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Comparative Analysis: The Hypocritical Role of Clergy in African-American Slave Narratives and South Asian Literature

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Abstract

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This research paper examines the depiction of clergies' hypocrisy in African-American slave narratives and South Asian Literature. The study focuses primarily on Frederick Douglass's seminal work, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*, an autobiographical literary work that mirrors clergies' hypocrisy. For comparative analysis, this research analyzes South Asian Literary works: *The God of Small Things, Untouchable*, and *Latoon* with *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*. This study explores how literature critiques the moral duplicity of clergies within oppressive societal structures. Douglass's narrative provides a scornful charge of the American clergies, which, despite professing Christian principles, actively supports and propagates the system of slavery, where the authors reveal the contradictions and ethical failings of religious figures who endorse or turn a blind eye to social injustices in their contemporary societies. By juxtaposing these two literary traditions and figures, this paper finds that clergies play a hypocritical role in their societies; they never practice their religious teachings and speak against the social injustices in their contemporary societies.

Introduction

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave is an autobiographical work published in 1845 by Frederick Douglass, an escaped slave who, through his resilience, became a prominent and leading figure in the abolitionist movement. He was born in 1818 into a slave family. Throughout his life, he faces unspeakable and relentless brutality and dehumanization. Despite these unbearable atrocities, he teaches himself to read and write, understanding that education is the key to freedom. The narrative provides a blunt, firsthand portrayal of clerics' hypocrisy, the brutal realities of slavery, and the hypocrisy of clergy who support the atrocities of white masters. He depicts the physical and psychological abuses perpetuated by white masters with the moral and religious support of the clergy. Douglass critiques this system of hypocrisy and atrocities committed by clergy. Douglass's powerful storytelling sheds light on his journey from bondage to freedom and serves as a compelling indictment of the institution of slavery. His eloquence and unyielding spirit make his narrative a crucial work in the abolitionist cause, influencing public opinion and advancing the fight for equality and justice (Douglass, 1845).

The portrayal of clergy as moral and spiritual leaders often clashes with their actions in both African-American slave narratives and South Asian literature, where they violate their religious principles and teachings. This apparent hypocrisy undermines the integrity of religious institutions and highlights the role of clergy in maintaining systems of inequality.

The God of Small Things is an impactful family drama novel by well-known Indian author Arundhati Roy. This captivating story portrays the lives of twin siblings whose childhood in 1960s Kerala, India, is spoiled by strict societal norms. The novel artistically illustrates how seemingly insignificant events and choices can radically shape individuals' lives and destinies. It's a cry against social injustice. It sheds light on the dark and hypocritical personalities of religious leaders. It answers how religion and the people of faith look at the low caste or untouchable man and to what extent the people of high caste adhere to religion (Mary, 2014).

In the same way, Ghani Khan, in his poetry, depicts the hypocrisy of clergies. Ghani Khan was born in 1914. He is a renowned Pashtu poet and philosopher of the 20th century. He went to study at Rabindranath Tagore's Shanti

Niketan Art Academy and developed a liking for painting and sculpture. Most of his poetry is written during the years of confinement. His most famous works are *Panoos*, *Latoon*, and *Palwashay*. He also wrote a book in prose, *The Pathan*, published in 1958. Like his sculptures and paintings, this book does not compare well to his poetry, considering he is arguably the greatest Pashto language poet. Aside from his apparent poetic genius, the singular distinction of his poetry is a profound blend of knowledge about his native and foreign cultures and the psychological, sensual, and religious aspects of life.

The *Untouchable*, a novel by Mulk Raj Anand, delves into the lives of India's marginalized communities, particularly the Dalits, or "untouchables." Set in pre-independence India, the story follows Bakha, a young sweeper who grapples with the harsh realities of his social status. Through Bakha's experiences, Anand exposes the deep-seated religious hypocrisy within Hindu society, where the very tenets of purity and pollution are manipulated by the upper castes to maintain their dominance. The novel *Untouchables* critiques the religious figures who perpetuate discrimination and injustice while preaching spirituality and morality. Anand's poignant narrative underscores the need for social reform and challenges the ethical contradictions of the Hindu religious hierarchy.

