Chapter IV

Postcolonialism and Women

This chapter, “Postcolonialism and Women,” focuses on the Indian Heritage and culture. It shows how Githa Hariharan has focused on the reputation, on the values of leading a life with more limitations especially to women, even from ancient histories to the present century. It has also discussed the discrimination of women, the ayurvedic method of curing diseases, and the method of learning. Apart from all the techniques, this chapter, focuses on the way Hariharan has completely given rebirth to women, the silent women have been changed into an ambassadorial, free of thought, and bold enough to point out the mistakes. She has also re-visioned the stories in the history and in the myth. When anyone has talked about the country “India,” “India is the cradle of the human race, the birth place of human speech, the mother of history, the grandmother of legend, and the great grandmother of Tradition” (38) says, Mark Twain, in his work Following the Equator: A Journey around the World part 4.

India, the resound land is known for its literary heritage, which consists of tales being told through the ages, different from the myths and legends. In those days, the moral values of life was raised and discussed to the people through various stories from the epics. Later, it had influenced the minds of generations through folklores. In addition to that, the development of the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Itihasa and the Puranas, grew a strong ethical, moral and pragmatic. At the same time a purely, earthly practice consisting of the Kathasaritsagar, the Jatakas and the Panchatantra are also raised the value of life through stories. The Kathasaritsagar is a set of lively tales of wisdom comprising of wit and delight; the Jatakas, the world’s collection of fables and the Panchatantra, is based on the collection of animal fables. But, mostly, such stories have
prevailed in our oral tradition, except the great Epics *The Ramayana* and *The Mahabharatha*. M. Rama Rao, has mentioned in, “Language and Spirit” (foreword to Kanthapura, 1938) in *The Post-colonial Studies Reader* as,

> We have had in India stories which lie embedded in the hymns of the Rigveda, or scattered in the Upanishads and the epics, the stories which constitute the Panchatantra, the Hitopadesha, the Sukasaptati, the Daskumaracharita and the Vetalapanchvimsati in Sanskrit, the Buddhist, Jatakka in Pali and a host of similar stories in Modern Indian Languages. (216)

The tales of Buddha and the other Hindu Myth are conferred in Hariharans *When Dreams Travel*, retelling the stories from *The Arabian Nights*. It is very clear that our ancestors and the stories have shown the mobility from East to West. Hariharan has said the stories in a way have raised women’s consciousness to such an extent that they have begun to raise questions and have planned for their benefits. Hariharan has given a new shape to the stories about the women, have been changed in this fast moving society.

The same age-old tradition, still survives in India, yet, the people of India have achieved and followed the life style of other foreign countries, but they have come back to the same old tradition in the form of Post colonialism with the new shape. On the other hand, some as postcolonial women can challenge with a man in her working place not in their home. They can order them by giving official responsibilities, but at home it is highly impossible. Even the way she has dressed has provoked other hidden emotions. These kinds of women have thought that, through their outward exposure their target can be achieved and get succeeded in everything. This thought is entirely wrong in researcher’s view. Every woman can claim equal rights, towards men not to dominate or subordinate them. In this era it has become quite opposite. Nowadays they have moved
forward without doing their responsibilities. This has happened especially in metropolitan cities. Some women have done their duties without expectations. For example an article by C. V. Sukumaran titled “Woman the Spine of the Family in the English Dailies” appeared in “The Hindu,” on Sunday, December 11, 2011 in the “Open Page” has stated that if a woman falls ill it is not at all possible for a man to maintain the entire family and office. The narrator has said that even though he spent much time to cook, he could not prepare a tasty food. But, he used to pass comments on the food which his wife has prepared. Cleaning the vessels is a big process, and washing is a very big strain for the male. Finally, he has also added usually his daughter has not missed the bus when his wife was in good health, now for the very first time she missed the bus. He open-heartedly accepted that a woman is the spine of the entire family, not only the spine but also she is supreme. This cannot be accepted by certain people; still it is a million dollar question. Leela Gandhi, has suggested in the book, Postcolonial Theory, that, the construction of the “third world woman” as,

Some feminist postcolonial theorists have cogently argued that a blinkered focus on racial politics inevitably elides the ‘double colonization’ of women under imperial conditions. Such theory postulates the ‘third – world woman’ as victim par excellence – the forgotten casualty of both imperial ideology, and native and foreign patriarchies. (83)

The coalition between feminism and westernization has formed a wrong antagonism between feminism and nationalism that the development on woman’s status has critically questioned the survival of the postcolonial nation. The cause for this unwise is entwined in what is, quite often, a feminist has appealed to greater state accountability and the wider welfare intervention has its root in the transitional process to postcolonial
independence. Cultural self-assertion, quite through natives and a radicalization of ethnic/cultural differences are one of the basic strategies to win popular support for the struggle for independence. As a result, nowadays politicians have influenced hegemonic discourses concerning the preservation of certain traditions, and the “purity” of women, as a matter of national self-definition. Hence, the tense co-existence of independence movements and women’s claims, although women have certainly participated in the independence struggle in great numbers, either in India or in the liberation processes over the world. Every citizen of the nation can believe that they have moved towards Westernization, but still everyone is bounded with their culture. Hariharan an excellent storyteller has taken the stories from the great myth and the Arabian stories and has given new definition to the story and women. She has said the story which has a theme and the courageous thinking of new woman.

When it has come into the framework of the Postcolonial literature, this theoretical formulation has become more tangible. In order to know more about the postcolonial texts, it is stated as reinterpretations of colonial history. This has become an observation, on specific cultural systems as critical reflection on the socio – political context of postcolonial location. Edward has opined on compelling the proponents of post colonialism by Gayathri Chakravarty Spivak, Homi Bhabha, Bill Ashcroft, Helen Tiffin, and others might appear to be. It has been ill- received by the scholars outside the Western Academy like Chinua Achebe, Nigugi wa Thiongo, Aizaz Ahmed Ihab and many others. In the words of Hiren Gohain the typical apprehension of Indian Post colonialism, has appeared in his article “Critical Observations on Post-Colonialism” as,

Post – colonialism or rather Post – coloniality, is thus related to the contemporary crisis of Western capitalism, unable to pursue the path of classical imperial exploitation, disturbed and troubled by
resistances of tensions within the third world, and yet driven by its
own logic to build a global economic and cultural order to maintain
its hegemony without alienating the exploited and dominated
regions of the world. (16)

On the other hand Jasbir Jain has given her opinion that the present writers specifically
bring out the social realities in their writings. In her essay “Post Colonial Realities:
Women Writing History” she has stated that:

Women traditionally termed a historic, bring a new awareness to
their treatment of history. Rejecting the hegemony of male
projections, they cross over to occupy a centrality ordinary
withheld from them. Their works reflects the difference between
colonial and Postcolonial context but also reflects a feminization
history. (65)

Women are considered as the inferior being to man right from the beginning till now.
Still in India especially in remote South, women are considered subordinates and they are
hypothetical to do only the household, and they don’t have potential to participate in
literary and other activities. Very few women have achieved with the help of the women
organizations. They have to thank and support such organizations. According to Sarala
Palkar, in her article “Of Mothers and Daughters of Great Divide” as,

Culture representation of women in the image of a Sita or a Savitri
or an Ahilya – women known for their exceptional devotion to
their husbands – still proliferate in popular media as well as in
serious literature. In most of the popular films and fiction,
traditional roles of women as dutiful daughters, devoted wives, self-sacrificing mothers are valorized. (4)

Still in India it has happened, most of the elders’ even the women have blessed a young bride as “May you be the mother of a hundred sons” (Bumiller). People in India trust that a male child is more blessed than the female child and the female child is treated as a curse. This problem of domination has started, right from the infant and grows “much heightened” which rules over women. Right from the ancient period it exists even now. Simone de Beauvoir, through his work, The Second Sex, has stated that:

> History has shown us that men have always kept in their hands all concrete powers; since the earliest days of the patriarchate they have thought best to keep women in a state of dependence their codes of laws have been set up against her; and thus she has been definitely established as the other. (171)

