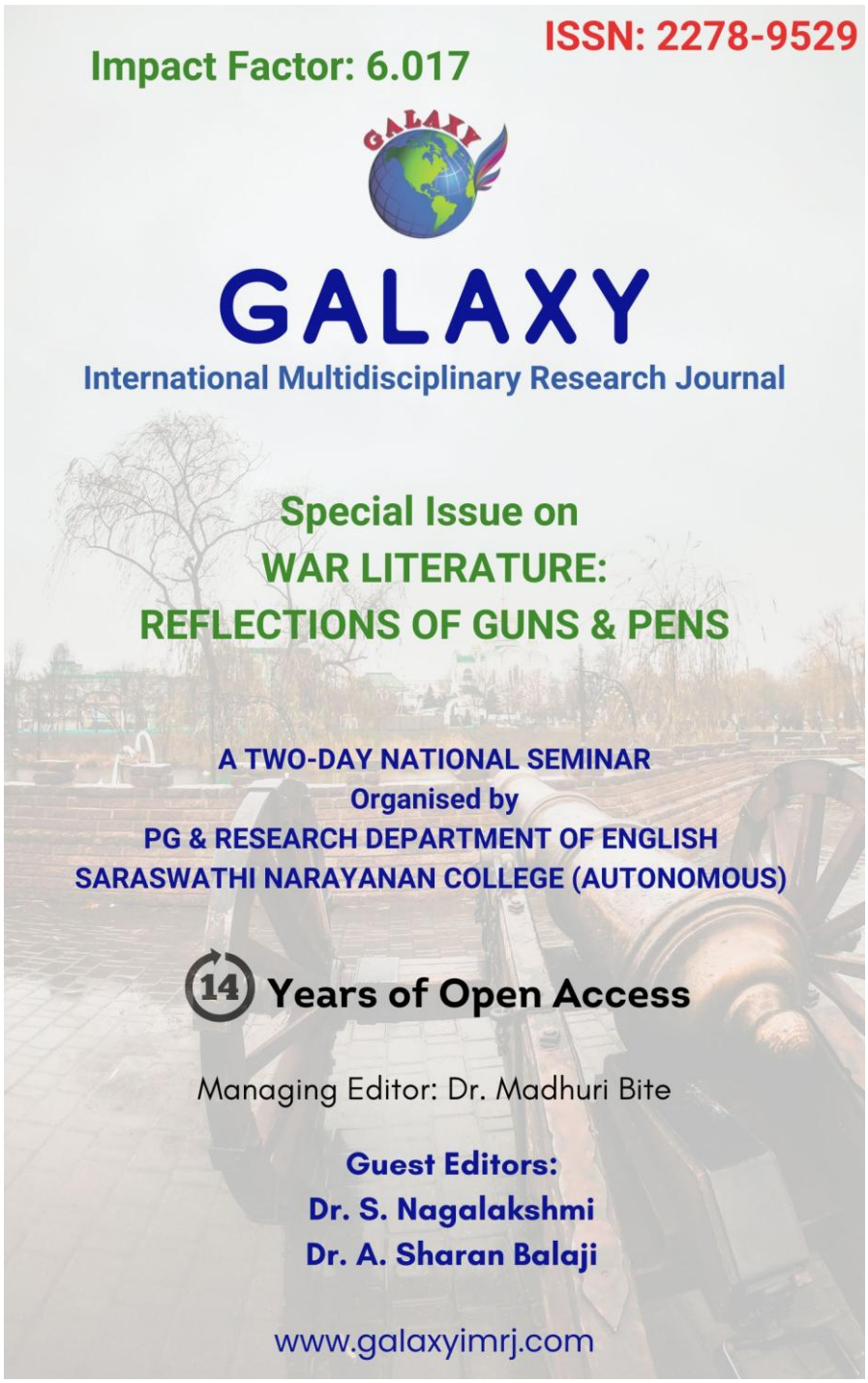


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Thematic Study of War and Love in Mitra Phukan's *The Collector's Wife*

M. Nivetha
Research Scholar,
PG & Research Department of English,
Saraswathi Narayanan College,
Perungudi, Madurai-625022
Tamil Nadu, India.