Literature Review

Lee argues that comparative African American and Asian American literary studies highlights the complex and diverse ways these two groups have been represented in literature. The literature, which includes poetry, novels, essays, and plays, addresses the relationship between African Americans and Asian Americans through different political lenses, from Orientalism and Negrophobia to postcolonial critique and political radicalism.

Historically, African Americans have viewed Asia as a site of resistance against American racism. In contrast, Asian American authors have drawn parallels with the African American experience to better understand their own struggles with racism. Despite the long history of Afro-Asian literary representation, scholarly severe attention to this topic has only emerged in the last two decades. This emergence is not only a result of the 'comparative turn' within race studies but also a reflection of the increasing transnational focus of American literary criticism, which is evolving to encompass a broader range of perspectives and experiences (Lee, 2019).

Jeanette writes that slave narratives recount the shared experiences of African diaspora members subjected to the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, highlighting the spectrum of hope, disillusionment, joy, and despair. Among those enslaved, many turned to religious faith as a means of coping with their bondage. A recurring theme in these narratives is the division between the religion practiced by white southern slaveholders and the personal and communal faith of the enslaved. This division critiqued across five narratives discussed in this thesis, is marked by the author's denunciation of what they describe as "false" slaveholder religiosity. Each narrative offers a nuanced perspective shaped by individual convictions, beliefs, and moments of religious awakening, reflecting diverse responses to the disturbing disparity between the oppressors' faith and the enslaved spirituality (Jeanette, 2019).

Dasgupta examines the struggles of Pakistan's Christian minorities through the lens of Mohammed Hanif's novel *Our Lady of Alice Bhatti*. Combining fictional depictions with scholarly research, it explores the intersectionality of religion, caste, class, and gender in their mistreatment. The article underscores how literature can evoke empathy for marginalized communities, serving as a powerful tool to illuminate the lived experiences of those whose human dignity is threatened by systemic power and privilege (Gupta, 2021).

Amir explores the transcendent qualities of Abdul Ghani Khan's Pashto poetry, particularly its connection to "Romantic Supernaturalism." By examining the parallels between Romantic supernaturalism and the mystical elements in Khan's works, the study situates his poetry within a universal literary tradition. It argues that, like the Romantics, Khan's poetry challenges rational constraints, celebrates nature, and explores mystical themes, thereby offering fertile ground for scholars interested in universal mystical traditions. The paper also highlights how Khan's poetry expands the scope of literary studies beyond Western-centric perspectives (Amir, et al, 2023).

Mary investigates how Arundhati Roy, in *The God of Small Things*, portrays the devastating impact of religion on various aspects of life in Ayemenem village, Kerala. The analysis focuses on three key dimensions: the challenges faced by a divorcee from an inter-caste marriage, the effect of a broken family on innocent children, and the treatment of a low-caste or untouchable man. Additionally, the study explores the concept of religion through references to religious texts, assessing the extent of adherence by high-caste individuals (Mary, 2014).

Research methodology

The nature of this research is qualitative, a method that involves the analysis of non-numerical data such as text, video or audio. It is used to gather in-depth insights into a problem or generate new ideas for research (Bhandari, 2020).

The current research study is guided by a *Comparative Analysis Approach*. Mbongiseni defines it as an innovative method of systematically studying the similarities and differences between two or more literary works, authors, genres, or themes. He adds that this kind of research and theoretical framework is used for a deeper understanding of texts by exploring their cultural, historical, and thematic contexts, and importantly, it broadens our

perspectives by revealing how different works address similar ideas or represent divergent perspectives (Mbongiseni et al, 2009).

Research Question

This study explores how literature critiques the moral duplicity of clergies within oppressive societal structures. This question serves as the compass for our journey into the complex world of religious hypocrisy and its role in systemic oppression.

Research Objective

The research aims to identify the hypocritical role of clergy in African American Slave Narratives and South Asian Literature. This objective guides our efforts to unravel the complex interplay of religion, power, and social justice in literature.

Significance of the Research

This research is significant as it bridges the gap between African-American and South Asian literary studies. It highlights the common theme of religious hypocrisy in maintaining systemic oppression. By examining the clergy's role across these different contexts, the study can contribute to broader discussions on the intersection of religion, power, and social justice. It offers new perspectives on how literature reflects and critiques religious hypocrisy in societal structures.

