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Building A Global Village (GV) Through Inter Dialogue

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Editors

Dr. S. D. Sasi Kiran and Dr. Sharada Allamneni

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EDITORS' NOTE

We are glad to bring out this book envisaged as a multicultural, multi genre collection celebrating the quality and diversity of contemporary cultural expression. Among the many themes represented here are: **Social Translatorship, Travel and Culture, Migration and Identity, Cave-Psychical Landscapes, Media and Constructions, Multicultural Appropriation, Subaltern Studies, Rituals, Cross-cultural Communication, Neo-humanism, Co-relational Relationships, Post-colonial World, Culture Shock,** and **Indian Composite Culture**. Our present attempt is an unprecedented effort to capture, in all its scope and variety, the extraordinary results of research in these areas. Over two dozen of contributions fill the confessions reveal the complex diverse languages, diverse cultures, and diverse social, economic and political frameworks. Complete papers, all never printed or anthologized, come from a wide range of both traditional and rediscovered genres, including: familial relations, social roles, psychological moorings, marital issues, etc. Representing distinguished themes, this richly interwoven collection explores the diverse intersections of gender, caste, religion, and sexual identity. The papers showcase the different voices of the accomplished contributors. One hears a common note of pain or anguish as well as the ring of conviction and confidence. The reader finds an indepth analysis much neglected marginal and regressive identities.

HAPPY READING...

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1. The Social Role of Translatorship within Indian Environment

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Introduction

"There are two principles of translation. The translator can bring to his fellow countrymen a true and clear picture of the foreign author and foreign circumstances, keeping strictly to the original; but he can also treat the foreign work as a writer treats his material, altering it after his own tastes and convictions, so that it is brought closer to his fellow countrymen, who can then accept it as if it were an original work." (Goethe)

W.von Humboldt (1767–1835), a Prussian philosopher and linguist, wrote a letter to A. W. Schlegel (1767-1845) about translation relating it to culture: *"All translation seems to me simply an attempt to solve an impossible task. Every translator is doomed to be done in by one of two stumbling blocks: he will either stay too close to the original, at the cost of taste and the language of his nation, or he will adhere too closely to the characteristics peculiar to his nation, at the cost of the original. The medium between the two is not only difficult, but downright impossible"* since *"... despite the fact that translation brings cultures nearer, in each translation, there will be a definite deformation between cultures."* (July 23, 1796)

In this research article, I consider the responsibility of a translator as an umpire between cultures whose job of translation presents every translator with an exciting challenge and can be incredibly rewarding. Rather than simply stepping into the shoes of a writer, a translator must acquire the *savoir faire* to augment understanding by intervening ideas diagonally cultural and national boundaries. The present paper presents how translation plays the social role of translatorship within Indian environment in passing fresh learning and wider understanding to rich, native cultures at global level and in so doing allowing languages to grow to be more extensively operated and upheld through culture, functioning towards proper fortification.

Translation focuses mainly on how diverse languages, cultures, social, economic, political frameworks are arranged offering reciprocated precision without forfeiting divergence showing a concern just for a blind assimilation. Translation is *a propos*, making new cultural, social, economic and political maps, founding shared territories, the growth of a border *raison d'être*, contrasting to a mere approval of the *raison d'être* of the borders. Translation allows being different, homogenization being an offence, and yet allows to be equal. "Rewriting is manipulation, undertaken in the service of power, and in its positive aspect can help in the evolution of literature and a society." (Lefevere, André) Victor Hugo's remark "When you offer a translation to a nation, that nation will almost always look on the translation as an act of violence against itself," Will it be similar when the social role of the translator is examined in Indian environment? This present paper traces the above elements that come in the way of the rise of translation-studies within the social role of translatorship in Indian environment. The observation of Goethe: "If you want to influence the masses, a simple translation is always best," suits the naturalism of literary texts in translation in Indian environment.

Firstly, the social role of the translator in settling source ideas, cornering national and cultural boundaries, places the translator in a distinctive situation above all for thoughtful improvement of issues. Translating narratives is an infinite spring of knowledge about indigenous languages, native cultures and local experiences, and is immeasurably helpful for promoting a perceptive of native societies. Moreover, translation can also have a decisive authority especially in politics and can act as an instrument for bringing all and everything together known as social integration. Translations

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can therefore have a distinctive result on how worldwide and human rights issues can be conveyed and communicated. I venture to highlight the remarkable facade of *translation - modus operandi* that are over and over again misconstrued during a primarily language 'transform and inane' function where one set of source matter is replaced by another. I will at the outset focus on 'unifying' aspects of translation in view of the current situation in India where there are 22 official languages recognized by the constitution, but where English has become a dominant language.

Secondly, I would discuss Telugu language and the difficulties that accompany its translation, a perception based on the *Whorfian hypothesis* (1984) that language is shaped by the world in which we live. It is Whorf's view that the linguistic patterns themselves determine what the individual perceives in this world and how he thinks about it. Since these patterns vary widely, the modes of thinking and perceiving in groups utilizing different linguistic systems will result in, on the whole, different world views. (Fearing, 1954) In a way the translated version of a text will permit to let loose the entry to unfamiliar cultural and linguistic environments. The outcome will debatably bring in orientation points to translation methodology. In conclusion, I summarize the resourceful role of the translator, which involves forming a brand new lexis in order to effectively put across the point of the source text. As such the interface between the disciplines of translation studies and development education will turn into visible.

Literature Review

Translation is not only the study of various aspects of linguistic communication but also consists of interconnected or interwoven parts that include subtle difference or distinction in cultural expression, meaning, response, etc that can silhouette the options and attitudes of target readers. Any translation is not generated free from either cultural or political emptiness and cannot be unfastened from the context in which the text is set in. (Dingwaney and Maier) '...the translator is a bilingual mediating agent between monolingual communication participants in two different language communities.' (David Katan, *Translating Cultures*, 2004) Therefore the translator not only goes between diverse language systems, but also demonstrates the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with people of other cultures and thus become an ambassador and thus 'bilingual and bicultural' (Aniela Korzeniowska and Piotr Kuhlaczak, *Successful Polish-English Translation Tricks of the Trade*). Thus, translation performs a crucial role in our understanding of the cultural 'other.'

Translation as an Ideal Cultural Perceptive

An example where translation facilitates the understanding of global cultures is in the case of a local language. Translation can play a number of different roles such as *unifying or constructing* new words and also, most crucially, as a source of knowledge about foreign and lesser known cultures. Accordingly, translation is not merely a linguistic process, but can make a political and social impact also in Andhra Pradesh and India. The translation process can be viewed as a way of introducing linguistic as well as cultural equality by enabling native languages, to become languages promoted formal protection by the respective state constitutions and curricula. Moreover, translation can act as a 'bridge' between east and west. If it were not for the translators' investigations and research into Asian languages we would never have heard about the translations at global level. Indeed, it is through translation that we will eventually be able to become acquainted with the world of the source environment, Telugu here. The translation of this language will allow us to open the doors to an unknown cultural and linguistic world. It will also introduce a rich reference point to translation and translation methodology alike.

One language cannot articulate the meanings of another due to peculiarity built in, captured and expressed in its structure. In a way, every language user reflects in a singular way to diverse aspects of the linguistic and social environment expressing with same consideration. The job of the

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translator is therefore a matter of seeking other social, cultural frame with similar quality finding appropriate ways of saying things in target language. Cultural and social nuances are woven such that the social role of translatorship captures and projects primary importance that should be reflected in the translated work.

Any translator is caught between the verve to clutch local color and need to be understood by target audience of cultural lingual situation. Culture is an intricate set of experiences which shape day to day living style; it embraces history, social structure, religion, and routine traditional customs which are not easy to figure out fully. The method of passing on cultural elements through literary translation is a complex and critical mission. The readership of any translation, however, will have to be portrayed in quite familiar to the target reader.

An idiom in any language is a linguistic and cultural element, and as source writer uses it for its associative value, though it resists translation, it the translator's job to opt so that its evocative value is not lost. I shall discuss some of the problems a translator stumbles upon while translating a document from one language (Telugu, here) to another (English, here) in the Indian context considering the most common idiomatic expressions in Telugu and the difficulties that would crop up while translating:

- Emi palu poka: It is idiomatic expression in Telugu. It means that one has nothing to do or think doing anything. The word 'Palu' means 'Milk.' This expression is used when one is unable to come to a conclusion about a matter. It is an equivalent to Sanskrit expression *Kim Kartavyam?*
- Naku nota mata raledu: It means I could not get a word into my mouth which communicates a different meaning in translation altogether. It is equivalent to *I am dumbfounded.*
- Koyyabari poyindi: The expression used in the original means "she became like wood" which communicates a different idea in translation. The word koyya means stick. It is equivalent to '*She was stunned*'.
- Nadumu bigincha budhi kadu: The expression used in the original means "no mind to tighten the back" which communicates a confusing idea in translation. This idea can't be translated literally. It is equivalent to 'There is no aptitude to do (certain) work'.
- Ramayanamlo pidakala veta: The expression in the original means the search for 'dung cakes in the Ramayana'. In the Ramayana the search is for Sita. The above expression means *a search for irrelevant things.*
- My forefathers came down (Tathalu digi vtcharu): It is a popular expression used in Telugu to indicate the difficulty in fulfillment of a particular task. It is equivalent to '*Herding cats*'
- Placed the turban in the fort (Kotalo paga vesaanu): It is a well known expression used in Telugu to indicate that one has victory on his side. It means 'one place pathway to victory.'
- The bird has escaped (Pitta tappinchukundi): In Telugu 'Pitta' means a bird. The word 'Pitta' stands for a beautiful woman also. So here translation is contextual.
- Having eaten grass (Budhi gaddi tini): It is only a literal translation. Metaphorically, "One having committed a stupid thing."

Also in the Indian culture, people demonstrate esteem to their elders by addressing them in plural. A simple he/she cannot be substituted, because then the implication behind the use of plural address would be lost. So, in addressing the old, either choice-retaining the plural form or replacing it by a simple "you" will lead to uncertainty. It seems unnatural in any Indian family to address one another with "good morning," "have a nice day," etc., to apology, or to convey gratefulness by uttering "thank you."

Regarding social relationship, majority of rural Indians reside with their extended families. A need to speak to each relative is there. Consequently, there are special words in all Indian languages

referring to maternal/fraternal relationships. The English language lacks the corresponding terms as this practice of extended family existing collectively is unheard of in western countries.

Attire or ornaments also create difficulty for any translator. Some of the Indian ornaments are meant only for a married woman with her spouse alive. The lifestyle of any widow in India is restricted. This idea of widowhood is non-existent in western countries and hence the pain carried in widowhood cannot be put across to western readers.

When it comes to food and its habits, the outstanding aroma behind each food and its significance is untranslatable to western audience. For instance, foods prepared only during certain festivals remind Indian readers of the season or some sacred tale. But this is not experienced by the readers of an alien culture.

When it comes to customs and tradition which are part of a culture - a marriage or a funeral, the hidden symbolism behind each ritual becomes difficult to carry into another language. For instance, Panigrahanam (holding hands) of groom and bride when mantra is chanted 'Dharmecha, Arthecha, Kamecha, Mokshecha Aham Evam Naati Charami.' Pani grahanam, Saptha padhi, Mangalasuthra dharana, Veekshanam, Talambralu, Arundhathi darshanam, Grihapravesam, Appaginthalu are traditional register of Telugu people difficult to be carried away into another language like English. Beliefs and feelings vary from culture to culture. What is considered agreeable in one sign, may not symbolize the same thing in another culture. Major cultural components like religious elements, myths, legends present setback in translating any text from one language to another language that burdens the translator's job.

Art of Connotation

Translations are by no means an objet d'art of ineffectual ephemerals and there has been a broad-spectrum of deal between translation scholars. If the job of the translator is placed at in the hunt for carrying words and sentences and texts from SL to TL, the translator cannot simply look for corresponding words in TL to provide the connotation of SL. Translation, however, is a cultural practice, influenced also by social and political imperatives, which can open more doors than it closes. The act of translation, when vigilantly and critically attended to, becomes a means for active interrogation. (Dingwaney and Maier, 1995) Therefore, Aniela Korzeniowska and Piotr Kuhiwczak, translators become mediators between two dissimilar language systems, and befall intercultural mediators.

The business of the translator is to carry on source ideas across cultural and national boundaries positioning him or her in a distinctive class to comprehend an assortment of advance topics. Thus translating narratives from one Indian language to another/English is a helpful mechanism of comprehension cultural experiences and is immeasurably constructive for gaining and for spreading out in particular. In the case of India, social on top of political need for translation is enormous. At present, there are 20 official languages set by the constitution, although some critics would come to blow that official multilingualism is a simulation given the supremacy of English.

Translation activity may shape for a complex linguistic project where all the local languages could coexist simultaneously on an equal basis. In end result, English has commonly turned into vehicle of communiqué in everyday political, business and educational life. The classical languages, notably Sanskrit and Pali, have become neglected in social, cultural and political spheres and witnessed the decline of usage of these languages. The urgent need for the translation of native books and other forms of literature in India has been the central topic of scholarly debate at present.

An ongoing initiative to translate Indian literature into English is the need of the hour. It is concurred that in a multilingual country like India, the translation of Indian literature and culture

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should be treated as a matter of foremost national significance such that it would put in to spreading the knowledge about lesser known social and linguistic groups. Furthermore, such a project would formulate other voices heard augmenting cultural base of English, the other cultures and peoples of India in a multilingual dialogue. Translation can be seen in this context as *an act of mediation and a form of reconciliation* between the periphery and centre, the dominant and aspiring cultures.

The undertaken translation activity takes in not only the translation of Indian literature, but also introduces and incorporates indigenous Indian languages into the education system at global level. When implementing the project, which comprised of work ranging from Indian poets to astronomers, the translation scholars would identify some frequent difficulties with the absence of equivalents and a vocabulary 'gap' in particular. The absence of words would restrict the implementation of project. However, the concept of the vocabulary gap does not only occur in the translation of English terms into Indian languages. It can also be observed in the reversed process where the English language lacks an equivalent term as in the case of the Indian words. Some scholars in India claim that the officialization of the various Indian languages is more a gesture than anything else, that it is politically motivated rather than culturally enhancing. Officially Indian languages are supposed to be treated equally, but in practice nothing much is being done to popularise them through translation activity.

Conclusion

Translation focuses mainly on how diverse languages, diverse cultures, diverse social, economic, political frameworks are arranged offering reciprocated precision without forfeiting divergence showing a concern just for a blind assimilation. Translation is *a propos*, making new cultural, social, economic and political maps, founding shared territories, contrasting to a mere approval of the *raison d'être* of the borders. Translation allows being different homogenization, and yet allows to be equal. The logical and informative shift to the problems of translation ensures that it will be indispensable for all those who work with languages and areas like sociolinguistics, discourse studies, pragmatics and semiotics 'in contact'. It is to analyse the process and product of translation in their social contexts. Through this analysis, the importance of the translator as a social mediator between cultures is emphasized.

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2. Travel and Culture: the Indomitable Themes of Diaspora Writings

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The word diaspora is derived from Greek word diaspeirein. Its etymological meaning is scattered (speirein) across (dia). Earlier the word was used in relation to jews who migrated from their homeland (Germany) to other European countries for survival. Diaspora is generally the violent and compulsory migration of people from their homeland to other regions. As a central event in colonization, the diaspora may involve millions of people who voluntarily displaced themselves from Europe and Asia to work chiefly in the United States, Canada and Africa. In the present scenario post colonial literature is the foremost in any program of literature in English. The most interesting thing is that the current literature in English is heavily relying on the literature coming from post-colonial topics and post-colonial writers living in British ex-colonies or living in Britain or the United States but were born and bred in colonized countries. These kinds of writers are called diasporic writers. There are diaspora writers from China, Africa, Caribbean countries and India.

Diasporic condition is the state in which the longings and yearnings of the immigrants are expressed. The longing is for culture, people, human relationships, and for the love and security offered by the native land. These longings and yearnings of the immigrant psyche are expressed in all the genres of literature. Indian Diaspora is emphasized through the diasporic writers who have migrated from India to different and distant places. Amitav Ghosh, Salman Rushdie, V.S. Naipaul, Bharati Mukherjee, Vikram Chandra are the diasporic writers, whose works represent the diaporic condition. Their works represent the agonies of the diasporic people as being stranded in an alien land who have to adopt the aliens' culture either willingly or unwillingly. Diaspora is simply the displacement of community/ culture into another geographical and cultural region. Diaspora culture is the effect of migration, immigration travelling and exile. As Pramod K. Nayar points out: "*Diaspora is particularly fascinating phenomenon because it has existed since the arrival of humans on earth. As communities settle down, they acquire and build certain traditions and customs. Later, when members of this community move away, they take with them the baggage of the customs and belief-systems.*" [Postcolonial Literature; An Introduction, P.187.] When the people start migrating from one place to another they cannot abandon their customs and cultures. There are different reasons for their migration. However, as it is pointed out by Pramod K. Nayar, "it is important to distinguish between kinds of migration and diaspora- refugees, asylum-seekers, illegal migrants, voluntary migrants, and job-seekers constitute different forms of diasporic existence... curiously, 'diasporic' writing today has come to signify the recent phenomenon of 'Third World' writers in western metropolis... This produces a narrative that is often caught between a de-territorialization (the loss of place) and re-territorialization (finding a new place)." [Postcolonial Literature; An Introduction PP.187&193]. Dislocation is the first problem that can be noticed by all in migration. Amitav Ghosh's novels reflect the tendencies and concerns of the age. He attempts to understand the lives of his contemporaries in lands as diverse as India, Bangladesh, Egypt, Burma, Cambodia, England etc. his canvas is always large and his novels are entwined with a variety of characters. Amitav Ghosh writes about the relationship between India and her diaspora, "the links are not those of language, religion, politics or economics, in a sense the links are those of culture, but again of a kind of culture in which the most important cultural institutions as we usually understand them-for example, language and religions – are absent the links are lived within the imagination. It is therefore an epic relationship..... It is because the relationship is so much a relationship of the imagination that the specialists of the imagination – writers – play so important a part with it" ('Diaspora in Indian culture'. *The Imam and the Indian, Prose Pieces*, p.247-248.).

Traveling is a predominant theme in Diaspora writing. The characters cross the borders and face challenges. In post-colonial fiction travel and its related conditions migrancy and exile are recurrent concerns in the work of many post-colonial writers. James Clifford describes it as: *“Travel as a figure for different modes of dwelling and displacement, for trajectories and identities for story-telling and theorizing on a post-colonial world of global contacts ... every center or home is someone else’s periphery and diaspora” [Notes on Travel and Theory’ in Traveling Theory , traveling theorists, PP.177- 179].* At present the themes of Diaspora writings are widening the scope of post-colonialism. There are different discourses that have been dealt with in the post-colonial period. Now the bottom line is that the post-colonialism has now become a term to discuss the problems and narratives of much of the world’s marginalized classes. Thus the post-colonial theory addresses the feminization, marginalization and dehumanization of the native and also the psychological effects of colonialism on both the colonizer and the colonized. A central mode of retrieving the past in postcolonial literature is through reconstructions of cultural and national histories and identities. Pramod K. Nayar points out that: *“In 1990s, the scope of post-colonial studies moved beyond addressing ‘Third World’ cultures and colonial histories to include issues relating to the third world within ‘First World’ nations: migrants, refugees, language problems and other ethnic mirrors are shown and portrayed”.* (*Post-colonial literature: An Introduction P.21*)

Every nation’s culture is in a state of flux with the impact of Globalization. Culture can be defined as the knowledge and values that people require to live and function within a construct, in the way people wish and in a manner acceptable to whoever else is part of the construct. The term culturalism may be taken as a process of movement that calls for a replacing of one construct of thought with another. It also connotes an adherence to a conscientious direction and perspective that coerces total acceptance and adaptation of one set of values over another. As Homi Bhabha rightly says that: *“Culture as a strategy of survival is both transnational and translational. It is transnational because contemporary postcolonial discourses are rooted in specific histories of cultural displacement, whether they are the ‘middle passage’ of slavery and indenture, the ‘voyage out’ of the civilizing mission, the fraught accommodation... Culture is translational because such spatial histories of displacement-now accompanied by the territorial ambitions of ‘global’ media technologies...”* (*The Location of Culture, P.247*)

The works of Diaspora writers like V.S. Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, M.G. Vassanji, Jhumpa Lahiri, Tabish Khair and the like reflect a confluence of history and human insights. The undocumented histories of ordinary people and the chronologically ordered histories of historical characters mix and merge throughout their fictional work. The characters in their works hail from diverse socio-economic backgrounds and traditions, which follow different cultures and language. They are the spokesmen of the common people. Writers like Amitav Ghosh brings to light the agony and ecstasy, the pain and pleasure that the characters have undergone by giving voice to fictional character and thus tries to depict the impact of great historical events upon their lives. Most of his characters take a liberal humanist stance towards issues they confront, betraying the ambivalence of collaboration and confrontation. His characters knew no boundaries and so they always indulge in travelling. Amalgamation of multiple texts with history and culture is a common feature of Diaspora writings. Crossing borders is one of the recurrent themes in Diaspora writings. Their central figures are travelers and diasporic exiles. Following Benedict Anderson’s idea of “nations” as imagined communities”, post-colonial commentators have rigorously invested the nation, along with the narratives. This contestation is most directly addressed in the works of the subaltern studies group and the historiographic fiction of Rushdie, Ghosh and others.

