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THE STUDY OF STRUCTURAL AND SOUND DEVICES IN THE POETRY OF RUKMANI  
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ABSTRACT

English poetry by Indian poets during the Post Independence period is an incredible evidence of the linguistic and stylistic developments in the creative output of the poets. Women poets during this period have risen to glorious heights by virtue of their linguistic style and ornamentation. In the present analysis the selected women poets have exhibited their poetic sensibilities attracting the attention of the readers. The scrutiny of the style of these post independence women writers reveal that there has been tremendous experimentation in all aspects of poetry especially in language, themes, style and poetic techniques which brought about new dimension and vigour in Indian English poetry. These women poets has devoted from the earlier poets who write poetry of naturalistic, idealistic and romantic temper.

Introduction

Nair's poetic technique is praised for the fact that it is beyond the poise of words and the choice of appropriate figure of speech for exhibiting the ability to present the correct feelings before the readers. Her poetry can be read with a lot of suggestive meanings because of multi-layered thoughts. She is praised for her 'polyphonous' literary style because she tries to connect her different interests in literary and linguistic studies. She explores the possibility of finding out new figures in order to meet her polyphonous style and to check her limits of expression in the language that she has opted to write in i.e. English.

Analysis of Structural Devices in the Poetry of Rukmani Bhaya Nair

**Similes:** Nair remembers fondly the great Indian women poet Kamala Das in her poem "Fellow Poet". The poet is in all praise about the poetic beauty of the poems of Kamala Das. She expresses the fervour of the poems of Kamala das through the use of simile; "Your poems smelt like the sea at low tide, like/ Guano, the world after summer rain" (*Yellow Hibiscus* 174).

**Metaphor:** Computers have metaphorically become the patterns of life. Nair beautifully makes use of technical language to express this metaphor: "Press F1 to continue/Or Delete to enter Setup/Release and Enter CPU speed/And remember to Save before Exit!" ("Computers" 167). 'Telescope' is used as the metaphor of vision by the poet in the poem with the same title. It could see what normal eyes could not see. Poet tries to reveal the agony of displacement due to industrialization through telescope; "Used as a moral crutch, divining rod,/An idle

glass to spy on idylls" ("Telescope" 170). Nair gives the definition of poem in a splendid metaphorical style; "All said and done, a poem/ Is water in a woman's hands" ("Making Ends Meet" 197). Further she gives more illustrations to what poetry is and she writes; "poetry is impulse/the world's nervous pulse/suddenly grown steady." ("Why Should a Poem Always Glide" 199). A small piece of shell is metaphorically termed as the "sea in pocket" ("Shell Shock!" 1) and end the poem with the line "The sea in his pocket breaks, breaks, and breaks!" (32)

**Personification:** In the poem "Gulmohur" the poet personifies the gulmohur tree as a woman seeking liberation. The tree like others wants to fly and be free. But since gulmohur is a tree and a tree cannot fly; "gulmohur/Forgets she is a tree/Rooted to the ground" ("Gulmohur" 34) and the pain is that "The gulmohur loses heart" because nature has "tied down eternally" and gulmohur cannot be free. She depicts objects of nature like human beings and give them the human quality when she writes; "trees dozing in the wind" ("Making Out" 13)

**Imagery:** Nair has her own way of creating imageries. Using the structure of language she is able to create a unique world of imageries. Poetry is the way in which she is able to give a new view and perspective to the world around and this is her own way of looking at the pattern of various relationships that objects have in this world. They are brought by her into a discipline of rhyme, rhythm and assonance. In the poem "Buddha" she creates her own world of senses for feeling the divinity of Lord Buddha;

A man who speaks  
With his eyes  
Hears with his hands...  
Lifts you effortless  
To paradise! (Nair 21-25)

In her poem "Insight" she creates her own imagery of "Green doves on grey grass" ("Insight" 85). The imagery is not that easy to understand unless we understand how the world and its objects are understood by us. In the poem when the "sunlight" falls on us our ability to perceive things changes or "the world reverses" (85). The poet has a special sense of perception therefore the sunlight is a source of providing new cognitive sense about the world around us. This cognizance of poet is conveyed through a message in the form of a poem. This poem is encoding of experience in language which requires an insight into the inner most layer of language to reveal the meaning.