Discussion and Analysis

This part of the research investigates textual references from the selected literary works, compares them, and answers how literature critiques the hypocritical role of clergy in African-American Slave Narratives and South Asian Literature.

Clergies and religious leaders in different religions worldwide are considered spiritual leaders and moral compasses and exert significant influence over their followers. The role of religious leaders is to guide, nurture, and uphold God's ordained laws and principles of their respective faiths. However, history and contemporary events expose their hypocritical role. Many clergies teach virtues, but they do not practice their own teachings. Their lives starkly contradict the principles they preach publicly. This hypocrisy cannot be confined to any region or religion, but it's a common issue of faiths across the globe.

In Christianity, within the catholic church, numerous immoral scandals are noted. An immoral scandal, such as sexual harassment of children, highlights the hypocrisy of so-called virtuous and spiritual leaders. The sexual abuse scandals show that high-profile priests are involved in such a shameful act. These priests are supposed to preach and practice the Christian values of modesty, chastity, and protecting vulnerable ones. However, they betray their religious teachings in the worst possible ways. Even more shameful and damaging was the catholic church's systematic cover-up of these abusers.

In the same way, the Islamic world offers many instances of clerical hypocrisy. Several clerics who teach stringent values of peace, tolerance, chastity, and modesty engage in corrupt and immoral behaviours in cases of bribery, embezzlement, and even sexual harassment and rape. Ralph H. Magnus and Eden Naby, in their book *Mulla, Marx and Mujahid* (1998), highlight that many clerics in Pakistan support religious extremism, terrorism, and sectarian violence; many are arrested and even killed, and many are still wanted in terrorist activities. Many of them provide moral and religious support to the terrorist organizations in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Such irresponsible and shameful behaviour reveals a dis-hurting and painful gap between their public teaching and private actions. Such acts spark outrage and disappointment among the faithful, who feel betrayed by their religious and spiritual leaders and fail to practice the moral and ethical standards they impose on others.

Similarly, in Hinduism, swamis, gurus, and pandits are revered as spiritual guides and are implicated in scandals involving financial fraud, religious extremism, terrorism, sexual exploitation, and much other unethical behaviour. These events are particularly jarring given followers' high devotion and trust in these religious and spiritual figures. Such hypocritical incidents of clergies have far-reaching consequences and undermine the authority of religious institutions when spiritual leaders fail to practice what they teach; it creates a chasm between religious teachings and real-world behaviour, weakens the faith of the followers, providing ammunition for critics that religions are inherently hypocritical and corrupt.

Throughout human history, the clergy's religious hypocrisy has been quite rampant. Spiritual leaders often use religion as a source of power, wealth, and control over others. Manipulating religion for personal gains, the history of clergies' hypocrisy can be traced back to Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilizations. History shows that these two powerful civilizations' clerics are influential and powerful. They present themselves as gods' co-workers. Today, whoever wants to remain in power they are supposed to adhere to religion to shelter themselves from the criticism, rebellion, and attack of people. Influential people consistently adhere to religion to gain wealth, access to power, control over the people, and exploit human and natural resources. For this purpose, the clergy always supported the rulers and the powerful to indoctrinate and frighten people, never to question and never raise their voices against the

kings or courts and royal families, as they are God's chosen people, and they must rule them the way they want. It leads to the destruction of human civilizations, millions of people suffer, and people are seared in the flames of discrimination, extremism, terrorism, capitalism, slavery, and clergies that use religion to their advantage (David, 2003).

African American and South Asian Literature explores the themes of religious hypocrisy, mainly focusing on the hypocritical role of clergies. In African American Literature, the presentation of clergies goes in line with slavery, equality, and social injustice. For instance, Frederick Douglass's narrative perfectly exemplifies clergies' hypocrisy. He exposes their duplicity; the Christian slaveholders preach the values of love, compassion, piety, and morality but commit acts of brutality and oppression against the enslaved people. He starkly criticizes not only the individual clergies but also the religious institutions that turn a blind eye to the oppression of enslaved people.

South Asian Literature combines diverse cultures and religions, such as Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity. It also critiques the hypocrisy of the clergy. In Roy's *The God of Small Things*, the character of Father Mulligan is in a high position; he engages in illicit affairs, highlighting the gap between his spiritual teachings and his private actions. Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable* is another prime example of religious hypocrisy in South Asian Literature depicting the caste-based discrimination rooted in Hindu society, supported by religious leaders who teach equity, purity and spirituality while endorsing social exclusion.