Another writer, Seemanthin Niranjana, in her article “Discerning Women: Variation as the Theme of Gender-A Review,” has said about the partial difference between both genders as “dichotomies like home/world = Female/male” (22). When gender status is fully mastered by the cultural, religious, and social ethos prevalent in a society, which may not be conducive to attain “gender equality,” in this present world no one can say that man has “upper hand” in the society (19-20). But in India there is no change because of their age-old tradition. Hariharan as a Postcolonial writer and also feminist writer has boldly expressed her opinion on the suppression of women in her novels and short stories. The characters are decentralized with the old traditional values, through stories, myth, passion and loneliness and the hidden life of the Indian women. On the other hand she has made the women question against the evils. She has also modified the weak characters in the original stories to be bold enough to face
life/difficulties with full confidence. She has illustrated the cultural values by comparing with the legends and age-old stories and through life of famous poets and composers. M.H. Abrams, has opinioned in, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, as, “Hereditary stories which were once believed to be true by a particular cultural group and which served to explain why the world is as it is and things happen as they do to provide a rationale for social customs and observations.” (170)

Hariharan’s novels *The Thousand Faces of Night*, *When Dreams Travel*, *The Ghost of Vasu Master*, *In Times of Siege* and the short story collection *The Art of Dying and Other Stories*, are entirely circumscribed with retelling the subjects from the Hindu mythology, histories, realities and the stories said by old people. In Hindu mythology, women have been given the position of the goddess; they can create or destroy anything, but with the permission or acceptance of the God. In reality, they do not have their individuality of their own. Some of them have said that women dominate men, it has happened only when he is not worth to take care of the family, she has done. In such unavoidable situations, she has taken all the responsibilities and sometimes she has to report all the happenings to her better half, sometimes “bitter half,” has to receive all the unpleasant words and even beatings.

The first novel, *The Thousand Faces of Night*, has described the female are treated as treasure of pleasure and beauty from Damayanthi to Devi the protagonist. This novel highlights the Indian women have still survived under the darkness, by shattering their desires according to the situation. For this novel she won commonwealth prize, which has been translated in French, German, Spanish and Dutch. This novel has deliberately pictured the life style of the South Indian especially the cultural values of the Brahminical family. The novel has opened that the protagonist returned to Madras from America after completing her post graduation. Though, she has come up from “the brave new world”
(TTFN 9), again she has entered into her same world with the same cultural values, under the control of her mother. Even she has a thought on Dan; she has not enough courage to accept his love or to say her love towards Dan or to her mother. It is all because of her strong bond of maternal love. After her arrival, in the beginning, it is seemed to be difficult for her to adjust with the day-by-day realities.

Later, Devi has confessed that it is difficult to change the old orders with the radical ideas. It is the fact; the youngsters who come out with the flying colours, radical thinking, have not been easily accepted by anyone. They are forced to get back to the same old ideas. They have never made them to try, but in the western countries they have encouraged them to come out with their own ideas and with their own skin. Everything is moved from here to other countries, again when it has come in the form of westernization with new forms and with the scientific terms they have realized. Devi has listened (to) the traditional stories from her childhood but her mother never encouraged her to hear such stories. Even then it is continued after her marriage. Often, she has compared the realities with her grandmother stories right from the beginning till now, the age-old tradition has not yet changed. India is known for its ancient culture and tradition. She has thought of the stories said by her grandmother and her father–in–law called Baba. But, Hariharan has given a new beginning to her when she has gone along with Gopal and later returned to her mother. She has challenged the male society that these women could lead their life alone. Devi’s mother has been considered as one such woman who has led her life alone even after her father’s death. She has balanced the society as well as her family members.

The characters from the myth have also fitted to the characters of the present women in the society. These types of women can only imagine with those characters, but cannot be followed in reality. Hariharan has proved and challenged the society that her
female characters can survive without the support of their counterpart. Hariharan’s women have proved themselves from the lower level of thinking towards rational ideas. In *The Thousand faces of Night* Devi has imagined all the mythical characters told by her grandmother in her childhood. Like Damayanthi, Gandhari, Kritya, Vengeful Amba, a woman has married a snake. She has compared these characters with herself, her mother Sita, Uma - cousin, Gauri – grandmother’s servant, Mayamma the old caretaker of her husband’s house. The novelists have invented the new women at the end of their extreme suffering and have walked out to prove their identity. The Indian heritage has still continued in the form of grandmother stories and Baba’s stories. Devi has compared herself with every incident which has happened in her life and she has become scared and has got depression over life. The story of Damayanti has made her to prepare for the marriage “When my mother prepared me for *swayamwara*” (TTFN 16). This is the very age-old tradition in Hinduism, for a bride, the parents search for the perfect match. When she was a small girl, she has heard the word from her grandmother, “the feast of a bride’s choice,” the regal dignity and solemnity of a *swayamwara*. Then her grandmother has started the story of Damayanti. Damayanti the princess has got ready for her *swayamwara*, “A long procession of kings, princes and gods have entered its lofty portraits” (TTFN 18). Among them she has bravely thrown her garland round the neck of Nala, the king of Nishands, a brave handsome and virtues. This story is taken from the famous epic *The Mahabaratha*. When it is compared to reality it is never happened in any bride’s life. Shashi Deshpandi, in her novel, *The Dark Holds no Terrors*, has opinioned on the present *swayamwara* as; a woman has to be under the level of a man. Through her character “Sarita” she has said, to maintain a happy marriage,

A wife must always be a few feet behind her husband. If he’s an M.A, you should be a B.A. If he’s 5’.4’ tall you shouldn’t be more
than 5’3’ tall. If he’s earning five hundred rupees, you should never earn more than four hundred and ninety-nine rupees.
That’s the only rule to follow if you want a happy marriage …
Women’s magazines will tell that marriage should be an equal partnership. That’s nonsense, rubbish; no partnership can ever be equal. It will always be unequal, but take care that it’s unequal in favor of your husband. If the scales tilt in your favor, God help you both of you. (137)

In the game of marriage, Devi’s mother Sita has been more conscious in selecting a bridegroom for her daughter; finally she selected Mahesh. Devi has also accepted her mother’s choice only for her love and care. She has never imagined him as a prince, but a regional manager in a multinational company that makes detergents and toothpaste (TTFN 21). Still it is in practice in the society, the elderly members in the family have never asked the opinion of the bride the one who is supposed to marry. Mostly this has happened in the remote place of India. Whatever, whoever, the person is, the bride has to follow him blindly. When Devi lived along with her mother, she has recollected all the stories of Swayamwara said by her grandmother.

Swayamwara is one of the important events of women’s life. They have dreamt, and tried to adapt accordingly to the new world. After marriage a woman who leaves the entire family which has brought her up, adapts herself to the new world will be well and good. Regarding a man he has no such problem at all. Even now in South India people used to say that even thousand lies can be said for the purpose of solemnizing a marriage. May be this story can be related to the above said statement and there are more stories from epic or tales etc. Gandhari, a character from Mahabharatha has met the same in her life, before her marriage it is not known to her that Dhiruthurashtra her husband, was a
blind man. In the real story Gandhari is forced to marry her blind husband; Bheeshma has taken her to the palace and has threatened to marry Dhiruthurashtra or her entire family might be sentenced to death. In this novel Hariharan has used Grandmother as a mediator. She has enquired Devi whether she has heard the story of Ghandhari, and then she has continued, “Listen; listen and you will learn what is to be a real woman” (TTFN 28). It is stated in general for man no one has said a story to be a real man. Gandhari has married to a royal prince; his palace was “twice big,” twice magnificent as her parent’s palace” (TTFN 28). It has been filled with “priceless gems, marble, and the pillars shown like mirrors” (TTFN 28). Gandhari has walked into her husband’s residence with curiosity filled with dreams, eyes witness and with quick impatient steps. When she has entered into the room, her husband stood by the window, the noble prince was looked at the sky. At the time when he has turned around, she has noticed the white eyes, that his pupils were glazed and useless. She could not say even a word; she has torn off a piece of her thick red skirt and tied it tightly over her own eyes. Gandhari has not interested to see the untrustworthy world of the people in the kingdom. At the end of the story her grandmother has said, “she embraced her destiny – a blind husband with self sacrifice worthy of her royal blood” (TTFN 29). Her grandmother has stated that a woman has to meet her fate alone. Even a man who is not worthy of marriage is considered to be noble. She has added that all “All husbands are noble, Devi. Even the blind and deaf ones” (TTFN29). Later Devi has understood that life is unpredictable. The stories of her grandmother have made her to learn the lesson that human anger is more difficult to digest “it could seep into every pore of a womanly body and become the very stream of her life” (TTFN 29). A general opinion that if Ghandhari has been in the position of Dhiruthurashtra, whether he will accept her, certainly not, or as a blind royal prince can
give life to a poor woman that also is not possible. They need royal blood to maintain their royal status.