Abstract:

The study looks into the war and love themes in *The Collector's Wife* by Mitra Phukan. The story takes place in Assam in the 1970s and 1980s, when the Assam agitation was going on, to show how politics can change love relationships. The events of the story show how war's damaging power goes beyond making the public unstable and changes people's personal lives deeply. In this story, war breaks up community routines because it causes fear and doubt in neighbourhoods. The hardest times in life give people chances to show kindness, support, and closeness to each other in ways they never expected. Through the study of the novel, this paper tries to show that love makes people stronger so they can handle tough situations better.

Phukan illustrates through his writing how love enables human endurance in wartime conditions. During a critical situation at the time of war fare, a very small actions like sharing food to the needy, a kind of caring, giving a space in one's home, or serving the people's need gives a ray of hope to the people. Besides having to deal with political issues in their relationships, such act of kind and love, forms new emotional bonds as a result of their experiences amongst the characters. The characters reactions to loss and change create new ways for them to connect and understand each other.

A deep analysis of this paper, allows scholars and readers to understand better how conflicts serve literary purposes to portray complex human experiences and demonstrate lasting power of love throughout time. The analysis also assesses literary elements presented by Mitra Phukan's in his *The Collector's Wife*. The story unveils war incidents and expressions of love alongside Assam protest perspectives together with societal and political matters plus character-to-character connections and emotional development and transformation of all the characters especially in protagonist.

Keywords: Love, war in Assam, romantic relationships, social and political tensions.

Introduction

The Collector's Wife, a novel by Mitra Phukan, looks at how outside events can affect people's daily lives. It does this by combining war themes with love feelings. Stories like this show how political battles affect every part of daily life and cause big changes in the minds of the characters. It also shows how people's feelings of love change over time when there is ongoing disagreement. In short, war destroys routine life style of people, which causes chaos among groups.

The story makes war seem more than just a historical event by showing how unstable social conditions can cause people to make emotional changes in their choices and change their relationships with others. Thought the war fare seems scary and life threatening, as a saying goes on "All is fair in love and war", so is the characters in the novel. Even when there is a lot of destruction going on around, love stays strong. Problems that the main characters face force them to find their true goals, which leads to the creation of deep connections.

Phukan's straightforward writing style makes the complicated relationships between love and war clear, so readers from all walks of life can understand them. Carefully chosen

wording is used by the author to show both changes in society and changes inside the characters. Through changing the core of social connections and community ideas and relationships, the author shows how war affects every part of life. The story makes it clear that human connections are important supports that give us power and hope when society is not stable.

The novel also tells the readers to look at current events in politics from both close and faraway points of view. People can still find useful relationships and personal comfort, which are important parts of their lives, even though there are ongoing public conflicts between governments. Civil unrest brings out the power of love, which helps people stay stable even as their world falls apart during times of insecurity. Through its seamless integration into the story, the paper tries to project how people find good goals during hard times.

In the 1970s and 1980s, there was a lot of social unrest in Assam, which is what *The Collector's Wife* is set against in terms of history and politics. In the story, the Assam uprising is both the background and a powerful force that affects everyone's life and how they grow, as well as their own stories. Assam's transport was slowed down by political unrest and big changes were slowly happening in society. People's lives got harder because they were constantly anxious because of the uncertain times and the unclear results of war. By showing agitation as a real experience that changes both cultural practices and personal traits, the novel shows that it can be used for more than just political purposes. The novel's story does a good job of capturing the deep stress that people felt during that time, when changes in public life had a big effect on individuals. Throughout their conversations, characters talk about a common social worry about an uncertain future that stands for national uncertainty. An external battle that runs through everyone's life is made clear by a character's view that daily life is like fighting because positivity is the only way to fight terror. Through a story, Phukan

has taken effort to show how a community in trouble can grow hope and kindness, turning them into love mechanisms in the end.

