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अनुक्रमणिका			
अ.क्र.	प्रकरण	संशोधक	पृष्ठ क्रं.
1	Privileges Of Witnesses Under Evidence Law In India	Dr. V. M. More Padmakar Kashinathrao Dhondge	1-5
2	Exchange and Make Use of Knowledge	Shri. Vijay S. Malekar Dr. Dhananjay W. Deote	6-9
3	Importance of "Total Quality Management" in Academic Libraries	Dr. Kashinath Rama Rathod	10-12
4	Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic in Indian Education System with Special Reference to Trends in Higher Education	Gourab Das	13-17
5	Physico-Chemical Parameter And Ichthyofaunal Diversity of Fresh Water Reservoir Majalgaon Dam In Maharashtra State, India.	Sitaram B. Ingole,	18-25
6	Role of Retailer as a Service Provider in Business	Dr. Songirkar Nitin Bhatu.	26-29
7	Translation of Leo Tolstoy's Short Story The Coffeehouse of Surat from English into Marathi With a Note on Loss And Gain	Dr. Raut Sunil R.	30-36
8	"A Study of Depression on Mental Health among Post-Graduate College Students"	Dr. Ravindra Ramdas Shinde	37-40
9	Population Growth & Unemployment	Mohamad Mustafa Mujawar Dr. Shivalingappa B.P Pradeep B.S	41-44
10	Psycho social problems of Tuberculosis patients of Chikkamagaluru District	Kirankumar H. M. Dr. Lokesh M. U.	45-48
11	Location Quotient of Rural Population in Beed District	Dr. Jitendra Vitthalrao Ghodke	49-54
12	Dimensions of knowledge	Dr. A. A. Khapre Dr. Dhananjay W. Deote	55-62
13	Challenges Faced By Parents Of Children With Learning Disability	Pradeep .B.S	63-66
14	Green Banking In India	Dr. Ravindra Pundlik Patil Mr. Kamlesh Bhimraj Vispute	67-70
15	Traditionally used plant species to cure wound and bone fracture healing	A.M. Shrirame	71-76
16	Status of English in India as 'Auntie Tongue'	Prof. Prajakta Raut,	77-81
17	History Of Economic Thoughts - Dr. B. R. Ambedkar	Dr. Bhoge Digamber Bhagwat	82-85
18	Information and Communication Technologies tool for Online Teaching in Physical Education	Mrs. Archana	86-88

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19	Malala and the Politics of Literary Controversy	Kailas B. Giri	89-91
20	D.D. Kosambi Contribution to Marxist Historiography	Vasappa Sottammanavar	92-95
21	Decentralization and Women Empowerment in India	Dr. Shivaji Ramachandra Katti	96-99
22	A Study On The Role Of Public Private Partnership Towards Corporate Social Responsibility In India	Mohan V. T. Dr. B. P. Shivalingappa	100-107
23	Application of Teaching and Learning Strategies for students with learning disability	Dr. Atul B Pawar Mrs. Poonam Jagdish Varma	108-118
24	स्तंभलेखन : एक आकलन	प्रा. विठ्ठल संपतराव जाधव प्रा. डॉ. सुरेश वि. जाधव	119-123
25	मराठी आदिवासी कविता	प्रा. डॉ. बडुरे राजू सायन्ना	124-129
26	बहिणाबाईची गाणी अस्सल देशीकार लेणी	प्रा. प्रल्हाद दत्तराव भोपे	130-133
27	आदिवासींची जीवनमूल्ये (आदिवासी कादंबरीच्या संदर्भात)	डॉ. सुलतान पिरू पवार	134-139
28	नवदोत्तर आदिवासी कादंबरीचे आकलन	अनिल मोतीलाल वळवी	140-145
29	'सांगावा' मधील अभिव्यक्तिनिष्ठ शैली : एक अभ्यास	प्रा. डॉ. व्यंकट दिगंबरराव कोरेबोईनवाड	146-148
30	महानुभावांचा तुरा पक्ष	डॉ. हंसराज जाधव	149-156
31	काशिबाई कानिटकर लिखित डॉ. आनंदीबाई जोशी ह्यांच्या चरित्राचा थोडक्यात शैलीवैज्ञानिक अभ्यास	उज्ज्वला रोहमारे	157-164
32	काया मातीत मातीत काव्यसंग्रहातील धगधगते सामाजिक जीवन	प्रा. डॉ. सोपान माणिकराव सुरवसे	165-169
33	जीवन पद्धतीचा चिंतन गर्भ आविष्कार: बहिणाबाईची गाणी	प्रा. रमेश रिंगणे	170-173
34	बाबा आमटे यांच्या 'करुणेचा कलाम' कवितासंग्रहातील जीवन जाणवा	प्रा. डॉ. नारायण शिवशेट्टे	174-177
35	शब्दव्रती : शांता शेळके	प्रा. डॉ. प्रियदर्शनी वसंतराव देशमुख	178-181
36	माझ्या वर्तमानाची नोंद जागतिकीकरणाच्या संदर्भात	प्रा. डॉ. प्रेमला मुखेडकर	182-185
37	बोंबदवंडी आत्मकथनाचे वाङ्मयीन मूल्यमापन	प्रा. लालबा चां. दुमटकर	186-189
38	संत साहित्याचे सामाजिक योगदान	प्रा. डॉ. डी. एम. शेटे	190-193
39	संत साहित्यातील अस्पृश्यता निर्मूलन विचार	डॉ. अनिल व्यंकटराव मुंदे	194-197
40	कातिज्योती सावित्रीबाई फुले	प्रा. समीर रामचंद्र वैरागी	198-201