In the same manner, Ghani Khan, through his poetry, scathingly highlights the duplicity of clergies in Pashtun society. He condemns clerics and tries to show them the stark contradictions between their teachings and private actions. Ghani Khan continues his criticism that clerics are the ambassadors of idols in Allah's home, highlighting their hypocritical behaviour as they support idols in Allah's house. These verses mean that they support the powerful elites of the time and the capitalist forces. These elites are called idols, and they often exploit the masses of society and keep people deprived of their rights. Although clerics frequently speak of justice, equality, and equity, both clerics and elites support each other in gaining access to power and prosperous life. Ghani Khan further criticizes them that clerics are always after *Jannah* (heaven), which, according to them, is nothing but mere access to beautiful, chubby women, sex, food and a place of fun, while wine indicates mental frustration and misinterpretation of the text. He points out that clerics denounce Western culture as the centre of evils and sins, yet for the clerics, *Jannah* is akin to Tehran and Paris, cities well known for licentious and modern lifestyles. (pp. 221-223).

Frederick Douglass confronts the issue of religious hypocrisy throughout his writing. The story of religious hypocrisy is rampantly present in Douglass's narrative. He experiences firsthand the contradictions between the professed values of Christianity and the realities of slaveholding Christians. In Baltimore, almost everyone has slaves, and all these slaveholders are highly religious. They used religion to justify and further strengthen their slavery system. But a particular slave knows that whatever they are doing is not what God wants. The slaves are mistreated by their masters. Religion is used to justify the suffering of the black slaves. The religious slaveholders oppress the slaves as they argue that God admitted the slave existence when he curses Ham. This is found in the Christian teachings, using the Bible as their guide. According to the scripture in the book of *Genesis*, chapter 9, verse 24, Ham is cursed by Father Noah after he sees the nakedness of his father and fails to cover him, but instead tells his brothers about it. Ham was then cursed into the bondage of slavery. Thus, the whites believe that they are correct in slavery (p.11). Ghani Khan refers to the same point and rejects it categorically that in this world, we decide our life and destiny; Muslims should not decide for non-Muslims, non-Muslims for Muslims, whites should not decide for blacks, and blacks should not decide for whites. We all are free to write our future and destiny.

"Mulla Jan says that you (God) have written everything, one will have brightness in eyes, other the city without flowers, your fate in every moment, your every hair is responsible, for one here is a flower, for the other a beloved, for one there is fire, for the other a burning coal, one will be without means, hungry, thirsty and worried, one spoiled, one will be sleeping on soft silk, the other in a desert, one will be bitter like a dog bark, the other biting like a snake, one will be pretty like a fairy, the other will be scary like Toraban (Pushtu Folk/ Monster), Mulla Jan says, O God, you are responsible for every bloodshed, all this cruelty you have written, it's the curse of your fingers, these cruel calamities and all these useless blessings, Mullah says you have a book in the sky, in which you have written everything for one, the way this system is, why are you asking me, I don't have any control or power, I lack the power and energy to erase what you have written in my future, you are the lord of gold and power, and I am your helpless power slave, no matter if I cry or laugh, none of your words will change, these idols are of your fingers, how will it be done, what will be questions and answers, if you have written everything for me, for us, in which law are you going to punish me, you wrote in the sky, I did on the earth, I can see Mulla is gone astray, it's all your sin, oh fate, if it's my power, it's the matter of how much you can take in your hands" (Latoon, 2005).

Douglass exposes that Captain Auld never offers them proper food and poor resting conditions, and usually, the slaves sleep on the floor. In his novel *Untouchable*, Anand exposes the same point of discrimination by the caste system supported by religious leaders. The protagonist of the story is subject to discrimination and torture since he

hails from a low caste (p.51). Other characters are also torn apart by the fangs of the caste system. They are forced to live in mud-walled cottages (p.9). Douglass and other slaves are also forced to live in cottages and are treated as untouchables. The religious leaders in Untouchable know inside their hearts that they violate the principles of their religion, but they don't care at all.