Themes of War and love

Mitra Phukan combines chaotic politics with strong human bonds in *The Collector's Wife* to create an emotional story that sends both positive and negative messages. While the Assam uprising was going on, the political unrest in the state had an effect on every part of daily life. In this situation, war shows up as a force that keeps people in the military, messes up family systems, and changes the way people think and feel inside. However, love acted as a protective counterforce in conflict, giving people comfort and inspiration to reclaim their humanity in the middle of terrible chaos. Phukan weaves these different parts of his story together to show that the intense conflicts on the outside of war are similar to the problems people faced internally too.

According to the author, love is a way to protect yourself from fear and uncertainty during rough times. They show how relationships are put to the test and change during wartime. During war, characters' habits fall apart, and family life that used to be peaceful falls apart because of how unpredictable political violence is. People feel stressed when there is war going on, but these forces also push characters to remember basic things about their lives. The ongoing nature of the fight sometimes makes things unstable while also strengthening deep emotional bonds between people. The character has to deal with problems every day, which is why he needs hope to deal with his worries. This powerful sentence shows that protecting people from outside threats is inextricably linked to protecting love and human rights. This could remind us the words of the character Siddharth,

> …Living here in Parbatpuri, I"ve come to respect life. Life and birth. Life is so cheap here. Death is everywhere. Sudden death, like Deuri's... just because life is so cheap

here, just because of that, I hold that life is precious … the child is yours. And you…we're married, aren‟t we? (Phukan 2005 p.315)

This shows that kindness and closeness protect people from violent upheaval. Without using a lot of complicated words, Phukan shows how conflict changes relationships through clear and powerful writing.

In a world full of uncertainty, love gives people a way to take back control of their lives. Characters change their ties to deal with problems caused by outside forces. Throughout the story, acts of kindness often show up as ways of fighting back against the chaos. As shown in the story, love is a powerful force that can change people's lives, even when they are going through hard times. Small acts of kindness between friends create safe spaces of normalcy where characters can remember that love lives on even in a war-torn world.

The main point of this novel is to show that problems and romantic relationships can coexist. These forces work at the same time because they affect each other in the same balance. Battle's harsh realities cause people to show how weak they are, which makes it easier for deeper emotional connections to form. Love doesn't act as a simple way to avoid war in this story; instead, it shows how love forms through a complicated mix of reactions to conflict. A character sees how hearts use battle sounds to send messages of hope and healing during the war. People are forced to realise how important the relationships are during war, as the above quote says.

Love seems like a peaceful thing that brings about big changes in society when things are unstable. Rukhmini's mind changes in a big way when she meets Manoj, the handsome tire salesman. She no longer fits the traditional wife role with strict rules. While they try to get away from their current situation, they fight the forces of war through their growing love

story. People's natural emotions, which lead to hope and progress, can no longer be contained by the dangerous conditions of their surroundings. During war, people can ignore their lives, but the story of Rukhmini shows that true love is stronger than war and can bring people together through love.

Traditional gender roles and family systems change a lot during wartime, as shown in *The Collector's Wife*. External forces from conflict break down established norms, forcing characters to re-evaluate their roles within family structures. The plot of the novel shows a world where common ideas are turned on their heads, making room for relationships based on fairness and kindness. Love changes people into stronger beings who can handle loss better and come up with new ideas about their duties and their loyalty to others. According to the novelist, changes in people's lives caused by changes in the outside world led to long-lasting changes in society's values.

Conclusion

The story stresses both how the military works and how accurately it shows human life. This complex interaction between harsh truth and emotional depth makes the whole story better. The author shows that hearts can be incredibly strong even when things are bad. The story also shows the harsh truth of war while focussing on its main idea of rescue through love. However, war and love can have different effects on people and on society. At the same time, despite the chaos in the world, Phukan's writing shows that love still has the power to make big changes even when things are falling apart.

The novel shows that war isn't just physical fighting or big political problems; it also shows up in the daily battles that people have to go through. People can grow by facing difficult problems, which helps them form better psychological bonds with each other. Love shows up as a powerful force that changes things, making people stronger and helping them

through their worst times. During long-lasting wars, small acts of kindness are like lifelines for endurance because they temporarily ease the stress of the fighting. Choosing love as the story's main theme gives readers a basic understanding of how people can stay devoted even during terrible wars, which opens up the possibility of rebirth.

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