In India, a story is related to every incident; here Gandhari story is related to Devi’s mother Sita’s anger. Her grandmother has said that Sita has played veena beautifully, when she was a young bride, she has come along with the veena as dowry. She said when she was along with her parents; they have arranged the best teacher to teach veena. After marriage also she played veena beautifully, but this has changed. She has heard her father – in – law’s voice, roaring for not picking the flowers for pooja and yelling not to play veena. He ordered her to be a good wife and a daughter – in – law. Immediately she has stopped playing veena, out of frustration and anger she has pulled all the strings and said, “Am I a wife or daughter- in- law”? (TTFN 31). When she has noticed her husband, he could not say anything, from that day onwards she has not even touched Veena. This incident has made Devi to learn,

The lesson brought me five steps close to adulthood. I saw for the first time that my parents too were afflicted by a kind of blindness. In their blinkered world they would always be one, one leading the other, one hand always in the grasp of another. (TTFN 29)

By following this story, her grandmother has said the story of a girl who has married a snake, as a child she could not understand the hidden meaning, later she has realized and compared with the life of the maid. Sometimes woman is supposed to marry an inhuman having six senses. It is not possible to marry a snake; but this can be interpreted the nature, quality of a snake to a human. Even in this advanced scientific world still the habit exists. If a woman has a problem in the marriage process or for not having a child, they have stated it as sarpadhosham that has meant if they satisfy the snake with poojas the problem will be solved. She has started the story that a good woman and her husband
longed for a child, after ten years of longing they have given birth to a child in the form of snake. This has shown that a man with venomous in nature. After some years they have searched for a suitable bride for their son. Finally, his father has brought suitable bride for her son. All his neighbours have speculated, “Will this pearl-like maiden marry that venom – tongued snake?” (TTFN 33), but that girl has accepted to marry him and said that a woman can marry only once in her life. In reality even when a man is divorced he stated himself as a young innocent widower has been searching for a young, slim, beautiful bride for marriage. But for the weaker gender, even she is not a widow she is supposed to accept a widower voluntarily or forced by others to get married with that person. Once she has lost her life she has to survive alone in the egalitarian society with fear. Most of the women have accepted, especially downtrodden has accepted their life as it has come as they have not analysed or understood the value of life. These sorts of people have sarcastically commented with the intention of life as both happiness and sorrow a woman should lead accordingly. As a devoted wife, that girl, who married the snake, has satisfied all the needs of her husband and also she loved snakes. One night she has embarrassed a good fortune, when she embraced her husband, she could see a cold snake – skin on the floor, and then she quickly dragged the skin outside and burnt ashes. Later she noticed her husband a young man has been slept on her bed “unaware of his rebirth” (TTFN-34). It has been stated that with all her goodness a woman is capable to change the nature of a man a venomous can be changed into human with all her love and care. On the other hand this story is compared to the present day life of women that even if she is married to a brutal man a venomous, she has to adjust herself. She has to be a devoted wife, to satisfy all his needs. If she has raised question towards him she is treated as an untouchable or an arrogant woman or she is not capable to lead life. In another case if a woman has dominated a man in nature she is entirely separated away from the family.
and society. Nowadays women have started to earn, lead their life and dare to complain the tortures given to them by the other gender in public, before it was not practiced, they had thought it was shameful for them. Now they have become bold to face geared up to point the inaccuracy of others.

The mythical characters have reflected in the life of the present women, when Grandmother has told about Amba, who was forced to be violent and sacrificed her life because of the treatment of Bheeshma and Salwa. She was born with two younger sisters Ambika and Ambalika. These beautiful princess were about to choose their husbands from the crowd of Princes and Kings gathered there. At that time the noble Bheeshma, born of a goddess has visited Kashi, he heard the swayamvara was going to be held in the palace, immediately he remembered his stepbrother, so he walked into the hall and saw the three princesses. Amba, the eldest, garlands the young king Salwa. “The jasmines had barely brushed the princely neck, when the air was filled with piercing screams, trampling feet and clouds of dust” (TTFN-36). Amba had realized that a rough hand seized her. When she was about to see the person who had interrupted her heart’s desire she had heard the cries of her sisters and fell herself in the chariot. This is not the question raised by Devi, but by everyone that “why didn’t Amba’s father stop him? Or Salwa? Or anyone else?” (TTFN-36). Her grandmother replied, “A woman fights her battles alone” (TTFN-36) it is absolutely true, a woman from Amba to the present world woman has to face and fight for her in the battle of life against man and society alone. When he had taken them to his step-mother, Amba had confided her secret that she had garlanded another man- Salwa. Without her permission she had been kidnapped. At once when Bheeshma had listened he said, “[...] go where you will. Be a faithful wife to a man you have chosen” (TTFN 37). It is really ironical; the one who has kidnapped another man’s property could not have uttered these words or Bheeshma might have known that surely
Salwa would not have accepted her. When Amba reached Salwa, he had abused her that, as a king, will not touch another man’s wife, and said will never turn to any leftovers. He had shouted at her to go to Bheeshma, who won her, when his arrow has trapped his eager hand is about to garland her. He had screamed towards her, better go to Bheeshma, he could be your husband. Again when she had reached Bheeshma – the Ganga’s son he had also refused. She had felt like orphan though she had all relations. She had been shuttled between Bheeshma and Salwa. This event had completely changed her mind-set towards Bheeshma, to take vengeance on him. She had spent long years in the forest to get a boon from the Lord Shiva. Lord Shiva had appeared and took “a garland of thick-skinned, flesh coloured “nagalinga pushpa” in her hands” (TTFN 39), had given to her and said that the one who wears this garland will surely kill Bheeshma. “She threw the garland around a pillar in King Drupada’s court and stormed out, to meet her death” (TTFN 39).

Later she took rebirth as a daughter of Drupada, a daughter as son called (Sekandi). In the Kurukshetra he rose as a man and killed her beloved in the battle. In reality as a woman she could not do anything one who has spoilt her life; she has to take rebirth as a man to take revenge on him. Of course women are weaker may be physically but not mentally. Here who is the cause to spoil the life of a woman? Whether Bheeshma or Salwa or her father? It is too simple for every one to blame that it is the penance of her and not anyone. When it is analyzed, it is understood that these three are the cause. Still, in this society we can find man like Bheeshma or Salwa and her helpless father with the pride that spoils a woman’s life and dreams. In this society, woman abuse has become common everywhere in India; still they could not find a solution.

Devi has also remembered the story of motherhood which her grandmother has told when she is not interested in hearing the story. She has remembered the story at the time when she is in her husband’s home. The story has focused about Ganga. In our
country, a special place is devoted for the Indian mothers. She has said the word
motherhood is more important for a tender woman. When she has bent over the baby to
feed her milk it is pretty picture that cannot be seen anywhere and it is a boon for a
woman, a mother undergoes all kind of difficulties, horrendous paths and even tolerates
unbearable situations. This has happened in Devi’s mothers’ life. When her father-in-
law has shouted to stop playing Veena, she has entirely felt dejected, even though she has
gained lot of wealth, but, after the birth of Devi, she has found a new meaning for her life
and feels as though she gets “a new Veena to play on and this time she was not going to
give up so easily” (TTFN 104).

Harihan has cited the story of Shantanu and Ganga from the same epic. It was
avowed that once Santhanu – the king of Bharata was riding alone near the Ganga, he saw
a woman “shimmered with beauty” (TTFN 88) dressed like a goddess. When he
proposed to marry her, she accepted by saying “will you promise not to ask me my name?
Will you promise not to stop me from doing what I do?” (TTFN 88). For seven years she
threw the newborn baby in the river. But when she was about to threw her eighth son he
stopped her “Enough, do not kill this one too!” soon she handed over the child to him and
then “she plunged into the river that flowed down from heaven” (TTFN 89). In the
beginning as a child she could not understand the meaning of the story and her
grandmother did not say any moral related to this. Later she, herself has found out the
meaning that to earn a title of a good mother, she has to renew her wifely vows every day
as her mother does, but her mother was totally disappointed with her daughter’s (Devi’s)
action, that she has eloped with Gopal. It is articulated as,

She reaped after years of sacrifice, years of iron-like self-control.
After all those quarrels with her husband about discipline for a
growing child, won through silent, ferocious struggles, and
sleepless nights of through, between the - lines planning the best of possible lives had been offered to her daughter. And what had Devi done in return? She had torn her respectability, her name to shreds. (TTFN 108)

After being remembered all the stories of swaymvara and her marriage, with her husband she has moved to her new home/world on Jacaranda Road. In the new place she has met Mayamma the old maid – servant and Mahesh’s father “I am to call him Baba” (TTFN 48). The new place has made her lonely with emotional distance, and the treatment of Mahesh has prepared her to move close with Baba. Hariharan has recalled the traditional stories through Devi’s grandmother. Devi has belonged to this generation has said the “stories were a prelude to my womanhood, and initiation into its subterranean possibilities” (TTFN 51). But Baba’s stories “[…] have always for their centre – point an exacting touchstone for a woman, a wife” (TTFN51).