Ghosh has clearly revealed the pathetic and miserable inhabitation of immigrants. But the indigenous people live on “the other bank of the inlet rose steeply out of the water into a solid concrete – and – glass cliff of hotels and offices” [*The Circle of Reason,374*]. This description suggests that the Ras is socially as well a spatially segregated from the other areas. It is seen as a

threatening ghetto. “Very few share – taxis or buses passed by the Ras after dark, and those that did never stopped ... many of the stray dogs in the Ras were known to turn vicious at night.” [*The Circle of Reason* 330] Here Ghosh’s humanistic concerns are revealed. In every work an attempt is made by the writers to show the problems of alienation, loneliness, dislocation, linguistics, dehumanization, and hospitality to the refugees, freedom, adaptability, inter-cultural communication, dress-code and the like. In addition to this the focus is made on pinpointing how mimicking the western culture leads the characters in to troubles. The crossing of the borders is in the form of migration or travelling. The alien culture is not simply the West but also the East.

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3. Tea Tribes in Assam: Migration and Identity Issues

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This paper dwells upon the two major issues and concerns of tea tribes in Assam, viz. extent of migration and identity crisis. The history of the tea labourers of Assam, a community that emerged with the establishment of tea plantation in Assam during the British Raj, is replete with deprivations of multiple dimensions from the early period of their migration to and settlement in Assam. For decades, the tea tribes have been demanding their inclusion into the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution for recognition as the Scheduled Tribes for getting better privileges and other financial incentives. But there are also voices of protests from indigenous tribal people who are opposed to smaller groups demanding the Scheduled Tribe status as the accordance of such status to some other groups would lead to greater competition within the beneficiaries of Scheduled Tribe status. All these experiences of social exclusion and marginalisation have gone a long way in shaping the expressive traditions, particularly literature of the community. The present paper aims to study the literature of the tea garden community of Assam and attempt to understand and examine the multifaceted dimension of the literary texts situated within the totality of the context, which will provide a new perspective on the socio, political, economic and cultural history of the space.

The tea tribes of Assam came mainly from the states like present day Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal who were employed by the British Tea Planters from middle of the nineteenth century to early decades of following century. 'Arkatis' or the middlemen lured them to come to this part of the country with a prospect of a better living with economic stability. But once they arrived, there was no route of exit for them. On the one hand, the unsuitable climatic condition brought countless physical sufferings to them and unable to withstand this, many of them died before fulfilling their dream of success. On the other hand, the exploitation by the British plantation masters made their lives miserable; but they could not leave the tea plantation as they were treated almost as bonded labourers. Any adventurous attempt to escape was handled with inhuman torture by the tea planters and colonial masters. Moreover, the prospect of a hard-earned return to their homes also did not offer any rosy picture to them as they would be treated as unwelcome guests back home. So the tea labourers belonging to the communities such as Mundas, Oraons, Santhals, Kharias, Gonds, Khonds, Kisang, Nagesias etc. remained in the tea plantation in Assam over may decades by enduring the sufferings perpetrated against them and many of these indentured labourers settled down in Assam even at the end of their contract period. After the exit of the British planters in the post independence period some of them left the tea plantations to inhabit in the surrounding agricultural lands. But the tea tribes of Assam are continuously facing the crisis of identity due to their uncertain status. On the one hand, they were uprooted from their earlier homes and on the other hand they are not accepted by the natives of this land. The plight of the tea labourers of Assam seems to reveal a similar kind of 'Trishanku' experience mentioned by Homi K. Bhaba in his book *Nation and Narration* (London, 1990) in relation to the people who swing to a third space between the homeland and the new land.

The conflict between the tea tribes and the native people of Assam has taken an ugly shape over the last few years which has not only affected Assam's tea industry but also created political turmoil and social unrest. The historical background may help us to understand their present situation as well as their struggle for identity. It should be studied in the context of the *Permanent Settlement 1793* and the Assam tea plantations. Meant to make tax collection easy, the *Permanent Settlement 1793* the British turned the *tikedars* and *jathedars* whom the local kings had appointed as tax collectors into *zamindars*. Thus, the colonialist took the Indian upper classes into his confidence to control the tribal on their behalf. After that the British enacted forest laws that denied the tribal their customary rights to their sustenance. Moreover, the tribal did not have the knowledge of land tax, and thus they were easily exploited by the *zamindars*. In this context Walter Fernandes comments in his essay "Assam Adivasis: Identity Issues and Liberation.": "*The Permanent Settlement began the process of the marginalisation of the tribal communities that that depended not*

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on individual ownership or landlordism but on community property resources (CPRs) in which land and forests belonged to the village. The family used them under its control and on its behalf. . . . The tribal communities had inhabited these areas for several centuries before these laws were enacted and had sustained themselves on the forest produce and other CPRs that met more than 50% of their food, fuel, fodder, medicinal herb and other needs. These laws are based on the colonial principle of eminent domain according to which all natural resources are State property, so is all land that does not have an individual patta.” They thus turned them into encroachers on their own land and deprived them of their traditional rights (Munshi Saldanha 71-72). Thus the Permanent Settlement broke the link between the CPRs and their communities, resulting into the weakening or destruction of their cultural identity and economic security. In Assam, the British rulers enacted the *Assam Land Act 1834* followed by the *Wasteland Grant Rules 1838* in order to get land easily for the tea estates. The primary intention of the colonialist behind the enactment of all these acts was to engage the tribals viz. Ahom, Koch and Bodo in the plantation by way of driving them out of their own land and thus depriving them from their livelihood. But the tribals of Assam were not ready to become wage labourers on their own land. Moreover the Chinese whom the British immigrated to Assam could not become the type of workers they needed (Guha 1977). So the British tea planters ventured to Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh in search of indentured labourers. And because of their impoverishment they were “compelled to emigrate mainly to Assam tea gardens when they could not obtain justice from the government and could not bear to stay on in their newly transformed status as tenants” (Chatterjee 159). Thus they and Dalits elsewhere formed a continuous flow of indentured labour that helped the worldwide expansion of the ‘plantation complex’ (Sen 8-12). So the plight of the Assam tea tribes can be understood only in reference to this system.

Moreover, it may be seen that there is a rift among the tea tribes of Assam themselves which affects their identity formation. Most Upper Assam workers identify themselves as “Assamese” while in Lower Assam their identity is linked to the places they originally came from. Again, the former are fluent in Assamese and use Sadri as their mother tongue while the latter are more comfortable in the tribal languages of their origin. Moreover, there is another dimension of their identity formation which is linked with capitalist and imperialist exploitation. The tea garden management always keeps the tea tribes isolated from their neighbouring communities so that they may consider them “outsiders”. Thus the local people consider these “outsiders” a threat, as being capable of depriving of their jobs and land. Again, the regimented nature of work culture adds to their sense of dependence on the tea garden and this makes them easy prey to the management and their exploitation becomes easier since they do not get any local support.

The identity of the tea tribes in Assam remains as fluid as it used to be in the colonial era even though they have settled here for more than a century. Because of the design of the management as well as the lack of understanding between the tea tribes and the local communities, the identity formation has become a major concern for the tea tribes in Assam. It may be seen that many tribal activists coming from Jharkhand and other neighbouring areas seek to promote a sense of solidarity among them and retain their Jharkhand identity (Crawford 22). But this approach has further problematized their identity formation resulting into more rifts that has widened the cleavage of minds between the tea tribes and local communities. The latter, instead of considering these “outsiders” assets for their contribution to tea plantation which is the backbone of its economy, continue to consider it a liability and a threat to their own existence.

Moreover, the fluidity of the identity of these tea tribes who are considered “outsiders” is also due to the increasing strong sense of indigenous identity among various communities of the region. In Assam much of it is around land and forests (Misra 11-17). It has led to conflicts and even massacres for example among the Bodo and Santhal tea tribes in Kokrajhar, Chirang and Baksa districts of Lower Assam. The most recent incident was the massacre of more than 80 lives of tea tribe communities in 5 villages of Kokrajhar, Sonitpur and Chirang districts in the evening of

December 23, 2014. The Bodos have lost their land through a series of historical factors and the settlement of tea tribe communities on forest areas of the region has aggravated their struggle for livelihood. This is the root of the conflict with the Bodos who have now been turned into labourers on the land what was once their kingdom. The situation is further aggravated due to the arrival of Muslim community, large chunk of which is believed to be illegal migrants from Bangladesh. In that region too they feel that they have to compete with the *Adivasi* and Santhal “outsiders” for the scarce resources (Bhan 9-10). Thus the Jharkhand identity that many of them are trying to retain in its purity can add to the perception of the *Adivasi* being “outsiders” (Fernandes 4). Moreover, the medium of language of education has a role to play in the construction of their identity. In the schools of this region the Bodo and Assamese languages are recognised mediums of instruction which creates a problem to these tea tribe communities who are more conversant in Sadri and Hindi with which their Jharkhand identity is also linked. This has indeed added to their isolation instead of having a cordial relationship with the local people. Besides, by excluding them from the Schedule, the State has denied them the opportunity of free education and of working outside the gardens (Fernandes 4). Moreover, parents in need tend to view a child not as a mouth to feed but as two hands to work with. So despite the law, they bring along children below 12 to pluck leaves. The management tends to view them as cheap labour and ignore this abuse, thus creating a vested interest in their not being educated. As a result, most *Adivasis* have to cross several economic and social barriers to gain access to formal education (Fernandes, Barbora and Bharali 57-60).

To solve this problem of identity of these tea tribe communities there may be two alternatives - the first alternative is to recognise their uniformity amid the diversity of cultures and accept a blanket identity of “Tea Tribes”. The second alternative is to counter that position which some *Adivasi* leaders tend to revert to their Jharkhand identity and become Assamese like their neighbours (Kar 118-119). Both the extremes can be counterproductive. The former can keep them isolated and also lead to ethnic conflicts. The latter can intensify their low self-image since it implies that their original culture is of not [sic] value. (Fernandes 5). As a compromise formula it may be that they retain many of their cultural forms and at the same time enrich them with local elements in order to become a tribal community of Assam rather than being isolated and treated as “outsiders”. Thus for these tea tribes both the tag of “tribal” and “Assam” are equally important. Some do retain elements of their past such as animist practices in their religion (Barjo 51-53)

Any text, either oral or written, often reflects in its tone and tenor, explicitly or implicitly, the context it has grown out of. The literature of the tea tribe of Assam is no exception to that. Through the reflection and the articulation of the responses to the context of the genesis, the development and the existence of the tea tribes of Assam, their literature represent the marginalisation, and the anguish of attempts of social exclusion ingrained in their life. The literature of the tea labour community of Assam, howsoever peripheral its existence may be, has added a new dimension to the literature produced from the Northeast in particular and to the whole gamut of subaltern literature in general. Through the responses ingrained in it to the pangs of subjugation and existential crisis, it has also opened up a new area of subaltern studies. One of the reasons of the marginal existence of this literature is the fact that this community is yet to find required attention of publishing houses as well as critical response to vanguard their voice. The anger of being deprived, marginalized and the frustration of an ‘outsider’ as well as the memory of being historically wronged becomes the core of the literature of the tea community of Assam.

As a case in point the article “Upojati Nigroho” by Kajol Demta published in *Hamder Bat* may be cited where the history of the exploitation and subjugation of these tea tribes of Assam is expressed with the ventilation of frustration: “*It is more than a century and half that the addivasi people belonging to the ethnic groups of Munda, Urang, Kol, Bhil, Santali etc. came from various parts of Madhya Pradesh, Ranchi and Hazaribag. They came to Assam with a tag of “Imported Coolie.”* The whole of Assam at that time was crammed full of bushes and jungle inhabited by ferocious animals and poisonous reptiles and insects. In such a hostile place the addivasis were

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imported to work and carry out orders of their masters. All these things have become myths now. Many of them went to the tummies of tigers while making the bushes and jungle fit for living. Some more were the victims of snake biting and also a handful of them were not spared by malaria. In spite of all these adversities the self-effacing poor adhivasi were continuously working. On one hand with extreme hardship they were clearing the bushes and jungle and on the other the opportunist people were intruding the lands cleaned by them.

The British government at that time laid railway tracks in this region with these adhivasi coolie labourers. Miles after miles the hilly tracks of this region were covered by tea plantation with their physical labour. Gradually the adhivasi people have acclimatized with the soil and environment of this region along with the alien people. They accepted heartily the dialects and customs of these people as their own. Records of that time report to various incidents of atrocities perpetrated to the adhivasi tribes. In tea gardens they were the subjects of admonishment and physical torture in the hands of clerks, doctors, accountants, guards and every other. They were not granted any leave even if they were knocked down by illness. The adhivasi find place even in old scriptures. There we find references of various ethnic groups - Ludha, Shobor, Nisad, Chandal. In the Ramayana the sudra cleric Shambuk was killed by Ram and in the Mahabharata Guru Drunacharya refused to teach the art of archery to Eklavya as he belonged to the low caste adhivasi tribe. Even if Eklavya attained the skill of archery with his own effort he had to pay a very high price by way of sacrificing his right hand thumb. The adhivasi tribes did not get their due from the high caste society even in ancient time and this kind of atrocity is still continuing.” (Translated by this author under the title “Atrocity against adhivasi tribes” published by OUP) But their arrival to this Promised Land of happiness was full of expectations and dreams as reflected in their oral literature:

*“Chal Mini Assam jabo
Deshe boro dukh re
Assam desher sahib debe pati tola kam go...”*

The poor husband expects of a better life in the tea garden of Assam and this is expressed in his words to his wife, ‘Mini, let us go to Assam/ Life here at home is full of misery/ The sahib of Assam will give us the job of plucking tea leaves’ But once they arrived their experience was totally opposite to that expectation and the dream turns into disillusionment as they suffer the subjugation and exploitation under the hands of Sardar, Babu and British Sahib. The frustration of this poor man who has now become a tea garden labourer gets reflected in the next lines of this oral narrative who shares it with his wife:

*“Sahib bole kam kam
Babu bole dhare aan
Sardar bole libo pither cham...”*
(Sahib demands more work
Babu orders to bring the labourer forcibly
Sardar warns of thrashing) (Tr. Self)

In another poem written by Kajol Demta titled “Sapon Dekha” the history of initial dream turning into frustration is very well reflected:

*“Where to go my son!
We can't go far away
know not how to dream...
Silent on who will wash dishes and car.
Wait my child for few more days
Thou will be called before thy age.”* (Tr. Self “Dreaming” OUP)

This disillusionment has also led to an eagerness to go back to the root as depicted by Sameer Tanti, a distinguished poet of the tea tribe community of Assam, in his poem “One day I shall Return”:

“One day I shall return to remember us forever in solitude.
(Tr. Baishali Baruah at <http://www.geocities.com/bipuljyoti/poetry/sameer.html>)

The same kind of poetic voice is also found in another poet of the community, Sananta Tanti’s poem “The Whole Day Long”:

“He spread his wings t he whole day long ... the day long, t he whole day long.”(Tr. Pradip Acharya)

The same kind of sufferings, deprivations and exploitations are reflected in Jhumur Pandey’s short story ‘Jagai Burir Uttaran’ (The Rise of Jagai Buri) which depicts the quandary of an old woman of tea tribe community, Jagai Bari, who had migrated in her childhood holding her father’s hands. The septuagenarian woman lives alone by begging door to door and now she is left only with the memories of the past when she used to pluck tea leaves and lived life to the lees in her youth. Her fair complexion had also created the ripples that she might have been fathered by a white sahib. This again is a typical case of hybridization in the tea gardens of Assam. But one cannot miss the point of exploitation of tea garden women by the British Sahibs which was also realistically depicted in Mulk Raj Anand’s novel *Two Leaves and a Bud*. However, Jagai Buri lived with her husband and son. But the husband died in an attempt to put down the fire in the garden and the son died of fever which is again the typical story of the tea gardens of Assam which lack basic health facilities.

The struggle for existence actually began when they were forced to leave their native place as her father failed to pay the land revenue in time and the landlord put their small hut into flames. That very night her father, after cremating the burnt dead bodies of his wife and son, boarded a train with some other people and came to start a new life in the tea garden of Assam. But the disillusionment began with the killing of his father in the police firing on the protest rally of the tea garden labourers. After that Jagai, who was engaged as a manual labourer in the Manager’s bungalow, could see the ugly faces of the union leaders, who earlier instigated the labourers against the tea garden management, but they were nothing but the tools of the of the management and they compromised at the cost of labourers’ lives and interest in exchange of self enjoyments and benefits. The septuagenarian Jagai Buri now blames none but her fate for all her sufferings. But one morning when she sees the labourers of the tea garden in an agitation in support of their certain demands she wakes up as she gradually feels a kind of transformation within her and she pulls herself up to join the agitation. Thus the exploitative status of the Assam tea tribes is replete with sufferings whose history and social situation have reduced them to a state of helplessness. They have gradually absorbed a low self-image and have almost lost their own identity. But the attempt to assert the identity is growing gradually among the educated section of the society which also finds expression in their literature along with political movements.

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4. *The Cave*

Psychical landscapes divided by shadows perceived through the spectacles of Nature

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‘Nobody realizes that some people expend tremendous energy merely to be normal.’ -Albert Camus (The Absurd Reasoning).

Not normally normal. Civilization is a roundabout search for the ‘normal’; a lifestyle that vacillates between the importance of being an individual and an all inclusive citizen of this world. *The Cave* is a quest set against the backdrop of a dying primitive craft. Jose Saramago enquires the purpose of art and literature subtly through the slow movement into the world of ‘progress, expansion and mobility’. Industrial Revolution spawned a new populace who indulged in being ‘more than humans’. The purpose and nature of life and art became a wanton abstraction caught in the cogs of the machine of mechanics. The shift from the all nurturing Mother Nature to the all answering Mother Culture took place. This novel deals with the difference of what we imagine to be normal life and what we end up living and how abnormal our concept of the ‘absolute normal’ really is. Using Foucauldian Discourse analysis of the ‘new normal’ one can see the focal fracturing of skill into the merely physical and the purely intellectual. The former gets relegated to the background as the latter parades the ‘brave new world’ of polished culture.

Nature inside out. A reverse ‘pathetic fallacy’ is set in motion when the landscapes of the mind reflect the decay of the outside world scarred by the ‘urban megalopolises: “The overwhelming melancholy of what lay outside had contaminated with incurable artificiality what was growing inside.” (Saramago 17). The novel is Cipriano Algor ‘s journey from the ‘house cum pottery’ to the soulless megaplex called the ‘Centre’. He is an aging potter who lives with his daughter and her husband at the mercy of the Centre for his livelihood. The author explains the family names of the two main characters (Cipriano Algor and Marcal Gacho) in a nonchalant way as ‘Algor’ meaning “the intense cold one feels in one’s body before a fever sets in” and ‘Gacho’ meaning “the part of an ox’s neck on which the yoke rests”. Cipriano’s visit into the ‘stomach of darkness’ of an artificial beast at the Centre and his feverish realization culminates in a final escape from the shadows of mental illusion and physical distortion. The meaning of ‘Gacho’ is exemplified when we find that Marcal’s soul is trapped by automated notions of duty.

The Algors had lived a ‘simple in means’ happy life till the interference of the Centre. Cipriano in his ‘salad days’ had seen the glory and importance of his sturdy hands that made earthen wares of clay that had great utility value in every household. The Centre suddenly decrees that it is no longer interested in purchasing his humble wares. This comes down as an unexpected blow to the aging potter and his daughter. They try to stabilize their shattering world by coming up with a new proposal for the Centre. Together they craft a new line of small ceramic figurines and to their utter shock, the Centre fancies these little clay clones ordering vast quantities. It, however, recants its decision later throwing another thunderbolt on the Cipriano family, prompting them to move into the artificial city that contains a horrible secret in its bowels. The Centre keeps growing enclosing the city and expanding into villages. It is a gigantic complex of housing and shops, effectively and seemingly self-contained in itself. People have apartments there, and can live in a perfect temperature controlled world with everything one needs for sale within the Center, and even a special room where one can go and experience artificial rain storms, snow, strong winds and the sun. There is no need to leave the cave of the Center to experience the assumed ‘inferior’ external world. The autonomy of the Centre is based on the shadowy existence of Nature. The Centre offers everyone a paradise on earth, manipulating Nature.