Douglas exposes the same point that inside his heart, Auld knows that he dehumanizes and exploits people for his personal gains. Douglass remains a slave for quite a long time, but he manages to escape and become a free man. The text shows that Douglass has a wealthy master named Captain Auld. He is highly religious, regularly practices religion, and presents himself as a faithful follower of Christianity, but in reality, he is morally corrupt to the core. The author captures the atrocities of his white master. He used to cry out a verse from the holy scripture while whipping a young slave woman. The scripture permits him to beat the slaves. The scripts are misinterpreted by the church for their advantage to perpetuate slavery. The meaning of the master does not refer to slaveholders. It refers to the Jesus's master. (p.68). Captain Auld attends all the activities in the church, such as meetings, prayer, and Sabbath school, but he does not follow the message of Christianity, and he frequently uses religious hypocrisy with his slaves. The slaves are not even allowed to pray without his permission.

In the same way, *The God of Small Things* is a family drama written by an Indian Novelist, Arundhati Roy. It is a story of twins whose lives are ruined by love laws. Here, the novel is compared with Douglass's narrative. The book is set in the strong background of religion, customs, and practices. The history of the Kerala church is as old as Christianity itself. (Joseph, 2018). The central character in the novel belongs to the Syrian Christians. In true spirit, Christianity teaches equity and equality and doesn't encourage the practice of a caste system, but Syrian Christian clergy preached and supported it (p.66). As in Douglass's narrative, the preachers preach equity and equality, but in reality, they don't follow the teachings of Christianity. The same events happened in *The God of Small Things*, but Syrian Christian clergy believed in practicing the Hindu caste system that existed in the Hindu religion before the creation of society into dharma. Syrian Christians feel pride in their legacy of hundreds of years that their ancestors were converted from the Brahmin families, so they could not accept the new converts, especially from the lower caste (p.66). The Hindu caste system has been divided into Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisya, Sudra, and hundreds of sub-castes (Joseph,2018). The character of Velutha belongs to the Sudra group, and Sudra is forced to depend on the higher class for economic and social support. Society doesn't expect nor accept Sudra to occupy another profession. For instance, Velutha is hated in society because he is a carpenter (p.73).

In the light of his experience, Douglass describes the Method's camp meeting to create a vivid picture of how Auld goes to the church but is guilty of religious hypocrisy (p. 66). The author narrates that this transformation has no impact on him, changing neither his heart nor his mind. He has no soft corner for the slaves. Instead, he turns harsher and crueler to slaves. He starts treating them as animals and turns more stone-hearted; Douglass comments that this new transformation gives him more power to suppress and whip slaves more ferociously (p. 66).

Further, the novel *The God of Small Things* depicts the religious hypocrisy of Brahmins and Syrian Christians. Brahmins bathe whenever a Sunda comes closer to them and never bathe in the pond Sunda uses. Douglass points out that Auld teaches compassion and equity but needs to follow his own teaching. His behaviour shows that he hates the slaves. *The same hatred is exposed in the God of Small Things*; the clergy who teaches compassion never practice it. The text shows they do not touch the soil stepped by a Sunda (p.75). Roy sheds light on the hypocrisy of Brahmin and Syrian Christians by saying that they follow the tradition of untouchability and pollution. They purify themselves if they happen to go near untouchables. Low castes move away from Brahmin in public places (p.288). Roy criticizes the church by saying rich people used it to show their power, gold, and prestige. He adds that the clergy and the wealthy followers never follow the teachings of simplicity, obedience, poverty, and the model of Jesus (p. 6).

Likewise, Douglass is treated by white masters as a man of low caste and untouchable. Douglass faces unspeakable atrocities at the hands of white masters. His white master, Auld, follows religion and is proud of his belief, but in reality, he is a monster full of horror. For instance, Douglass condemns the pomp and show of clergy and church. Douglass was not allowed to teach other slaves, and his school was shut down. The behaviour of Auld, Syrian Christians, and Brahmin is no way different; all of them follow religions and perform their religious duties, but in reality, they are far away from the teachings of their religions. Auld, Brahmin, and Syrian Christians use religion to hide their discrimination, hatred, and crimes against the lower castes. They brutally exploit the weak of society for their personal gains and advantages. For instance, Auld had sex with black women in the same way Chako's father had sex with untouchables (p.168).