Hariharan an excellent storyteller has modified the stories for the easy understanding of the audience. She has also pointed out the Hindu custom which has been related to science and scheme of life only for ladies, the Baba, the Sanskrit professor, an intellectual man has bestowed about Manu, who has given a voice for Hinduism and about Brahminhood, and he has quoted the words of Manu that “A Brahmin […] shrinks from honours as from poison; he covets as if it is nectar. The humble one sleeps happily, wakes up happily, and moves about in this world happily; he who has inflicted the humiliation perishes” (TTFN 52). The old Baba has always discussed the Vedas and Sanskrit hymns with Devi, and said these have made a man to lead a sinless life. But the system and the conviction played a major role only for ladies, even he has not pursued in his life. She has felt comfortable and happy in spending time with Baba. At present we Indians have slowly forgotten our tradition and culture which is
more precious than other countries. Then Baba has talked about “kriti” a noble raga which has brought out the ancient Indian music of ragas and the composers of Indian music like Muthuswamy Dikshidhar, Jeyadeva, and Thyagaraja. The music and the lives of the composers have reflected the Indian Culture. In India the two types of music is formed - the Hindustanic and Carnatic. Hindustanic music is popular in North India and the other one is famous in South India. Hariharan with her mediator has started to spotlight on music which has been considered as one of the medicines that any incurable psychological problem can be cured; it has given way to the audience to understand the life of Muthuswamy Dikshidhar and his two wives and the treatment for women in his period. His first wife was not pretty, she had seemed too dark like a moonless night, and so his parents were worried and presented a young fair beautiful fair-complexioned woman to their son. He had accepted both his wives, they were like sun and moon. After some years, his second wife expressed her desire for jewels, which could match her beauty. When he sang in front of Maharaja of Thanjavur for precious gift, he sang that “when I have the golden Lakshmi, is with me why should I care for unworthy mortals?” (TTFN 52). The same night Ambika the deity had blessed the fair wife in her dreams with desired ornaments. After she had seen the divine beauty she has forgotten her desire for ornaments. This system of searching for a beautiful bride has followed in India and in South India from the beginning that a pretty, young, fair-complexioned girl has to be the daughter-in-law or wife of the family or she should have belonged to be a rich family. It has not been considered that she too has a desire; she has to be prepared to accept everything as it has come to her. It is very clear that woman should not express her desire even to her husband. She has to adapt to the status of her family, even though she has come from rich family. There are other categories of people who expect dowry.
Normally jewel plays an important role in dowry. The parents finish the marriage of their daughter by the jewel they have earned in their life.

Hariharan has insisted and pointed out that women have always been the instruments of the saint’s initiation into “bhakti” (TTFN 65). She has proved the statement through the story of Jeyadeva. Hariharan, through her negotiator the Baba as a speaker and Devi as a listener, has continued with Jeyadeva, composer of Gita Govinda and sang the song of “Krishna’s all en-compassing love” (TTFN 65). When Cudjan, was written by him, he could have come across an unbelievable incident. After the song being completed by him, he has left his manuscript with his wife and went backyard for an oil bath. In the meantime Lord Krishna has come to Padmavati, in her husband’s disguise, “he took the manuscript from her and resorted the line” (TTFN 65). When he has noticed the miracle, he has plunged at the feet of Padmavati, as she had the fortune of seeing Lord Krishna. He has signed in the song as the husband of Padmavati. Through this incident the author has pointed out that “A great man can see the spiritual greatness of his wife” (TTFN-65). There are some men who has really accepted the greatness of their counterpart, but Baba as a husband could not understand his wife Parvati who was willing to serve God by leaving the home. In this case he has said that a wife has to leave her husband’s house only after her death. Mahesh has not encouraged Devi to go for job or expectant with any other interest of hers, rather than with male chauvinism he has dominated her. He has been brought up with care and concern of his father not mother, the same has had the thought of his father; that has persisted not to think himself in the position of his wife or mother.

Hariharan has also used the art of magical realism throughout the stories in her novel which has not happened in real situation. It is observed in the life of Purandara Dasa, a saintly song composer of Karnataka, a wealthy trade man, who has dealt with
precious stone. One day a Brahmin has come to Purandara Dasa and asked money for his son’s upanyanam, his formal initiation to Brahminhood. But, he has refused to give. The same Brahmin has gone to Purandara Dasa’s house in disguise, said the same to his wife Sarasvati Bai, and she readily has removed her nose-ring and given it to the Brahmin. The Brahmin has gone to Purandara’s shop to sell the ring, when he has seen the ring, he sent a messenger to his home to bring Sarasvati Bai’s nose-ring. When the messenger has asked her nose-ring, she has become unconscious. Later she has come back to her conscience; she has entered into a room with poison, but it has disappeared. Instead of that in the cup she has noticed an exact replica of the old nose-ring. After seeing this, he has become humble and gave away his property. “He resolved to lead a simple and austere life” (TTFN-66).

Baba’s stories and the incidents from the greatest poets of India has shown India’s heritage of woman and it has had the characteristic of “non-violence, truthfulness, honesty, purity, control of the senses – this in brief is the dharma of all the four castes” (TTFN-66). In India still the age old tradition has followed to be a virtuous wife. Sumangali prarthana has stated that ‘a virtuous wife has to die before her husband dies’. When she has passed away before her husband as Sumangali she has ornamented with bangles, gold chains in their hands and neck, her forehead filled with kumkum a symbol of married woman, this has given a prestigious position in the heaven for her. It has been believed by the great men that the fortune of a virtuous wife has led them to their spiritual power. Like Syama Sastri and Thiyagaraja’s wife has done the Sumangali Prarthana before they have died. Syama Sastri’s wife died after conducting this ceremony, his ‘wife died five days before he died’ (TTFN-67). Thiyagaraja’s second wife has conducted the ceremony before she dies. For the prarthana, she has invited twelve women for a sumptuous feast, cooked by her own hands. At the end of the feast she presented them all
a token which has supposed to present a token with “[...] six glass bangles, given for fertility, kumkum, turmeric, two betel leaves, and betel nuts. A little mirror, a comb, and a small sandalwood box full of red ‘kumkum’ that was mixed with golden dust” (TTFN-67). After ten months of his wife’s death he passed away. Baba’s stories has illustrated determined conclusion that he has believed deeply, though it was cast in borrowed words “By public confession, repentance, penance, repetition of holy mantras, and by gifts, the sinner is released from sin. That which is hard to get over, hard to get, hard to reach, hard to do, all that can be accomplished by penance: it is difficult to overcome penance.” (TTFN 67)

When it is compared with Sita, she has been a dutiful wife and a responsible mother, but after the death of her husband she has not changed herself. She has led her life alone. When she has returned from abroad after her husband’s death, she came alone in a taxi, dressed with the deep blue Kanchipuram silk sari. Though she has come and survived like Muthuswamy Dhikshidhar’s second wife, Sarasvati Bai, and the wife of Syama and Thiyagaraja she has never taken a reverse from her duties.

