When the poet says that she is absolutely free from the world of worries, she unambiguously rejects the external social world that is full of guilt, darkness and danger. In comparison to this gruesome picture of the external world, the poet finds the world inside bright and pure. The sky portends no danger or gloom for it is perennially bright and blue. The sun keeps it always warm, and the summer’s exuberance is never-fading:

Reason indeed may oft complain
For Nature’s sad reality,
And tell the suffering heart how vain
Its cherished dreams must always be;
And Truth may rudely trample down
The flowers of Fancy newly blown. (WH&P 343)
The substitute gratification found by the poet through her withdrawal from the world outside may be deemed vain and futile by Reason which is not her own but is governed by the customs of the world outside. Similarly the commonplace truth dictated by the world outside may rudely trample down the flowers of imagination, but she is happy that reason and truth have no direct bearing on her inner world which she maintains quite assiduously as her own and is safe from the ways of others:

But thou art ever there to bring
The hovering visions back and breathe
New glories o’er the blighted spring
And call a lovelier life from death,
And whisper with a voice divine
Of real worlds as bright as thine. (WH&P 343)

The joys of the subjective world are never fading. Fancy brings her occasional inklings from the unknown, which breathes fresh vitality into everything that was blighted by reason and truth of the external world. The charms of the world of imagination are not vulnerable to death. Imagination has the power of the creative and preservative divinity and, as such, the subjective world ordered and maintained by the rules of imagination is immortal:
I trust not to thy phantom bliss,
Yet still in evening’s quiet hour
With never-failing thankfulness
I welcome thee, benignant power,
Sure solacer of human cares

And brighter hope when hope despairs. \(WH&P\ 344\)

In this concluding stanza, the poet is conscious of the illusion of Imaginative world. She is back to her world of pain and sorrow. This recalls to our mind the concluding lines of Keats’ *Ode To Nightingale*, in which the poet comes back to the harsh realities of life around him, “Forlorn! the very word is like a bell/ To toll me back from thee to my sole self!” (Palgrave 250). Emily Bronte was influenced by Wordsworth who had hailed imagination as absolute power which defends mind from the distractions of the world and provides the soul to have intimation with immortality. Wordsworth wrote:

Imagination, which in truth
Is but another name for absolute power
And clearest insight, amplitude of mind,
And reason, in her most exalted mood. \(\text{Palgrave 310}\)

Thus the two poets engage in all possibilities of playing with the stock characters, stock situations and leitmotifs of lyricism to give
expression to the never dying desire for freedom from the world governed by male-oriented mores and ethos. The freedom is envisioned as a total oedipal return to absolute oblivion or annihilation into the elemental forces through all effacing death. It is only imagination that helps the two poets achieve this type of visions of freedom.

The two poets under study followed the rules of the lyrical tradition in their respective languages and produced visions of freedom from the rigours of worldly life. Oblivion through euphoria and annihilation into elemental forces of nature are the only possibilities of imagining the moments of freedom.
CHAPTER V

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The overpowering ‘I’ or the speaker’s point of view is just a deception because lyricism is in itself antithesis to subjectivity. The first person point of view in Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte is the preoccupation with the legacy of eroto-mystic romanticism in the two languages. The surface subjectivity produced by the use of the grammatical speaker is only a mirage as it constantly leads the readers’ attention from the person of the poet to the archetypal speaker produced by lyricism.

Emily Bronte was a true poet in that her only allegiance was to her own imagination. In Wuthering Heights that imagination included morality in its scope, and so produced a unique kind of wisdom. She was in the strictest sense a law unto herself, and a heroine in keeping to her law and also invited confidence in her moral power. There is a double current of imaginative passion and practical compassion which made her a tragic poet and proved her a perfect woman. Whether she was a perfect woman or not, the art of Emily Bronte makes us see that there is an order of creative genius where the sex of its possessor ceases to matter.
Subjectivity in Habba Khatoon’s poetry is surfaced by the presence of a speaking subject who is often confused with the self of the poet. In every lyric, the driving force is a chosen rhyme and an assumed mood, and the verses go on adding up. Since her poetry has remained preserved in oral medium, there is likelihood of many interpolations by various singers and even later poets. The semblance of a speaking subject is therefore much alluding. Any of her lyrics can be extended to any extent by a person having the skill of using rhymes. One of the most popular songs of Habba Khatoon, *Why This Aversion For Me?* has been sung by all the major singers of Kashmir. The lyric is marked for its intense subjectivity that has been related to the biography of the poet:

Who is my rival to have seduced you?
Why this aversion for me?
Give up your sulking, and hate;
Doesn’t your heart feel inclined?

Why this aversion for me? (*BOKP 67*)

The lyric is a succession of spontaneous complaints of a woebegone girl who is passionately waiting for her callous nonchalant lover. The speaker, though conscious of her own charms, has a suspicion in her mind that some other charming dame has seduced her amorous beau.
She implores him in every possible way to give up his grudge and value her true love. But the beau, being a conceited dandy, ignores all her beseeching and remains unmoved:

By midnight I kept my door ajar,
so that you spend an hour with me;
there is no obstacle, still you evade.

Why this aversion for me? (BOKP 67)

The speaker is an innocent young lady who, going against all restrictions of modesty, is ready to surrender her body to please her indifferent lover. In late night hours she keeps her door half-open so that her lover could creep in and sooth her ardent passion. She compares herself with a majestic avalanche that is on a lofty hill, but the ardour of her love makes her melt down. She then compares herself with garden ivy that needs support to stand, but covers the ground so that her love could come and enjoy to his full. She roves in mountains, ravines and dales in search of her love, but being unfamiliar with the paths she realises that her days will end soon. The beauty is short lived, and the consciousness that time is fast running out makes her agony more tormenting. Whatever she does to adorn herself is only to ingratiate herself with the arrogant beau. The forsaken girl is always shedding torrents of tears. She is shrivelled and has not the cheek to
reveal her secret ailment even to other girls at the waterhole. All these appeals do not influence the dandy lover and continues lacerating her. He is depicted as an archer who takes sadistic pleasure in shooting darts at the victim:

O adroit archer, you throw your darts,
readily I offer my chest to receive;
bruised and battered is my body with the darts.

Why this aversion for me? (BOKP 68)

He like Cupid or Kaamdev (in Hindu Mythology) is the deity of desire bearing a bow and arrow, and the forsaken lady, like Psyche, is all passion and surrender. It is the shower of arrows that rejuvenates her youth and world begins to look young and fresh again. Thus the young woman is destined to bear the burning embers in her heart and marrow and the dandy lover is preordained to be conceited. The suffering caused by this primeval polarity is the cause of the intrinsic vitality of Nature.

Music is the essence and guiding principle of all such lyrics. Habba Khatoon, so far as the legend goes, was well-versed in music. It is said that she contrived her own symphony known as “Maqaam-I-Raast” (Sufi 187). The legend seems to be cogent because most of the musicians and singers of the time were women who were called
“Hafizas” (Sufi 190). The centres of music and dance managed by Hafizas were the centres of culture besides being the rendezvous of the pleasure mongers. The songsters were greatly respected and singing was considered a mark of modesty and gentility. The song quoted above, though superficial in its translated form, is one of the most melodious lyrics in Kashmiri.