Malala and the Politics of Literary Controversy

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Abstract:

Literary controversy arises to restrict the intended content of work due to various reasons such as politics, sex, caste and religion. Therefore, the study of literary controversy becomes an urgent need in context of its relation to individual and society. This article attempts to reflect upon the mechanisms existing in the society of Pakistan that prevent the expression of dominant socio-culture reality by female writers along with the bearing of these mechanisms of female writers freedom of expression. For the purpose, the paper specifically studies literary controversy associated with Malala's autobiography 'I am Malala', The Girl who stood up for education and was shot by the Taliban'. Malala is the education campaigner from Swat valley, Pakistan. She at age sixteen became a global symbol of peaceful protest and the youngest ever nominee for Noble Peace Prize and recipient of many more awards. Malala's publication takes the country in storms; the system trying to choke the writer's voice by imposing ban on when it finds she has revealed publically the reality of country in the hands of extremist fundamentalist, particularly Taliban ideology. This paper foregrounds efficacy and its impact on society in relation to culture and gender. It discusses the bearing of literary controversy on society of Pakistan along with its combination to the female cause.

Keywords: Literary controversy, Censorship, Gender, Patriarchy, Ideology.

Literary controversy regards as the peaceful literary discourse deserves scholastic consideration. It becomes a source of knowledge for masses and provides better understanding of the work and have the potential to people to act and to change. Literary work of art turns controversial and generates conflict when hegemonic social group of society feels that the work does not confirm to their particular ideology and possesses threat to the established canon. It calls for ban on the work and sometimes for the threat of assassination of the author, as in the case of controversy behind the text 'The Satanic Verses' (1958) of Salman Rushdie and many more. Literary controversy is not a new phenomenon. It has a long history of banned text and author on various grounds such books are The Communist Manifesto (1848) of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, The Catcher in the Rye of J.D. Salinger, and many more authors who belongs to last century like Oscar Wilde. Taslima Nasreen, Arundhati Roy etc. That literature subjected to ban and other censorship. When it comes censorship of feminist text the reason can be an attempt to suppress female voice, so as to let the patriarchy reign continue in an

unobstructed way. The one case of gendered based censorship is the suppression of Taslima Nasreen who threatened to death. It validates the male attitude towards female text. The real purpose of censoring practices is to conceal the real condition of women's lives and biasness of patriarchal gender relations. Malala's memoir opens the door to some of the greatest challenge of modern world. It is about politics, education, culture, religion and violence against women and girls. It shows us a complex vision of Pakistani culture. Malala is a strong advocate of female education and shook the foundation of Taliban. She spreads secular view of education for either sex. She argues the Taliban view of culture that education is an un-Islamic and Western. She said that,

"Today we all know education is our basic right. Not just in the West... Islam too has given us this right. Islam says every girl every boy should go to school. In Quran it is written. God wants to us have a knowledge". (263).

She is an active resistanant in her country and community. She asserts that, "I don't want to be a thought of as the girl who was shot by Taliban, but 'the girl who fought for education". (152-53). Malala is the staunch advocate of the female empowerment primarily, education. She expresses the bizarre condition of child education particularly, girls education in her country. She is hatred by the Taliban group in October, 2012 and attempted to assassinate to her and also become the target for radical extremist and terrorist. country. She specifies that the worst situation of children almost 5.1 million children do not have primary schooling among them two-third of them are women. Taliban does not want female education, theref She miraculously survived and continues her campaign for education. It expresses and challenges the authorities' hegemonic structure. But being a woman's work faces criticism and alleged as controversial. She is charged that her work disrespected Islam and could have negative influence on society. She exposes relegated and suffocated lives of women of Pakistan under Taliban. She traces that peaceful and secular history of Pakistan before Taliban. After Taliban it becomes Islamic. She revealed the gender inequality in Pakistan where the birth of son is celebrated and girl is unwelcomed. She gives her own account of birth. "I was a girl in a land where rifles are fired in celebration of son, while girl are hidden away behind the curtain... for most Pistons it's the gloomy day when daughter is born." (09). Even women don't have right of franchise. 'Women in our own area don't vote.' (52). Female are real victims of humiliation in Pakistani patriarchal society while men are free. The girls misconduct is to be considered as a blot to family and ultimately to the society. However boys are safe. She points out that, "in our society for a girl to flirt with any man brings shame on family, though it's all right for men". (54). The life of girl is sacrificed to settle the familial dispute in spite her innocence. Malala argued that Taliban hiding the path of education for women and also forcing them to remain under the veil,

and banned for laughing loudly beats for just wearing nail varnish. Malala herself wrote blog for BBC under the pen name as Gul Makai under Taliban. 'Women in the village hid their faces whenever they left their purdah'. They are not allowed to speak and meet to alien man instead of close relatives. It shows the plight of women in her own country. She exposes the grim reality girls education in her book.

Conclusion:

Literary controversy on banning shows that reality of the patriarchal society. The book also uncovers the structure of Pakistani society which operates the agency of patriarchy, policies and females hate in order to restrict the female potential and freedom of expression. But in the larger context, book has a positive bearing on society with regard to gender and it also fosters a debate over a free speech and gender treatment. In terms of cross cultural reader the significance and consequences of the literary endeavor of the female writers who are engaged in women's struggle for education.

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