Another imaginary character found in this novel is Kritya, the imaginary character created by Baba, which Devi has read of her own from the books of Baba, usually in India a woman has to be treated properly; this has already followed in the age of kali. Each age has its Kritya. Kritya – ferocious woman has destroyed and haunted the house with her anger and spits fire where women are not treated well. Here Kritya is compared with Kali the blood thirst goddess who has the world ablaze. Still women have been treated with silent terrific tortures inside the four walls. Sometimes these women hide and sacrifice everything for their cultural values. It is pointed out that if a woman brings out the tortures to the light they have undergone, it is considered as a sin of womanhood. Is it so? If she has taken everything as penance then she will be considered even herself
as a woman in the society. She has to be like “Ahilya” a stone, a curse given by her husband. If not, they are saying as a curse to the world and saying it as because of “Kaliyuga.” This has not happened only in this age alone but also in all the ages it happens, but our ancestors have pointed out only the stories of Gandhari, Sita, Ganga, Kannaki etc. Before, Devi has imitated and tried to be like that of these woman, but as time passed she could not tolerate the silent tortures given by her husband, and the society. So she has left the house without any intimation, and where ever she goes with Gopal she is not happy, again she comes back to her mother. Devi has rendered herself that:

My Grandmother fed me fantasies; my father a secretive love, my mother sought me forward in the direction she chose […] I have made very few choices […]. But I was too well prepared and not prepared at all. America, Jacaranda Road, Mahesh, Gopal. I have run away from all my trails. (TTFN 137)

Like The Thousand Faces of Night, Hariharan’s short story “The Remains of the Feast” from the anthology, The Art of Dying and Other Stories, has shown the life style of Brahminhood. Devi’s grandmother is very particular in her culture, like Rukmani in the short story, the narrator – Ratna’s dying ninety-year-old great grandmother, has been very particular in culture. It has to be noted that one can be proud to belong to this culture, at the same time it has led the woman as a melting candle to the entire family. Here Rukmani has lived alone for ten years away from her son and daughter-in-law. Ratna says, “I don’t know how she felt when they died, but later she seemed to find something slightly hilarious about it all” (TADOS9). Usually a strict Brahmin has never taken the food anything prepared by a non-brahmin. They have considered it as a sin. Rukmani, the old woman has suppressed all her desires to maintain the disciplines followed in her
culture. When she has been in her deathbed she has given up all her disciplines. Cancer has licked all the parts of her body, her hands are punctured with tubes, and a needle which has tied with I.V. pole has crashed on the floor. Even she suffers from severe pain; the temptation from her heart never resists her. As a Brahmin woman, she has controlled all her senses, her mind, heart, and tongue. Hinduism- a culture shows how a human has to live a disciplined life. Even our ancient saints have guided moral and the way to lead life that, if one who has controlled the desires which have come from the heart, mind and tongue that has made them to lead a happy life. This is more particular to a woman who has belonged to any group. Rukmani, before a week of her death, she has broken the tether of being the Brahmin hood. She has started screaming deliriously to get her something from the bazaar like raw onions, fried bread, chickens, and goats, and then she asks for peanuts with chilli powder from the corner shop and onion and green chilli bondas deep-fried in oil. Later she has become a strange partnership with the family members.

I smuggled cakes and ice cream, biscuits and samosas, made by non-brahmin hands into vegetarian invalid’s room. To the deathbed of a Brahmin widow who had never eaten anything but pure, home-cooked food for almost a century. (TADOS 12)

Her curiosity in tasting the food has become over whelmed, she has said, buy me coco-cola, lemon tarts, garlic, three types of aerated drinks, fruit cakes laced with brandy, bhel-puri from the fly-infested from the nearby bazaar. Finally she screamed to wear a red silk sari with a big wide border of gold. In Hinduism it is a custom that a widow has to wear white colour or saffron to indicate her position as widow. Hariharan has analyzed the character, Sita the mother of Devi in the novel *The Thousand Faces of Night* is entirely different, after her husband’s death she has come from abroad as she has not been
seen before, she never mind the words of others or for the world. Throughout her life as a widow woman, Rukmani has sacrificed all her trivial desires, and at the end of her life in the deathbed, she has satisfied her needs. These kinds of women, when they were young have given much importance to the age-old tradition and they have followed the ritual rites. In the present century everyone has moved towards westernization, people have changed themselves physically. They change contemplated under this term which covers the lifestyle related to eating, dressing, dancing, and entertainment. But mentally they have followed the age-old tradition; in fact if our ancestors have said about the medicinal value or the values followed in the Indian tradition, the present generation has never accepted them. It has happened due to the improvement of science as well as the technology; it has been stated as medicinal value, it will be accepted without hesitation. No one can be blamed totally against everything which has culture biased; the opinion from person to person has varied according to their situation or if anyone has tried to dominate others. They have forced others to follow the order and also the submissive will have been lost their identity in the name of culture, which has to be condemned. Everyone has accepted the modern trend and the scientific inventions have made a drastic change but whatever the changes have happened women have been in the same position with the same threats. But they could not even digest or to treat their wives equally. This has to be changed. As a mother she satisfies and knows other’s desires, but no one will have asked her desire or fulfill it. When she was alive no one minds her desire or satisfies her, in her deathbed she has been satisfied up with everything. Indian culture has taught how a mother, a wife, a daughter, on the whole a woman has to be, but not for a man, though it has been given for man he could not follow. A weaker sex (woman) can be scrambled or her goal can be achieved in all the fields, but still they are kicked to the same position in the form of culture.
The novel, *The Thousand Faces of Night*, has closely conveyed the story telling as a feminine tradition which has passed from the grandmother to granddaughter and also from the old servant to the young mistress. This kind of story telling has promoted self-awareness, wise thinking, and survival strategies. These issues have been discussed as a central theme in this novel. When it has been followed from one generation to another the present generation has accepted the myth or story but it has not accepted it merely in words. Even Devi has heard the stories she has challenged and overcome that, finally she has had her identity; throughout their life these three woman have faced multiple challenges in their family and in the society. Mayamma has challenged the society and she has lost everything husband, son, her entire life, and has started to lead her life as maid. Sita has stood alone and supported her daughter throughout her life. Devi has conked out the tradition the bond which has had from her childhood and has prepared to lead a life like her mother.

*In Times of Siege*, Hariharan has focused and rewritten the history of India. In this novel, she has exhibited the “Siege” (4) as, the mentality that exists when extremists set agenda for intellectual. Through Shiv, Hariharan has examined and linked 1169 and 2008. She has conveyed the scenario of Indian government and the clash between the religion and the extremist at the same time Meena as an intermediary has pointed the position of women also. Hariharan has probed the issues related to political parties in power, she has created Shiv as a professor of History, particularly to point out the history, who has immersed into the past, and with the help of Meena he has intended the contemporary issues which have happened in the society, the academic etc. In all the places, everyone from literate to illiterate has bent down towards the irrational masses has taken over, and the voices of the true intellectual are silenced. Hariharan has shown the mindset of young woman in this novel, she has also struck out at those who sit on the
fence when others are in crisis. Hariharan has explained the position of India as well
Indian Women, Meena as a feminist writer has dragged the suffering of women,
Hariharan has also retained in the position of Meena and has clearly stated through the
postures have represented the feminist posters of some sort; with no words, an image of a
woman just holding a matchstick in her hands to make a perfect circle. It has denoted the
hazard of in indifference gender in the background has well represented in a poster on the
wall of Meena’s room thus,

   In Germany, they first came for the communists, and
   I did not speak up because I was not a communist.
   Then they came for Jews, and I did not speak up
   because I was not a Jew.
   Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did
   not speak up because I was not a trade unionist.
   Then they came for the homosexuals and
   I did not speak because I was not a homosexual.
   Then they came for the Catholics and I did not speak up
   because I was Protestant.
   Then they came for me … but by that time there
   was no one left to speak up. …
   Speak Up! Before It’s Too Late (ITS-27)

On the top of the posters it has mentioned her views on women.

   In another novel, When Dreams Travel or The Thousand and one Night, a
reproduction of the famous work The Arabian Nights, Hariharan has said that ‘women
dreams and stories are transported from India to Persia to Arabia to France to England
and back to India (WDT 25). The stories have shared by Shahrzad, Dunyazad and
Dilshad has seen all around the world the problem of women both biological and mental has walked towards them and has remained the same wherever she has been gone; whatever religion she could be a Hindu or Christian or Muslim she has been treated as a female a subaltern, leftovers, even though she is talented, superior to men. Always she has been committed as a challenge to men. Here in this novel a woman Shahrzad the protagonist has said stories and compared them from all over the world to prove her virility and to prolong her survival. She has got the responsibility to save the young girls of Samakarnd from the hands of her husband, the brutal king Shrayar. For one thousand and one nights she has awaken to protect the life of the young generations not only of Samakarnd but all over the world. The stories of her have reflected the histories of women who have lived all over the world. “There are Persians, Kurds, Romans, Armenians, Ethiopians, Sudanese, Hindus, Barbers […] And they could be slaves, aristocrats, prisoners of war […]” (WDT-237).