Emily Bronte, belonging to a much advanced culture, was trained in music. She also had the opportunity to hear Beethoven’s symphonies during her nine-month stay in Brussels, a city rich in chamber music and piano recitals. In 1844 she acquired an eight-volume anthology of sheet-music. In England, serious commitment of women to music was a part of gentility in culture. Women virtuoso enjoyed high esteem in society. Stevie Davies wrote in Emily Bronte:

Emily was interested solely in playing, rather than in accompanying herself in singing: none of the vocal music in the new anthology shows any markings. Fine ladies were trained songsters, and might have some arty showpieces up their sleeves. (41)

Emily’s pencil markings on the pages of the folios of eight-volume anthology of German music indicate that she possessed a keen interest in acquiring mastery in symphonic music. All her acquaintance with
Beethoven’s Pastoral Symphony is evidenced by the music in her lyrics. Stevie Davies wrote further, “Emily Bronte was essentially a lyric poet, whose inspiration found expression in concise distillations of emotion” (41). Her musical aspirations become more ardent in such poems as combine lyricism with desire for liberty. In her famous poem, titled And Like Myself Lone, Wholly Lone, liberty is attained through lyrical excellence and eternity of music:

Give we the hills our equal prayer:

Earth’s breezy hills and heaven’s blue sea;

We ask for nothing further here

But our own hearts and liberty. (WH&P 327)

In the first stanza, the poet, in the voice of the caged bird, gives an image of the glorious vastness of nature, verdant hills which are always refreshed by breeze, and the blue ocean under the blue sky. The sight of the expanses of free nature eventually evokes an ardent desire in the heart of the caged bird to encompass the whole cosmos or merge into its elemental presence:

Ah! Could my hand unlock its chain,

How gladly would I watch it soar,

And ne’er regret and ne’er complain

To see it shining eyes no more.
But let me think that if today

It pines in cold captivity,

Tomorrow both shall soar away,

Eternally, entirely free. (WH&P 327)

The bird is the infinite soul in the finite physique which keeps it captive till it breathes its last. The poet, in the voice of the caged bird, longs to have the option to set the soul free. Being inseparable from the body, the soul can vainly long to see itself soaring high in the immensity of nature. The limitation makes the soul only a prayer which is broadcast in, “earth’s breezy hills and heaven’s blue sea” (WH&P 327). Liberty of the soul being the speaker’s ardent desire, the escape of the caged bird would not cause her regret:

But let me think that if to-day

It pines in cold captivity,

Tomorrow both shall soar away,

Eternally, entirely free. (WH&P 327)

The poem ends up with an ardently childlike hope that the day is sure to come when the soul shall have its freedom and the cage shall mingle with the elements through dissolution. Both the cage and the captive shall have their freedom, not on parole, but for all times to come. The words “eternally, entirely free” (WH&P 327), foreground the
metaphysical implications of the poem. The poet yearns for getting transformed into an “eternal music” (WH&P 327) that like echo remains resounding through breezy hills, dales, oceans and the sky.

The contrast between immense nature and finitude of being is a recurring theme of lyrical poetry. It is beautifully presented by Habba Khatoon in her uncouth way in her short lyric, *All The Hinterlands Are Filled With Bloom*.

It is not only the contrivance of alliteration in the original Kashmiri text like “vanan”, “kanan”, “saran”, “gulshanan”, “gaaman”, “nayan” (*MIL* 80), that determines the structure of the lyric, but also the semantic associations which make its music all-encompassing. The alliteration, interestingly, creates the possibility of extension of the lyrics. The munificence of nature’s charms evokes an irresistible longing in the soul to transgress the physical existence of body and have intimate communion with every constituent of nature’s immensity. Music, divested of lexical associations, has the scope of this perfect harmony. If meaning of words is the prime end of the poet, the music is sullied and it loses its evanescence. In rustic folk lays we have numerous songs which have their sway only because of their dissociation from meaning and thought. Pure music, an end in itself, is the soul of lyrical poetry.
Freedom attained through perfect blending with nature has also the objective of achieving perfect oblivion or harmony that enables us to get rid of all worldly considerations. The Gnostics in all languages know the secret of this swaying potential of music and use it to produce delirious states of mind. The dithyrambs of the ancient Greeks were the most perfect examples of this autonomous music in the shape of songs. We have already discussed in a poem of Habba Khatoon, how the body-rhythm of the woman at the spinning wheel is in harmony with the phonic rhythm of the poem and how lyrics are knitted out of the flux in the unconscious mind.

Freedom through lyrical poetry has yet another manifestation, that is to liberate the meditative mind from the mundane values of good and bad, pain and sorrow, loss and gain, and now and then. The sway of music makes all artificial boundaries of reason meaningless. It attains the power of such a frenzy that breaks the barriers between the imagining mind and the imagined reality. The poet, the singer, and the devoted lovers of music seek complete freedom, though momentarily, from the arbitrary codes of the here and now and help them have some sort of epiphany of the desired experience. It is not, therefore, amazing that many religious and social institutions, consider music a bane to reason. The lyricists, who aim at producing symphonies through words
and images are in perfect agreement in using music to counter arbitrary logic imposed on the freedom loving soul. Music to them is a means to transcendence. Music and spirituality are, therefore, inalienable in many religions and cultures. It reflects the very essence of a culture and is regarded as the most enduring element of the identity of a community. According to Walker, “musical meaning is the product of a learned belief system about particular sounds and not intrinsic to sounds themselves. It is, therefore, important to study the belief system itself, and not to analyse reaction to the sounds used” (4). The lyrical poets, conscious of the spiritual import of musical sounds and sound patterns, avail themselves of the repertoire of musical phrases available in their language in creating supernal effects for the liberty of the soul. Emily Bronte’s lyrical poem *Often Rebuked, Yet Always Back Returning* (The poem appeared for the first time in *Wuthering Heights*) reveals how she desires to use her lyricism to achieve communion with the supernal realms. It is instinctual intimation of every human being with the supernal reality that forms the euphoria of childhood. The poet wants to return to that world where innocence and purity were the highest virtues. This return to childhood ecstasy may be considered foolishness because it goes against the material pursuits of the world, but the poet readily wants to bear the rebuke of people so that she returns “to those first feelings” that were born with her:
Often rebuked, yet always back returning
To those first feelings that were born with me,
And leaving busy chase of wealth and learning
For idle dreams of things which cannot be. (WH&P 313)

In the next stanza she visualizes the material world as a “shadowy region” (WH&P 313), because the illusions of unreal and un-abiding material pleasures lead us astray to follow the phantoms of unreal happiness. Life is brief and available only once to every human being, yet ignorance and greed fill it with vexations, fears, frets and delusions. The poet wants to liberate her soul from this quagmire and use her lyrical competence to retain the primeval bliss:

Today, I will seek not the shadowy region;
Its unsustaining, vastness waxes drear;
And visions rising, legion after legion,
Bring the unreal world too strangely near. (WH&P 313)

The poet is also not interested in the stories of the great adventures and heroic deeds of the past in which venturesome people tried to vanquish the world and appropriate it. Such so called heroic deeds are vivid illustrations of the futility of human strife to own the world. All those men and women who achieved temporary glamour and esteem are now only names and clouded forms of long-past history:
I’ll walk, but not in old heroic traces,
And not in paths of high morality,
And not among the half-distinguished faces,
The clouded forms of long-past history. (*WH&P* 313)

Contrary to the worldly norms of strife and achievements, the poet aspires to lead a simple pastoral way of life in which there is no place for the anxiety and dread caused by man’s vain struggle to possess. Her natural and instinctual drives make her prefer to live with other animate things that are free from the fear and fret caused by the notions of uncertainties of imaginary tomorrow. It is only the present that is the real time because the senses and the surrounding reality are in direct contact:

I’ll walk where my own nature would be leading:
It vexes me to choose another guide:
Where the grey flocks in ferny glens are feeding;
Where the wild wind blows on the mountain side.