On the other hand, Douglass brings forth the idea that he is not even allowed to pray without permission from Auld. He commits religious hypocrisy every day. Douglass argues that Auld is the main person of the church. He has to convert souls. His house is full of preachers, he serves his fellow preachers good meals, and his house is a church for them, but the irony is that the preachers never preach to him to treat his slaves in a good way, not to whip them,

not to abuse them physically, emotionally and sexually; the preachers got failed to make him a human being. His colleagues from the church know about this life and inhumane behaviour; however, they never condemn him (p.66). Further, he argues that Auld prays in the morning, noon, and night and allows other preachers to offer their prayers in his house, but he never enables slaves to offer their prayers in his house. He highlights that the religion of the South provides support and safety for the atrocities of masters (p.67).

As in Douglass's narrative, the clergy preaches simplicity, honesty, and justice, but in reality, they are stoned-hearted and commit every type of crime against the black community. Even Auld recites verses from the Bible when he beats a black woman. Douglass strongly condemns the pomp and show of the church and rejects their so-called religion of equity and equality. In the same way, Ghani Khan calls them gluttonous, *Halwa Qarp Mulla*. He points out that Mulla eats a lot; although he was taught to eat, he never follows the same rules. Captain Auld serves his religious colleagues various foods but never offers proper food to his slaves.

Thus, Bakha is the central character of the novel *Untouchable*. He represents the entire community of the outcaste, treated as untouchables and subjected to live the most miserable. This idea is reflected when Havaldar Charat Singh shouts: Oh, Bakhya! Oh, Bakhya! Oh, you scoundrel of a sweeper's son! Come and clear a latrine for me! Why aren't the latrines clean, you rogue of a Bakhe! There is not one fit to go near!" (p. 7). Bakha is slapped by Kali Nath in public when he touches a caste Hindu (p.38). He is not guilty at all. He is embarrassed and weeps all the way (p.3-44). In Douglass's narrative, the white slave masters treat the blacks as untouchable. They preach Christianity as the system of justice, but on the other hand, they do not give proper food or a place to live. The same happens to Bakha and his family. They are not given adequate food and shelter to live. They collect food from the streets and are brutally victimized by so-called preachers and clergies. The same treatment is faced by black slaves in Douglass's narrative. For instance, Captain Auld preaches Christianity, but he lacks the true essence of the religion. He beats his slaves and even rapes the slave women constantly, regardless of their slave background. He is called a slave breaker, treating slaves like animals in the house and on the plantation. He violates the principles of love, compassion and equality. In short, they treat Bakha's family as sub-humans with no emotions or feelings. They are hated and not accepted in the leading stream society; however, the so-called religious man of Hinduism is ready to molest Sohani, a beautiful girl from Bakha's family (Anand, 1935. Ghani Khan's poem "*Deodasia*" refers to the same point. In the notes, Ghani Khan writes that beautiful girls work in Hindu temples and often dance in front of the idols. The visitors pay attention to the idols, but the gorgeous girls are ignored. The poem vividly depicts the lives of these Hindu girls in temples, a life filled with profound sadness and heart-wrenching stories, and evokes a deep sense of empathy in the audience.

"The doves were cooing, and larks twittered away, as the wave of zephyr brought a wave of joy; Morning came with tidings of laughter and light: All the buds were smiling- the air was euphoric, time turned another tide, another night was parting, some spent in love's lap, while other sulked and pined, her beauty was a longing, envisioned by a poet, her eyes were dim and sad, bound to someone's love. I said, O king of sorrow, you are a fairy of flowers; where from these hues of autumn in the springtime of youth? Your autumn is still far from such a heavy black burden at your tender age, oh branch of the red roses. Such beauty yet unnoticed, such love unrequited, the world must be blind if it cannot see your grace. I have also been hurt by life, pained and grieved; my blood and love both weep and long for you. She looked at me and smiled; her eyes welled up; she took her black shawl and walked away silently. Leaving me with another ache, a fond wish, a golden grain of light from a radiant world" (p. 247).

In addition, like Auld's house of prayer, Douglass has a Sabbath school where he teaches slaves the New Testament. The school is taken away from him, and he is not allowed to teach slaves the New Testament, but Auld and his preachers never condemn this act of hypocrisy. Douglass and his friends are forced to stay away from each other and never meet again. Douglass highlights that he cannot attempt to teach slaves to read and study the Bible (p.68).

