

**IDENTITY, TIME, SPACE AND MEMORY IN THE WORKS OF KATHLEEN RAINE****Hem Kanwar Shekhawat<sup>1\*</sup>, Prof Parul Mishra<sup>2</sup>**<sup>1\*</sup>Research Scholar, Amity School of Languages, Amity University Rajasthan, India,<sup>2</sup>Professor, Amity School of Languages, Amity University Rajasthan, India,**\*Corresponding Author: Hem Kanwar Shekhawat**

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**Abstract**

Kathleen Raine, an acknowledged poetess of 20<sup>th</sup> century is renowned for spiritual values in her works. In addition to this she is a practitioner of true art and wisdom. This compilation presents her vision on poetry and poets of her time period and her views over the changing perception of the society, Kathleen holds a candid perspective over Jungian Philosophy aiming at rediscovering the already discovered, fathoming the conventional space while focusing more on imagination and less on nature. She also addresses her century to be that of a common utopian world or a shadow world. This study analyses her opinion on the traditions and prevalent writing styles of prominent writers like Plato, Eliot, Blake, Coleridge, Wordsworth and many others. Her addressal to surrealism with reference to Auden and his school also finds a mention here. This study further elaborates Raine's views on progressive usage of Metaphor, Imagery and sublimity in poetry. As a poetess she considers an unconscious mind not a chaos but an order.

**Keywords:** Spiritual values, identity, time, space, Jungian Philosophy, utopian world, Surrealism, Sublimity, Identity.

**Full Paper;** –Literature holds an enormous capacity of meddling with a variety of experiments and embellishments being done upon it by several authors, poets, writers, etc. to enhance its richness. These add ons provide lift to an underlying piece of art. Such devices or elements work like a magic wand in the hands of magicians known as authors who elevate the grandeur of the literary piece. Identity, time, space and memory are such tools which when handled with utmost proficiency and know how techniques work wonders for literature. They serve as ideal instruments to raise suspense in a storyline. Authors use these two things judiciously in their works to bring out the excellence in written work. Perhaps because a writer must always create multiple identities in order to create compelling characters. For instance, William Blake creates identities that highlight his thoughts in his poetry to express his individualistic worries and to take use of his romanticist ideals. Writers will often construct characters who perform a false identity, villains such as Shakespeare's Iago, for instance. A person's identity can be determined by their self-conception as well as their social presentation, how they behave within civilisation. Thus, it is important as a reader to contemplate the contextual background of a literary text because it is this that determines what would have influenced the norms of behaviour and therefore, a strong indication of why an author, poet or playwright would construct their characters in the way that they do. Poem written by Raine in her collection *From The Oval Portrait* poem *Blue butterflies' eyed wings* had vivid and symbolic imagery, as well as its contemplative tone, can be seen as an attempt to connect with a deeper, hidden reality or a sense of the