**Half Senses:** Rukmini Bhaya Nair also makes use of half senses in her poems. The poet wants to convey the ideas with the help of using halfness or fullness of senses. When she writes 'half-smile', "shut-eyed" "He half rose" ("At Fourteen" 17) the reader is able to understand the meaning through the usage senses. "half a mile" ("Feb. 1944. Kasturba Talks of Life with Gandhi" 24). Her poems are replete with half feature; "not half so real" ("Quarter" 9), "my entire stock of certainties/ Would not fill half a larder shelf ("Enemies" 1-2). She writes about the power of the women which is half the universe; "Women hold up half the sky" ("Prophesies 2001" 20), "The hulking mass of Half-Moon" ("Arachnidaria" 15), "stories shimmered/in cave's half-light, i loved it," ("The Hyoid Bone" 19-20), "Beside a half-way limpid pool." ("Undeciphered Script" 31), "Half-buried" ("Love Songs" 33) "Women hold up half the sky." ("Prophesies 2001" 16), "Not the half-sonnet above" ("Computer II 28), "half/A barely visible sky" ("Telescope" 11-12).

Rukmini's all early years of experiences were poetic. But as she matured her style got evolved and she nurtured her style not on Bengali-language context or translations but English language becomes natural to her poetic creativity. Keki Daruwala in his review of *Yellow Hibiscus* rightly points out; "Not since AK Ramanujan's selected poems has this reviewer read a better volume of poetry. With Bhaya Nair, the metaphor always goes much beyond the physical details ... Her poems almost always mean much more than the sum of her words (Daruwalla in *The Statesman*).

### Analysis of Sound devices in the Poetry of Rukmani bhaya Nair

**Alliteration:** Nair displays are dexterity in figures of speech in her poetic art. She uses alliteration in the poem "Cumquat May"; "cotton-cool clouds", "blue-green, blue-green" (*Yellow Hibiscus* 149). Even the repetition of sentences add beauty to the language of the poem; "'Snow is white' is true if and only if snow is white/'Snow is white' is true if snow is white/ 'XYZ' is true if snow is white" (*Yellow Hibiscus* 154). The poet very nicely describes the property of the shell in the poem "Shell Shock" in which the little shell carries the powerful noise of sea in it. The poet presents that through the figure of alliteration "The Sea in his pocket breaks, breaks and breaks!" (describe the property of the shell in the poem "Shell Shock" in which the little shell carries the powerful noise of sea in it. The poet presents that through the figure of alliteration "The sea in his pocket breaks, breaks and breaks!" (*Yellow Hibiscus* 172). The alliterative quality is quite beautifully manifested in the poem "Agitprop Verses: The Fundamentals"; "FUN,FUN,FUN/Wonderful fun! To tie a tin can to a puppy's tail/And see it turn, turn, turn!" (*Yellow Hibiscus* 183)

**Onomatopoeia:** Nair has a great sense of sound and that is reflected in her poems. "white owl whoos/. . . catchment of mumbles, hisses" ("Soundtrack" 12-19), "His father's thump-thumping boots" ("Hundru Falls, Ranchi" 7)

**Musical Quality:** The appeal of poetry also depends on the lyric quality. Nair's poetry appeals to the readers by its musical feature. She says in her interview with Chitra Panikkar that "Lyricism is essential in poetry because a poem must get people to carry away words - and thoughts - in their heads. This is the true revolutionary potential of poetry" ([www.poetryinternational.org/pi/poet/2736/Rukmini-Bhaya-air/en/tileTuesday\\_1](http://www.poetryinternational.org/pi/poet/2736/Rukmini-Bhaya-air/en/tileTuesday_1)). Nair's poem have musical quality which adds melody to the poem.;

FUN,FUN,FUN!  
 Wonderful fun!  
 To tie a tin can to a puppy's tail  
 And see it turn, turn, turn!  
 To drive a dumb creature from her tattered home  
 Make her run, run, run!  
 To hide a blind man's stick, to set our books alight  
 Watch how they burn!  
 FUN, FUN! ("Agitprop Verses: The Fundamentals" 183)

The poems in the collection of poetry entitled *Yellow Hibiscus* are called as "grandeur in verse" (Kamala Das in *Outlook*). The most appealing characteristic of Nairs poems is her style that she is able to strike the intellectual complex of the readers. She uses her sound devices, experimentation with words and ideas to present her energy and ideas in a very effective manner. The poems in the collection are magnificently conceived and wonderfully executed rendering the collection a powerful and original voice.

### References

Kali (*Talking Poems* 62). In an interview Rukmini Bhaya Nair says, "Poetry is an echo chamber and our supposed influences can come from Kabir or Kant."

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