Cultural Prison and the Cave. The novel explores the idea of prisoners caught in a concrete jungle. The Centre's belief is that, the world belongs to us and not the other way round. Man, then, is the apex of all creation. We think we have control, which is a supreme illusion, for we only control the equipments and gadgets with which we interpret the world. This can be further adumbrated using the 'story of the hapless airman' Daniel Quinn talks about in his novel *Ishmael*. In this story, a hapless airman tries to achieve powered flight ignorant of the laws of aerodynamics. He chooses a very high plane to launch his contraption. As the flight begins all is well and the airman pedals away to glory. He feels wonderful and excited. But what he does not realize is that the craft is aerodynamically incapable of flight. It simply does not comply with the laws that make flight possible. However, his excitement makes him forget this. He does not realize that he is an unsupported object falling toward the centre of the earth. He is not in flight but in free fall. *"The floor of the valley is dotted with craft just like his-not crashed, simply abandoned... What sort of fool would abandon their aircraft when they could be enjoying the freedom of the air?... In fact, the earth seems to be rising up toward him. Well, he's not very worried about that. After all, his flight has been a complete success up to now, there's no reason why it shouldn't go on being a success."* (Quinn 107-109). The Centre would not acknowledge its descent. It is a grand glorification of the 'free fall' we indulged in, away from Nature. We take comfort in Mother Culture who keeps telling us to conquer more. *"Urbanization, centralization, increased mobility, the dependence on goods and technologies is from where one does not belong, the increase of structural complications of life-all these factors weaken or disrupt the steady belongingness to a place, or even hinder its formation."* (Drengson, Devall 45). The scare of losing their sense of belonging is what haunts Cipriano and Marta throughout the novel. The contrast is made evident when the family shifts to the Centre-governed apartments where they experience firsthand the conversion of humans into mere 'subjects'. Louis Althusser's theory of the construction of the 'subject' and in turn the subject's 'construction of ideology' is seen in operation here. He explains the 'subject' as: *"The individual self-consciousness as constructed by institutions (ideological state apparatuses), which interpellate subjects."* (Althusser 37). *This interpellation of subjects is central to the functioning of our cultural prison (the symbolic 'Centre'). We have been provided with conditions to live in and contexts to act and react to. Consider this sign put up by the Centre: "We would sell you everything you need, but we would prefer you to need what we have to sell."* (Saramago 235).

This is exactly how the system functions. It mass produces products and then customizes our 'needs' to suit its consumption targets. The above is a very clear example of interpellation. The concept of subjectivity which problematizes social relationships, actually replaces 'human nature' with the production of the 'human subject'. This Cultural Prison, which encompasses all Modern humanity functions like the 'Panopticon'. Foucault's interpretation of Jeremy Bentham's circular prison in his *Discipline and Punish* introduces the idea of 'surveillance' (Deleuze 33). The Panopticon is a type of prison building; the design is to allow an observer to observe all prisoners without the incarcerated being able to tell whether they are being watched. Thus, a constant vigil is maintained over the prisoners. In the novel the Centre is this cultural prison, where the security guards keep close watch over the inhabitants.

Cipriano Algor's first investigative steps led him to the mysterious secret door... (When he tries to open it, he is stopped by a security personnel who enquires after this supposedly needless prowl by the inhabitant) Cipriano Algor explained... Simple curiosity, sir, the simple curiosity of someone who has nothing else to do... (the guard says) take my advice, don't come here again, it could get you into trouble, being curious once is enough, besides, there's nothing secret behind that door, there was once, but not now, In that case, why don't they remove the sign, asked Cipriano Algor, It acts as a lure so that we can find out who are the inquisitive ones living in the Centre. From the above conversation between Cipriano and the security guard, one can gauge the interference and 'panoptic surveillance' practiced actively by the Centre. The guard is trained to kill the inquisitiveness of the residents and report any anomaly of behavior, in this case, 'simple curiosity'.

Automated Human Caves. The novel begins with the following epigraph: *What a strange scene you describe and what strange prisoners, They are just like us. -Plato, The Republic, Book VII.* Jose Saramago uses the ‘allegory of Plato’s Cave’ to throw light on the ‘death-in-existence’ of us in this ultra Modern, urbanized world. The ‘Allegory of the Cave’ is introduced by Plato in his work *The Republic*. The story of the cave illustrates the escape of the philosopher from ‘the fetters and the darkness’ of the physical world of the senses to ‘the free and the dazzling radiance’ of the world of intellect. The narrator-Socrates also insists that the philosopher must afterwards return to the cave to enlighten and set at liberty those still imprisoned there. Adapting this to understand the novel, we can say that the Centre is that Cave where people are fettered to comply with the workings and ideologies of absolute authority. The name ‘Gacho’ (yoke) makes more sense now. Marcal Gacho can be identified with the prisoners of Plato. Let us compare and contrast the description of both these pathetic scenarios: *“Next then,” I said, “take the following parable of education and ignorance as a picture of the condition of our nature. Imagine mankind as dwelling in an underground cave with a long entrance open to the light across the whole width of the cave; in this they have been from childhood, with necks and legs fettered, so they have to stay where they are. They cannot move their heads round because of the fetters, and they can only look forward, but light comes to them fire burning behind them higher up at a distance. Between the fire and the prisoners is a road above their level, and along it imagine a low wall has been built, as puppet showmen have screens in front of their people over which they work their puppets” (Plato 365).* This is so similar to the condition of the residents in the Centre. There were two corridors separating the blocks of apartments from the view onto the outside world that all that the residents could behold was nothing but the splendor of the artificial city. The windows that did open into the outside world were ordered to be shut all throughout the year owing to pre-conditioned/controlled stimulated ambience. In a sense, the residents were fettered to gadgets that controlled and regulated weather conditions: *“...the inhabited part of the Centre is made up of four vertical, parallel sequences of apartments, arranged like cells in a storage battery or honeycombs in a beehive, the interiors joined back to back, the exteriors joined to the central structure by the corridors...these people never see the light of day...they can find some distraction watching the view and the people moving about, while the others are practically enclosed (Saramago 232).”* The irony is that the residents believe this conditioned environment to be reality, no different from Plato’s prisoners. They prefer ultra-violet machines, atmospheric regenerators and thermostats to actual atmospheric condition. They are like the prisoners in the cave, seeing life in the dumb show of shadows. The novelty here is Cipriano’s descent into the Cave rather than the ascent to behold the Sun. His physical and mental transference from the illumined world of the Mulberry tree guarded pottery and house into the soulless darkness of the otherwise splendid arcade of the Centre.

Lost and Found-Alazon and Eiron. In Greek Old Comedy, we have distinct characters called the ‘alazon’ and the ‘eiron’. These are typical stock characters used in the plays as vehicles of stereotype. The first of these is the braggart and the second his clever opponent. In the novel, the alazon stands for the brag of civilization. He is the ‘hapless airman’ who keeps boasting about his heroic feats. Nature on the other hand, is the eiron, who exposes our ignorance and vain gloriousness by just being there. Marcal and Marta belong to the generation of the alazon, whereas Isaura and Cipriano belong to the older, wiser generation of the eiron. Although, in the case of Cipriano, the alazon in him surfaces when he tries to fit into the new world; to find his lost ‘sense of belonging,’ it is here the novelist employs an external agent in the form of the dog called ‘Found’ to perforate the debate between instinct and intellect. Found here becomes, the more consistent eiron drawing a parallel with Isaura. They both supply Cipriano with the missing link to living life as opposed to merely existing. Isaura, is the village widow who shifts from, the mellow person wallowing in self pity into a woman who gives refuge to Found; later deciding to stay back in the solace of the rustic village than choose to be a part of the ever devouring Centre. She is the silent eiron, who is also the reason for Cipriano’s return to the village after he discovers the horrible secret buried deep within the bowels of the Centre. What they have is not a romantic or a rebound relationship, but a relationship that searches for each individual’s place in the world and how they could achieve it,

paradoxically, by being together. It is not two people who have lost much in life coming together as much as it is about two people who have beheld the illusions of life and broken free.

Found becomes a clever companion to Cipriano affecting his thoughts with only actions that has managed to reach across to him more efficiently than words whose worth keep changing in the sterile flux of ineffable speech. The dog is his ticket to re-embrace a more natural and simple existence in the real and the actual external world. Found is the lost dog who turns up at the Algor household just when he is needed so much. In a sense, his name stands for ‘finding the lost self’ more in the context of the humans around him. Marcal understands his human self outside his skin of the uniformed security guard; Isaura understands that it is never too late to have a zest for life; Marta realizes her role as a daughter and a mother to be by the touching gestures of Found. He provides a profound contact with the natural world – an animal without as much of our limiting conscience, a being which follows its gut and gives generously in loyalty and love for decent treatment. Further Found drives them toward the “natural” world since the Centre has programmed out pets as messy and unnecessary. Though his actions are anthropomorphized, his mind voice acts as a contrast to the human world or the human’s version of the world- for not everything is measured in human consciousness. Humans wish to be the sole subject of the universe, to absorb the world into themselves, and never to be an object. Found is a reminder to Cipriano that there is a world beyond the shadows of human existence.

The torch of Sapience. In our obsessive compulsion to represent the world we often forget to live in it. The Algors shuttle between such representations. A rat race that goes on, until, a realization dawns upon Cipriano, when his curiosity discovers the gruesome secret of the Centre. At the Centre, the residents hear the drone of an excavation process for the setting up of new cold storage units. It is later revealed that the drone had stopped owing to the discovery of a cave. This was being guarded with the utmost security. Cipriano however, ventures into this cave in a daring spirit of curiosity: *“The tremulous light from the torch swept slowly over the white stone, caught some bits of dark cloth, then moved upwards to reveal a human body sitting there. Beside it, covered in the same dark fabric, were five other bodies, all sitting as erect as if a metal spike had been put through their skulls to keep them fixed to the stone. The smooth rear wall of the cave was about ten handspans away from their hollow eye sockets, in which the eyeballs had been reduced to mere grains of dust.”* (Saramago 280). These prisoners, however, have empty eye sockets, hence even beholding shadows are denied. An interesting parallel exists between the six figurines, created by Cipriano and Marta to these strange six fixed fossilized humans. Near the entrance he had passed an abandoned stone bench by the builders, he slowly walks up the passageway; slumps down on it and passes through a spectrum of emotions. This abandoned stone bench is a reminder of the ‘stone of meditations’ the novelist earlier describes where, Cipriano had sat, right next to the kiln, pondering on the figurines. The abandoned bench here is symbolic of forfeit experienced by the creator (God or man acting as god). The dejection, terror and agony of the sight pain him; he then tells himself that this is like the circular route of the Calvary, intensely heart-rending. *“I touched the forehead of one of those women with my own hand, it wasn’t an illusion, it wasn’t a dream...If they can’t be those other people, since they never existed, who are they, asked Marcal, I don’t know, but after seeing them, I started thinking perhaps what really doesn’t exist is what we call non-existence.”* (Saramago 281).

Cipriano on the way to this ghastly and macabre sight had also cast a glance on a wall; a platform; a large black stain on the ground, maybe scorched by fire. All of the above are remnants of a lost cause. Whether or not Plato’s cave had a latent or manifest existence now transcends his understanding, he has drawn his conclusion, as he later explains to Marta in the apartment: existed or not; he’s leaving the Centre. Cipriano keeps uttering “those people are us”. A frightening truth grips the Algors. Cipriano goes back to his village and finds Found and Isaura in his pottery-house and he now holds the ‘torch of sapience’, he sees the sun in its entire splendor like the one prisoner who escapes the fetters in Plato’s allegory. He has ascended out of the cave called Centre. Meanwhile,

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Marcal decides to stop ‘adapting’ to the conditions of the Centre and Marta decides that her unborn child will not see the world as seen by the residents and they follow suit into the village, to the pottery-house very soon. The Algors, however, realize the ascent was only partial fulfillment, now they have a ‘future’ to figure out. Plato’s Socrates recommends the return of the escaped prisoner to enlighten his fellow prisoners after beholding the ‘real’ as opposed to ‘shadows’. The Algors, however, caught in the modern labyrinth are too lost to declare anything for they realize that the entire world has turned into one big cave and really the ascent is only an illusion. As strangers to their own race, they abandon a life bewitched by the smudge of civilization. They shut down the kiln; arrange the clay figurines, poised and guarding the entrance to the pottery. On the morning of their departure, they leave their creation to the fate of a grey sky and speed away in the van. Then they are bizarrely reminded by Marcal, of a new poster outside the Centre. “Coming Soon, public opening of Plato’s cave, an exclusive attraction, unique in the world, Buy your ticket now.” The Centre’s secrecy, its marketing policies, its urge to convert anything into an industry, its love for ‘packaging, promotion and publicity’ create more shadows that the world needs to either believe or forsake. “*No story is devoid of meaning, if you know how to look for it.*” -Daniel Quinn. Our ‘existence’ is what the world makes of it, but how we ‘live’ is what we make of this world. *The Cave* is a reminder of the circularity of meaning.

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5. Bliss: Questionable Quandary

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This paper is based on an unpublished poem, “BLISS” of an Indian-born, Australian settled poet, Manoj Prajwal Bhattaram, born on 21st July, 1987. He is presently working as a Research Officer at Queensland University. He has more than fifty poems to his credit; majority of them, about Nature and the destruction Man has brought to it. His poem “The Doom of Man” won the third prize in the competition conducted by “The Poetree Garden”, Thiruvananthapuram; and was published in their book. The poet has no interest in publishing his poems; but all of them are available on his website.

*When I was just a little girl,
I asked my mother what will I be,
Will I be rich? Will I be pretty?
This is what she said to me....
Que sera sera! What will be, will be;
The future's not ours to see...
Que sera sera! What will be, will be!.. (Doris Day)*

This was a song by Doris Day, the quintessential all-American girl, continues to be revered by her fans, while the media still celebrate her as an actress and singer with a legendary Hollywood "girl next door" image. Doris' recording of "Que Sera, Sera (Whatever Will Be, Will Be)" was used as an innocuous plot device in the film, and won an Oscar for Best Song. When Doris later recorded "Que Sera Sera" for Columbia, it became such a massive hit, it was henceforth perceived as her signature number. This song was taught in our school when I was just six years old. We had singing classes and the Anglo-Indian teacher there taught us this song. It sounds so simple yet; it is remarkable for its profound meaning. The French phrase and its English translation speak volumes of the ultimate truth expressed in such a simple verse!!! The innocent yet ambitious nature of the child is reined in by the mother's judicious answer. Ambition is neither a mistake nor a sin. But an irresistible, ravenous appetite to secure comfort at the expense of creating pain to others is said to be maniacal.

Let's look around...what we find is a mad rush...everyone is racing...trying to reach destinations...deciding on the spur of the moment...squeezing through traffic lights...paying scant regard to traffic rules or the other vehicles...hitting other people and zooming off...accidents happening...ambulances wedging through trafficking pedestrians...roadside hawkers busy selling their wares...brisk business at traffic jams...the list can go on forever. If that is the situation on the roads, let us look at our academic arena. Even before the child secures a place on earth, a seat is reserved in the so-called best school. Before the child starts recognizing its parents, it is taught alphabet, numbers, colours, General Knowledge, made to attend competitions, secure prizes and certificates. A child is made to believe that life is nothing but competing with others in all activities and achieving the first place. If a child expresses inability or fails in the process; the stigma it has to face and the trauma it has to undergo makes life a miserable place to exist. Obtaining a seat in professional college and acquiring a stable employment is the goal that is set for the innocent child. All this takes at least 22 – 25 years. Then the cycle repeats with the next generation. Have we ever thought for a second as to what we are losing in the process? In this stressful rigmarole we have set for ourselves; and our children; we have stopped living. Very similar to a patient who is in comatose, we exist only to fulfill our ambition; otherwise we go into depression and end up in committing suicides. We have ceased to 'live'; we only 'exist'.

Why are we racing? Against whom? To achieve what? What do we secure out of it? Happiness, Peace, Contentment....No. Only Blood Pressure, Diabetes or Haemorrhage! What are we

searching for exactly? Knowledge? Wealth? Peace? Power? If it is knowledge we want, a quiet study would do! If for wealth, is it for man-made currency or God-given Nature? If it is peace we seek, then why all this violence? If it is power to harass others or hoard more monetary wealth, aren't the methods adopted, expressions of sadistic pleasure? Manoj Prajwal Bhattaram, the poet, tries to portray through his poem *Bliss*, the source of real happiness. He pinpoints to the fact that Nature is Man's asylum, his elemental and terminal sanctuary. Striving to shield oneself from Nature's natural processes is a stressful and futile trial; for subsequently Man has to remain subservient to Nature.

Nature has provided man with everything. Though man, in numerous ways has been unproductive to Nature; she endures him and tries to satisfy his needs. But how far can she satiate his greed? Instead of adapting to the changes in Nature, he tries to create alternate methods to transform his surroundings; so that he may achieve physical comfort and egotistic satiety. Man's sensory powers are utilized only to establish his superiority over other living things. Terming himself brainy, he exploits all the resources available in Nature. In the process he not only disregards Nature but also unhesitatingly damages it; ignorant of the fact that in the process he is authorizing his own doom. The poet Manoj Prajwal Bhattaram puts these thoughts very effectively through his verse. He begins the poem with lines conveying the pleasure gained out of subsisting with Nature in all its nascent beauty. But after about a score and five lines, we realize that the poet had been dreaming about this paradise; and that Nature has been mutilated by Man beyond recognition. Instantaneously the poet's mind starts analyzing Man's inherent qualities.

All of Man's senses have been dwarfed by his sense of ambition. His eyes fail to see the clouds scudding across the skies or the beauty of Nature around; his ears fail to listen to the winds whispering; the crickets chirping. He is unable to give an ear to the howling of wolves far off or the owls hooting mournfully? He has turned blind and deaf to all the sights and sounds of Nature. His aspiration to conquer Nature and make her do his bidding has attained proportions hitherto unheard of. He resorts to strategies, which provide momentary comfort to Man putting to risk other creatures of Nature. He tries to secure comfort at the expense of harming Nature. He tries to inquisitively interfere into Nature's intrinsic attributes; which lead Nature to the brink of imminent danger. He is always searching for comfort – rains in summer, warmth during rains so on and so forth. What he actually forgets is that Nature is comfort. Comfort is acquired only through adaptability. Adapting to Nature and adopting natural ways of living will undoubtedly secure ultimate comfort for Man. Man's quest for this illusive bliss has blinded him to the extent that he is unable to perceive true bliss in Nature. Where else can a child find comfort, if not in the lap of one's mother? Ignoring this comfort he seeks the elusive illusion, which has finally landed him in a delusion resulting in his total confusion.

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Appendix: *Bliss*

I wake up on a cool morn,/ To find myself on green grass.
The blue sky stretches out,/ Like a vast dome over my head.
The birds chirp in the trees,/ A cool breeze ruffles my hair.....
Surprised I sit up and...../ Find myself in a meadow,
That stretches to the feet of the hills/ Hills veiled in the morning mist.....
The sun rises as I watch,/ Out of the grey vapour in the east.
A Golden ball of fire, He rides,/ Rides in the heavens above.
The mist rises as the day clears,/ A wonderful silence pervades,

In the wide flats that stretch,/ That stretch to the feet of the hills.
The silence is broken by the chirp,/ The chirp of the birds in the trees.
A silver stream tinkles by, filled,/ Filled with fish of myriad hues.
I let the Bliss sink in,/ Into my very bones, and then.....
Then I wake with a jerk!!!/ It was all but a dream....
Very few places there are today,/ That are filled with beauty,
Where true unspoiled nature exists./ For man has ruined all in his Quest,
Quest to find some Bliss.
He cannot appreciate the beauty.../ The wonder of nature's art.
He disfigures it and calls it lovely, / While marring it with some stroke of his.
Bliss is for those creatures,/ Creatures that are one with the wild.
Can today's man understand the Bliss, / The Bliss in the sounds of silence ???
When you can hear the wind whisper, / The crickets chirp and watch,
The clouds scud across the sky ??? / Can he ever learn to love,
The velvety darkness of the night, / When the stars twinkle fitfully,
When owls hoot mournfully, / While the wolves howl far off ???
Can he ever understand,/ The beauty of a spring's day,
The might of the summer's sun, / The sound of the rain on the leaves,
And the bite of the winter's winds ? / He is cut off from the world,
He seeks frost in summer,/ He wants rain when it is hot,
He prays for heat when it rains,/ And he fences out the winter's winds.
He is ever seeking comfort,/ And has not found it till now,
For it can never dawn on him,/ That Nature is comfort.....
That Nature is Bliss incarnate.
Bliss shall find Man when/ When he takes Nature as it is....
When he can finally understand, /That to be one with Nature,
Is to be one with Bliss. - *Manoj Prajwal Bhattaram*

6. Representation of Conversion in Telugu Literature

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Recent event of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party's controversial push for a law to ban religious conversions which led for heated debate in the country shows how religious conversion continues to spark debates that find precedents in colonial history. The debate on religious conversions in India received wider audience in the international arena with the killing of Dr. Graham Staines, an Australian Christian missionary along with his two sons in Orissa in 1999. Recently, with the rise of Narendra Modi as Prime Minister of India, the Hindu right-wing RSS, for which the BJP is the political front, has often accused Christian missionaries and Muslims of converting poor Hindu Dalits, formerly known as untouchables, among others, with inducements of cash and a better life or even forcibly.

While Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the nation, was not in favour of religious conversions, other leaders like B.R. Ambedkar, called the father of the Indian Constitution, saw conversion as a means of social elevation and a way to revolt against the discrimination of the caste system. He himself converted to Buddhism. But the recent debate was triggered following attempts by the RSS and other Hindu groups to hold reconversions or "homecoming programmes" to bring Muslim and Christian converts back into the Hindu fold. In Agra, 60 families were allegedly forced to convert to Hinduism in the month of December 2014. While the Christian organizations propounded the role of Christianity in fulfilling the socio-economic aspirations of the lower castes and tribes, the Sangh Parivar leaders strongly rejected this theory of social change and accused the missionary activities in India as being a part of a larger political project being initiated by European countries.

In the light of present debates about anti-conversion law which spread communal tension in the country through forced conversions, present paper looks at how Dalits conversion to Christianity has represented in Telugu Literature. I will look at it by analyzing two novels namely: *Malapalli* by Unnava Lakshminarayana and *Antarani Vasantham* by Kalyan Rao. Paper looks at how caste works to have bias in representation and also the writers' personal experience on Dalit experience (insider and out sider), and on the subject of Christian conversion.

In the writings of upper caste people, Hindu religious world prominently reflects. In tune with Gandhi, (project of reforming within Hinduism) most of the Brahmin nationalist intellectuals are worried about the Dalit's opting out of Hinduism and especially converting into Christianity. This could be seen in Unnava Lakshminarayana's novel *Malapalle*, and also Sripada Subramanya Sastry's stories like *Sagarasangam*, Karunakumar's story *Polaiah*. These writings could be understood in the context of large scale conversions of Dalit's into Christianity. From early twentieth century onwards, Indian life and thought were powerfully affected by the national movement and especially by the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. Unnava is no exception from the influence of Gandhi. He depicts the characters from Nationalist, Gandhian, and even Marxist backgrounds and frameworks, yet he completely sets aside the Dalit position as articulated in their embracing of conversion.

Malapalli literally means the Mala locality in the village and should be a depiction of the complete lifestyle of the Malas in their colony. The novel was published in two volumes. In the first volume Unnava presents a rosy picture of Dalit life in the village. Ramadasu, the protagonist, highly respected priest of Mala community. He is shown from the beginning to the end of the novel as an exemplary priest in terms of interpreting all Hindu texts and myths and always a humble servant of the god Rama. His second son Sangadasu works as a servant-cum-student in the house of Chowdary, a Kamma landlord whose elder son, Ramanaidu, befriend him. The second volume tracks and raises questions of religious identities and conversion movement. Chowdary, who kills Sangadasu, also grabs Ramadasu's land through force and with the support of the court. Ramadasu's family becomes

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very poor. Due to the peasants struggle against the British, Ramadasu's family arrested and taken to the settlement area. Here they meet Paul, an orphan from the Mala caste, brought up by a Christian mission. He is shown as a translator to Branson, a missionary at the settlement. Ramadasu questions the intention behind the everyday prayer in Christianity when most of the people at the settlement are Hindus, and Paul is shown as a person who is malicious and intrigues the Ramadasu family. Ramadasu who believes settlements are places for forceful conversion to Christianity, seriously fights against the initiation of conversion. The question that strikes us is why did he not show even a tinge of this anger when Chowdary kills his own son Sangadasu? The only reason for the Chowdary to kill his son was that he believes in the caste hierarchy and the norm that a Mala should always take an inferior position with respect to Kamma caste. Ramadasu is not depicted as worried at the time of his own son's murder. But he is shown as furious at the time of conversion at the criminal settlement places.

On the other hand, if Hinduism is questioned, it is a matter to be taken very seriously. In a very important section of the novel, Paul who is a Mala convert Christian, is shown from the beginning as cunning, cruel and deceiver of the same community. But what is the intention of the author in outlining the enemy or exploiter of the Dalits as Dalit, while depicting the landlord's sons as reformers and as well-wishers? How does one understand the implicit meaning of this representation? One can easily conclude that the solutions he posits for the emancipation of Dalits is that they have to adhere to Hindu faith, to Nationalism as well as to Gandhian values, and each linked to the other. At the end of the novel, the principal note the author wants to leave the readers with is that of Christianity as a foreign religion, where missionaries use false and fraudulent methods to allure and proselytize Dalits. This is an argument that Gandhi also made and quotations that relate to this can be found in many of his writings.

The author, who is, as pointed out already, a Hindu-reformist Gandhian, hails from Guntur district. This is a district in which a majority of Malas and Madigas by the 1910s already converted to Christianity on their own for social respect, social mobility and social equality. It is unlikely Unnava was unaware of the development that had already taken place among the Dalits to convert Christianity at this high point of nationalism and earlier during the period of reform. How could, Unnava suggest, by undermining the historical truth of Dalit Christian conversion, that Dalits should be like Ramadasu, who is a staunch follower of Vedic-Hindu beliefs and values and who is completely unable to fight for himself? It seems that in this literary project Unnava is trying to preserve Hindu values through the reformist and Gandhian-nationalist movements. In order to do this effectively, he has to undercut conversion movement. A majority of Dalits opted to convert to Christianity through the mass movements but Unnava provides no significant note on this historical movement on which Dalits were agentive. How can one understand the question of the representation in such discourse?

Writing as an insider who has experienced caste discrimination, Kalyan Rao tells a very different story. He shows that Dalits have the history of struggling against caste oppression and exploiting an alternative religious identity for their emancipation. Here, we would try to analyse Kalyan Rao's analysis of the Dalit question in the period that Unnava depicts, and his bringing forward of Dalit lives into the present day. Of particular interest is his understanding of Christianity as an alternative religion in Dalit life. Kalyan Rao is a socially committed writer. The voice of change and struggle speaks in his works. He is a serious activist struggling against all ills of society—that of rooting out caste barriers, breaking social shackles. That is why his fictional protagonists are rebellious and uncompromising. His novel *AntaraniVasantham* deals with various historical issues proven to be of central import in Dalit life, such as Hinduism, Colonialism, Nationalism, Gandhism, Christianity, Communism, Naxalism and the meaning of Independence for Dalits. At this point, I will confine the discussion to the question of caste and conversion and particularly to identify the essential role of Christian conversion in the Dalits life.

The novel is a saga of six generations of Dalit life. Religion plays an important role and lies behind their exploitation. The trajectory of their life from so called Untouchables to Dalits is historically delineated. Their desire for freedom from caste discrimination becomes possible, in the author's opinion, through Christian conversion, which in his novel plays a key role in shaping the experience of Dalits and in the modern history of Dalits. In addition, conversion to Christianity is a first step in the move of the community towards participation in progressive movements. Kalyan Rao has foregrounded the history of conversion in a manner which is not only far more detailed, but also as central to Dalit's experience. It is worth noting that his view of conversion is based on the long history of Christianity in Colonial Andhra Pradesh and the remarkable role it has played in the emancipation of the untouchables. In this respect, he presents Dalits as witnessing love, redemption, liberation, social emancipation, social mobility, social development and self-respect from the conversion movement. At the same time, he feels that prior to conversion Dalits had experienced hatred, social discrimination, social exploitation, social inequality, inhuman treatment and atrocities from the caste Hindus. He strongly express in his work that it was the endeavours of the Christian missionaries that laid the foundation for the establishment of Christianity, and shook the roots of the millennium-old socio-religious structure of colonial Andhra.

AntaraniVasantham opens with a woman called Ruth, who is a Christian and one of the protagonists of the story, who sat in front of a dilapidated church and remembers her glorious past associated with the mission compound as well as the bitter stories told by her husband Ruben. The novel traces six generations of Dalit lives in Andhra Pradesh. Ruth and Ruben belong to the third generation. Christianity is projected through many characters such as Martin, Simon, Ruth, Ruben, Emmanuel, Jessie and Ruby. Kalyan Rao documents the historical background of conversion through the story of Sivaiah. Sivaiah grew up in EnnilaDinne village. When drought hits the area, all of his relatives died of starvation and disease. Both the Mala and Madigas colonies are reduced to mere graveyards. Being a victim of the severe drought and the starvation, Sivaiah and his wife move from place to place in order to survive along with other migrant labourers from different villages. After long days of no food, they reach the Buckingham canal. This canal is a major colonial project for the development of agriculture and transportation during the mid-nineteen century. They think of their survival at that point. The place is filled with labourers. Sivaiah and his wife Rekha were happy to reach there. They think that they definitely get work so that they could live. But the moment Sivaiah asks the leader of the workers for work he is quickly abused and beaten up by the leader and his followers because he is from the Mala community.

The practice of untouchability is the worst of all social evils. In this respect, how Dalits have been marginalised and condemned to humiliation, exploitation and discrimination for many generations is vividly portrayed. From these pitiable situations the untouchables convert to Christianity. Kalyan Rao depicts the conversion as inevitable in the lives of Dalits. The root of conversion, as it is portrayed in this novel, is the result of caste hierarchy of Hindu society and he endorses the missionaries repeated interpretation that famine is the historical juncture for conversion. According to Kalyan Rao, conversion is not simply a way for material benefits, rather as emancipation and as subversion of Hindu caste hierarchy. He shows that conversion is neither imposition by Christian missionaries nor a project of colonial administration. He strongly believes that it is the collective and conscious choice by the Dalits themselves in a historically desperate situation. Dalits explored a sort of substantial alliance with the missionaries for social respect, social mobility, social development, and dignity. They could gain to some extent these values in the process of transformation.

The spirit of divine falls upon Sivaiah and Rekha when they are almost in dying condition through Martin who is a preacher of the Bible. Martin sprinkles water on their faces: he gives them food when they need it for survival. He is a padre, preaching under the denomination of American Baptist Mission, *Lone Star*. The Lone Star Mission has been rendering its marvellous service around Nellore and exclusively in the lives of Malas and Madigas. Unlike, Unnava, who ridicules, trivialises

and debunks the importance of the missionaries and missions among the Untouchables, Kalyan Rao, welcomes the historical work that the missionaries rendered to the Dalit community. Untouchables in the early days of their conversion confronted with new Christian messages and its practice. Martin touches them when they are weak and exhausted, lying on the scorching sand. Sivaiah and Rekha are astonished, as they had neither seen such a person nor expected such a treatment from anyone from a different community. As a padre, Martin, who introduce them to the word of God and the miracles, inspires them. He says repeatedly: Jesus is kind. They stare at his words. Martin eventually comes to know that they were from Mala community and had come for work, and they were scolded and even beaten up by upper caste workers. Martin shivers on hearing what had happened to them.

Kalyan Rao records the Baptist Mission's involvement and draws on the work of John E. Clough, a dedicated missionary. He considers Clough's work for the upliftment of Dalits when they were persecuted by the caste-Hindus as exemplary. The famine of 1876 was followed by mass movements from many Mala and Madiga communities. We can see how Martin represents the early Christianity into Dalit's life in the following paragraphs. Martin brings Sivaiah and Rekha to the place where all the downtrodden untouchables are working separately. On that day they become close to Martin and his wife Saramma, who looks after them very affectionately.

"All of them sat together for meal. It seems to be a strange experience for both of them. Martin was observing them. . . . Saramma tells them. 'We will pray'. While Sivaiah looks away, Rekha looks towards Sivaiah. Martin tells them 'close your eyes'. Saramma speaks by closing her eyes. They are hearing the word 'Yehova' for the first time. In her prayer, they hear their names and feel an unknown anxiety. She is speaking that the good things will happen to them. She is asking 'do good things for them . . . finally, Saramma says we ask in the name of your loving son, our Jesus Christ. She ends prayer by saying 'Amen'.¹

Sivaiah and his wife Rekha could experience the taste of love, kindness, mercy, communion and humanity literally, in their lives for the first time, in the presence of Martin and Saramma. They have not experienced this kind of treatment from any caste Hindus in their lives so far. Wholeheartedly they associate with the Martin family. Moreover, they become part and parcel of this family and eventually they convert to Christianity, which is the happiest miracle to happen in their lives. When Martin heard the hardships of Sivaiah's father, he recollects his own bygone terrible days. Martin's earlier name was Chinnodu. He belongs to the Madiga community. His father's job was stitching and cleaning shoes. In fact, Chinnodu did not like this hereditary job. He was rationalist, he could not tolerate the dominance, arrogance of upper castes. The upper caste way of discrimination against untouchables is very emphatically narrated in an unforgettable incident, which leads to Christian conversion in the life of Chinnodu who becomes Martin.

"Chinnakapu (an upper caste person) came into the colony. Suddenly, everyone stood up straight from his or her position . . . Chinnodu did not like to stand up like the others. The persons standing by folding their hands. They stood by bowing their heads. Even a very old woman strengthen herself, stands up quickly, but falls down."² As a rationalist Chinnodu cannot bear this. He decides not to surrender at any cost. He is determined and staunch like a lion. ChinnaKapu frowns at him and subsequently Chinnodu was beaten up severely. Nevertheless, Chinnodu did not stand up. He hugs the land and did not want to lose his self-esteem and dignity. At this time, Chinnodu was touched and consoled by a white man who comes there on a horse. The white man holds his hands with love and affection and leads him into Christianity. Chinnodu is quite amazed at the treatment rendered by the white man. Chinnodu is conscious that the white man was not from his village, nor had he come from this area, but he touches him and treats him affectionately as a human being whereas the caste Hindus neither touched him nor treated him as a human being so far, rather everywhere he and his community people were discriminated. This white man says that nobody is an

¹Kalyan Rao. *Antarani Vasantham*, p.134-135.

² Ibid, p, 140.

untouchable for Christ. This inspires them. As a result, Chinnodu converts to Christianity, he was baptized and given the name Martin. Chinnodu's wife Polamma was also baptized and given the name Saramma. Eventually they become the preachers in Nellore Mission Compound. The untouchables acquired abundant assistance from the missions. They get material benefits such as education and employment. Their names, their culture, their social and economic status were also transformed. They found a new agency called Christianity; at first it came into their lives upholding human values and later on it provided various benefits for Dalits in the course of socio-political changes in colonial Andhra.

Kalyan Rao believes that Christianity provided an alternative space for critical articulation against caste discrimination and the early converts were involved in the project of emancipating their communities from shackles of all social and religious oppression. Martin and Sivaiah are involved in doing this. Even though Martin became a preacher of the gospel, he did not hesitate to bring change in the lifestyle of Dalits. Dalits had been pushed to the level of eating the meat of dead animals. Martin thinks it is his responsibility to change the position of the untouchables. He exhorts his community not to eat the meat of the dead animals. He even teaches them in the prayer meetings not to eat the meat of dead animals. Martin could bring considerable changes in the community. They no longer liked to eat the meat of a dead animal. Gradually by practicing these precepts, the new Christian community starts securing their liberty, delinking themselves from the Hindu mythological inhuman system, and starts becoming altogether a new community with a culture of human values and dignity. Martin's dreams slowly began to come true, and he was striving tirelessly to achieve this. Reminiscence is the narrative technique used in this novel recurrently. Reminiscence is a form of history for those whose voice is not heard in written history. The purpose of this technique is to emphasise that Mala and Madiga communities have converted to Christianity with their will and wish, due to the caste discrimination in Hindu society. It is nothing to do with the repeated Hindutva arguments that Dalits were allured or forced to convert Christianity or else with the arguments like Nicholas B Dirks³, who proposes that it is due to colonial power politics that Dalits are enticed towards Christian conversion. Kalyan Rao's narration clearly disproves all sorts of reformist, nationalist, Gandhian and Hindutva arguments that conversion has taken place with all sorts of allurements.

UnnavaLakshminarayana could not expose this whole trajectory of Dalits experience from untouchables into Christians. Actually Unnava was a living example of the time. Sisir Kumar Das⁴ rightly makes a point that despite the fact that Hinduism did not treat the Dalits with dignity, many leaders, including many writers, did not favour Dalits conversion to Christianity.

Kalyan Rao, unlike Unnava, does not depict Untouchables as mere passive consumers of a foreign religion. Nor does he depict conversion as a colonial conspiracy, which was supposed to have enticed Dalits. Kalyan Rao's understanding not only interrogates the narrow mainstream notion of conversion but also illuminates our perception of the role of conversion in the lives of Dalits. As Kalyan Rao believes Christian conversion has metamorphosed the Dalits' lives, allowing them freedom from the shackles of Hindu caste hierarchy. He shows clearly that Christianity was co-opted by the Dalits, not Dalits by Christianity, as is mostly interpreted by Hindutva forces. In fact, through conversion, Dalits attained social dignity, self-respect and patrons who would treat them equals. Conversion changed untouchables from a low place in Hindu society to a positive affirmation of a new social and religious identity. Needless to say, this new identity did not depend on the acceptance and recognition of the higher castes.

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³ Nicholas B. Dirks. *Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India*.

⁴ Sisir Kumar Das. 'The narratives of suffering: Caste and Underprivileged'. In Tapan Basu (ed). *Translating Caste*. P.153

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7. Being a Malayali: Media and Constructions of the Popular Imagination of Onam, Kerala

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Introduction

In this paper I attempt to understand the popular imagination of Onam festival and its homogeneous identity in contemporary Kerala. Onam is a cultural festival of Kerala which has been regarded as the 'National festival' of Kerala since 1961. Onam as a festival evolved through different practices of tradition as well as amended and refashioned by and through the different interventions of modernity, globalization and new liberal economy of the present. In its practice or performance, Onam is not completely bound within the mythical or religious sentiments but is rather coupled with changed forms, perspectives and consumption of Malayali life. Onam is a cultural festival with fragmented histories, legacies and practices. However, Onam celebration is also becoming a contested site for heated debates on issues of included hierarchies, religious orthodoxy, caste hegemony and its stereotypical reproductions.

It is also important here to analyze how state and its various apparatus accommodated and idealized this festival in order to produce collective sensibility and national consciousness. For spreading the nationalist feeling among the Malayali, in 1961 Pattam Thanupilla, the Chief Minister of Kerala declared that Onam as the national festival of Kerala. The declaration of Onam as a national festival is political strategy of state mainly aiming the establishment of community identity as a state identity. It also part of a long conversation of the assertion of community identity especially among the Nairs, and the national festival is the outcome of Malayali Memorial and demand for the linguistic state. The declaration of Onam is a national festival as a success of a group of people who demanded for the united Kerala state earlier and it emergent from a nationalist consciousness.

Myth of Onam

Onam, which for many Keralites brings the reminiscence of a prosperous agrarian past of the Kerala society, is considered as a harvest festival of Kerala. For a Malayali, celebrating Onam brings into mind the prosperous past. Onam falls in the month of *Chingam* (August-September), the first month according to the Malayalam Calendar. Onam is a remembrance of the death of the Asura King Mahabali and his reigns, when people lived in harmony and prosperity. There are quite a few myths associated with Onam. The popular myth of the Onam festival is the story of Mahabali. Mahabali's reign is considered as an uninterrupted period of piece, plenty and prosperity. Seeing the prosperity of the kingdom, the gods were jealous and they went and complained to Vishnu about Mahabali and his prosperity. Vishnu agreed to help them and transformed himself into his avatar Vamana. Vamana, the Brahman boy, went to visit Mahabali. Vamana asked Mahabali to give three feet land as *danam*. Mahabali agreed to give three feet land to Vamana. The Brahman boy Vamana immediately became the giant Vishnu and in two steps he covered the whole earth. He returned to the king to ask for his third step, as there was no land left. Mahabali said, "I have nothing left, you took everything, you can take me but you must grant me a boon, I want to come once in a year to visit my people and to see that they are all right". Vamana agreed and Mahabali lowered his head. Vamana stepped on Mahabali's head with his right foot and Mahabali was pushed underground. Onam is a commemoration of Mahabali's reign. The present paper will examine the popular practices of Onam festival in contemporary Kerala. The two specific questions that this paper raises are: How does the Onam festival reflect in the media and how it reinforces the status of Onam as the cultural festival of Kerala and the marker of a Malayali identity. In contemporary society Onam became the symbol of cultural unity and produces the feeling of collective belongings.

Popular Imagination of Onam

I argue that the images disseminated by various media play an important part in the construction of a popular imagination of Onam. During the time of Onam celebration, the media run many “Onam special” programmes such as Onam games, songs etc. Cultural performances during the festival are always broadcasted by T V channels, Radio, Newspapers and Magazines. Video Discs and Cassette records also play a significant role. Local culture, therefore, is staged in a national context and is mediated by the mass media (Carlo Lentz, 2001: 48). Nowadays, the state institutions and media look at Onam as a space for exchanging cultural products to promote collective values. Historical and contemporary print and visual media have played a significant role in popularizing Onam while symbolizing various manners, customs and life styles. The media starts the Onam special programmes one month prior to the festival. They come up with programmes that project the supposedly prosperous past of the Malayali society, and then its changes and intermediations.