(*WH&P* 313)

It is not however, an animalistic way of life that the poet wants to lead. She abhors mere enjoyment of having physical vigorous health and physical appetites. While living side by side with the sheep grazing in “ferny glens” and “the wild wind blows on the mountainside” (*WH&P* 313)
313), she longs for a meditative life. She wants to take lessons from “lonely mountains” (WH&P 313), because their language is more communicative. They reveal the permanence of nature and the transience of life. It is a philosophy that reveals to the reflecting mind the meaning of Heaven and Hell:

What have those lonely mountains worth revealing?

More glory and more grief than I can tell:

The earth that wakes one human heart to feeling

Can centre both the worlds of Heaven and Hell.

(WH&P 313)

We do not come across such profound lyrics in Habba Khatoon’s poetry; nevertheless, her rustic lyrics suggest the same kind of abhorrence for the mundane materialist world and longing for the origin. Her grudge against the torments at the house of the in-laws is a metaphor of her spiritual alienation in the material world. The stereotype of obnoxious, overbearing and cruel mother-in-law in her poetry is a metaphor of the abomination for the worldly life. It is in tune with those numerous lyrics of Indian classical music that complain of the cruelties of the in-laws and longing for return to the baabul (parental house). In a pathetic lyric of Habba Khatoon in which she expresses her ardent appeal to her parents, she says, “Not well I am
at the house of my in-laws, / O my parents come to my rescue” *(BOKP 67-8)*. The song, recalling to the mind the pathetic story of Biblical Ruth and Orpah, expresses an ardent desire to leave the world of falsehood and return to the world of ultimate truth, the original abode. However, like a true subjective poet, Habba Khatoon does not make any overt statement about the mystic import of the suggestions in the lyric. It is the tale of a typical Kashmiri girl of the feudal ages who shows complete forbearance in bearing the torments at the house of her in-laws. In running errands, she often commits mistakes and bears the brunt of her mother-in-law. She goes to the waterhole to fetch water for the family, but her ill luck, or her being engrossed in memories of the parental home, per chance, drops her earthen pitcher, which breaks into pieces:

I doused while I was at my spinning wheel,
the axle of the wheel was broken by my weight.
The coloured spinning wheel’s axle is broken,
I need wood to make a new one,
a carpenter, too, I need for the job,
O my parents I would sacrifice my life for you.

*(BOKP 67-8)*

She remains spinning wool or cotton on the spinning wheel till late night, and the fatigue overpowers her, has a short douse, and the
weight of her body breaks the axle of the spinning wheel. She desires that her father arranges for the wood and the carpenter to mend the spinning wheel. Similarly in all other routine chores in the house, she reveals her inexperience and haplessness.

Subjectivity in lyrical poetry of the two female poets under discussion assumes many other forms of desire for freedom and the speaker remains invariably a female. But we must not forget that this type of lyrical subjectivity is not the foregrounding of the real self of a feeling and thinking person, it is rather a sort of semantic skill. It is a kind of word-game that produces the semblance of a real experiencing subject. The internal semantic suggestions make it clear that the semblance is not real. Lyrical poetry, as the poststructuralist analysis reveals, works to the contrary of subjectivity. The more we read this kind of lyrical poetry across languages, the more we come to realise that composers of lyrics have the prowess of producing new combinations of the stereotyped structure; it is only the poet’s wit and linguistic competence that produces ever-new symphonies out of the given raw material. Therein lies the novelty or difference of the text of a lyric. When Derrida in *Writing and Difference* says, “there is nothing outside the text” (158-9), it means that the traditional subject of Wordsworth’s aesthetic does not exist; it is the reading habit of the reader or listener that generates meaning in the text. In the words of
Terry Eagleton, “meaning is scattered or dispersed along the whole chain of signifiers...it is never fully present in any one sign alone, but is rather a kind of constant flickering of presence and absence together” (128). The theme of freedom through literary exuberance is, therefore, not to be restricted to any particular sign or set of signs; it is to be perceived through the reading of the entire text and in the possibilities of its extension. The two lyrics quoted above are a clear illustration how the reader or listener can add new stanzas to the poems without doing any harm to them. The reason is that the readers have a habit of connoting different words in their traditional meanings. Words like, cage, bird, home, parental home, in-laws’ home, lover, love, beloved, and so on and so forth have a free play in lyrical poetry because the tradition in the languages has already determined their meaning or semantic equivalents. The theory of representation of Aristotle is hardly applicable to lyrical poetry. In a lyric we do not find a spaced out subject, it is a game in which signifiers point to signifieds, and signifieds are changed into signifiers. There is no such thing as a final signified in the shape of the self of the poet; it is in itself a signifier. Thus, meaning of a lyric becomes an endless play of signification.

The poet’s self, the reader’s self, the self-inbuilt in the language, and the self-governed by the moment and the milieu constitute an
interesting play of never-ending signification. We can never speak of truth. Rivkin and Ryan write:

Without signification, without those processes of substitution (of a signifier for a signified) and differentiation (of the signifier from the signified and from other signifiers) and repetition (of an original differentiation in an opposition that situates it as the subordinate and devalued term) and non-identity (of the original truth with itself because its “self” is entirely other than itself, being difference) that are “essential” to the making of meaning in a language. (341)

The foregrounding of self becomes all the more impossible in lyrical poetry as it is essentially the voice of the community which the poet carries forward. Musical contrivances, in spite of the individual innovations by a poet, are a part of the phonetic structure of a language and are handed over from one generation to the other. Lyrical music relies on the nature of consonants and vowels, accent, intonation, stress and tone of the language. The poets exploit all these features of their mother tongue in agreement with the community. They may get influenced from the poetry of other languages, or even borrow some of the prosodic norms from them, but they cannot graft the music of any
non-native language on to their mother tongue. Every language has its natural potential to reject or accept such musical experimentation. Thus the lyrical poet has to remain subservient to the domineering intrinsic music of their language that has been established as a lyrical mode by their precedents. It becomes a literary tradition from which there is no escape.