mystical. The description of the natural elements, especially the ‘eyed wings’ of butterflies and ‘blue veiled’ mountain isles, symbolize a quest for deeper meaning and a connection with the mysteries of the natural world. The idea that ‘of these I am the I’ interpreted as a way of expressing a spiritual unity or oneness with the elements of the natural world. This is a common theme in many spiritual traditions, where individuals seek to find a sense of identity or connection with the border universe. Memory holds great significance when we talk about its use in literature. The author can create various accounts based on memories or experiences. This can be supported by Wordsworth’s very famous quote written in *lyrical ballad* co-authored by S.T. Coleridge: “Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling. . . . it takes its origin from emotions recollected in tranquillity” (4) There are several authors and poets from different time periods, who have put to use the elements of time, space and memory in their works. For instance, W.H. Auden’s tribute to W.B. Yeats in his poem *In memory of W.B. Yeats* written after he died in 1939. In the poem Auden remembers Yeats as a poet and his role in the society. He describes the weather on the day he died. And further moves to the future possibilities over the name and fame of the poet in the upcoming time, therefore spanning both past and future. Robert Frost in the poem *The Road Not Taken* remembers a past incident which has made all the difference in his life: “I shall be telling this with a sigh / Somewhere ages and ages hence: Two roads diverged in a wood, and I / I took the one less travelled by / and that has made all the difference.” (16-20). P.B. Shelley very interestingly depicts the transience of power and how time can bring change into the position, grandeur and eventually running it in his poem *Ozymandias*. Also, the poem *Ode on a Grecian Urn* by John Keats brings out the concept of immortality through the images and motifs drawn on the ancient urn which holds various past memories. Gabriel Garcia Marquez in his novel *Love in the Time of Cholera* presents a bond of love that develops over several decades. Salman Rushdie’s novel *midnight’s children* is a story of Saleem Sinai who is born during independence of India and whose life gets affected by the history of his country. William Shakespeare also gave great importance to time, Space and memory in his iconic works. One of them is *Macbeth* wherein the witches make prophecy about Macbeth’s future, leading to his decline. An extremely beautiful usage of time and space can be seen in yet another splendid work of Shakespeare *As You Like It* Amidst great confusion love flourishes which takes up the setting of both, a palace and forest of Arden. Memory also works as an important element in the storyline, as it raises the authenticity on being used as well as it provides a historical identity. A strong basis in many literary works is identity, Kathleen Raine’s poetry also does make effective use of the themes of time, space, and Memory. She as a poet always looked for meaning in life. Her works majorly deal with the ideas of spirituality and divine vision and takes up her personal experiences and memories. She was highly influenced by nature and philosophy and dealt with conflicts as well as materialistic ideologies. Therefore, her life spanned the 20<sup>th</sup> century but her works and reflections makes it difficult for her to be placed with romantics or a modern visionary. Raine spent her childhood years in Northumberland with her aunt and pursued botanical studies at Girton College which induced in her, love for nature and a sense of human familiarity with plants and flowers. Kathleen grew as a young, beautiful and intellectual lady who was admired for her beauty and wits. However later in her life pleasures were followed by pain and partition. Her love life was not a success and she had to part her ways with Gavin Maxwell, a naturalist and author of *Ring of bright water*. It left her with immense sorrow, regret and loneliness which indeed is reflected in her four volumes of autobiography and in her poetry as well. Ellenandjim stated that Raine, whose poetry he discovered in Ann Stanford's *The Women Poets in English* and Catherine Kerrigan's *An Anthology of Scottish Women Poets among contemporary Scots and Anglo-Scots poets*. He first encountered her

as an autobiographer in Beatrice Didier's *L'écriture-femme*, where Didier describes her as the prototypical autobiographer who enacted a myth of a return to a past that is still with her, that has never ceased to be. For women, this is found in childhood as a symbol and reality before the growth of an adult female sexual body with all the imprisonment, suppression, and destruction of the self that society inflicts. She saw Scotland as a mother landscape where a woman may establish a non-disturbing relationship. From *The lost country* poem title *Heirloom* touches on themes of memory, passage of time, childhood wonder, and the deep connection between individuals and the natural world. It's explained that certain experiences, like the mother's moment of seeing the moor come alive, can be treasured throughout a lifetime for her profound and transformative nature. The beautiful poem begins by mentioning the various flowers and natural elements the mother gave to the speaker during her childhood. These conclude heather, eyebright, Lichen, and more. These gifts symbolize the mother's nurturing and the beauty of the natural world. This poem also describes the sea creatures and marine life that the child observed from a fisherman's boat, such as medusa, sea gooseberries, starfish, and various shells. This imagery evokes a sense of wonder and fascination. Mother shares her memories with the child, connecting her experiences with the natural world. This transmission of memories represents a bonding between generations and the passing down of knowledge. The mother retain one special memory, which she is hesitant to share until later in the poem. Poem also reveals the mother's treasured memory, a moment from her youth when she saw the moor come alive. This is a profound and almost mystical experience, suggesting a deep connection with the natural world. Poem notes the passing of time, with seventy years having elapsed since the mother's revelation. This time frame emphasizes the rarity and preciousness of her experience. The mother's experience of seeing the moor come alive is described as seeing the 'living skein' of which the world is woven. This suggests a profound and mystical connection with the interconnectedness of all things in the world. The mother is said to know all implying a deep understanding and awareness of the world's inner workings and unity. This poem also includes mother's lifelong treasuring of this memory, symbolized as a priceless pearl. It's a testament to the enduring impact of a profound, mystical experience and the value of such memories.

Raine was highly influenced by the writings of William Blake, William Wordsworth, S.T. Coleridge, John Keats, and P.B. Shelley. She has also written a number of essays on these poets including *Defending Ancient Springs* and *Blake and Tradition*. She has also written extensively on the work of William Butler Yeats. Raine was deeply influenced by the thoughts and ideas of Swiss Psychologist, Carl Jung and this Jungian outlook can very well be visualised in many of her works. Jungian Philosophy focuses on the need for self-realisation. The influence of Carl Jung can be seen in some of the following works of Raine. Raine integrated Jungian psychology into her literary vision of the divinity manifest in nature and the cosmos, and the perennial wisdom and spiritual symbols common to all religions, peoples, and times, writes Janet Watts , who is mentioned in the lines from their work above.. In the poem *The Inner Journey*, Raine supports the idea of unconscious mind proposed by Jung by exploring the inner self, one's own identity, reaching out to your very own origin. It is just like a quest for self-discovery. The idea that a journey has been the subject of the most creative poetry throughout history is explored by Raine. She illustrates the poet's journeys into the domains of awareness by quoting from ancient mythology to Wordsworth. In-depth research is done on examples like Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Poetry and Jungian psychology, which likewise deals with interior journeys, are compared by the author.