Visual Media

Visual media through special Onam programs supplements the construction a nationalist feeling among the Malayalees. Most of the Onam programs in television and other visual media are nostalgic recollections of traditional virtues and reflections on the changing life style and worldview of the Malayalees. The major focus of the visual media during Onam is about the sharing of the nostalgic memory of celebrity guests and connecting Malayali past to their personal life history. Even though visual media celebrates other festivals as well, the time slot that has been given for Onam is much higher than the time given to other festivals. Also, when festivals like Eid and Christmas are presented as religious festivals, Onam is presented as a common festival. When the festival season begins, the major caption of visual media is “celebrate this festival season with us”. Earlier most of the TV programs were narrating the history of Onam and some series of entertainment programs like film, songs, etc. Now there is a slight change in TV programs. They have started featuring programmes like “traditional tastes” of Kerala and some travel documentaries; *Nadukanunna Maveli* (The Maveli on Kerala Tour) programme in Reporter News Channel is an instance of this. The aim of this kind of travel documentaries in festive season is to “explore the Malayali life” all over the world. Here I argue that in contemporary Kerala, media constructs and reinforcing the idea that Onam is a marker of the cultural identity of Malayalees

Special Programs and Malayali Identity

Television offers the most visible expressions of the popularization of traditional values through festivals. During Onam, all Malayalam channels alter their programme schedules to add Onam flavours, in order to increase their viewership and rating. During this season, channels compete with each other to include Onam “special” programs like interviews with celebrities, running premier shows of movies, comedy programs, music shows, traveling shows, cookery shows etc., These programmes show the ‘heritage’ of Kerala tradition. Malayalam channels use Onam as sign of Malayali identity and they also show how people celebrate Onam in different parts of the World. Most of the channels come up with various programmes such as Onam with politicians, Onam on campus, Onam with stars, and so on and so forth. The programmes they broadcast are based on the cultural memory of the golden past of the Malayali, which is the Maveli era.

Most of the TV programmes focus on the feeling of Onam as a national festival of Kerala. Apart from this, most of the programmes in Television project more on the market economy of Onam. Almost all the programmes and ads talk about the new products in the market and their effects in the society. At the same time these Onam programmes express angst about the loss of traditional way of consumption and concentrate on the nostalgic feeling. Onam programmes in channels try to preserve the cultural heritage of Kerala and claim that they mediate the traditional

values to the new generation. Some programs like “*Nadukanunna Maveli*” (Maveli on Kerala Tour) in Reporter Channel and “*Nerode Maveli*” (The Truthful Maveli) in Asianet bring the nostalgic feelings of the Malayali all over the world. In these programmes Maveli travels all around Kerala as well as the world and explore how Malayali celebrate Onam. Outside Kerala they focus on the nostalgic life of the Malayali and how they bring the traditional tastes to their life. Recently some channels are coming up with the “other” history of Onam. For instance “*Kanam Vitta Onam*” in Media One. This programme focuses on the other narratives of Onam; especially the folk from lower caste people in Kerala. The programmes like *Kanam Vitta Onam* raise new questions about Onam and the politics in it.

Print Media

The print media has a significant role in the popularization of Onam. From the beginning of the 20th century itself, print media started publicizing Onam, projecting its practices a cultural symbol of Kerala. In the 1920s and 30s the print media focused more on the need of linguistic nation and national festival. The literary writings of the 1930s have played an important role in Onam being declared as the national festival of Kerala. These writings imagined a unique Malayali culture which necessarily meant the construction of a glorified Malayali past. There had been many writings in this period in the Malayalam journals about the Onam celebration of Malayalis living outside Kerala, especially in places like Madras, Burma, and Rangoon. For the non-resident Malayalees of that time, Onam was a means of belonging to their “homeland” (Ranjith, 156-7, 2011).

In the 1930s and 40s, a group of Malayalam writers, writing on the importance of a linguistic state, started a discussion on the need of a national festival for uniting the Malayali community. They mainly used the Malayalam weekly, Mathrubhumi, for expressing their thoughts on Onam. Their work mainly consists of articles about Onam and its practices. They also describe how the non-resident Malayalees celebrate Onam and how Onam has become part of the Malayali culture. There are some writers like M Achuthakuruppu (1950), Chelanattu Achuthamenon (1940s), Kappana Kannan Menon (1920) Puthethathu Ramanmenon (1940s-50s), K P Kesavamenon (1950s), Thayat Shankaran (1940s) and Ilamkulam Kunjapilla (1954) and so on debating the history of Onam festival and the need of a national festival and the importance of unique Malayali identity based on language and culture.

After Onam was declared as the national festival of Kerala (1961), print media has been treating Onam as the remembrance of a Malayali past. The contemporary print media carries articles and reports on how Onam was celebrated in the past. During the Onam season, Malayalam journals come up with their annual editions of the journals known as *varshika pathippu* (Annual Editions). These annual editions titled “Onam Special Editions” mainly feature literary works by prominent Malayalam writers. Here Onam become the occasion for bringing the annual editions. At the same time, these Malayalam journals like Malayalam Varikha, Madhyamam, Mathrubhumi, etc. also carry special features on the celebrity figures in Kerala and how they have been celebrating Onam. Visual media, images and print literatures produce a regional/national feeling among the people. On the account of Jyotindra Jain, “the visual images play a major role in the everyday life of the people. It shapes their personal and social values thereby forging ideological conceptions of the nation itself” (12-13. 2004). The images and visuals are emerging from the context of culture and region. These representations become the marker of local culture and identity. The visual representations of images are linked to ‘local culture’ (Christiana Brosius, 1999. 12). In India, most of the festivals have local flavours and the representations of these festivals focus on the local identity and culture. Media celebrates festivals with regional cultural tastes like dress, food, etc. and they articulate these festivals as celebrating the local culture.

Compared to other festival seasons in Kerala, Onam has specific features in media. Here Onam is represented as Malayali festival which does not have any ‘religious’ symbols and is known

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as ‘Kerala festival’. Contemporary festivals depend on the market and consumption. In various levels, media promotes the consumption practices of Malayali, especially in Onam season. Visual and print media aim different levels of audiences; visual is focusing on global level and vernacular print is on local level audiences. Both the media can produce a certain homogeneous identity and give a unique cultural identity and practices to the society. These two media also aim the consumer habit of Malayali. They are connecting this consumption tendency as the marker of social status especially in advertisements and Television programs. These two fields introduce new life styles and products to the society and it becomes part of their culture.

Advertisements

Advertisements are an integral part of popular and they transform the cultural symbols and models. Social communication can also happen through ads. William Leiss writes, “Advertising caused unease because it seemed to have broken free from its original product information mandate to become a highly persuasive and seductive form of communication” (2005. 275). Most of the Advertisements carry an identity related to the region and culture. Most of the advertisements are about the ‘special’ offers on goods in festival seasons and also about the cultural programmes of the festivals. In Kerala, festivals come one after another, for example Onam festival comes soon after Ramzan. So as soon as sales are closed for Ramzan, sale for Onam begins. Jewelers, Textiles and electronic gadgets contribute the major share of advertisements during Onam advertisements and they are the ‘traditional’ cultural products in this season.

Advertisements in Onam season create a market space for Kerala culture which is more focus the consumer habit of the society. The products which are coming in Onam season have the tag of Kerala culture and tradition. Some advertisements during Onam projects the cultural and heritage value of the society which is marking the ‘golden past or tradition’ of the Malayali. Most of the advertisements are the marker of Malayali identity and it evokes the nostalgic feelings of Malayali. At the same time these advertisements are also talking the need of modern goods in Malayali life style. The receptionists of these ads are in local level consumers and they are introducing the branded global goods to the local market. Most of the Onam advertisements are connected to Kerala culture and tradition. Through different signs and idioms, these advertisements connote certain virtues and values of ‘those days’ and its embedded cultural exaltation.

Preserving the Culture

Cassettes are part of cultural industry and cultural consumption. The basic agenda of the cassettes are familiarizing the music to the public or make it as part of the popular culture. In the developing filed of music Cassette was cheaper and more durable for recording. Peter Manuel is interested to find the way of popularization and emergence of cassettes in India and the different way they can make changes in Indian media. He writes, “the cassette revolution in India, however, has provided many of the basic perquisites for such a democratic restructuring of media control and content, at least in relation to popular music (xvii)... the emergence of cassette culture in India thus must be seen in the context of a new world information under with new potentialities for decentralization, diversification, autonomy, dissent, and freedom” (2001: 3).

During Onam season many groups come up with Onam special cassettes. These cassettes usually contain Onam songs and comedy based on the Maveli myth. The comedy cassettes are using Maveli as tool for social criticism and the music albums are used for remembering Malayali’s past.

Onam as a Metaphor: Comedy and Social Criticism

There are many Malayalam comedy cassettes released during Onam season by different mimicry troupes. Some of them are, ‘*Onaththindayakku Puttukachavadam*’ by Navodaya, ‘*De*
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Maveli Kombath’ by NAD productions, ‘The Maveli Express’, etc. Almost every cassette is in the form of parody and comedy and the background of these comedy cassettes is Kerala society. Some comedy troupes try to associate current comic characters with Maveli like Tintu Mon, Ayyappa Baiju. The most famous Malayalam Onam comedy cassettes are *Onaththindayakku Puttukachavadam* and *De Maveli Kombath*. These two cassettes have more than twenty-year history in this field and they are Onam special comedy cassettes. Every year, based on real social and political events, these cassettes make parody songs and comedy skits that are immensely popular in the Kerala public domain. Started as audio cassettes these are now available in video format. The change from audio to video format is more powerful because it helps the cassettes to visualize the current issues. Apart from comedy cassettes, there are some Onam song cassettes also available at this time and the songs in these cassettes contain folk songs, pilgrimage songs and Onam parody songs.

The video comedy cassettes mainly talk about the ‘injustices’ in contemporary society and culture. They mock the transformations of the society. For example, in one cassette, *Onathindakku Puttukachavadam*, there is a parody song on the dressing style of girls which is ‘bad and against’ the morality of the society. They satirize the introduction of new goods which doesn’t have any ‘cultural value’. These cassettes say that these changes are not part of the ‘Kerala tradition’. Many of the comedies are referring to recent news items such as current political issues. Most of Onam skits include the imitation of political figures, celebrities and crisis. The Onam special comedy cassettes like ‘Onanthinadakku Puttukachavadam, ‘De Maveli Kombath’ etc, believe that, through criticizing social norms, they can bring the social issues to the public and they can use it as a tool for social change. We can see that, the voice of the Maveli in these cassettes has unique feature. All the comedians imitate one voice for Maveli, which is the voice of actor Innocent, a cine artist in Malayalam.

Comedy and social criticism would happen only through the historical knowledge of the system. So using Maveli as a symbol for social criticisms will authenticates the importance to criticize the society. Cassettes are raising the social issues through the parody songs and comedy skits. Most of these comedies are trying to bring the moral value of Kerala and all these cassettes also dreaming that Kerala’s ‘golden past’ will come again and Maveli will again rule this country/Kerala. So here comedy is used as a tool of social criticism and they are also using Maveli as symbol of prosperity and truth.

In this part I will investigate show the occasion of Onam is used by comedy and cartoon for carrying out social criticism. For comedy to be successful, it is important to the audience shares the context and the codes from the living culture used. Here Onam serve as the context and the codes. During the time of Onam, many Malayalam comedy skits and cassettes are produced most of which also romanticize the ‘golden past’ of the state. Using the codes from every day culture, these programmes are often social commentaries on contemporary issues.

Conclusion

Irrespective of its religious legacies, Onam becomes an effective site to construct an identity and popular mobilization. Onam is also political place to make social and political criticism through various programs and performance. The image or idea of Maveli has been used as a metaphor of virtues, moral values and welfare and as an icon of prosperity. In these media representations, Maveli becomes a cultural icon of the state and has the authenticity to criticize the welfare mechanisms, political situation and social problems. In cartoons, advertisements, comedy skits, and songs he has become a desirable object which the people want to achieve, change or to be fulfilled. He can enter into the private and the public life of the Kerala society, irrespective of the caste/class or religious differences. All Onam Cassettes and visual media are reflection on these ideas.

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8. Representing the Multicultural Appropriation of Contemporary Indian Society on Anitha Desai's Selected Novels

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Anita Desai is one of India's most celebrated and senior most writers. Born to a Bengali father and a German Jewish mother in 1923 at Mussorie, India, Desai inherited a legacy of multiculturalism. She later married a 'Desai' (a Gujrati) and created several multicultural homes of her own in many parts of India and the world. She now lives in the United States of America. This paper analyzes Desai's explorations of her multicultural legacy through her novels. It also fuses the current attitudes of the whole world to globalization, multiculturalism, and the essential oneness of all religions. Desai makes no attempt at social documentation, shows no desire to reflect on social issues and hence the customary strains of rural poverty, caste and class conflict are conspicuously absent in her novels. Differing from Kamala Markadaya, Ruth Prawar Jhabvala and Nayantara Sahgal, who mostly concern themselves with social and political themes, Anitha Desai ushers in a new era of psychological realism. She focuses on 'the journey within' of her chief protagonists who are women. She depicts poignantly their agonized existence in a hostile, conservative male dominated society. She presents multi-cultural dimensions in most of her novels highlighting the predicament of her woman characters. She explores the inner world of woman. As a result, her male characters are insignificant and serve only the peripheral needs of the story.

Desai was brought up in Delhi at the height of the influx of Punjabi culture. She came under diverse influences, foreign and native, which fertilized her imagination. At the age of seven, she began to write prose, mainly fiction and published some small pieces in children's magazines. She had her education in Delhi-first at Queen Mary's school, and then at Miranda College, university of Delhi. She graduated in English literature in 1957. Shortly after graduation, she joined Maxmuller Bhavan, Calcutta, for a brief sint. Then she got married to Ashwin Desai and took to creative writing. As a writer, Anita Desai has been influenced by Western novelists like D.H. Lawrence, Virginia Woolf, Henry James and marcel proust. Even though each of these depicted the predicament of main in his own milleu, the main concern of these novelists was the study of the inner life of the protagonists. In this respect Anita desai belongs to the tradition of these great novelists. Anita Desai has to her credit ten novels, children's stories, short stories and review articles. Her earlier piece was published in an American children's magazine. When she was in college, her stories appeared in Thought& Quest. Later she contributed to Envoy. Her short stories were published under the title, Games at Twilight. In all her novels, she portrays in a psychological perspective, the problems and the plight of alienated individuals caught in the crisis of a changing society. The miserable plight of highly sensitive and emotional women engages her attention. In her later novels, however, especially in Clear Light of Day (1980) and In Custody (1984), she moves out of her earlier psychological mode and deals with relationships between the individual and the society and between the people themselves. Even the problems of the alienated women have been handled and resolved in a positive way. She received world-wide recognition as a novelist of rare merit. Besides the prestigious Sahitya Akadami award for her Fire on the Mountain, she is also the recipient of Author's Guild of India Award for excellence in writing for her Where Shall We Go this Summer. Clear Light of Day and In Custody were nominated for the coveted booker prize.

Her Works

In *Cry, the Peacock* (1963) she explores many cultures simultaneously; of men and women, past and present, rational and irrational, conscious and subconscious, traditional and modern, and so on and so forth. It is typically a feminine novel, a novel of sensibility rather than of action. The novel

focuses on the problem of domestic incompatibility between Maya who is highly sensitive and emotional and has husband who is intellectual and detached. She is obsessed by a childhood prophecy of disaster and lives a life of acute sensitivity lost in her own world. Ultimately she is driven to a kind of schizophrenia and dies in her quest to find a fuller life.

A voice in the City (1965) is an examination of the plight of sensitive and independent women caught in the web of a hostile society. Taking two neglected women as its female protagonists- one a housewife and the other, a career women-it dramatizes their emotional turmoil. It also highlights the hollow existence of the urban people living in the transition phase of India in the post-Independence era.

Bye-Bye Blackbird (1971) is a story of love in the background of immigration. The novel presents the difficulties of adjustment of Indian immigrants settled in England and of those who return to the motherland, often complicated by inner-racial marriages. Problems like loss of identity, alienation and humiliation which immigrants suffer due to racial and cultural prejudices are dealt with in this novel. The main focus of the novel is on the psychic turmoil of Sarah who struggles to find her identity.

Where Shall We Go this Summer (1975) analyses the trauma of a sensitive woman who is unable to accept the dictates and demands of a male-dominated marital life. Sita, an over-emotional and middle-aged mother of four children and expecting the fifth child is obsessed with her loveless marriage and feels isolated from her rational and worldly husband. She wishes to escape the mundane reality of her existence in a bid to discover peace in her childhood home but finally compromises with life which she always felt was so aimless and monotonous.

Fire on the Mountain (1977) projects the conflict between the need to alienate in order to retain one's identity and the wish to be involved in the throes of life. The novel presents the tragic death of Nanda Kaul triggered by the traumatic news of her friend Ila Das's rape and murder. The novel highlights the psychic and oppression to which women are subjected and their intense suffering, loneliness, alienation are portrayed with great effect.

Clear Light of Day (1980) is concerned with the discovery of an identity that emerges out of the seemingly rootless and meaningless life in a small Hindu family. Bim, young and sensitive sacrifices her whole life for her brothers and sisters. In her middle age Bim is fairly representative of a certain type of contemporary Indian urban woman-single, independent and self-assured. Intra-psychic conflicts produce alienation in Bim. After a long period of frustration and anger, Bim comes to recognize the importance of an attitude-to forget and forgive. It is by far the most affirmative of Desai's novels. It reveals the vision of the author that love, understanding and forgiveness are qualities which triumph over despair and destruction.

In Custody (1984) in this novel we find neither a sensitive and highly-strung women protagonist nor any violent neurotic woman. Commenting on a change in Desai's fictional world, Meenakshi Mukherjee says, "Change is towards a widening of human concerns and a willingness to integrate concrete historical and specific cultural dimensions in the creation of interior landscape." The novel present an ineffectual but well-meaning young man whose problems are not just personal and private but public and social.

Baumgartner's Bombay (1988) is a piercing study in human solitariness. The novel deals with the condition of a lonely man in an alien country where he remains as an outsider throughout his life. An uprooted German Jew, compelled by circumstances, arrives in British India before the Second World War and lives there till his death. But unfortunately, he is not accepted by the Indian society. It shows how time and destiny along with the social, psychological and political problems enhance the already insurmountable misery and despair in human life.

Journey to Ithaca visualizes the quest for attaining enlightenment. This novel portrays the cultural similarities and dissimilarities as well as influences of India on the disillusioned hippies, and the children of affluence, with their reckless ways, and how they took to India and identified themselves with its spirituality and chaos. The novel delineates the life of a young European couple who set out for the exploration of spiritual truth in India. The central theme of the novel is quest for truth, ultimate reality, beauty, joy, ecstasy or whatever from it has. Here Anita Desai displays a significant balance of tradition and modernity, east and west, humanism and spiritualism and explores newer regions of human experience.

Fasting feasting (1999) is Desai's latest novel, which depicts the story of expatriate Indians. It explores the identity of an individual outside his or her country of birth. It is about a brother and a sister, one an introvert and the other outgoing. The brother goes to America and thereon the novel is about two families, one Indian and other American.

This paper has explored in detail the various multicultural aspects of her novels and short-stories, hitherto unexplored. Her novels and their vary origins are colored with her own personal memories and attitudes to life. Multiculturalism forms the bedrock of Desai's creative writings which is analyzed in this paper along with her take on religion, spirituality, and the problems of urban women, East- West encounters, alienation and loneliness, tragedy of abandonment, loss and pain. Desai explores minutely in her works the arguments between logic and emotions, the divided-self as well as the nature of artificial and transitory love that human beings seem to have for each other. She seems to offer a resistance to the ideas of boundaries and narrow-mindedness, in almost all her novels and short-stories.

Through the prism of a life lived in India, the United States and various extensive explorations while traveling in several countries, she seems to dwell upon the deep and abiding connections of man with nature, resilience of women, and cross-cultural predispositions to a multifaceted multicultural world, which is the reality of globalization. Desai has over the years developed a writing-style that is genuine and inevitable with a deliberate intent to disclose the undying spirit and tell of the human nature which is same all over the world, notwithstanding culture, religion, caste, class or other disparities. Her stories have sarcasm, humor, wit, wisdom, philosophy, sincerity, and an unintentional critical look at the socio-political, cultural and moral norms and practices throughout India and the world. Her characters live in the world of their own imagination surrounded by the demons of the past, present and future. Despite their weaknesses Desai's characters are winners by and large, sometimes while belonging to different cultures they come together and form everlasting bonds that last a lifetime and more. Her ever- enduring endless stories surround us as they transcend all barriers. Her novels seem to portray the imperfections of the various 'worlds' that we live in, and how multiculturalism is in a constant state of change while evolving in to something entirely different.