The lyrical language being essentially verbal music remains cryptic, only hinting to the expository nuances, delicacies of emotions, and beauties of expression. They are bound to remain abstractions; any attempt to expound these abstractions through rational analysis is bound to reduce them into a jumble of words. The deconstructive analysis is not applicable to lyrical poetry; Derrida himself knew the hazards of this analysis and therefore stressed that, “deconstruction is not a method, and cannot be transformed into one” (Writing and Difference 543). Deconstruction is not a mechanical operation or an arbitrary system of reducing a literary text into fragments. Derrida warned against considering deconstruction a mechanical operation when he stated that, “It is true that in certain circles (university or cultural) the technical and methodological ‘metaphor’ that seems necessarily attached to the very word ‘deconstruction’ has been able to seduce or lead astray” (Writing and Difference 560). Richard Beardsworth explains that:
Derrida is careful to avoid this term [method] because it carries connotations of a procedural form of judgement. A thinker with a method has already decided how to proceed, is unable to give him or herself up to the matter of thought in hand, is a functionary of the criteria which structure his or her conceptual gestures. For Derrida this is irresponsibility itself. Thus, to talk of a method in relation to deconstruction, especially regarding its ethico-political implications, would appear to go directly against the current of Derrida’s philosophical adventure. (41)

So far as our study of lyricism as a vehicle of freedom in the two poets of two different languages, cultures and eras is concerned, we must bear in our mind the precariousness of an analytic approach to their music. Even the sole novel of Emily Bronte, Wuthering Heights, considered a lyrical novel by many critics, cannot yield to any deconstructive method adopted by various professionals in academia. The text of the novel is a perpetual modulation of moods of the characters; they clash, balance and dramatize the play of emotions. Stevie Davies wrote about this lyricism in Wuthering Heights:

To notate a ‘score’ of Wuthering Heights: it opens with the bedlam scherzo of Lockwood’s introduction to the
Heights, style swerving between sardonic irony to plain
telling, which is able to tremble at any point into the
passionate expressiveness of (say) Heathcliff at the
window. The narrative, however, neither lingers nor
elaborates. The forward drive of the story is carried by a
brisk and brusque no-nonsense allegro moderata as the
tale passes to Nelly Dean. Here English and Scottish folk
ballad is incorporated: terse, uncanny, elemental. In
Wuthering Heights, the second subject (Cathy II and
Hareton) precedes the first (Cathy I and Heathcliff),
giving a suspenseful shock effect. There are distinct
climaxes and anticlimaxes through the novel, which the
music swells into appasionata episodes of stormy
lyricism. (Emily Bronte: The Artist As A Free Woman 47)

It is no concern of ours here to analyse the novel Wuthering Heights as
a piece of lyricism; this digression is only aimed at revealing how a
lyric follows the rise and fall of a traditional movement. It is not the
self of the lyricist that determines this movement or is determined by
this movement, but the collective aesthetic of a linguistic community.
All other lyricists, singers, listeners, and calligraphists enter into the
making of a perfect lyric. Any attempt to extract biographical details
from a lyric, (even a lyrical novel like *Wuthering Heights*) is to lead us to confusion.

To illustrate this lyrical constraint, Habba Khatoon says in her popular lyric, “Bountiful is my garden with poppies red, / Intensely I love you O my Love” (*BOKP* 78). The lyric opens with first singular speaker with an emphasis on the abundance of love, the all blooming garden could arbitrarily be taken as a signified of the mind of the poet which is preoccupied with the love for the beloved. But all other references and allusions in the lyric give a free play to communal memory, in the form of readymade shibboleths like “the Abyssinian vendor with a swarthy skin”, “the bazaar of China” (known for colourfulness), “Surat Bandar” known for the commercial dock, “apparel bedecked with gems and pearls”, “silvery body”, “tasting the vintage of forgetfulness” (*BOKP* 78), etcetera, and are woven in the text only under the dominant mood of the lyric. The poet enjoys every manner of freedom in producing re-combinations of the poetic building blocks bequeathed by the poetic tradition to the poet.

The freedom of the lyric also lies in roving in the legendary past or the unknown lands of imagination and fantasy. This kind of freedom enjoyed by the poet is made available to the readers and listeners through collective remembrances. The poet has also the freedom of
going against the social taboos to, “fulfil the promise and unclothe yourself; / Intensely I love you O my Love” (*BOKP 78*). The beloved is asked to reveal his/her naked body that is immaculate. The consummation of love is in itself a time-honoured poetic metaphor in oriental poetry. There are thousands of verses in Persian, Urdu and Kashmiri in which this metaphor is used in equally numerous ways. She says, “give me such a wine you, O Cup-Bearer, / as makes my goblet full to the brink” (*BOKP 78*). The poet also takes pleasure in free play of the metaphor of getting inebriated by the wine of love. All depends on the moral equanimity of the one who ventures into the state of ecstasy. The vintage as a poetic convention stands for realization of truth, but there are some who get submerged in complete oblivion, and many acquire direct acquaintance with the mystic truth:

I am watched by all, know my state,
meet me under the planes in the dusk to come;
you made me a butt, oh clad so bright.

Intensely I love you O my Love. (*BOKP 78*)

The lyrical freedom enables the poet to have imaginative tryst with the lover under the serene shadow of the planes in the village purlieus. The meeting has to take place in late evening when all are indoors. The craving lover wants to get rid of the taunts of the people that she has
been forsaken by her spouse. The lyric closes with yet another allusion. The lover has seen the beloved endowed with charismatic beauty as that of Yousuf in *Ahsan-al Qasas* of the Quran (Joseph, son of Jacob in the New Testament). The poet identifies herself with Zulaikha (wife of Potiphar) who was bewitched by Yousuf’s beauty. The ardour of her love imparted sublime beauty to her verse:

I once saw you with Yousuf’s complexion,
Brilliantly shining like the moon over the world;
Sublime are the verses of Habba Khatoon.
Intensely I love you O my Love. (*BOKP* 78)

This type of lyrical freedom to take escapades into the historical or mythical past is common to all lyricists. The allusions come either through oral medium or through reading. When Emily Bronte read the English translation of Schiller’s *Cassandra*, she used it as an allusion in her lyric. The vision of Cassandra, of the impending catastrophe of Trojan War is used as a metaphor of alienation caused by possession of superior intellect. The Prophet-Maiden is shown both as a common woman and as a pariah in her community. She becomes a laughing stock to the crowds at the wedding feast of Helen and Paris:

Un-joyous n the joyful throng
The still Cassandra wandered on!
Into the forest’s deep recesses
The solemn Prophet-Maiden pass’d;
And, scornful, from her loos’n’d tresses,
The sacred fillet cast! (Davies 50)

Cassandra’s affliction is the fate of the Philosopher in her poem *The Philosopher* written in 1845. The original title of the poem is *Julian M. and A.G. Rochelle*, the names of two lovers in the Gondal saga. In the poem, the questioning soul encounters the bulwark of human limitations. It is a groping in the dark, “and an endless search and always wrong” (*WH&P* 358). The visionary in the poem is in search of the infinite, “measuring the gulf it stoops and dares the final bound!” (*WH&P* 358), but the entire quest ends up with the realization of mortality:

‘Then dawns the Invisible, the Unseen its truth reveals;
My outward sense is gone, my inward essence feels—
Its wings are almost free, its home, its harbour found;
Measuring the gulf it stoops and dares the final bound!