One of poem title *On leaving Ullswater* from her first collection *stone and flower*, weaves together themes of love, nature, time, space, identity and mortality, exploring the speaker's contemplation on fidelity, the enduring

qualities of nature, and the inevitable transitions in life. The speaker grapples with the notion of fidelity amidst inevitable separation, possibly death, drawing parallels to the enduring qualities of nature such as hills, skies, waters, and leaves. The interplay of vivid imagery and imagery and poignant questions creates a rich tapestry of emotions and reflections. Despite acknowledging life's transience, the speaker pledges unwavering devotion, portraying love as all-encompassing, akin to elemental forces like air, darkness, and water. The imagery of 'smiling heart' and 'sunlit noon' conveys a positive and cherished presence within this contemplation. Reference to 'love must pass' and 'times must go' hint at the theme of memory, revealing an awareness of the impermanence in experiences and relationships, underscoring the relentless march of time. The phrase 'my joy with pain, my heaven with earth' delves into life's inherent contrasts and balance. The speaker's identity intertwines with the ebb and flow of love, pain and life's cyclical nature. Utilizing a first-person perspective and personal pronouns, the poem fosters intimacy, prompting contemplation on an individual's connection to broader themes of existence. In essence, the poem navigates the intricate landscape of love, time's passage, and the fleeting nature of human experiences, intricately weaving these themes to unravel profound insights into life and identity. Love is equated with the life-giving quality of water, emphasizing its fundamental role in sustaining existence.

Kathleen's poetry often draws upon themes of mythology, nature and spiritual inquisitiveness making her a significant figure in 20<sup>th</sup> century British poetry. She believed that the modern society has ended up creating a gap between them and the nature resulting into their sufferings. She tries to present this transition of time through her works. *The Year One* (1952) this is a collection of poems by Raine which explores the themes of spiritual renewal and the search for meaning in modern times. *The Ground of Faith* by Raine is a book that explores the nature of faith and its connection with art, poetry and mythology. She expressed that faith is an important element of human life which is deeply related to our sacred sense. She feels that by losing out on this sense of sacred we have lost our touch with the deeper dimensions of reality. Raine's poetry very often explores the different ways in which the human and natural world interested in the idea of 'eternal moment' which she considered as a means of going beyond limits of time and space. Raine also opined through her works that poetry was a useful instrument to reconnect with the natural world and that it could help us develop a better understanding of our place in the universe. Raine's language is highly poetic and musical, and her use of symbolism and comparative devices is rich, phenomenal and resonant when explored. She often draws images from past or from nature and ancient myths reflecting her interest. In a collection of poems by Raine *The Hollow Hill* for Willa muir. She explores different aspects of human experience from love and longing to death and rebirth. The collection is divided into three sections: The wind among the Reeds, The Hidden Path and The Stars at Dawn. Many of the poems in the collection are highly reflective and deeply introspective relating to a world that often seems disconnected and fragmented.

"Those fields of childhood, tall Meadow-grass and flowers small" (190). The line begins with a nostalgic reference to the meadows of the speaker's childhood. These fields were filled with tall grass and small flowers, evoking the idyllic and innocent nature of the past. Describing beautifully the natural elements which were exist in past and how she recalled. "The elm whose dusky leaves patterned the sky with dreams innumerable" (190). The speaker recalls an elm tree from her childhood that had leaves casting patterns on the sky. This imagery suggests the imaginative and dreamlike quality of childhood memories. "And labyrinthine vein and vine And wandering tendrils green" (190). Further describe the natural elements of the speaker's childhood environment, mentioning intricate patterns of veins in leaves and wandering green vines. This imagery conveys the sense of wonder and