According to Spivak, in her work, Can the Subaltern Speak, “the subaltern as woman cannot speak, she does not have freedom to hear or to read even in her own voice, but still they are in the position ‘as a questioning subject’”(294). While discussing the Postcolonial studies, it has been a challenge to get back “collective cultural identity-ironically re-inscribe and re-hearse neo-colonial narratives of political domination, economic exploitation, and cultural erasure, becoming thus an ethno-centric extension of Western logos” (294), she also has added that:

In seeking to learn to speak (rather than listen to or speak for), historically muted subjects of the subaltern woman, the postcolonial intellectual systematically “unlearns” female privilege. This systematic unlearning involves learning to critique postcolonial discourse with the best tools it can provide and not
simply substitute the lost figure or the colonized. Thus, to question
the unquestioned muting of the subaltern woman even within the
anti-imperialist project of subaltern by differing or to appeal to a
sexual identity defined as essential and privilege experiences
associated with that identity. (295)

Similar to the words of Spivak, Shahrzad and Dunyazad could not express their sufferings
through their words, but still it has remained in them in the memory of stories. After the
Journey of storytelling has been completed, still Dunyazad has remembered that the
thousand one nights have done, or the wounds the suffering what they have had and,
where Shahrzad has undergone. She […] carries those stories – laden memories like
festering wounds, not in some safe, reticent organ, but in a permanently deformed tongue
weighted down by memory, memory laced with fantasy. (WDT 22)

Generally women have their emotional wounds in their hearts. They never
express their passion to their close one’s even if they have expressed; they have not
received a proper response from them again it hurts her. Still the memories of her or
unwritten stories, later the stories have transformed into histories, each story from the
different parts of the world. These stories have made everyone to understand the status of
women. The expedition of Dunyazad has initiated the readers to learn more than one
story “every night to lands beyond seas and mountains – China, Africa, India” (WDT 23).
Here Githa Hariharan has proved Shahrzad as a powerful woman mentally, has narrated
her stories that women have been treated as powerless women which the walls of
sufferings and disasters cannot be broken by her. The others have treated her as a
powerless human who can only dream. She is also very strong to say that surely it is
possible for them to break the wall. Of course, it has started happening, nowadays they
are breaking the hedges the walls and have started questioning each and every crime
against them. A man as a superior could not digest, the submissive to ask questions. Everymen say that they are treating women equally, in which way standing in a queue or working in the same places or sitting in a same bench or travelling in the same compartment is not like that. In some places a woman dominates a man may be without any reason or to take vengeance against him. This action has to be strictly warned. On the other hand, even if she is dominated outside from her home. She is not well treated in her family. Still she has been treated as submissive. Hariharan has said, “The travelling tale undergoes a change of costume, language, and setting at each serai on its way. It adapts itself to local conditions, to this century or that, a permanent fugitive from its officious parent, legitimate history” (WDT 25).

Through Shahrzad, it is understood that, through tales the lesson she has told reached the entire women. In some places it has been a myth, in many places “fleshed in different bodies before her dreams let go of Dunyazad or her descendants” (WDT25). “[…] to colour the physical features of a city which stands on the ancient, shifting soils of history” (WDT-29). Wherever a woman has come forward or step into any work, she has more responsibilities than a man. The skin may be changed but the history has been remained the same. Mohanty, has discussed in an article, “Under Western Eyes: Feminist scholarship and Colonial Discourses,” as,

The assumption that all of us of the same gender, across classes and cultures, are somehow socially constituted as a homogeneous group identified prior to the process of analysis… Thus, the discursively consensual homogeneity of ‘women’ as a group is mistaken for the historically specific material reality of groups of women. (338)
In this novel, Hariharan has shaped and examined the story of Shahrzad and Shahryar in all aspects and this chapter “Postcolonialism and Women” has been focused on how Hariharan has dissected the plot and the characters from the original myth and has given in the form of a modern myth. She has also boldly focused on the discrimination on women, gender politics this has been approached in the old text. Here she has subverted the custom and reinvented the incidents and has given an alternative female characters in order to show their inner strength, shadiness and strength in a patriarchal world. Hariharan has given the outset that she has clearly made the readers to understand that she has focused the story behind the screen.

Hariharan has revealed in the story of Dunyazad the woman has laid hidden behind the shadow of her illustrious sister Shahrzad. In The Telegraph, she has conveyed that:

I think it would be more accurate to say that while Scheherazade is centre stage, as a woman or storyteller or savior, Dunyazad, the silent accomplice, occupies a part of the stage that is almost unlit. It is always this mysterious, unknown corner of a story that sets the writer going. It was Dunyazad’s position as the unheard younger sister, the yearning, questioning follower, which allowed me to step into the story as a writer. (3)

(Githa Hariharan, “The Unknown Corner—A writers bank of myths.” The Telegraph 25th October 2009, Calcutta (Kolkata) ed.: page no.3. Print.)

Dialogues in a Comparative Study of Indo-English and Lusophone Women Writers”, has tried furthermore, she has interchanged the thoughts and seen in the reader’s mind's eye which has endowed with the brilliance of her for the prospective and for the improvement of the present women society. She has said that:

[…] Feminist writing can be less concerned with identifying the mechanics of local patriarchies that with the search for alternative ideas and projects for women. If, would one wonder from the point of view of sexual difference theories, women had ever been allowed to have their way in terms of power and social re-organization what would they do? Another way to go around the perspectives advocated by sexual differences theories could be phrased as “how will liberated women be?” How can she be different from the domestic version created by patriarchy? I think this set of theoretical questions is relevant to present the last text […] because When Dreams Travel (246) really answered some of these questions in a very creative and intelligent way. (101)

Here When Dreams Travel has two parts. Part one has highlighted Travelers in this rephrasing of the original text The Thousand and one Night in the plot “Knots in the Afterline” has shown the history of Samakarnd, Basra, Isfahan […] the physical features of a city which stands on the ancient, shifting soils of history (WDT 29) these names off the city seems to be difficult to find out or locate this city on a coded map.

According to Coady and Miler in the article “Literature, Power, and the Recovery of Philosophical Ethics,” that “Literary text, traditionally viewed as repositories of moral and aesthetic insight or challenge, tend now to be seen as predominantly ideological constructions, or sites of power struggles between social forces of various kinds” (201).
Hariharan’s *When Dreams Travel* has imitated the original story, the famous *The Arabian Nights Entertainment or One Thousand and One Nights* from the West. Chitra Sankaran has stated that this work has first translated in French by Antonic Galland, “he deconstructs and in the process re-examines some deeply embedded misogynist ideologies in cherished patriarchal texts” (66). All the novels of Githa Hariharan has focused the social realities, especially the novels *The Thousand Faces of Night* and *When Dreams Travel* has dragged out the hidden darkness of women in the society. Still in India, like other countries women have been faced many challenges day by day. They have conquered the peak of the ladle for outside, but, still, their inner world, inside the house in the room they have been living in darkness. The novel *The Thousand Faces of Night* has retold stories from the great Epic. In *When Dreams Travel* has satisfied the readers with more fantasy and fairy tales. Mottahedeh, an Arab scholar has opinioned that Githa Harihan’s *One Thousand and One Nights* exactly has retold the original version of *The Arabian Nights Entertainment* and he has noticed that, the original collection is “‘aja’ib’” means loosely: marvels, wonders, and astonishing things and “the emotion of astonishment […] those objects or events that inspire this astonishment” (29) the main theme in *One Thousand and One Nights*, has shown the same in Harihan’s *When Dreams Travel*. The oral stories in this novel have avowed that the story has been integrated, from the familiar three ‘Eastern Cultures’ like India, Persia and from Arabia. Mainly the story “Rupavati’s Breast” has referred to China. Richard Burton has commented in his book *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night* that, “In tide of yore and in long gone before, there was a king of the kings of the Banu Sasan in the Islands of India and China, a Lord of armies and guards and servants and dependents […]” (27).
In this novel Hariharan has covered the areas like Far East, Middle East, and South Asia. This novel has revealed the rational illustration and focuses the recent issue that has followed from the beginning of the civilization and these kinds of issues have still related to the present world. Adrienne Rich has observed that Hariharan’s novels, “Re-vision the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction […]” (35).