(*WH&P* 358)

The quest is eternal because fascination for the invisible and the unseen is unrelenting, and the human soul is endowed with eternal restiveness
for search. It has an irresistible yearning to transcend the measureless distances. Being imprisoned in the mortal frame, all this quest ends up in the realization of the earthly existence of body, all hopes of freedom from captivity, and attaining transcendence finally crumble at a point of beginning of sense of futility, “The soul to feel the flesh, and flesh to feel the chain!” (WH&P 358). Yet the prisoner Julian is visited by a messenger who consoles her and assures her of final liberations from the house of granite and iron:

Yet, tell them, Julian, all, I am not doomed to wear:

Year after year in gloom and desolate despair;
A messenger of Hope comes every night to me,
And offers, for short life, eternal liberty. (WH&P 357)

Critics like Emma Francis, have found much common between lyricism and paranoia as the predominant use of the first person singular assumes many voices that are in fact the voices that come through tradition. Writing about the poem, The Philosopher, Emma Francis wrote:

*The Philosopher* has a triple articulation. We have extremely sparse information about the first speaker. He is identified directly twice by the philosopher, in stanza 7 and 10, on both occasions immediately after an
identification of the spirit. The syntax of the first identification allows for the designation ‘Man’ to be a qualification of the ontology of the spirit: ‘I saw a spirit standing, Man’ (stanza 7). The fact that he has the closest spatial and temporal contact with the elusive spirit adds to the suggestion that they are identical. The second address identifies him as ‘Seer’. Because of the semantic similarity of this category with that of philosopher, a similar collapse occurs between the philosopher and the one to whom he expresses his alienation. So, in a sense, the collapse of identity the philosopher longs for is already happening, and is a symptom of the strength of his despair of it. (38)

It is in this sense that Emma Francis questions, “Is Emily Bronte a Woman?” There is an element of transgression in Emily Bronte’s poetry, it can be categorized as poetry of the Sublime which is based on power as against poetry of the Beautiful which is based on surrender. The aesthetic division between the Sublime and the Beautiful was for the first time theorized by Edmund Burke (1958) in, A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful. Emma Francis suggests that Emily Bronte’s transgressiveness has close identity with male romantics. She wrote:
Power is produced in the Sublime (gendered male) and becomes dispersed in the Beautiful (gendered female). It is produced by the Sublime experience of threatened privation of death. The Beautiful cannot comprehend power because it is a structure of plenitude which does not have this threat of lack inscribed within it. Thus Bronte, who consistently refuses to write within the aesthetics of the Beautiful, places herself in a unique, and apparently attractively decisive, relation to the power up for grabs in nineteenth-century poetics. (31)

Georges Bataille in his essay “Emily Bronte” in Literature and Evil (1973) demonstrated his maxim, “Eroticism is the approval of the life up until death” (4). It is beautifully explored in the following stanza of Emily Bronte’s poem The Prisoner:

‘Yet I would lose no sting, would wish no torture less;
The more the anguish racks, the earlier it will bless;
And robed in fires of hell or bright with the heavenly shine,
If it but herald death, the vision is divine!’ (WH&P 358)

This perpetual antagonism between freedom loving infinite soul and the finite mortal physical existence is beautifully presented in Emily Bronte’s novel Wuthering Heights. In the strain of a lyrical narrative,
the novel uses symbolism of animal ferocity and aggressive drives of all human beings. The cat and mouse imagery used in Chapter VIII, is just one instance. Edgar Linton has the power to escape, “as much as a cat possesses the power to leave a mouse half-killed, or a bird half-eaten” (72). Cathy is shown as, “half-mangled prey hanging from deadly jaws” (100). Heathcliff attests that, “no brutality disgusts her...that pitiful, slavish, mean-minded brach” (151).

In a touching poem of affiliation to the mother-world is her little poem, *I See Around Me Tombstones Grey*, where she says, “Sweet land of light! they children fair / Know nought akin to our despair” (*WH&P* 329). We remember how Cathy in *Wuthering Heights* shows her intense filial love with mother earth when she says “Heaven did not seem to be my home” (126). Angels are not allowed to show their pity and weep, they are immunized against suffering of mortals. The speaker in the above poem, therefore, as a passionate lover of life, says to Mother earth that she knows nothing about the angels. She cannot make them weep and groan like mortal human beings. They are in eternal ecstasy. She loves earthly world because the earth, like a loving mother, ultimately lets them have a space on her breast in the form of a grave.

Habba Khatoon likewise, though in her own rustic way, celebrates life and expresses her passionate desire to continue her
earthly pleasures. In one of her small lyric, she sings, “One word from you shall make me well, / O my love, my head I lay at your feet” (BOKP 56). Habba Khatoon expresses her view that the components of the highest pleasure are tranquillity and freedom from fear. This goal can be achieved by living in the moment, neither in the past nor in future. It is obtained by knowledge, friendship and living a virtuous and temperate life. She lauds the enjoyment of simple pleasures like relishing simple rustic food, adorning the body with flowers, roaming free from the dread of death, and valuing every moment of life. The images of lover as a guest, the guest relishing such plain food as rice, curd and pumpkin, welcoming the guest with garlands of briers, garnishing hair by narcissus, washing body in sandalwood water and the like suggest innocence and piety in love. All the erotic suggestions are deliberately curtailed.

Lyricism of Habba Khatoon of the sixteenth century and Emily Bronte of the nineteenth century is an attempt to use language to create a semblance of personal freedom in giving vent to suppressed feelings of woman. Being rooted in the oral tradition lyrical poetry follows various universal patterns that are uniform across ages and cultures. It is open ended and does not follow the rigours of classical structure. It has to be read, and enjoyed in totality and not through critical scrutiny.
Taking various examples from the two poets, we tried to reveal how lyrical poetry is conservative, mnemonic and part of collective memory of a people. The poet’s individual personality and talent does not play much role in the choice of words, metaphors, similes and allusions, the texture is rather determined by the lyrical conventions in language. Lyrical form of poetry is not sectarian or parochial. It encompasses wide range of human passions that cannot be categorized and appreciated in terms of a particular faith. It remains unaffected by the changes in social and economic patterns of society, nevertheless conforms to these changes in terms of lexical items.

Lyricism with its basic principle of freedom from reason, faith, and milieu, uses stock characters, stock situations and stock responses; analysis of some songs of the two poets illustrates this generalization.

In the light of various aesthetic theories from Longinus to contemporary critics, like Derrida, attempt was made to explain how the basic motive of lyricism is to seek transport through ecstasy.

This chapter briefly traced the historical development of lyricism in the English language and showed how lyrical poetry achieved strong theoretical basis when Wordsworth wrote his Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*. It became a commonplace platitude to say that poetry is spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings. But with the advent of
structuralism, this notion of spontaneity and subjectivity of lyrical poetry changed. Structuralism explains lyrical style as a free play of readymade building blocks in a language and the semblance of the subject is its beauty. A lyric cannot be understood and appreciated in relation to the actual life experiences of its author. The best lyrics are those in which this free play seems to be spontaneous in creating semblance of subjectivity.