Her novels seem to resonate Salman Rushdie's words in his book *Identity and Homeland*: " *Our identity is at once plural and partial. Sometimes we feel that we straddle two cultures; at other times that we fall between two stools. But however ambiguous and shifting this ground may be, it is in part the business of finding new angles at which to enter reality, then once again our distance, our long geographical perspective, may provide us with such angles....One of the things I liked and still like, about India is that it is based on a non-sectarian philosophy. I was not raised in a narrowly Muslim environment; I do not consider Hindu culture to be alien from me or more important than the Islamic heritage. I believe this has something to do with the nature of Bombay, a metropolis in which the multiplicity of commingled faiths and cultures curiously creates a remarkably secular ambiance. Saleem Sinai makes use eclectically, of whatever elements from whatever sources he chooses. It may have been easier for his author to do this from outside modern India than inside it.* " (15-16).

Desai herself has started the life of adventure in her sixties that she always dreamt of as a young lady. She shares her time between India, Cambridge, Cornwall, Mexico and New York State. Her creative works portray that all human societies are fundamentally similar. She has dealt with the trauma of exile, bewilderment, rage, security, and power, commitment to homeland, the multiple cultures, and tensions of living in them.

Critical Reception

Although Desai has not been widely read in her native country—mainly at Indian universities—Western audiences have warmly received her fiction largely due to its unique insights on the often neglected aspects of Indian culture. Most critics have attributed these circumstances to Desai's own dual ancestry as well as her preference for the concerns of Westernized, middle-class characters rather than those facing the majority of Indians. Many reviewers have praised her intellectual rigor and vivid portrayals of India, particularly her insistence on the multicultural dimension of contemporary Indian society. Although some commentators have charged that Desai's fiction depends too heavily on the mundane and trivial, others have defended her attention to detail, arguing that this feature breathes life into her fiction and contributes to its often humorous tone. Critics have equally extolled Desai's short stories, tracing the thematic similarities between her short fiction and novels. However, several reviewers have asserted that Desai's later stories set outside of India are inherently stronger, faulting Desai's skewed perspective on more recent developments in Indian society and noting her inappropriate use of Indian idiom. Postcolonial literary scholars have focused on Desai's use of Indian settings in the majority of her works, contending that colonial appropriation of Indian cultural values remains an obstacle for postcolonial writers. Others have explored the effects of English culture on the subjectivities of Desai's urban Indian middle-class characters, suggesting that 'the unspoken gendered and imperialist premises of colonial culture inhibit the potential growth and artistic expression of the formerly colonized'. Feminist critics have assessed the psychological development of Desai's female characters in terms of the patriarchal Indian family structure while evaluating Desai's representation of the Indian feminine within the context of other Indian literature written by women. Although most of these critics have praised the complexity of the family relationships depicted in Desai's novels, several have objected to their resolutions as either too simplistic or perpetuating patriarchal values.

Best known for her studies of Indian life, Desai has written exclusively in English since she debuted in the mid-1960s. Throughout her novels and short stories, Desai focuses on the personal struggles of Anglicized, middle-class women in contemporary India as they attempt to overcome the societal limitations imposed by a tradition-bound patriarchal culture. Set amid the cultural and social changes that have swept India since its independence from Britain in 1947, most of Desai's narratives validate the importance of familial bonds and explore the tensions that exist between different generations. In her later works, Desai has addressed such themes as German anti-Semitism, the dissolution of traditional Indian values, and Western stereotypes of India. As a contemporary Indian female author, Desai has been identified with a new literary tradition of Indian writing in English, which is stylistically different and less conservative than colonial Indian literature and concerns such issues as hybridity, shifting identity, and "imaginary homelands," a phrase coined by Indian novelist Salman Rushdie. These show multi cultural appropriation on contemporary Indian Society. *Fire on the Mountain* placed Anitha Desai's reputation as one of the best Indian English novelists. By virtue of its originality and literary merit, it received critical attention over the years. The *Sattesan* considered it, "an outstanding novel....sharp and refined, descriptive as well as symbolic. K.R.Srinivas Iyengar in his *Indian Writing in English* throws light on Anitha Desai's themes, plot, characterization, language techniques and narration. S.Ramamurthi in his *The rise of the Indian Novel in English* acknowledges her poetic quality and points out the hyper sensitive nature of her characters. According to him, her novels are highly poetic and they do not show the

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harsh realities of the work-a-day life. This criticism represents cultural appropriation of contemporary Indian society.

Cultural Appropriation through Symbolism

A study of Desai's novels shows a tendency on her part to conceive experience and project cultural appropriation in terms of symbols. She regards them as an effective technique for the articulation of her sensibility and handles it superbly. Her symbols have several functional dimensions. Botanical, zoological, colour and nature symbols; symbols of ugliness, loneliness, destruction and annihilation are consistently used in order to reflect the tone of the novel. Anitha Desai has endowed a symbolic and universal significance to the plight of her protagonists. Especially in *Fire on the Mountain*, she uses bird imagery, sights and sounds of nature to weave recurrent patterns and give insight to the situation. Thus Anitha Desai employs nature, atmosphere, and the associations of memory action in recurrent pattern to drive a set of symbols and images that create a web of inter-related meanings. Summing up the significance of imagery in *Fire on the Mountain*, S.Indira remarks: "It is the charming mosaic of imagery woven so skillfully by the novelist that makes the novel a work of art." Symbols of her novels represent cultural appropriation Indian society.

Conclusion

Desai is the most renowned woman novelist among psychological novelists. Anitha's works are revelations of the inner climate, grappling with thoughts, emotions and feelings. Her novels brought in the multicultural appropriation to Indian fiction. She has touched the nuances and subtleties of fiction hitherto unknown in Indian fiction in English. All her women are conscious of their existence and their needs. Love, lust, war, politics, economic, social tensions, aspirations, disappointments, prejudices, riches and rags, life's intricate and inner feelings, sensualities and spiritualities are all parts of any culture and these are appropriately delineated clearly in the novels of Anitha Desai who contributed very much to the Indian Writings in English literature. So her works undoubtedly represent the multicultural appropriation of contemporary Indian society.

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9. Subaltern Studies: An Overview

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Some definitions to start: Decolonization: the process of removing an imperial power over a colonized region (1947-1997). Post-colonial: after colonization is over, or when decolonization is complete. Postcolonial refers also to a specific type of history: Postcolonial theory / studies, the study of the formerly colonized regions and their independent development.

The Subaltern Historians originally started as an Indian version of “History from below” approach of the west. They were also influenced by the British Marxist Historians. The term “Subaltern” came from the writings of Antonio Gramsci and is referred to the subordination in terms of class, caste, gender, race, language and culture. Gayatri Chakraboty spivak in an essay titled, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” wrote:

“The Subaltern cannot speak. There is no virtue in global Laundry lists with woman as a pious. Representation has not Withered away. The female intellectual has a circumscribe task Which she must not disown with a flourish.”(308)

She cited the examples of widows burnt at the pyre of the husband in her essay. She emphasized the condition of women who are doubly oppressed—firstly by patriarchy and secondly by colonialism. Ranajit Guha is undoubtedly the most famous name among all Subaltern Historians. His Elementary Aspects of Peasants Insurgency in Colonial India is considered to be the most powerful example of Subaltern historical scholarship. Guha attempted to uncover the true face of peasants’ existence in colonial India. He claimed that there existed in colonial India an ‘autonomous’ domain of the ‘politics of people’ that was organized differently than the politics of the elite. This in a sense summed up the entire argument put forward by Subaltern sections. They also shed new lights on the domains of Culture and politics of the period and their roles in the whole picture.

Subaltern history in particular understood the need to document the lives of all the oppressed people, like peasants and workers. The decade of the 80s assumes a special significance due to the fact caste, gender, and religion became important reference points in history writing. This movement questioned the basic assumption of Brahmanism as well as various historical schools. Subaltern school has no doubt made great contribution in the dominion of Indian historical literature.

The last two decades of the twentieth century have witnessed the emergence of diverse themes within the subaltern historiographical School. Apart from these volumes a number of books appeared in the decades of 80s and 90s. Historians like ‘Partha Chatterjee’ made notable contributions in this respect. His works proved crucial at this juncture to understand that engagement with elite themes is not altogether new to the subalterns. Members of Subaltern Studies group felt that although Marxist historians produced impressive and pioneering studies, their claim to represent the history of the masses remained debatable. The subaltern’s agency was restored by theorizing that the elite in India played a dominant role and not simply a hegemonies one. There is no denying the fact that Subaltern School has contributed a lot in the study of history, economics and social sciences in Third World countries in the end of the twentieth century. Subaltern Studies emerged around 1982 as a series of journal articles published by Oxford University Press in India. A group of Indian scholars trained in the west wanted to reclaim their history. Its main goal was to retake history for the underclasses, for the voices that had not been heard previous. Scholars of the subaltern hoped to break away from histories of the elites and the Eurocentric bias of current imperial history. In the main, they wrote against the “Cambridge School” which seemed to uphold the colonial legacy—i.e.

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it was elite-centred. Instead, they focused on subaltern in terms of class, caste, gender, race, language and culture. They espoused the idea that there may have been political dominance, but that this was not hegemonic. The primary leader was Ranajit Guha who had written works on peasant uprisings in India. Another of the leading scholars of subaltern studies is Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. She draws on a number of theoretical positions in her analysis of Indian history: deconstruction, marxism, feminism. She was highly critical of current histories of India that were told from the vantage point of the colonizers and presented a story of the colony via the British administrators (Young, 159). What she and other historians (including Ranajit Guha) wanted was to reclaim their history, to give voice to the subjected peoples. Any other history merely reconstructs imperialist hegemony and does not give voice to the people—those who resisted, those who supported, those who experienced colonial incursion. In other words, proponents of subaltern studies suggest that we need to find alternate sources to locate the voice of the subaltern historically. Elite records, like those at the home office or foreign office could still be used, but you had to read them with a different pair of lenses. So even though we might be subject to using these same sources, we can read them "against the grain" –this phrase comes from Walter Benjamin's theoretical work.

Obviously, the introduction of subaltern studies, like all of our theories we've encountered this term, has tremendous political repercussions. In a society like Great Britain, that claims to operate as a "Commonwealth" yet sees racism around every corner as well as the desire to keep out the blacks who cause all the problems (refer to recent Prime Minister elections), the writing and mapping of a history of previously silent groups creates an undercurrent throughout the society. Thus subaltern history will help to lay bare previously covered histories, previously ignored events, previously purposeful hidden secrets of the past. All of these people dealt head on with the concept of the "other." Distinctiveness is part of modern nationalist rhetoric to define a nation, to have a nationalist spirit—patriotism, for example is to suggest a certain level of inclusion. Movement from the New Left to the New Cultural History: The New Left came out of this discontent. Dissatisfied with the Soviets after 1956, young scholars thought about alternative ways of thinking about the past by not relying on "working" models. Saw a chance to see the past for what it was.

This gets us to the point where we can talk about "postcolonial" theory and history. It enables us to use a discourse that would have been forbidden. A very important point to note here that is not all works that deal with race or racism are "subaltern studies." There are plenty of critical works that still remain focused on European politics—these works are collectively known as the New Imperial History. Academic work on subaltern themes quickly detached subalternity from its various inventors. Migrations of reading dispersed research on subaltern themes connected by circulating terminologies, arguments, and texts. As we will see, outside forces moulded the project itself, and its own institutional boundaries have always been permeable. Its internal coherence has been less intellectual than personal and more formal than substantive, being composed primarily by group loyalties and by invitations to join Subaltern Studies activities. Intellectual cohesiveness has never been a project priority, as the leaders often say, and it has appeared primarily in solidarity against critics. Outsiders have built outer walls for Subaltern Studies and landscaped its environment to dramatize its distinctiveness. Respondents, interlocutors, interpreters and translators have worked with Subaltern Studies material and redefined it by writing about it differently. Insiders have become outsiders. Outsiders have become insiders. Outsiders doing independent work on subaltern themes have embraced Subaltern Studies as a kindred project, for example, in a 1994 collection of essays in the *American Historical Review*.

This book provides a reference guide for reading Subaltern Studies in a world context, and most of that context is outside India, though *Subaltern Studies* and essays reprinted here primarily concern India. Subaltern Studies occupies a subject position inside India, but is written for readers everywhere. The term Subaltern Studies used as synonym throughout. Some of these classes and

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groups such as the lesser rural gentry, impoverished landlords, rich peasants and upper-middle farmworkers who ‘naturally’ ranked among the ‘people’ and the ‘subaltern’, could under certain circumstances act for the elite’, as explained above, and therefore be classified as such in some local or regional situations—an ambiguity which it is up to the historian to sort out on the basis of a close and prudent reading of his evidence.

There is no one intellectual history of subalternity and never could be, because it lives on local ground in disparate readings. Geographical patterns may exist, however, because, in the world of globalization that makes Subaltern Studies what it is today, disparities have patterns. South Asian sites are extremely diverse and diverge along national lines. Readers in Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka might tend to read Subaltern Studies as an Indian national project, not their own. South Asian readers far from big city universities and research centres might feel most distant from the global academy and might tend to value the project's global success inversely to its local credibility. But locality is shifting: Brinda Bose and K. Balagopal represent two equally real, totally different, and equally local South Asian sites, in cultural studies and human rights, respectively, which also have global dimensions. Readers outside South Asia would be more likely to encounter South Asia in media, abstractly. In the global academy, moreover, venerable ideas constitute India as a singular, unitary, South Asian space, so readers can imagine the national 'fragments' in Subaltern Studies quite literally, because debates in South Asia about multiple, shifting, contested nationalities do not interfere with this reading. Globally, India also has a theoretical location inside binary oppositions between West and East, First and Third World, Europe and Non-Europe, modernity and tradition, colonisers and colonised, rich and poor, developed and underdeveloped, privileged and downtrodden, and so on. Because India stands for South Asia in the second term in each binary pair, Subaltern Studies fit neatly into prevalent ideas about India's place in the world. Indian subalterns can thus represent India metonymically. The History written till now is one-sided, partial and not showing true picture of low level group in society. A group of people is deprived of proper position. A great man or intellectual group cannot create history. True history is not of superior group but it is shaped from the group of common people. The credit of a victory in the battle (war) is not only that of the king or the leader of soldiers but also of the soldiers fighting on the battle field and food suppliers have lion's share in it. If caves, buildings, forts are created in the period of a king, its credit should not go to the only king, but to the mason, water man, artists, labours. All the events and incidents should be recorded in history like this. In the History very much contribution of low level group's work. But till now, they are considered 'common' and not recorded in history. This work brings together all the historians through the new trend of writing 'Subaltern studies', so that the recipients of success should get justice and in the same way true history will be written. Identity and homelessness is also presented in an Anglo Indian Writer Ruskin Bond writings. 'The Room on the Roof' can be analysed critically in Post Colonial Diaspora because post colonialism in academic studies can be called an interdisciplinary movement that attempts to reshape the past, the present and the future of colonized countries. The model presented by the colonizer does not meet the colonized immediately and namely the construction of the self in the true sense of the world is not possible for him. However the colonial identity goes beyond the colonized it is as Homi Baba puts between colonized and colonizer. The colonial identity for the colonizers erupts with their arrival to their colonial lands. Being an average man in his own country he suddenly turns into superior but they also face with the same problem of identity. As a writer Ruskin Bond does not have a sense of superiority over Indians nor does he apologise for Europeans in his stories. There is no sense of tension between two cultures of East and West. He lived in India in both periods as a result of post – colonialism and Globalization he portrayed diverse characters in his stories.

The novel *Room on the Roof* portrays the historical period of the late 20th century. It is a combination of determination, achievement, detachment, expatriation, abandonment, customs and modernity. Tension of Rusty in *The Room on the Roof* is home, identification of the self and other. *The Room on the Roof* attacks the persisting racial and colonial attitudes of the Europe through 17

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year old Rusty and his search for his own 'identity, 'home' and 'belonging' in India. The same problem through which Ruskin Bond agonised in his early age when he was struggling for his career. He suffers from post-colonial trauma of displacement when he realizes his tentative position in India. Sense of exile and yearning for the security of family, friends and the loneliness of an outsider. Rusty initiation into the Indian world is marked by his participation in Holi .Rusty like the author has not had any contact in Indian religions but believes in humanism. Finally Rusty finds a home and a reason to live a life for others who are not his people. He resolves his identity crisis and becomes a mature and self-assured young man and assimilates in Indian culture and admits his status in India exclusively from cultural hybridity. The cultural roots mark the Indian identity beyond their physical attributes. The literature for young people in a multicultural society depicts minority groups in realistic literature so that the majority understands their emotional needs. However the characters display a newer culture evolved in the process of adaptation and assimilation and meeting current demands of the society. Thus Ruskin bond criticizes the cultural crisis which globalization creates affecting healthy human bonding. He has successfully addressed the social economic and cultural effects of nominally globalized society stressing over the negative forces which overshadow the positive growth of globalization.

To conclude, it is important to stress that the bulk of research on subaltern subjects has always escaped Subaltern Studies. Two recent books provide a good opportunity for controlled comparison of contemporary historical theory and method inside and outside the project as applied to the study of tribal peoples in Western India. They diverge especially on questions of autonomy, consciousness, and colonialism. They indicate rightly that historians outside the project tend to locate subalterns more carefully in changing environments that include economic, political, ecological, technological, and social history; and in this perspective, they tend to see colonialism as a diverse, changing bundle of historical forces rather than as a comprehensive structure. The borders between Subaltern Studies and its others are vague, shifting, and contested, however, and there is much smuggling and border crossing, authorized and otherwise. Anthologies abound with essays from both sides. The very existence of an inside and outside is today questionable as the project diversifies internally and merges externally with comparative colonialism, cultural studies, historical anthropology, and post-colonial studies, Many authors use Subaltern Studies but also draw on other sources, and hybrid research is now most prominent in Subaltern Studies. Internally, the project continues to be creative, adaptive, and malleable. Dispersion and convergence, migration and assimilation, have made subalternity a moveable feast with jumbled tracks leading in many directions.

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10. Rituals in Parsi culture

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Parsees in India, though a microscopic minority have had a prominent place. The “double displaced ethnic minority” have a distinct culture, religion and language that they have maintained for over the past one thousand years or more. The Parsees follow the Zoroastrian faith founded on the teachings of Prophet Zarathustra, settled in Gujarat between 8th to 10th centuries. The Parsees in India are a closed ethnocentric community. The problems and challenges of the Parsee community – a sense of security, identity, dwindling population, late marriages, and high rates of divorce – find expression in Parsee writing. Furthermore, Parsee writing is replete with the community’s ‘hopes and fears, aspirations and frustrations and a daily struggle for survival’. Parsees fear that their unique ethnic culture could be submerged in the dominant Hindu culture. Dina Mehta, a Parsee writer in her novel and *Some Take a Lover* expresses her concern about the existence of Parsees in India through Rustom, who says: “What has this country to offer us? What kind of cultural life? We Parsees are aliens here. And our days are numbered after the British leave.” (18) The novels written by some Parsee writers Rohinton Mistry (Such a Long Journey), Perin Bharucha (The Fire Worshippers), Firdaus Kanga (Trying to Grow), Farrukh Dhondy (Bombay Duck), Dina Mehta (And Some Take a Lover), Nergis Dalal (Skin Deep) exhibit the consciousness of their community, national and transnational issues. The writers deal with the typical peculiarities of Parsee culture, rituals, and eccentricities in their works in order to present the uniqueness of their culture for posterity. As A .K. Singh aptly points out: “Their works exhibit consciousness of their community in such a way that the community emerges as a protagonist from their works though on the surface these works deal with their human protagonists.” (66). The present article proposes to look at the particular rituals and rites in Parsee culture.

Rituals have a central place in human beings’ relationship with reality. They bind the present with the past and the future. Therefore, they connect the transient with the enduring. Rituals discover, create and sustain the moral fabric of the community while they set up social boundaries that cannot be transgressed by individuals. Thus they evoke attitudes, commitments, feelings and forms of behavior. The individuals in the community are educated and trained to respond to the moral, social and metaphysical reality. They foster a strong sense of community, identity and unity. These rituals provide the members of the ethnic group roots to their own cultural values linking them to their past with powerful memories in a physical context at the same time offering comfort and constancy, by giving time and space to the individual to be together in a family. In addition, they provide an insight into their cultural values to those who are outsiders of the culture. Parsees are called as “The Fire Worshippers” because Fire is worshipped at the temple to which outsiders of the faith are disallowed. They perform every ceremony before Fire. Perin Bharucha in her novel “The Fire Worshippers” the character Nariman Kanchwalla discusses the significance of fire through who tells to an Anglo-Indian, Portia Roy “Fire is something sacred to us, so I assume that if a corpse is burnt that would amount to defiling something which is sacred”. (43)

Kanga presents in *Trying to Grow* the centrality of the Fire temple to the Parsee community. Kanga through Brit remarks on the Parsees highest seat of spirituality. “We Parsees don’t take our religion too seriously; those who do are considered down right dangerous and a little mad.”(17) The protagonist’s parents, Sam and Sera meet for the first time at the Fire temple on New Year’s Day which is celebrated in August every year. Sera seems to be blasphemous, wondering what the priest wears under his white muslin robe that catches Sam’s attention. Brit’s parents exhibit the centrality of their religious spirit in their humanity towards their physically deformed child. Instead of treating the child with kid gloves, they let the child lead as normal a life as possible, but always ensuring that Brit is most comfortable without cloyingly making him their only priority in life.