In Part two “Virgins, Martyrs and others,” a small introduction for ‘seven Days and Night is given under the title “A Dream, a Mirror.” In this part, Hariharan has introduced a new tale which has been different from the original collection. In this new frame, the tales has no longer said in the nighttime tales. In fact, the original text the tales said by Scherazade (name as in the original text) to save her life by entertaining her husband. In her text the two women, who has been the lovers of stories, tell stories each other, which has given the answers for one tale and another, has happened for seven days and nights.

Hariharan has rewritten this novel to focus the identity and cultural heritage. Post-colonialism and Women have become majority all over the world. While rewriting the canonical text, she has not only focused the Eastern Literature, but also a work of World Literature, which has shown the existence of this mixed, “shared cultural heritage”. For instance, Taj Mahal – a symbol of Love, one of seven wonders has represented a tomb which shows the real love between man and woman. This situated in Agra is built by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan for her beloved wife Mumtaz, got married in 1612 and died at the time of her child birth in 1631. This Tomb at the riverbank of Yamuna has the name Mumtaz Mahal or Mahal, is built with pure white marble and the interior is decorated with precious stones. This exact history is reflected in this novel under the story “A Lover- a Tomb.” Shah Jahan has a remarkable place in the history for his
leadership, but it is ended with humiliation. Usually in an Empire, even in the Mughal tradition after the death of the king, their sons can ruin their kingdom, but in Shah Jahan’s Kingdom, Aurangzeb one among his four son, killed his two brothers and imprisoned his father for the kingdom. In his period all the importance is being given to the artist like court musicians, painters and all the “monumental building plans” has been stopped, and his religious fanaticism made him to be away from the arts. His continuous war and his eternal enemies went ahead to the debauchery of his powerful dynasty, which did not survive long after his death. Here Aurangzeb has related to Umar the austere prince of Samakarnd, who has imprisoned his father, and kept the entire kingdom under his control. When Shahryar has realized his mistake he has built a tomb for her beloved wife, the one who has changed his mind and cured all the psychological problems through her stories. But Umar his son is entirely against the thought of his father. “The city always semi-mythical once in the palace grounds, recedes even further from the vantage point of the ex-sultan’s improvised prison” (155).

Hariharan is skilled in the art of retelling the stories, which has pointed out the long cultural exchange and shared heritage between east and west which has managed to go beyond. The story “Nine Jewels for a Rani” has deliberately explained the postcolonial view. This story has completely based on women issues, the inner sufferings of her. It has described the monster, the one-eyed monkey woman, who was either abandoned by discomfited parents or is the silk, deformed product of an unkempt childhood in the streets. This monkey woman, a monster is “chopped limb by limb” (WDT 134) by the people of the eternal city. Its misshapen trunk is mattered with fur and dried blood refused to die. As days passed away, it has laid in the shades of the treetop as its home and just mourned. Some of the people eerily and have left the place, and several of them “brandished sticks glinting blades of steel and rusty old iron chains” (WDT 134)
and other carried prayer breads. These people had been of different “colours, sizes and shapes, men and women” (WDT 135) have no consideration on the poor monster. However “it was hard to tell them apart. They could have been members of the same happy family,” (WDT 135) at the same time this one eye monkey woman is entirely different from the other girls have belonged to the same eternal city. For instance, she has climbed all the tall trees easily and stares at moonlight, she has named as Satyasama, the one-eyed monkey woman, a street orphan has lost an eye because she has injured by lightening. She has never considered her for having lost an eye even if she, she has concentrated on singing at the top of her favourite tree. First they were furious with the monster, afterwards the eternals and the other monsters have tolerated one another, and they are impressed by her simple singings. Sometimes the other monkeys have left some coins in the tin plate by the tree.

Unfortunately the eternal city has divided into two not by flowing rivers, or craggy mountains, but by “the innocent sky” (WDT 140). “The sky divided Eternal city into two the Eastwallas and Westwallas” (WDT140-141). The Easterners have started worshipping sunrise and peace. They worshipped that piece of eastern sky; chanted ten thousand and one names in its praise” (WDT 141). They have also greeted each other by “May the light rise in the east tomorrow!” (WDT 141) on the other hand the Westerners “found this early morning devotion a bizarre and alien thing. Surely anyone with an iota of sense or piety or love for motherland would see it was the west he should turn to?” (WDT 141) they have also started loving sunset. They have satisfied with enough sunlight and sunsets. The problem between the Easterners and Westerners is that they have had the trust the birdsongs has enhanced the moods of sunrise and sunset. As long as one–eye has sung only simple, silly songs and she has been left alone for the entire world loves a simple fool. After that, two things have happened in Satyasama’s life the
first one is she fell in love with her Rani and the second one is the heat waves has attacked the eternal city. For Rani she has written many love songs she is fond of Rani, but the eternals have tortured One-eye by asking, “Who is she? What are her aliases? Is she anti – city? Anti sky?” which has refined the strong emotions of her and the songs are more elaborate and unfathomable. So the One-eye creates new beautiful poems is about the sky the light of day and night these songs impressed her Rani a lot.

Next problem has about the change of climate happened in the Eternal City. The heat wave has continuously produced its waves, made the Eternals suffer from the sunstrokes. Because of the change of climate melted their brains and, they have cooled down, with congeal in knobby shapes. These Eternals are ready to share the sky and to avoid the discomfort of the climate. They form a new department of Shame, Fear, and Loneliness (SFL). By following this One-Eye has sung on peace. But the songs are not easily understood by the departments instead of that they find the danger in the songs “Is she pro – Westwalla? Anti – Eastwalla?” Because of this, the monster has summoned for interrogation and she was forbidden to sing the mixture of day and night in her songs that is East and West. These oppositions were fundamental, and not to be questioned. But one-eye refused to hear the words of the Eternals so she was imprisoned for a year. After the period of imprisonment, she sets free with a condition that she has to maintain silence. After the freedom that first night she has given the greatest performance, which she has never given, and in the morning she is caught and chopped limb by limb. As soon as the Eternals came back to set out the pieces, at that time the trunk started to moan that the “Eternals wish they were deaf, or that they could go into exile somewhere to hide their fear and self-loathing” (WDT 149). The story of Satyasama has evoked Hindu – Muslim bitterness in contemporary India and also the status of women. In this tale, territorial divisions’ /secessions/ mirror bodily mutitation /dissedtions. (The story of Satyasamma)
All of these has veiled allusions celebrate India’s complex cultural heritage and critique its successive cartographic partitioning and communal, religious and linguistic divisions in a retelling of a text, whose cultural coordinates are also partly Indian and similarly hybrid, bearing the history of successive conquests, a cultural amalgam. Shahrzad speaks Arabic bears a Persian name and employs an Indian narrative mode - the frame story device. Next the name of Satyasama has formed with the combination of Sanskrit and Arabic the first part means truth “Satya” in Sanskrit and the second part “sama” stands for sky in Arabic. Women have belonged to the two communities have no freedom they have been caught with SFL (Shame, Fear and Loneliness) in India at least they have limited freedom when it has compared to other Muslim countries they could have right to vote. Still a woman has been struggled for her independence. The stories said by Hariharan were more complicated to understand. While retelling the stories, the language is difficult to identify with the theme which has more twists.

Hariharan has citied another character through Dilshad has discussed “Rupavati’s Breasts” a retelling tale from Sanskrit tale. This tale has focused on the triumph of birth and rebirth of Budhahood. In the original tale Buddha first has appeared in the body of a woman, Rupavati, a generous woman has cut her breast to feed a starving mother, has been about to eat her newborn child. Her breasts have eventually restored only to be when she has reborn as a man, Rupavata, and then as successive male Bhuddhisatvas, in the end attaining Bhuddhahood. A traditional reading has interpreted the excision of Rupavati’s breasts as signaling the birth of the male body as the ideal body, has equated with virtue (Armour and Ville2). Hariharan has retold the story through Dilshad’s, as the story has undergone a series of reincarnation in the hands of three storytellers: First Satyasama has met an old woman in her travels, the old woman’s husband, and Satyasama herself. The old woman and her husband each has related narratives that seem
to follow, with certain difference, the first and the second segments of the Sanskrit myth, but as independent stories. In the first one both breast were removed, and in the second a single breast was removed. The couple has argued that whose story is correct, with the old man eventually silencing his wife by rejecting the possibility that the Bhuddha could be born a woman. Seeing no reason “why she shouldn’t have a turn at this game of molding Rupavati’s breasts” (WDT 185), Satyasamma has provided a seditious retelling, where rather man plucking out her breasts, Rupavati twists her husband’s ears off (which later re-grow) and plants them in the earth, thus causing ears of corn to magically appear, row after row, to feed the hungry mother and child. This story has enacted the history of a myth’s journey, with the reader witnessing its successive creative and ideological metamorphoses from one teller or generation of tellers to the next – all in one sitting. This tale has also shared the motif of the mutilated female body with the previous tale, told by Dunyazad, and the element of the twist in the quest for virtue with Dilshad’s later tales. A series of thematic variations has thus stretched across the chain of tales, but has remained rooted in the frame narrative of the Nights.