The chapter illustrates how songs of Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte conform to giving expression to the longing for freedom. Some common themes of the two poets are: intense feeling of captivity, transience of life, craving for full abandon, sado-masochistic pleasure, obsession with death and return to the origin and vanquishing death through music. The element of transgression and radicalism in the poetry of Emily Bronte and Habba Khatoon produces the power of the sublime which is male gendered aesthetics. The semblance of subjectivity in the poetry of the two poets is in conformity with the lyrical traditions governed essentially by male aesthetics.
CONCLUSION
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The fundamental premise of the present study, as enunciated in the Introduction, that any two poets of any two disparate cultures, nations, ages and languages can be compared within the framework of comparative literature, was taken as the starting point of the study; the two poets chosen from Kashmiri and English, viz., Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte, the former from the 16th century Kashmir and the latter from the 19th century England. The justification for the study, besides the theory and practice of comparative literature, was that the two poets of the past were two prominent women poets of two remotely related Indo-European languages, Kashmiri and English. The principal objective was to show how the two women poets, in spite of the differences of culture, language and ethical mores represented the aspirations of women in the two patriarchal societies.

In the Introduction, attempt was made to discuss briefly the concept and practice of comparative literature as a multidisciplinary subject. Every literary discourse has to rely on insights of several fields of knowledge as all these fields ultimately revolve round humankind in general and character of man in particular. The very complexity of human nature, the greatest puzzle and the only problem solving
creature in the world, entails synthesis of the knowledge of various aspects of human nature; a point of view in isolation from other points of view is doomed to fail. Man is not simply an organism among other organisms, but the product of his own history. It is his struggle for existence and notion of future that keeps him always engaged in productive and imaginative strife and the achievements of one generation are transmitted to the successive generations through memory or written texts. This is the most important distinguishing characteristic of humankind.

Poetry and other forms of creative literature are an important and integral part of man’s collective behaviour. Though poetry and other forms of creative literature are essentially such human products that are to be read and enjoyed at the individual level, but emergence of literary appreciation or literary criticism as a distinct discipline of knowledge has made it obligatory for an analysis that it includes gains from all spheres of knowledge, particularly humanities, like psychology, religion, ethics, aesthetics, sociology, history, linguistics, anthropology, and philosophy. A poet is at the same time a product of his/her milieu, moment and race. In the light of the views of various theorists and practitioners, in the field, like Rene Wellek and Austin Warren, for instance, it was seen how comparative literature is
inevitably cross-cultural in nature. It was maintained that literature in any language in an era is influenced by other literatures of other languages that have had or are having cultural contact with the language and culture of a particular nation. A literature that remains in isolation, becomes stagnant and a bundle of stereotypes. It flourishes and is energized only when it accepts influence from all directions. This nature of literature, therefore, makes it necessary that a comprehensive literary analysis should include adequate knowledge of various literary traditions in different languages, and as such a lot of erudition is needed. Literary appreciation should at the same time have thorough knowledge of the variety of literatures that are obtained in a particular language concurrently. If a literature is quite vibrant and representative of the times, it cannot be a homogeneous mass of writings; it shows variety of style, variety of emphasis, variety of experience and variety of stances. All these varieties inter-animate each other, though opposed to each other. Even the opposition or difference indicates that there has to be a mutual ground. All these constraints make comparative study of literature most convincing and most satisfying.

It was seen how inter-disciplinarity of Roland Barthes and inter-textuality of Julia Kristeva gave a new dimension to comparative
literature. Contemporary literary criticism, lays much emphasis on the aspect of influences and indebtedness in literature. A creative writer achieves credibility when his/her writing has numerous connections with the literatures in other languages and that produced in his/her own language. It is impossible for a creative writer to achieve any manner of originality if it does not entail discussion of merger of numerous literary as well as non-literary texts in his/her work. No writer writes in isolation; on the other hand erudition of a creative writer contributes to his/her originality because he/she writes with conscious effort to be different from all other writers and as such requires as much of scholarship as possible.

The influence of various cultural, linguistic, philosophical and sociological movements in the world also contributed to the widening of the scope of comparative literature. Any of these movements shall remain vacuous if it does not include correspondences from creative literature, and creative literature of today is to suffer from superficiality if it does not have contact with the changing notions of all these movements. What Goethe had called world literature much before the emergence of comparative literature, has become an incontrovertible reality, and all literature is considered comparative in essence. The intellectual movements like structuralism, feminism, modernism, and
post-modernism are global in scope and literature as well as literary discourses have to be global in scope and implication. For instance, if we study the impact of the rise of feminism on literature, the discussion cannot remain confined to the political or cultural boundaries. Besides, the phenomenon of globalization and worldwide diaspora of people for economic, cultural and political reasons has rendered narrow parochialism ridiculous.

After discussing the importance of global movements on creative literature, the origin and meanings of feminism and its reflection in literature was discussed. Before discussing feminist themes in the poetry of the two female poets, various rudiments of feminism and its history before the term got universal acceptance and developed a substantial theoretical basis were discussed. A sexist interpretation of feminism was discarded in favour of a multi-disciplinary approach. Attempt was made to show how in a patriarchal society sexual subjugation resulted in the subjugation of women in all other fields. Throughout the medieval ages, any notion of women’s freedom was inconceivable. It was with the rise of various Liberation Struggles against imperialism, that women of the world also became conscious of their fundamental rights. But the aspirations of freedom were always articulated by women writers in one way or the other.
Attempt was made to prove how every piece of creative literature is an extension of the literary tradition and at the same time a marked departure from the tradition. In this simultaneous agreement and disagreement with the literary tradition, a poet’s knowledge of independent structures and skill to re-arrange these structures to create new forms are indispensable for genuine literature.

After having sought an adequate theoretical background and justification of a comparative study of the two women poets of Kashmiri and English, a brief introduction to their lives in relation to their time was given. Since Habba Khatoon, remained a legend in the oral culture of the past four hundred years, her actual life, not recorded by any historian, continued getting shrouded by legends. It is not possible to give any authentic account of her life, only a hazy profile is deducible from various legends. All the versions of the legend were fully discussed and compared and attempt was made to compromise with the most cogent one. The only statement that can be called fairly undeniable is that she was a popular woman poet of the 16th century Kashmir, had some kind of relation with the Sultan of the time, namely Yousuf Shah Chak, and her poetry was transmitted from generation to generation through the oral tradition. The body of songs attributed to Habba Khatoon provide much internal evidence that the songs have
been composed by a woman of extraordinary lyrical genius who, without bothering much about the elite mystic poetry of the time, gave voice to the inner feelings and aspirations of a woman as a human being. There is much internal consistency in the lyrics, some obvious interpolations notwithstanding, that suggest that it is the outpouring of a distinct individual woman. Reference to her life and poetry are available in the chronicles of the eighteenth century like that of Abdul Wahab Shaiq written in 1760. The earliest written records of her lyrics also date back to eighteenth century in Nagmati Ahli Hind, scribed by various calligraphists of Kashmir. The manuscripts are available in the Research Library under the accession No’s: 117, 763, 2107 and 2108. The last manuscript has been scribed by a scribe named Vasa Bhat.

Unlike Habba Khatoon, Emily Bronte’s brief life has been fully documented. Her works, comprising one novel Wuthering Heights and her lyrical poems are a very significant part of English literature. The Bronte sisters wrote under pseudonyms because they loved their seclusion and anonymity. They, according to Charlotte assumed anonymity because they feared that women authors were not being taken seriously.

The identity of Emily Bronte was revealed when Charlotte edited and published Wuthering Heights written by Emily Bronte.
Charlotte died in 1857 and Mrs. Gaskell published her controversial biography, *The Life of Charlotte Bronte*. This kindled the sudden fame of the Bronte sisters and their native place became a place of pilgrimage for the lovers of literature.