beauty found in nature. “Has grown a seed so small A single thought contains them all” (190). Speaker reflects on the transformation of these childhood memories. The vibrant, complex world of the meadows and the elm tree has now condensed into a small seed that can be contained in a single thought. This transformation highlights the idea of memory and how the past can be distilled and simplified in the mind. Overall, in this beautiful poem, Raine convey a sense of nostalgia for the simplicity and beauty of childhood memories. The speaker looks back on a time when nature was vivid, filled with intricate details, and seemingly boundless in its wonder. However, as time passes and author matures, these memories become compressed into a single, simple thought. The poem captures the bittersweet quality of nostalgia, where the vivid experiences of youth are transformed into a more abstract and manageable form in memory. This is a distinctive work in Raine’s career showing her poetic voice and her exploration of themes travelling through various spans of time, which furthermore continue to resonate throughout her later works. Poem *Nocturne* which holds the genre of an ode and is written on a night setting. It talks about a great realm of dreams which the speaker imagines as a sky which is full of stars appearing like numerous butterflies. She talks about the beauty of lying still under the sky but brings out the element of doubt as some can’t do it. The speaker of the verse titled *Nocturne* considers the dreaming state. They picture dreaming as being still at the foot of a guardian angel while their dreams, symbolized by a priceless butterfly, fly off to other locations. Another would get lost in darkness (representing both joyful dreams and nightmares), while some would find happy spots. “It would be peace to lie/ Still in the still hours at the angel's feet,(4-5). The speaker muses on how peaceful it would be to lie quiet, yet implies that they cannot do so for a particular reason. Foreshadows the gloomy nightmares that the speaker experiences on a regular basis alongside good ones.

Kathleen was a fine poetess who presented her emotions through poetry as candidly as she did through her works of prose, many of her writings are a testimony to her brilliant usage of a variety of literary devices creating outstanding master pieces in literature. One such splendid works of hers is her own autobiography in the form of four memoirs, including *Farewell Happy Fields* (1973), *The Land Unknown* (1975) and *The lion’s mouth* (1977) collectively published as ‘Autobiographies’ (1991). In this work of hers she literally takes the reader on an elaborate journey spanning her childhood fears to her higher education in botany and Zoology through this journey of time she opens up several pages of her memory and describing her experiences with a scientific precision. Raine was a well-read person too who appreciated literature that appalled her. She was highly influenced by William Blake which is clearly reflected in her work *Golgonooza’ City of imagination*.

Raine went through extensive research in order to bring out the very minute details in Blake’s works. The reader definitely learns about the various imaginary visions of Blake through Raine’s words. Raine was indeed a poet with great spiritual and mystical demeanour who chose poetry for her strongly felt words. She, very intently presented all her memories and visions with utmost proficiency. She very well bound the readers to her words while taking them across various spans of time. A prolific poet, Kathleen would always be remembered as a gem with million admires in the literary world.

### **Conclusion;**

Kathleen Jessie Raine was a visionary poet who explored the relationship between science and mysticism. Her work contained elements of Jungian psychology and Neo-Platonism. In her works, she made to run away from the ordinary world for an alternate universe of experiencing, inspired by Plato, Yeats, Blake, and other mystical

and visionary writers. Her talent for accuracy of perception and flawless diction is evident in her first book of poems, *Stone and Flower*, as well as in her after-that poetry. Her work, which has been characterized as meditative and poetic, is focused on universal themes such as nature, existence, mortality, and eternity. Her instructor was William Blake, and she shared his idea that “one power alone makes a poet - imagination, the divine vision” (Watts). She devoted not only to writing and expertise but her entire life to this ideal. In an era that ignored spiritual values, she stood as a testament to them. Raine sees plants with a poet's eye and writes about them with a poet's pen. Raine also explored nature with the eye of the poet. Identity, time, space, and memory are common themes in literature, where they gently communicate to create interesting narratives. In stories, writers often look at how people see themselves compared to what society expects. Characters deal with what's normal in their culture and what they believe in, figuring out who they are. Lots of stories focus on characters trying to understand themselves. This means they go through inner struggles, question their beliefs, and face their past.

Time is a big deal in stories. They often talk about what happened before and what's happening now. Characters might be troubled by things that happened in the past or find a way to make things better by dealing with their own history. Some stories mix up the order of events, using flashbacks or flash-forwards. This helps show how time affects the story and the characters. In stories, not only the places characters live in matter, but also the way they feel inside. Settings can mean more than just physical locations. They can symbolize how characters feel or show what's going on in society. When characters go on journeys or adventures, it gives a chance to explore different places and cultures. This adds more layers to how space affects who they are. Remembering things is shown as something that can change from person to person. Characters might remember things in their own way, showing that memory isn't fixed. Stories often look at how memories can be shaped by personal feelings. Some stories also talk about how bad experiences can affect memory. Characters might struggle with remembering things clearly, and the story might show them finding a way to heal by looking back and understanding their past. All these ideas come together to make complex and interesting stories. Writers use these themes to talk about what it means to be human, making us think about who we are, how time passes, the importance of where we are, and how memories can really impact us. So that Raine used identity, time, space and memory in her works to defined how to explore the world in the vision of spiritual.

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