Again the “The Woman under the Deadly skin” by Dilshad a story in part two has reproduced the narrative situation of Shahrzad, escaping from the palace to join the lower class lover. This story has happened in the state of Vijaya, about a poor goatherd has called Nanni later called Poison skin, and has recruited by a palace-man to be used as a spy. She has been drunken poison every day, until her skin has much strong dose which has killed her lovers, that is who has loved her from the enemies’ camp. The tale has consisted of two versions of destiny of poison skin has just compared with Shahrzad, when she has realized herself that she has expected to complete the mission successfully. The scholarly, written version of the tale, has said Poison Skin has opted to live the life of a loner (the harem?), in chastity, to avoid killing the prince she has ordered to seduce.
But there is a popular oral version, has narrated by a young shepherd, which has been orated that Poison Skin is only to poison as long as she has made love to warriors in the enemy camp. One day, she has decided to run away from the palace that employed her services on the way she has met a handsome goatherd who has been bitten by a snake, was about to die. She has moved towards him and considered his life to be saved, she made love with him, sentiment she could not do more damage. He will not have been dead. Poison Skin hence has discovered that she was not poisoning to the many fervent and rustic lovers she had. It was sexuality with high-ranking partners that was deadly. Similarly, Shahrzad’s has escaped from the palace is not a liberating alternative to the secluded life she has in the harem, where she has allowed the simple pleasures of a normal life of her own, nor has she any share in public power to compensate for her exclusion from the life of the city. Sometimes women have been protected from the critical situation and also they have even protected others from danger and save others life too. But others think her a serpent which has been deadly poisonous, which has killed anyone without any difference. It has stated in puranas that a woman has to obey the rules, which is given in “Smiriti” a text which highlights the subordination of women because they are found to be deceitful and wily creatures.

“Falsehood, boldness, craftiness, stupidity, impatience, greed, envy, impurity, and harshness are the natural qualities of women” (Devi Bhagavata, 1.5.83).

[A woman is the embodiment of rashness, and a mine of vices. 
She is hypocritical, recalcitrant, and treacherous… she is an obstacle to the path of devotion, a hindrance to emancipation… she is practically a sorceress  (a magician) and represents vile desire.]

(Bhrahma Vaivarta, Prakriti Khanda 16.52.60, sen, I, 132-133)
In reality who threatens? Who cheats? Does the whole responsibility have gone to a woman? Whatever it may be still woman suffers. As a woman to protect herself from others she has to be bold, rude, and hypocritical. It is very easy to blame a woman, because she is submissive, even though she has raised voice against evil thoughts they are not supported by others. In this story, by birth she is innocent, because of the minister and to protect their kingdom, she has made as a spy, and poisoned herself for the welfare of the kingdom. They have used her for their purpose. Hariharan has mentioned through the life of Shahrzad, that her father has been given the assignment to save the life of the women in the country.

When Hariharan’s novel has compared with the original text, she has given importance to Dunyazad and Dilshad and also these women have portrayed as powerful women. The stories have told them closely related to theme of the text. Dilshad and Dunyazad have been treated as a silent spectator in the original text, but in the version of Hariharan they have played the significant role, and have represented marginalized femininity which has taken forces of patriarchy. These women have got freedom of thought and knowledge and written a new story of liberated women. Hariharan has proved that these women can prove themselves have regained their identity, have known the tricks for survival, have overcome patriarchy on force and can write the story of their own. Joana Filipa da Silva, in her doctoral thesis titled “Micro-universes and Situated Critical Theory: Postcolonial and Feminist Dialogues in a Comparative Study of Indo-English and Lusophone Women Writers,” has summed up,

Modern myths, like Shahrzad’s, are part of popular culture, of our collective cultural heritage, and can work as a powerful mechanism to understand the real or interpret experience. This is not to say that myths are, always, openly pedagogic. They are complex
narratives, ambiguous and multi-layered, allowing diverse interpretations. Still, they transmit an objective model of behaviour and promote certain values or attitudes. Shahrzad is an example of a positive reformation of feminine/ feminist identities, reversing the traditional victim status of women to a position of empowerment, even in the most adverse circumstance. [...] the women characters created by Githa Hariharan are serious candidates to think new forms of liberated feminist identity, a long pattern of resistance, survival, imaginative choices, and solidarity, leading to unexpected life stories. (121)

According to Raja Rao, India has more histories, Puranas. These Puranas have made everyone to think how to lead a disciplined life. The Epics and Puranas have stood as an epitome of Indian Culture. But, it is changed according to the convenience of a person or situation. The Epics teach the moral of a human. In the busy world no one finds time to follow any ethics as mentioned in the Great Epics. Everyone thinks these stories as bedtime stories. He has affirmed that:

We, in India, think quickly, we talk quickly, and when we move quickly, there must be something in the sun of India that makes us rush and tumble and run on. And our paths are paths interminable. The Mahabharata has 214, 77 verses and the Ramayana 48,000. The Puranas are endless and innumerable. We have neither punctuation nor the treacherous ‘ats’ and ‘ons’ to bother us – we tell one interminable tale. Episode follows episode, and when our thoughts stop our breadth stops. (244)
He has given a clear picture about India the importance of Puranas and the Epic in his work *Kanthapura*. Through these tales Hariharan discusses the shared culture heritage between the East and West, about the customary source of involvement shows the landmark in “architectonic exquisiteness, remarkable in Literature and ancient histories too. *The Thousand Faces of Night* as well as *The Thousand and One Night* is an exact match of Cultural heritage. In Hinduism the woman’s “laaj” (virtue) is her ornament and even considers this is more important than her life. In Muslim they must have honour (izzat) and shame (sharam). Many scholars say that Islam is an egalitarian religion which gives better position to women both in social and economic status. Nilufer.E.Bharucha in her article “Inhabiting Enclosures and creating spaces: The worlds of women in Indian Literature in English” says that in The Quran commands the modesty of both men and women; unlike men, women are also told to hide their charms as,

And say to the believing women
That they should lower
Their gaze and guard
Their modesty: that they
Should not display
Beauty and ornaments except
There of: that they should
Draw their veils over
Their bosoms and not display
Their beauty except
To their husbands, their fathers (24:30) (100)

When it is viewed, in Hinduism, the characteristic to be good women states as women they have fear, delayed in their thinking, shyness, transplantation. (Achcham, madam,
naanam, payirppu- as prescribed in Tholkappiam - the first book of Tamil language!). In *When Dreams Travel* also the Eternals have the departments of Shame, Fear, and Loneliness. In my view, even women are excellent in their attitudes, still men always use her as their slaves, may be one or two can accept the importance of her. He has been given in ratio of his own, if she is his mother, a limit of consideration, as a sister it varies upon the elder and the younger, as a wife no consideration and as a daughter it differs because she is his blood and in some places the daughters are treated worse. But as a man, he remains as the same, what the religion may be. May be they have some rules like women, I think it is hidden there in the safer side.

In this andocentric world, still, women are de-sex themselves and forced to do this. The inner world and the resistance have to be limited. When we take Muslim women, it is a heartening note among all the world countries including the Muslim countries very specifically, Indian Muslim woman surges ahead in almost all aspects. When we take Kashmiri Muslim women, still they are not able to utilize the excellent scenario available in India in a highly civilized manner. They rather fear any repulses by the Muslim Extremists or Fanatic people who may harm them. When will this situation change? Muslim girls get married at the age of fifteen even before or very few after, for them the house is their world. They said they have given enough freedom to their women. Is it true? Nowadays Muslim women also challenge in this competitive world, very few in the top and others at home, even though they are well educated. Here religion plays a vital role. It is the fact that, a woman belonging to any religion, still, struggles for her survival to prove herself as a human to the world. They like both their religion and their freedom. Still every woman all over the world is waiting for the dawn.