Furthermore, *Douglass* highlights the church's hypocrisy and clergies in the Appendix. He condemns the practice of slavery and condemns Christian clergies' hypocrisy. Douglass says that those who support slavery under the guise of Christianity are not true Christians; they do not adhere to the true spirits of Christianity; Douglass calls it a wicked, bad, corrupt, and slaveholding religion. Douglass argues that he hates those hypocrites who know the true essence of Christianity but encourage and endorse women whipping, slavery, cradle plundering, and many other corrupt practices. The author adds that the clothes of these clergies are clotted with the blood of slaves, and the slaveholders follow a religion, but on the other hand, they steal the money of the slaves; they sell women for prostitution, but they call themselves pious and righteous. He adds that we see thieves teaching against theft and adulterers against adultery. The author highlights and condemns the hypocrisy of religious clerics that on Sundays, they teach that we should not love the world, but on the other hand, for worldly gains, they are keeping slaves and exploiting them from dawn to dusk. The text further says that the preachers are extremely hypocritical; they say things in a good way, but they never follow the teachings of Jesus. Also, in churches, they preach respect for others and teach about meeting God, but they physically abuse slaves and brutally beat them and their elder women (p.119-

126). Captain Auld and his other colleagues teach simplicity, but in reality, they love wealth. *Ghani Khan* points out the same hypocritical corruption, "*Pa Paiso Qurban Mulla*," which means the lover of money, highlights their hypocrisy. He points out that clerics people teach people not to love wealth and the world, but in contrast, Molvis are lovers of money and wealth. They are usually taught to live a simple life and starkly denounce ostentatious living, yet typically live in big, beautiful houses, and their bank accounts are full of money. For instance, many well-known Pakistani preachers and clerics preach peace, equity, tolerance, and simplicity. However, they never condemn terrorist activities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Auld and his colleagues do not speak against the actions of slaveholders, instead believing it is their right to rule and punish the slaves. Many well-known Molvis in Pakistan compares terrorist activities to virtues and good deeds, which is a childish approach. Many clerics view the world as a toy and a dog's bone. They are millionaires and live an upper-class life among the elites; they also enjoy access to power. Since they never speak against the atrocities committed by the extremists and other capitalist powers in Pakistan, Ghani Khan starkly condemns such clerics, calling them self-centered clones in kings' courts and liars.

Equally important, Douglass exposes the hypocrisy of Christian clergies who claim to be decent while they support and perpetuate slavery. Highlighting the clergies, he says that they use religious rhetoric to support and justify their actions and maintain control over enslaved people. They selectively explain and interpret religious texts to support and sanction the subjugation of African Americans. However, they conveniently ignored the fundamental principles of Christianity: compassion, mercy, love, equity, and equality. He astutely observes the hypocrisy of slave-holding Christians who attend church services on Sunday, only to turn to their plantations and again start their exploitation and oppression throughout the week. He points out the complicity of Northern Christians, who condemned and opposed slavery in principles, but they turned a blind eye to the brutalities perpetuated in the South. His strong condemnation of religious hypocrisy extends beyond the context of slavery to encompass broader issues of inequality and social injustice. He argues that true Christianity is not merely a matter of professing faith or attending religious services, but it requires a genuine commitment to embodying the tenets of love, justice, and compassion in one's private life, actions, and interactions with fellow beings. Douglass's narrative serves as a reminder that religious belief alone is insufficient and incomplete without a corresponding commitment to ethical conduct and social responsibility. He wants to convince the readers and individuals to strive towards a more compassionate and just world.

Undoubtedly, *Untouchable* is a satire of Hinduism and its religious practices. There is nothing but a reflection of society. It shows the religious hypocrisy of a Hindu clergy named Pandit Kali Nath. Kali Nath is a Pandit in a temple, and he teaches Hindu script and always emphasizes chastity, simplicity, and equality, but in reality, he is a lascivious man. When he ogles at the sweeper's daughter, she is invited to clean the temple. When Sohni cleans the temple courtyard, Pandit Kli Nath tries to molest her. He immediately changes his plan when she refuses him and shouts at "polluted, polluted, and contaminated" (pp. 44-73). Pandit Kali Nath's hypocrisy is evident as he cannot stand Sohni's brother to touch the temple, but the so-called custodian of the religion is ready to have a physical relationship with a beautiful, untouchable girl (pp. 43-73). Pandit teaches to eat less, but he is a big glutton. Ghani Khan exposes the same point of gluttony and lasciviousness.