The Introduction of the dissertation provides the basis for further expatiation on the subject of lyricism as an expression of feminism. The subject is essentially an aspect of comparative study of literature that is an umbrella term for seeking parallels and diversions in the literary works of different languages, times and cultures. It is closely related with other disciplines of contemporary thought and draws upon the insights gained in these disciplines. The sphere of comparative studies has gained much scope under the influence of structuralism, post-structuralism, freedom movements, political ideas of freedom, sociology, and anthropological studies. The introduction discussed though very briefly, all the interfaces of the disciplines of inquiry that revolve around humankind. Since, the dissertation is primarily concerned with the expression of feminism in lyrical poetry, only those ideas were discussed in the introductory chapter that have a direct bearing on the evolution of feminism in general and feminist themes in literature, in particular. Proper care was taken to avoid complexities of various schools of thought and disciplines of knowledge so that the
study does not lose its unidirectional objective by too many digressions. The purpose of discussing related concepts and ideas was only to find a rationale and pave the way for a comparative study of Emily Bronte and Habba Khatoon who have no ostensible affinity except that both were female poets and wrote lyrical poetry.

Keeping in view the fact that feminism as an organized global movement for the liberation of women is a recent phenomenon which emerged with the growth and decay of capitalism, we can trace antecedents of this voice in earlier eras when there was no question of any opposition to patriarchal system of society. Both the poets under scrutiny in terms of expression of feminism, belong to feudal system that had had a centuries old static substratum of ethical and aesthetic values. The two women poets, though belonging to two entirely disparate societies have a strong affinity and manifest similarity in terms of the imagery used to represent feelings, hopes and fears of womanhood. Both 16th century Kashmir and 19th century England were predominantly agrarian in nature and all the notions about nature, man’s relation to nature, cosmos and man’s relation to cosmos were expressed in simple and rustic imagery. The poetry of the two women poets was therefore studied in relation with the ethos of their times, which in terms of background was pastoral in nature. In the first
chapter of the dissertation, each of the two poets were placed against background that was interestingly much similar in terms of political strife, civil wars, and bloodshed. Poetry was a form of withdrawal from the futility of war and bloodshed and it found refuge in the rustic and imaginary world.

The transition of power from the Shahmiri sultans to the Chak sultans in Kashmir was traced. The transition was not smooth, but full of calamitous changes. A mighty empire of the Shahmirs was in the stage of decadence and disarrayed Chak sultans were in strife for power. Besides the internal strife among the descendents, there was an unrelenting threat from the expansionist Mughals. The whole region was under the direct threat from the great Mughal emperors who considered victory over Kashmir unavoidable in expanding their empire deep into the Central Asia and also to resist the expansion of Tsars of Russia. They attacked Kashmir several times, and ultimately, with the help of Sunni Muslims, succeeded in having a smooth victory over Kashmir and all other adjoining north-west mountainous territory. The common masses of Kashmir who were completely exasperated by the civil wars, and relentless Shia-Sunni riots welcomed the change. Habba Khatoon, a lonely voice of this strife-torn era, was inaudible in the chaotic din, but her poems became an integral part of collective
memory. Though no historian of the time mentioned this immortal poet, the common masses consigned her verses to their memory and handed over this invaluable legacy from one generation to another.

Emily Bronte, also lived in an era of England that is known for social unrest, though of a different kind. The industrial unrest of the time, particularly Peterloo Massacre and its aftermath were discussed. A sensitive woman poet like Emily Bronte could not be a part of this political and economic strife. She preferred to write under anonymity because the patriarchal society did not give credence to female authors. She, along with her three sisters, wrote under pseudonyms and even created their own imaginary world called Gondal. We saw how there is not any kind of direct reference to the times in any of her poems or in her novel, but her work in its totality is a true representative of the ethos of her times.

Attempt was made to discuss the basic features of pastoral poetry, and it was stated clearly that although neither Habba Khatoon nor Emily Bronte can be called pastoral poets, but the backdrop of their poetry has certainly many things common with pastoral poetry. Analysis of some poems of the two poets was undertaken to illustrate how pastoral setting is the essence of their myth making.
Lyrical Imagination was considered as a special form of poetic imagination. It is different in the sense that it, being under the direction of end rhyme, internal rhyme, word-repetition, alliteration and other forms of phonic music, gives free play to the substance and the objects of perception. Poetic imagination generally is a human faculty that relates internal unity of an individual human mind to the external objective reality. Lyrical imagination is a transgression of accepted logic that gives free play to man’s cognitive powers. The strict cohesion and organic unity is not required in a lyric but aesthetic pleasure in following the free association of sounds, memory, and fancy is to be enjoyed.

Analysis of various lyrical poems of Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte was undertaken to show how words used in the lyrics get divested of their customary usage and logic. The reader or listener does not seek the richness and complexity of experience that enlightens the soul and stimulates it to seek wider understanding of life, but ecstasy and euphoria as we get in some playful activity. Detailed analysis of the poems like *The ‘Airy Nothings’ From Above Descend Down To Frolic With Us* of Habba Khatoon and *Loud Without Wind Was Roaring* of Emily Bronte was aimed at showing how creative imagination in a lyric produces totally unpredictable associations.
Although many images tend to assume mythical dimension, they do not lead to any logical conclusion about this primeval relationship. Neither Habba Khatoon nor Emily Bronte had any scholarship of the theories of imagination and fancy, yet they, being sensitive poets, tend to suggest a theory of lyrical imagination. The following excerpt from Emily Bronte’s poem, can be considered the latent aesthetic principle of lyricism:

All too like that dreary eve,
Sighed within repining grief;
Sighed at first, but sighed not long—
Sweet— How softly sweet it came!
Wild words of an ancient song.
Undefined, without a name. (WH&P 305)

Special attention was paid to show how the imagination of the two poets created a rustic atmosphere in all their poems. Away from the hustle and bustle of city life and total disregard to the social and political turmoil of their times, they lived in the thick of nature and drew on natural phenomena for their sweet and melancholic images. In most of the poems of the two poets there is a feeling of presence of an eternal power in all the transient and evanescent phenomena. They depict nature as a parallel to the surges in their stirred souls. Such a
pastoral imagination is essentially pantheistic and secular in nature rather than parochial. We saw how Emily Bronte’s poems, for instance *Oh Thy Bright Eyes Must Answer Now*, reveal conflict between imagination and reason, and between spiritual needs and mundane cares. Through the scrutiny of various poems of the two poets under investigation, attempt was made to unravel the basic aesthetic of lyrical poetry.

The lyrical verses of the two poets obey universal codes and fundamentals in portraying feminine personality shaped by their times and at the same time by the biological determinism. The images and symbols of the works of a creative artist are used as a means to understand the individuality of the author by identifying various motives, fantasies, obsessions and desires of the author as well as the characters presented. It may not be much useful in the critical evaluation of a work, but it definitely helps us in understanding the creative literature more comprehensively. This structuring of the unconscious takes place under many extraneous sources like, education, economic structure of the society, the environment, sociological and cultural changes of the society and also by the changes in the linguistic structure of a language. But psychoanalysis of poetry starts from the personality of the author. Centering the person of
the poet in the study of the poetry is the result of Freudian Psychology. However, the main objective was to show how understanding female identity can help us in appreciating the poetry of the two poets.