Parsee 'parents are very particular about celebrating Navjote, an important first ritual in the lives of their children. It is done between the seventh and the eleventh year of the child. The initiation begins with a ritual bath called Nahn then a spiritual cleansing prayer; the child changes into white pajama pants, a shawl, and a small cap. Following introductory prayers, the child is given the sacred items that are associated with Zoroastrianism: a sacred shirt and cord, Sudreh, and Kusti. The child continues to wear the Sudreh and Kusti and perform the Kusti ritual with the prescribed prayers, throughout life. The Sudreh is made of pure, white muslin or cotton while the Kusti is woven of seventy-two threads of fine lamb's wool. In the Pahlavi texts, the Sudreh or Sudra is described as "Vohu Manik Vastra", the Garment of Good Mind. The word 'Kusti 'means a waist band. Being tied thrice round the waist, it points to the trinity of good thoughts, good words, good deeds. These form a barrier insulating the individual from all that is evil. The child then faces the main priest and fire is brought in to represent God. Once the priest finishes with the prayers, the child's initiation is completed and he or she is now a part of the community and religion. Nergis Dalal depicts the Parsee culture through her writings to society and also passes the culture to next generations very clearly in her "Skin Deep" with the celebration of Navjote for Nazi and Yasmin (twin sisters) at the house of their grandmother.

Parsee community gives specific and prominent importance to the marriage ceremony. In former times, the ceremony began with the young couple sitting facing each other. The officiating priest would then place a cloth between them and tie the ends round their chairs. He would then take the brides' right hand and place it in the groom's right hand and tie their hands seven times with a piece of twine. Prayers would be recited and an assistant fed the fire with sandalwood and incense. At this point, the cloth curtain between the young couple is removed. The bride and groom throw a fistful of uncooked rice on each other which they had been holding in their left hands. This action symbolizes prosperity. After embracing their parents, the couple leave and go to the Fire Temple to pay their homage to the sacred fire. While going to the groom's house, the bride holds a small wick lamp in a protective silver vase. The light should not go out on the way to her new home. At the threshold, her husband awaits her. The little wick lamp is kept burning in the bridal chambers all night. Love marriages are very common in the Parsee community. They prefer to marry within their own community. Everyone knows good Parsee girls marry Parsee boys'. (7) as Sera says in Kanga's Trying to Grow. In fact, Sam's family also was not averse to such an arrangement. When Defrage remarks that Sera's daughter, Dolly was twenty-four, a graduate and earning yet not married. Sera expresses her helplessness. 'What do I do? 'Said, Sera complacently. 'She refuses to let me arrange any boys for her to see. Any way it doesn't worry me. Love marriages are a tradition in our family. Like in all good Parsee families. (76) But in the modern era, many young Parsees choose their life partners not only from their own community but also other communities. However inter- faith marriages are not accepted by Parsee people. Children of Parsee men married to women outside the faith are considered Parsees but not those of women. In Kanga's Trying to Grow, Sam and Sera love marriage is accepted by all, but Dolly's with a Muslim doctor and Tina's marriage with a Hindu boy are not. Dolly's parents resist the marriage in spite of that she refuses to accept her parents' decision Sam and Sera have a historical distrust of Muslims because they forced the Parsees out of their native land with the establishment of Islam. In Perin Bharucha's The Fire Worshippers, Nariman who loves the Anglo-Indian Portia Roy thinks "the traditional Parsee disapproval of intermarrying was not for religious reasons at all. It was the outcome of the promise made by the early Persians to Jadhav Rana. Times had changed but his people hadn't changed with them. It was vicious and meaningless that his life should be in a mess because of a long forgotten promise made by his forefathers in the eighth century. (98) It has always been a controversial issue among the Parsees who wish to preserve the chastity of their ethnic group even at the cost of extinction. Perin Bharucha tries to reject the concept of ethnical purity through Nariman, an idealist and resists the disintegration of community through the character of Nariman's father, Pestonji Kanchawalla. Later novels by Parsee writers show that the earlier social rigidity and rejection of Inter-faith marriages is gradually getting eroded. In this context, Dasturji Khurshed, -Head priest in Udvada (the oldest fire

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temple established in Gujarat, in the early days of the Parsees arrival in India) said that, “If Parsee girl is married to a non-Parsee according to the special marriage act of 1954 and she is following her religion. I don’t understand why we can stop her from practicing the Zoroastrian religion. This little bit of change will bring peace in the community. And it will but I’m not encouraging the inter-faith marriage by saying all these things. But these are the problems where the youth are getting disintegrated from the community. We are instead of trying to make a fabric, we are trying to break the fabric of the community.” (Qissa e Parsi: The Parsi story-a film –produced by Shilpi Gulati) The community at large has been plagued by anxieties over its dwindling numbers. The result of too many generations of inbreeding Further, some attribute the eccentricity that is very apparent among Parsees to its rigid social structure of inbreeding compounding to its rapidly declining population, late marriages and high rates of divorce are other inter linked causes. In Kanga’s *Trying to Grow*, Brit’s grand mother is forty at the time of her marriage. Sam is 45 years old by the time Brit is born. Another character in the same novel, Mehroo Manekshaw is only 17 years old and marries the eccentric, 51 year old Dinshaw. When he proposes to her, she said ‘yes’ even before he could complete his proposal. After that a lot of envious people called her seventeen threes are –but she never gave a damn. She was busy with other things doing a Bachelors degree in French and completing a master’s in English and then taking one more degree. Degrees became the substitute for all the toys she never had as a kid. Perhaps such strange behavior has to do with the existential crisis the Parsees are facing. While Dinshaw lives with his stamp collection worth almost a million rupees, Mehroo continues to add to her educational achievements. The question remains whether it is Mehroo or Dinshaw who influences the other’s eccentricity (46-47) A possible or plausible reason for late marriages among Parsees could be attributed to indiscriminate sexual relations and the prevalence of homosexuality. The liberal westernized outlook of Parsees is yet another reason for the acceptance of sexual relations outside of wedlock. Amy, Ruby, Cyrus, Dolly, Defarge and Brit engage in sexual relations that are not looked down upon by the Parsee community. Therefore, there is no felt need to marry. As Nani Palkivala has observed: “They will become a decadent community with a glorious past, a perilous present, and a dim future”.(1994:320)

Historically the Parsees were closely linked to the British with their sophistication, refinement and knowledge of English language that had kept them distinct from the Indian masses. This voluntary isolation has made Parsees “anglophile the Parsee disease’ (161). The love for all things British –food, naming, dressing and communication is clearly depicted in Dina Mehta’s *And Some Take a Lover*, Rustom tells Roshini, “I was educated in England I lived there four years then I went back and completed two years at the Manchester University. They are a wonderful people. I wish I could impress on you how rich life there can be. The music, the theatre, the arts, the freedom, the dispassionate pursuit of knowledge, the concern for the well being of the individual” (18-19) Like their English counterparts, Parsees naming practices show the peculiarities of Parsee culture For instance, in *Trying to Grow*, the names of the characters, Sam, Sera, Dolly and Brit .As Brit says, “we delight in stretching, snipping and squashing given names out of all recognition, with a view to making them roll off the tongue easily and, perhaps, even sound English. So boys who are named Faredoon become Freddy, Nowroji becomes Neville, Adi becomes Eddy, and everyone is delighted with his new name and what he hopes is his new image. (26) In fact Brit parents decided to call their daughter Dolly. And they went about choosing a suitable Parsee name to put on the birth certificate. Finally in her birth certificate, they put ‘Daulat’ meaning “wealth” Further, Parsees stand out with their peculiar surnames. In early 1900s the British promulgated a law that everyone had to have a surname overnight; Parsees had to come up with surnames. In Perin Bharucha’s *The Fire Worshippers*, Khurshed explains the six categories of Surnames and comments that the Parsee surnames are the funniest (54).Firstly, surnames based on the names of towns and cities like Taraporewalla, Randeria, Sanjana, Davierwalla, secondly according to the Indian words of Trades and Professions, for example Mr.Mehta (clerk), Mr.Dastur (Priest), Mr.Dalal (Broker), Mr.Vimadalal (insurance broker), Mr.Patel (chief of the village).In the third category, English words for Trades and Professions, such as Doctor, Engineer, Lawyer, Banker, Driver, Printer. The fourth type the English –Indian combinations like Screwwalla, Bottlewalla, Working Boxwalla, Soda bottle

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openwalla, the Fifth type is acquired from the names of their fathers and grandfathers names like Khurshedji, Jamshedji and Nurserwanji. The last type are their original Parsee surnames like Mithra means the Lord of Light.

Numbers play a significant role in Parsee culture especially number 101. In *Trying to Grow* Brit's grandfather was one who was known for his chivalrous nature and having hunted one hundred tigers in the service of his princeling he was given the Diwan's only daughter, a Parsee lady, in marriage. "On their wedding night he boasted he would give her a hundred one sons. one for each tiger" (15) but unfortunately did not live long enough for that to happen comments. But a hundred and one being a number much loved by the Parsees gifts always consist of white envelopes with a hundred and one rupees inside that are presented on any occasion. From the time that the Parsees had migrated to India, their food was wonderful blend of different cultures and cuisines. They brought love of nuts and saffron which they use lavishly in curries and sweet dishes. According to Brit in *Trying to Grow*, Parsees were "reluctant Indians" who had their own way of food habits (32). Similarly in *Trying to Grow* Kanga through Sera highlights the attitudes of the Parsees towards Indians. 'The Indians are a poor people so the best place for genuine Indian cuisine has got to be cheap.' 'And dirty food is always tastier,' said Sam. 'I mean, nothing can match the flavour of a sweaty palm.' (32-33) They have no restriction on the consumption of alcohol and also use it as therapeutic value which has given effective remedy for tiredness and insomnia. One of the most significant aspects of Parsee culture is their funeral rites through erroneously called "Kagra khaos" (Crow Eaters). In reality it is the vultures to whom the dead are fed. It is an ancient practice, still followed in Bombay the Hanging Gardens on the top of Malabar Hill that houses the 'Tower of silence'. The funerary rites are conducted in a separate part of the house where the corpse is laid out for the funeral proceedings. In *Fire Worshippers*, Nariman explains the death ceremony to Portia:

"that's Doongerwadi, and in there is where we have our Dakhmas".

"Doongerwadi? Dakhmas? what on earth.....?"

*"Doongerwadi means the Hill Garden and Dakhmas is the Parsi name for
"Tower of Silence" (38)*

The dress code for the funeral is specific. Both for wedding and death ceremonies, white clothes are worn when Mehroo Manekshaw commits suicide following her husband's death, Brit is taken to attend the funeral. It is then Brit remembers that he does not have the knee-length white muslin coat with bows down the front (89) Parsees take the dead body to the vultures and Brit stands a mute witness to the event. The priest comes to say prayers that are for the cleansing of sins and to affirm the faith of the deceased. Fire is brought to the room and prayers are begun. The body is washed and placed a clean Sudre and Kusti. The ceremony then begins, and a circle is drawn around the body into which only the bearers enter. As they proceed to the cemetery they walk in pairs and are connected by white fabric. A dog is essential in the funeral process because it is able to see death. The body is taken to the tower of death where the vultures devour the flesh. Once the bones are bleached by the sun they are lowered into deep wells at the bottom of which are layers of charcoal, lime and other minerals which slowly dissolve the bones. Thus the mortal remains of the individual are disposed of in a most hygienic manner. Funeral ceremonies of Parsees continue for four consecutive days. On the tenth day after death, certain prayers are recited both in the home and in the Fire Temple. After a month, prayers are again recited and then annually on the death anniversary rather than creating graves for the dead, charities are established in honor of the person. In conclusion, Parsees in India have continued their efforts in preserving their unique cultural identity despite a changing and a challenging social milieu. They have successfully adapted to their environments amalgam the Indian and western behavioral patterns even as they continue their conservative religious practices. This flexibility to changing social environment yet maintaining their distinct Parsee identity and culture marks the Parsees desire to preserve and safeguard their ancient legacy and heritage.

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11. Importance of Cross-cultural Communication in an Organization

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“Culture is communication and communication is culture.” - Edward T. Hall

Introduction

Our histories are a vital part of our civilization. Historical experiences, whether five years ago or ten generations back, shape who we are. Knowledge of our history can help us understand one another and ourselves better. Exploring the ways in which various groups within our society are related to each other is the key to opening channels for cross-cultural communication. Not acknowledging cross-cultural similarities and intercultural variations may lead to stereotyping people from different backgrounds, exaggerating and caricaturing other cultures, and judging their specific ways of communication as fundamentally different and implicitly wrong. On the other hand, an understanding of cultural differences will pave way for effective communication at various workplaces. This will lead to organizational effectiveness and subsequent progress.

Concept of Cross-Cultural Communication

Communication is more than just talking, composing and editing; it also involves information gathering and teamwork. In the economy of the new century, this means communicating cross-culturally. There are three primary parts to any communication:

- Subject matter
- Medium of delivery
- Cultural considerations

Cross-cultural communication looks at how people, from differing cultural backgrounds, endeavour to put their ideas across. Cross-cultural communication tries to bring together such relatively unrelated areas as cultural anthropology and other established areas of communication. Its core is to establish and understand how people from different cultures communicate with each other. Its charge is to produce some guidelines with which people from different cultures can better communicate with each other. In the context of cross-cultural communication, misunderstandings and misinterpretations are probably the most common problems people face; and ‘culture’ is often at the root of communication challenges.

Different Communication Styles

Communication style refers to the way people communicate and it varies widely between, and even within, cultures. One aspect of style is language usage. Across cultures, some speech and idiomatic expressions are applied in dissimilar ways. For example, even in countries that use the English language, the meaning of ‘yes’ varies from ‘maybe’, ‘I will consider it’ to ‘definitely so’ with many shades in between. Another major aspect of communication style is the degree of importance given to non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication not only includes facial expressions and gestures, but also involves seating arrangements, personal distance, and sense of time. In addition, different norms regarding the appropriate degree of assertiveness in communicating can add to cultural misunderstandings.

Direct/ Indirect or High/Low Context

There are numerous ways in which communication styles in one culture may differ from the other. Interculturalists have identified two main distinctions- indirect/direct and high/low contexts.

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The context here means the innate nuances of a speech, for instance, shared meanings attached with a physical gesture, etiquette, and so on while interacting with another person of the same culture. In high context cultures, people are homogeneous and collectivist as in Thailand, Japan and Russia whereas in low context cultures, people are heterogeneous and more individualistic in nature as in the U.S. In high context cultures, for example, people possess a reasonably good idea around how a particular interactive discussion would progress and how the other individual would probably react to a commentary. However, in low context cultures, the communication style is more important, blunt questions are not avoided, and people prefer discussing the main issue directly. The differences between these two contexts can be experienced during business meetings and sale negotiations where people from different contexts meet. This happens particularly in the case of multinational organizations. For example, in Japan, the senior-most manager would enter a room first. If someone from low context cultures, who is not aware of this, enters the room first, he/she would, most likely, offend the Japanese manager. In Turkey and Greece, people may talk at length about things which may apparently have no direct relation to the meeting agenda. For them, trust building gets prominence. At times, the same word/gesture conveys different meanings to people belonging to different cultures. Sensitivity and Knowledge of all this is integral to a successful cross-cultural business communication. The following table gives us an idea about the kind of questions/comments people from high and low context cultures may prefer to use.

Communication Across Contexts

Direct/Low Context

Are you listening?
 You are doing that wrong.
 Where are the sales figures?
 What would be the rent of this house?
 I wonder if I would be able to afford it.
 I just do not agree with you.

Indirect/Direct Context

Hope you would have found the idea interesting.
 Are you satisfied with the result?
 Your presentation is good. I am sure you have all the Sales data with you as well.
 The house is spacious and well maintained.
 Exploring the ideas may provide us with more Insights.

Cultural Variables and Communication Sensitivity

The culturally diverse workplace of modern times differs significantly from that of the earlier generations in two ways. First, it is constituted of individuals from different national and cultural backgrounds. Apart from promoting diverse national and cultural backgrounds, workforce diversity represents different groups that have always been present there though the factor of diversity was never prominent. Ethnic balance is changing. Diversity lends a much richer workplace environment and a greater variety of viewpoints. Multicultural skills are not only for paramount importance to people who work within their respective regions, but may prove to be important since global talent is likely to become a priority in the coming years.

Cultural factors considerably influence the typical ways in which individuals interact with others, present their ideas, or negotiate. The norms as well as values we assimilate in terms of our social, cultural conditioning shape our views about the world apart from the way we interact with each other.

It is commonly held by most people that the word culture refers to people from a specific nationality. National cultures have an important role to play in shaping the way people interact. But the culture has other dimensions as well. Within a country, regional differences may have a powerful influence on the way people interact. Attitudes, ethnicity, values, customs and race can influence behaviour. Socioeconomic backgrounds, physical disabilities, gender, sexual, orientation and religion are also important determinants in this regard. A proper understanding of the differences between individualist cultures and collectivist cultures can hardly be ignored while learning about

people from different cultures and promoting intercultural communication. Individualists stress on individual goals that promote self-realization, while collectivists need individuals to fit into the 'group.' In matters concerning business, it is important to understand the values and traditions that shape people's behaviour. Even in our environment, we regularly interact with people hailing from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Variables of National Culture

While interacting with people for business purposes in a foreign nation, one should realize that the overall national as well as individual cultural differences within cultures further influence the stimuli. There are various constraints and variables that communicators are faced with while working with foreign nationals.

1. Education

The education systems of various nations vary considerably. For eg. The functioning of various universities and colleges across the world may be significantly different in matters of curriculum, evaluation system and pedagogy. The way education is imparted, can be formal or informal depending on the history and social fabric of the country. These factors are important determinants when one interacts with individuals of other nations for business purposes.

Cultures are also differentiated by how much they emphasis on education. Our understanding of cultures and their thrust on education also consider terms like access and availability. Western cultures often stress the importance of education in local and national politics. The factors become important while doing business across cultures. The same educational/professional criteria cannot be applied uniformly to all cultures while recruiting people for an organization.

2. Law and Regulations

Government regulations largely influence business communication as well as the sale of products. For instance, advertising targeted at children is closely monitored in America, Canada and some other countries. European nations put restrictions on the advertising of cigarettes and even on the budget allocated on these advertisements.

3. Economics

Various important determinants such as per capita income, capital availability and transportation infrastructure vary from country to country. The communication concerning a business depends on the rate of inflation, regulatory laws like free enterprise system, or degree of ease to borrow capital. Under the US free-enterprise system, competitors usually set their own prices.

4. Politics

The form of government as well as the concept of democracy differs from country to country. Major political changes within a country may influence the way business takes place. The political stability or instability of the country in which one wants to enter or communicate for business needs to be assessed. All these events influence communication.

5. Religion

Various nations around the world have a concept of a single religion or multiple religions. There are many nations that are tolerant towards religious diversity. For example India and the US patronize religious diversity. Besides being tolerant towards several religions, these nations allow the practice of other personal beliefs as well. However, some nations like Iran do not accept multiple religions. Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam are found in many parts of the world, influencing the values of individuals professing these faiths. Religious holidays influence international communication, hamper work schedule or postpone responses to queries. Religion can influence the

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position of women in the society, and their buying patterns and lifestyle. To communicate well internally it is beneficial to comprehend the diversity in the religious practices in various countries.

6. Social Norms

Politics, law and regulations, religion, education, economics influence a country's social norm. Many nations have a patriarchal society which largely affects business decisions. The family structure and how its members relate to one another, decisions, buying patterns, pooling of resources, special interests-influence behavior as well as business communication. Beyond the immediate family, a bond may exist between people, based on caste and creed, age, class or even special interests. Perception regarding materialism, roles and status, culture and manners and punctuality may affect communication. Thus, it is necessary to be aware of the social norms of the country. Most nations have several hundred different societal cultures. The most important factor to consider is how effective that society is.

7. Technology

When communicating, we need to consider a culture's advancement in technology. This is important because technology affects knowledge, language, society, and sometimes their work values as well.

8. Language

An important determinant that encompasses all the preceding factors is language. Obviously, unless both the sender and the receiver understand a common language, the opportunities for successful business communication are largely limited. English is a language used throughout the world, and to a large extent it is the language of business. However, one may do a better job overseas if one knows some basic vocabulary of the host country, in case one may have to travel to places where English may not be used. Each language has its own grammatical patterns and vocabulary. Thus, both verbal and written communication in a second language is more prone to errors. Language problems are often the cause of communication misunderstandings. To avoid these misunderstandings, one needs to understand the language as spoken in that particular cultural context in which one wishes to communicate.