"The worship of the Mulla is just an occupation, merely a routine of sitting and standing for the sake of sweet treats, always calling on Allah. The love of the Mulla is strange, as he falls in love with sweets and brays for the love of Hoors (p.111).

Mulla Jan says, 'Hoors (Women) are big, white, strong, and naked in Jannah. In the washroom of the Masjid, you remember women of others. Look at his mouth, full of saliva, and his eyes, full of lust. In the presence of the Hoors, he forgets his prayers and devotions' (p. 231)".

The poetry of Ghani Khan exposes the hypocrisy of Molvis and condemns it with stark criticism. For further comparative analysis, he has written a poem in his book named *Latoon*: the poem's name is *Janat* (Heaven). As is highlighted by *Douglass, Roy, and Anand*, the clergies across the globe are always involved in immoral and social evils regardless of their backgrounds. Ghani Khan starkly condemns their hypocrisy by publically speaking against the West, but in private actions, clerics are Westernized, and he condemns their inclination toward the West.

Conclusion

The examination of *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* by Frederick Douglass, *Untouchable* by Mulk Raj Anand, and Ghani's selected poetry reveal a profound critique of clergy hypocrisy across various set-ups and historical contexts. Despite their varied settings and narratives, these literary works underscore and question religious hypocrisy and its detrimental impacts on individuals and society. In *The God of Small Things*, Roy delves deep into the complexity of religion and the caste system, while the figure of Christian clergy, represented by characters like Father Mulligan, is depicted as complicit in upholding social injustice. Roy expresses how religious figures often support and perpetuate the caste system and moral double standards, contrasting their preached virtues with their actions, and this hypocrisy exacerbates the sufferings of the

characters, notably Velutha and Ammu, illustrating how religion is manipulated to suppress various sects in society. Frederick Douglass's narrative criticizes religious hypocrisy and critiques the spiritual justification of slavery in the South, while Douglass himself is a former slave who remembers how slaveholders use Christianity to rationalize their suppression and brutal oppression of the slaves. Clergymen are supposed to embody Christian values of love, compassion, justice, and mercy, yet they are depicted as the worst perpetrators of cruelty. This type of hypocrisy is clearly evident in the character of Mr. Covey, who pretends to be pious and embody Christian values, yet beats Douglass and rapes women indiscriminately, having no sense of shame and remorse. Thus, Douglass's narrative underscores the contradictions between the moral teachings of Christianity and the actions of those who use religion to exploit and suppress others. *Untouchable* by Mulk Raj Anand focuses on the life of Bakha, a Dalit in colonial India, and his interactions with various societal figures, including the religious clergy; Anand portrays the clergy as enforcers of the caste system, complicit in the discrimination and dehumanization of the untouchables. The temple incident, where Bakha is humiliated and beaten for inadvertently touching a priest, starkly reveals the clergy's role in perpetuating caste-based injustices. This hypocrisy is glaring as the same religious principles that advocate for purity and compassion are twisted to justify the inhumane treatment of fellow human beings. Ghani Khan's poetry, rich with socio-political commentary, also addresses the hypocrisy of religious leaders. A Pashtun poet, Ghani Khan often criticizes the religious establishment's role in stifling freedom and progress, and his verses reveal a disdain for the clergy who preach piety and virtue while engaging in corrupt and immoral practices. Ghani Khan's work reflects a broader disillusionment with the religious figures who manipulate faith for personal gain and societal control, thus undermining the very essence of spirituality they claim to uphold. These literary works collectively emphasize that clergy hypocrisy is not confined to a single culture or era but is a recurring theme in human history. The authors and poets call out the religious leaders who betray their spiritual duties through their narratives and verses, highlighting the chasm between their public teachings and private actions. This critique is a powerful reminder of the need for integrity and genuine compassion in religious practice, urging a re-examination of how faith is used to uplift or destroy a society.

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