The similarities of a dream work and a literary work are significant, but art work is for all practical means a conscious artistic way of merging various texts together to create a new text. It is by no means turning loose of the repressed desires of mind. It is subservient to the rules and conventions of a literary tradition in language. The findings and insights of psychology were discussed to show how the two poets, conscious of their female identity, express it without transgressing the domination of the male centred concept of women. It is now an established fact that human ego is not merely a product of ontological development, but a product of the language itself. It develops and evolves with its linguistic contacts with other people around the individual. Emphasis on the ideas of Lacan was aimed at to show how female psychology is different in many ways from the masculine psychology. Female psychology is essentially based on the long-lasting feeling of continuity with the mother.

The theoretical discussion of psychoanalytic approach also took into consideration the existentialist concepts that show how woman is considered as the other sex. The path-breaking ideas of Simone de
Beauvoir about the gender discrimination were discussed to show how woman is believed to copy men whenever she tries to become a real human being. Women in all the cultures and societies are reduced to objects or the other human beings and deprived of freedom. This condition of woman has become so common that she finally succumbs to man’s point of view. She begins to glorify her submission.

Some lyrics of Habba Khatoon and Emily Brote were discussed to illustrate how the two women on the one hand represent the clichéd notions of femininity in the patriarchal society and, on the other in their moments of pure lyricism the clichés are transgressed. Lyrics become ardent expression of the subconscious longing for freedom and women poets tend to achieve the status of true human beings as identifiable subjects. The short comings of the lyrical form in giving free articulation to the aspirations were also discussed.

The aesthetic of lyrical poetry was discussed so as to have a solid ground to expatiate upon the use of lyricism as a means of expressing the desire for freedom. Attempt was made to show how lyrical mode of poetry is essentially grounded in the oral literary tradition in a linguistic community. Right from the beginning of critical notions of the ancient Greeks to the present post-structuralist critics like Walter Ong, a lyric has been accepted as an important aspect of
collective expression rather than an expression of a concrete individual experience in actual life situation. It is governed by the rules of external music, is sung to the accompaniment of various percussive, stringed or wind instruments. The external music is in a sense copied by the verbal music in the text of the poem and is primarily meant for singing. Various principles of lyricism in the light of Walter Ong’s theory about the oral cultures were discussed to trace the underlying theme of desire for freedom from the logical world.

In order to pursue this objective of revolting against the arbitration of classical rules of expression, lyrical poetry uses stock characters, stock situations and stock responses; a song of the earliest known woman lyricist Sappho of ancient Greece was taken as an illustration of this premise. Though critical theory of lyricism dates back to Aristotle, William Wordsworth gave it a strong theoretical foundation within the framework of romanticism of the 19th century Europe. His famous often quoted dictum that poetry is a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings adequately defines the scope and limits of lyrical poetry.

An analysis of various lyrics of Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte revealed how feminine desire for freedom is expressed through impulsive and unprompted lyricism. In its revolt against the insipid
arbitrary logic of the patriarchal ethos, lyrical expression of feminism becomes a means of seeking freedom, which was the central premise of the study with special reference to the poetry of Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte.

The analysis of various poems of the two poets brings to fore how the predominant use of the first person singular is in essence a shield to give expression to the pre-existing structures in the literary traditions of the two languages. There has been an attempt by various scholars in Kashmiri to relate every song of Habba Khatoon to one or the other phase of the life of the poet, and they may succeed in doing this. Similarly there is no dearth of biographical criticism in English that tries to exhume the poet from the bulk of his/her creative production. It was, however, argued that all such attempts are nothing but to ignore the basic process of creative activity. No work of art, in spite of bearing close relationship with the creative personality, is a representation of his/her personal life. Lyrical poetry, especially, is governed by various literary constructs that are the lyrical mode itself and the archetypes in the linguistic community. In Habba Khatoon the collective myths of birth, youth, old-age and death are the re-phrasing of the centuries’ old myths that are handed down from generation to generation. These myths are the stock themes of mystic poetry which
also relates man’s position in the universe to the seemingly individual lives. The cycle of birth-childhood-youth-old age-death in an individual human life are envisioned as the representation of the cosmic phenomena. Attempt was made to show how we can understand Habba Khatoon’s poetry in terms of the mystic leitmotifs that have currency through the oral tradition of Sufi poetry. Since, as the historical accounts support, Habba Khatoon was trained in classical music, in the tradition of the Hafiza tradition in Kashmir, her poetry can best be understood in comparison to the eroto-mystic themes of this legacy.

Emily Bronte, too, studied music and at the same time was fully conversant with romantic poetry of the time. She wrote in consonance with the romantic trend and used all those metaphors and similes that were popular among the poets. Her novelty lies in associating her intellectual transgression against the feminine surrender and her resolution to withstand all odds to unravel the truth and attain enlightenment. Analysis of her two most celebrated poems, *The Prisoner* and *The Philosopher* was aimed to show that her originality lies in structuring the text according to her mood.

Derrida’s famous line, there is nothing outside the text, was made as the basis of discussion. It was seen how the reading habit of the reader or listener is important in generating meaning in the text.
Escape from personality, as the guiding principle of modern and post-modern poetry is a recent phenomenon. Attempt was made to show how a poet has no self to express, but the text of his /her poetry is the real object of critical study. In the light of various theories of modern times, it was made clear how the first person singular used in a poem is not the author, but the persona, which has existence only in the text.

Since Habba Khatoon as well as Emily Bronte were primarily lyrical poets, they saw reflection of their subjective moods in the objective reality. But the tradition and the customs of lyricism do not allow them to space out the subject, as modern poets are expected to do. The texture of their poetry is determined by music, collective myth and mystic notions. Being rooted in oral culture, lyrical poetry follows all the principles of oral poetry in using stock characters, stock themes and stock situations. It is therefore futile to seek any sort of the representation of the real self of the two poets in their poems. The semblance of self in their poetry is to be enjoyed for its skill and art of creating novelty, not as an insight into their private lives.

An attempt has been made to support the fundamental premise that lyricism is a means or vehicle for the desire of freedom. Lyrical mode of poetry is essentially feminine in nature. In all languages, we find centuries’ old traditions of collective oral poetry that has been
enriched mainly by the female folk. It is integrally united with the productive labour, like tilling, weeding, harvesting and spinning. In all the oral lyrics we find unhampered expression for the desire of freedom in all the bygone ages when the concept of feminism was unknown. The lyrical poetry expresses the suffering, aches, sorrows, deprivations, and repressed unconscious of the women folk. The lyrics of Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte, provide us with immense possibilities of a comparative study within the framework of feminism.

Thus Habba Khatoon and Emily Bronte, in spite of the chronological and cultural differences are comparable in terms of affinities and divergences in giving expression to womanhood through the lyrical mode. This study therefore examined the feminist thematics in the works of Emily Bronte and Habba Khatoon as structures of opposition to the central concerns and structures of the cultures and sub-cultures out of which they are written and which they represent and established that feminism cannot be dubbed as merely a late twentieth century phenomenon but as a mere shadow of the works of these women poets. The focus was on how lyricism becomes a powerful tool towards self realization and in turn a strong medium to achieve freedom.
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