Individual Cultural Variables

Individual variables or factors concerning the distinct lifestyle are related to individual habits and ethnic diversity. So within each culture, there are further differences in verbal and non-verbal communication expressed through varying non-verbal signals, food, individual speech, concepts of time, acceptable dress, decision-making patterns, manners at home and at work and other non-verbal variations.

Non-verbal signals

Non-verbal cues, such as gestures, eye contact, facial expressions and posture vary considerably across the world. For example, traditional greetings, such as, embracing and folding hands, may be common in some countries. Eskimos rub their noses to greet each other, whereas a kiss on the cheek or lips may mean the same in many cultures. The concepts of touching and facial expressions vary in meaning. One should be aware and cautious and know the non-verbal variations that could cause failures in communication if one wishes to be understood correctly by the people of other cultures.

Time (chronemics)

The concept of time is looked at differently across the world. Latin Americans and people in the Middle East are more casual about timeliness than are Americans, who are quite prompt. Germans are very particular about time; rarely is one kept waiting beyond the stipulated time. Even while referring to the different seasons of a year, people from different cultures differ in their expressions. Knowing cultural perceptions of time can help us understand why some responses are

slow by others' standards. On a different level, cultural variables that can affect the communication process by influencing a person's perceptions are attitudes, social organization, thought pattern, roles, language, non-verbal communication and time. The effects of these variables are interdependent and inseparable.

Managing cross-cultural communication involves the following essential steps:

1. Cultural sensitivity

The person sending a message makes it a point to know the recipient and encodes the message in a form that will most likely be understood as it is intended. This inadvertently means that the manager must be aware of one's own and the other culture and understands the expectations involved in the interaction.

2. Careful encoding

The sender must consider the receiver's frame of reference to make the best choice regarding words, pictures and gestures. The sender also has to understand that the language translation is only a part of the process, and considers the non-verbal language as well.

3. Selective transmission

This involves choosing the channel medium after considering the nature of the message, level of importance, context and expectations of the receiver, timing, and personal interactions.

4. Careful decoding

This would involve the same points as required by the sender while encoding the message. Further, it requires an understanding that beliefs and perceptions are only valid for an individual and not all people.

5. Follow-up actions

This would include maintaining eye contact, an interactive posture, ability to respond in a descriptive, non-judgmental way. A careful follow-up would help avoid three types of miscommunications, namely, receiver misinterpreting the message, receiver encoding response incorrectly, and sender misinterpreting the feedback.

6. Space (proxemics)

The concept of space distancing is also culture-specific. While most Indians do not mind people standing close to them while speaking, Americans demand more room, called buffer space, between themselves and others when speaking in some cultures not standing close may seem cold and uninterested. Some cultures consider those who stand close as intrusive, rude and overbearing. We cannot assume that one particular concept of space is accepted and understood throughout the world.

7. Food

The preparation, serving, type of food, or even the time of the day when it is had vary widely throughout the world. Even the way one should behave when the food is served, the way it should be eaten, the sequence of course, of the meal or table manners vary widely from country to country. Comprehending and appreciating the different cuisines as well as food habits of various countries may be crucial to the success of global business.

8. Acceptable dress

Generally the most accepted dress code for American men is a business suit and for women it is tailored suits. Moreover, these days business 'uniforms' have become common almost all over the world. Indians still prefer a Nehru jacket; in Singapore a long-sleeved shirt with a tie. The uniformity in business dresses can be seen throughout the world.

9. Decision-making

Decision-making is another area that varies with culture. Americans, for example, prefer individual decision-making as compared to the Japanese who prefer collective decision-making. Thus, one should take into consideration the differences and nuances involved in decision-making styles across the countries.

10. Cross-cultural strategies

Effective cross – cultural communication requires knowledge about the potential problems and a conscious effort to overcome these problems. There is always a significant possibility that cultural differences may cause communication problems. One needs to be very observant and careful while dealing with such problems. Some precautions are as follows:

1. During cross-cultural exchanges, one should understand the interaction completely before reacting. Jumping to conclusions about what is being thought and said may lead to ineffective and at times offensive communication. Active listening can sometimes be used to check this.
2. Sometimes words are used differently between languages or cultural groups and can lead to misunderstandings. Prior knowledge about such words is desirable.
3. Taking the aids of intermediaries who are familiar with both cultures can help in cross cultural communication.
4. In some cultures, people move quickly to the point; while in others, they talk about other things long enough to establish rapport or a relationship. Sensitivity to such cultural nuances helps one to win the trust or establish a rapport smoothly.
5. Direct experience is the best way to begin to understand any culture. This may not always be practical, but access to sources that cater to members of the target group can be of help.
6. We tend to overlook similarities and notice just the differences when we first begin to react with members of another culture. Here, one should understand that standards of interpretation that are used in one culture cannot be applied to interpret the behavior of those belonging to another culture.
7. Avoid the stereotype. This can occur due to over generalization, particularly among those who rarely interact with other cultures.
8. One should be sensitive to variations within groups. There may be similar people, in terms of personality and attitudes in different groups and dissimilar people within a group. Group members may share the customs and rituals only. A metaphor can be given here by apple and microsoft, which have developed different operating systems. Both these systems allow us to accomplish work with a word processing system. The output as we see is the same, but the language and the coding through which that output is accomplished are different.
9. Our own cultural identities become apparent to us when we begin to interact with people from different cultures.
10. Cultures witness changes with the passages of time. Updating one's knowledge of different cultures is very crucial, especially for a business manager whose job involves interacting with people from different cultures.

Potential Hot Spots in Cross-cultural Communication

In cross cultural communication, especially when working with other people or travelling abroad for work or pleasure, it may pay to ask some experts about the communication styles of the areas one plans to visit. A little research at the outset can stave off a host of misunderstandings.

Opening and Closing Conversations

Different cultures may have different customs concerning who addresses whom, when and how and who has the right/ duty to speak first, and what is the proper way to conclude a conversation. Certain ways of commencing a conversation or concluding one, will be considered rude, even disrespectful. These are artificial customs, to a certain degree, and there is probably no

universally right or wrong way to go about these things. Knowledge regarding modes of address, salutation, levels of deference to age or social position, gender differences and acceptable ways to conclude gracefully is certainly required.

Taking Turns during Conversations

In some cultures, it is more appropriate to take turns in an interactive way; in others, it is more important to listen thoroughly and without comment/ immediate response, lest it is taken as a challenge/humiliation. This depends particularly on the context of the conversation, the audience, and the levels of personal knowledge/relationship between the people interacting.

Interrupting

In some cultures, interruptions like vocal, physical or emotional expressions, are considered default conversational styles, particularly among those considered to be equals, or among men. Many people from Northern Europe or the US might mistake this kind of conversation for argument and hostility, but that might not be the case.

Use of Silence

In some of communication, silence is expected before response, as a sign of thoughtfulness and defence to the original speaker, yet at other times, silence may be perceived as a sign of hostility.

Appropriate Topics of Conversation

In some places, it is considered vulgar to speak openly about money, and intimate family issues. Travellers or business people should learn the customs that surround the making of deals, the transaction of commerce, and the degree to which details are specified.

Use of Humour

In the West, people often try to build immediate rapport through humour, but this is not universally seen as appropriate. The use of humour can be seen as a sign of disrespect by some, and it is important to understand that this is another area where misunderstandings can often arise.

Knowing How Much to Say

In some places, brevity is appreciated, whereas in other places, it is better to explain a small point using a long preamble, followed by extending closing remarks.

Sequencing Elements during Conversation

During a conversation or negotiation the appropriate time to touch upon issues that are more sensitive, is a matter of concern for cross cultural experts. It is important that the right question should be asked in the right way and also at the right time.

Basic Tips: Slow down

Even when English is the common language in a cross cultural situation, this does not mean we should speak at normal speed. One must slow down, speak clearly, and ensure that the pronunciation is intelligible.

Separate questions

Try not to ask double questions such as, 'Do you want to carry on or shall we stop here?' in a cross-cultural situation, only the first or second question must be asked. Let your listener answer one question at a time.

Avoid negative questions

Many cross-cultural communication misunderstandings are caused by the use of negative questions and answers. In English, we answer 'yes' if the answer is affirmative and 'no' if it is

negative. In some cultures, a 'yes' or 'no' may only be indicating whether the questioner is right or wrong.

Take turns

Cross-cultural communication is enhanced through taking turns to talk, making a point and then listening to the response.

Write it down

If you are unsure whether something has been understood or not, write it and check.

Be supportive

Effective cross-cultural communication must be comfortable. Giving encouragement to those with weak English gives them confidence, support and trust in you.

Check meanings

When communicating across cultures, never assume that the other party has understood. Be an active listener. Summarize what has been said in order to verify it. This is a very effective way of ensuring that accurate cross-cultural communication has taken place.

Avoid slang

Even the most well-educated foreigner will not have complete knowledge of slang and idioms.

Watch the humour

In many cultures business is taken very seriously. Professionalism and protocol are constantly observed. Many cultures do not appreciate the use of humour and jokes in a business context.

Maintain etiquette

Many cultures have certain etiquette when communicating. It is always a good idea to undertake some cross-cultural awareness training or at least do some research on the target culture.

Conclusion

Cross-cultural communication is about dealing with people from other cultures in a way that minimizes misunderstandings and maximizes our potential to create strong cross-cultural relationships.

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12. Humanism to Neohumanism: Universal love, Hence Liberation

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Even a cursory glance at the history of human evolution, one can understand that dynamism is the basic characteristic of the creation. Life in general has developed very fast since the time of existence. Human intelligence has proved human beings to be superior to other living beings of the nature. Due to this, human beings are constantly in search of unknown. This human quest has resulted in various physical, mental, social, and cultural developments, individually and collectively, in the society. The early stage of human civilization was primitive. These civilized communities were evolving faster. As time passed, people invented and discovered many scientific and technological things, which made life easy and more comfortable. In the beginning people used different tools made up of stones. Later, they found various metals. The most important invention was the fire. Later started living in groups and then evolved the concepts of religion, science and technology. Gradually started to establish various types of industries and conducted scientific experiments in various fields. Then a great shift took place in the form of information technology which turned this entire universe into a global village. The advancement in different fields made life comfortable and luxurious. Now we can sit at one place and do whatever we want. Even the manual work is done with the help of computers. Everything is within the reach of your hand. As one need not go to libraries for information, with the help of computer; information of the world is at your hand. Human being is replaced with robot. For example, robots are used in place of servants at home and office. To the extent that we think computer intelligence is more reliable than human intelligence, such as use of calculators and computers at stores and malls, respectively.

Human development is a multidimensional function. It depends on two factors: the way human beings interact with each other in a social group and their understanding about the individual's role in the eco -system. Secondly, the way we make use of various resources available in the nature. Man's desire for development and material pleasure had led him to constant exploitation of nature and its various resources. This has resulted in loss of nature's equilibrium and balance in ecosystem. Though, human beings have developed greatly, they lost their rational and holistic thinking and collective judgment about ecosystem. The scientific and material growth has increased poverty, social inequality, violence, terrorism, crime and also natural disasters, etc. Now, we live in a world full of dangers, threats and lack of any security to life in general and human life in particular. Every day we face new physical and psychological problems individually and collectively. We feel paralyzed when we think of taking any action against these problems. We do not know what to do and whom to trust. There are complex problems in the existing society and more complex problems to face in the decades ahead. These problems are global challenges across the nations. That is why we have to find solution at global level – a collaborative action, innovative methodology, transcehumanitarian perspective, universally accepted ideology. Here, we are reminded of the great poem written by our national poet Sri Rabindranath Tagore;

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high; ...

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;

In these thought provoking lines Tagore, prays to God for the spiritual emancipation of the land. Human beings should be truthful, fearless, rational, God fearing, noble and generous. They should not show any discrimination of caste, creed or nationality. Knowledge should be free to all. Everyone should widen the scope of thought and action. Today's man is greedy, selfish and scarifies his ethical powers and holistic thinking for material growth. He lives in an utopian world. The poet prays for the liberation of individuals from all shades of bondage. He asks for 'heaven of freedom'. True freedom lies in a virtuous and righteous living.

We wish to live in such an ideal world of liberation, harmony and peace. To create this type of ideal world, we require a guiding philosophy that rationalizes human thinking. This change in human ideology will establish a harmonious and peaceful world for all living and nonliving beings. It will lead to sustainable growth of society in all respects and hence, recover ecological balance. Man with his unquenchable thirst for material prosperity, and hence, pleasure has gone into minute details of science to a dangerous proportion: for example biotechnology. If he is not using his common sense and rational thinking judiciously, human life will be annihilated. Different theories – social, economic and philosophical- have been evolved since times immemorial. But inherent drawbacks are there in each and every theory formulated, till today. Therefore we failed to achieve the desired results in social development. Now let us, consider the existing philosophy of humanism. It is believed to be a theory based on humanitarian grounds. Today, Humanism is regarded as an atheistic philosophy. Human beings assume that they are superior to God. It's often associated with naturalism and materialism. Humanism is a growing philosophy that gives importance to secular societies. It stressed the importance of the individual in a society. We now find ourselves in contemporary world where humanism became a dominant force over other social philosophies. It is expected to create social equality and sustainable growth in the society. The philosophy of humanism is aimed at welfare of human beings collectively. There are various divisions and subdivisions in humanism as renaissance humanism, religious humanism, secular humanism, etc.

Humanism has been defined and elaborated its point of view in various dimensions in three parts manifesto. Humanist Manifesto is the title of three manifestos laying out a humanist worldview. They are - Humanist Manifesto I written by Roy Wood Sellars & Raymond Bragg in 1977, the Humanist Manifesto II of 1973 written by Paul Kurtz & Edwin H. Wilson, and Humanism and Its Aspirations (Humanist Manifesto III) of 2003 published by American Humanist Association. The central theme of all three *manifestos* is the elaboration of a philosophy and value system which does not necessarily include belief in any personal deity or "higher power". All three Manifestos believed in human evolution as foremost in their affirmation. The purpose of the document is to outline in detail the official position of humanists including their beliefs, values, and goals. Humanist regards human beings as supreme. Humanism do not believe in personal God, supernatural beings, heaven, hell, or life after death. It rejects the concept of a created universe in favor of the theory of evolution and a universe that obeys natural laws. It believes that the future responsibility of world rests on human beings. Human knowledge is based on reason and hard evidence rather than on faith. Humanism refuses the concepts of immortality or destiny. It considers that principles and moral values derive from human experience which are modified and used according to changing conditions of life. Humanists rely on scientific explanation for the meaning of existence rather than religious or spiritual beliefs. They believe and support the values of universal education, freedom of thought and expression, mutual respect, social equality, etc.

The philosophy of humanism has some limitations. There is need of extended humanism. There should be ideological and notional transformation in the society. Human beings ought to widen the scope of thought and action towards universal love. Humanism with many shortcomings, need modification. The concept is left as an abstract phrase because there is no equality or love among human beings. Materialism is the dominant driving force behind every thought and action of human beings. Apart from this, it also rejects the religious and spiritual ideals and practices. Due to this there is lack of wide acceptance of this philosophy. Another short coming is that while emphasizing and fighting for human rights, we do not even think of the rights of plants, animals, birds, etc. Human beings usually take care of plants and animals based on their utility value but not for their existential value. For example, if a cow gives milk it has utility value and thus we feed and take care of it. When it stops giving milk we either sell or kill it. We grow plants at home which decorate our house or have some use such as fruits and flowers. The arena of human concern and responsibility needs to be expanded to the animate and inanimate world. To create an ideal world of peace and harmony we need a new philosophical approach that will embrace the entire universe; organic and inorganic: Neohumanism holds that all living and nonliving beings have their existential

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value, regardless of their utility value to human beings. It believes and practices the philosophy of “universal love”. According to Neohumanism, human development should not be achieved at the cost of nature and its various resources.

Neohumanism is a holistic philosophy pioneered and elaborated by Sri Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar in his book, ‘Liberation of Intellect: Neohumanism’. The author redefines both humanity and humanism to expand its area of concern to animate and inanimate beings, too. He is the founder of Ananda Marga, (the path of bliss) a socio-spiritual organization that aims at two basic principles: self realization and service to all. In 1959, Sarkar propounded the Progressive Utilization Theory (PROUT), a social-economic theory based on the cardinal values of Neohumanism. Its focus is on maximum utilization and fair distribution of all existing resources. In 1968, he founded the organization, Proutist Block of India (PBI), to widen the scope of Neohumanism. Neohumanism is a transcendental philosophy that aims at the physical, mental and spiritual well being of not only human beings but also of plants, birds, animals, etc. PROUT is a practical means to establish Neohumanism in communities and nations around the world. In this philosophy universalism plays a central role. It is the elevation of humanism to universalism. Sarkar defines Neohumanism as, *“Neohumanism is humanism of the past, humanism of the present, and humanism - newly explained- of the future. Explaining humanity in a new light will widen the path of human progress and will make it easier to tread. Neohumanism will give new inspiration and provide a new interpretation for the very idea of human existence. It will help people understand that human beings, as the most thoughtful and intelligent being in this created universe, will have to accept the great responsibility of taking care of the entire universe, will have to accept that the great responsibility for the entire universe rests on them”*.

Neohumanism believes that the welfare of individual and society is interlinked; each relies on the other for their existence and growth. Everyone has the right to live and develop equally. There should be no discrimination on any superficial or utilitarian basis. It believes that the entire animate and inanimate world is the expression of the Supreme Consciousness. Neohumanism leads to the liberation of human intellect from the constraints of imposed social and religious dogmas and brings harmony between the inner and outer worlds, collectively. It aims at love and devotion for the entire universe- organic and inorganic. In order to implement such a way of life we must know the way in which human life is affected by physical, psychological, social, religious factors. There are two human sentiments which impede the expansion of individuals towards universalism, namely Geo-sentiment and Socio-sentiment. These two sentiments have minimum and maximum expressions. Both have good uses but at the same time great risk of harm to the other beings of the universe. People’s desire for power and material gain will exploit others with the help of these two sentiments, as per their convenience. For example, politicians exploit general public physically and emotionally during the time of elections.

When one thinks and devotes oneself to the welfare of one’s own home, city, or country, then it is called as Geo-sentiment. Its minimal expression is love for one’s own home and the maximal expression is love for one’s own country. Geo-sentiment presents in many forms as geo-politics, geo-patriotism, geo-economics, and geo-religion. Geo-patriotism has led people to wage many bloody wars in the history. The colonialism of the past and neo-colonialism of today is a form of geo-economics. Geo-religion would associate a religion or a religious group with a specific territory or belief that god has created it for particular group is an example of geo-religion. The harm done to the society through geo-sentiments can be eradicated by cultivating rationalistic thinking in human beings.

Socio-sentiment is one’s love and devotion shown towards one’s family, social group or nation. It may be love for a national, linguistic, social, or religious group. Its minimal expression is love for one’s nuclear family and maximal expression is love for one’s own religion, social group or nationality and may extend to internationalism which is a characteristic feature of humanism. Socio-

sentiment presents itself in many forms as socio-politics, socio-religion, socio-economics, etc. This may result in the creation of satellite groups and states. When compared, socio-sentiment is much more harmful than geo-sentiment that has resulted in many bloody socio-religious wars. Neohumanism prescribes cultivation of 'Cosmic Consciousness' among all to overcome the problems faced due to socio-sentiment. One has to believe that every living and nonliving thing is the expression of the Supreme. Human sentiments and wants violate the interests of other living and nonliving beings in the world. Man's unending desire for material prosperity forced him to destroy nature and its abundant resources. In this process we lost our spiritual consciousness. Man is trying to control and regulate nature and its resources for the benefit of society. This is a dangerous and obsolete pursuit. Such as deforestation, creation of green house, artificial rains-cloud seeding, genetically modified organism (GMO). An organism that is generated through genetic engineering is considered to be genetically modified organism. Genetic engineering, also called genetic modification, is the direct manipulation of an organism's genome using biotechnology. New DNA may be inserted in the host genome by first isolating and copying the genetic material of interest using molecular cloning methods to generate a DNA sequence, or by synthesizing the DNA, and then inserting this construct into the host organism. This indicates that we are going against the Creator. We are actually trying to become God. Apart from this, accumulation of wealth and natural resources causing great damage to ecological balance. This accumulation of wealth at one place results into poverty in other parts of society. We store food at home and ignore the people nearby our houses those are dying of hunger. We relish non-vegetarian food in our day to day life. Due to mechanization the environment is polluted thereby affected the natural equilibrium. In addition to these, so called developed nations extend helping hand to less developed countries in the name of humanism, but multinational corporations creating extensive misery for people and massive ecological destruction in their reckless pursuit of profits. Neohumanism provides a holistic solution to the problems that have sprung up in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences in the past. It specifically suggests a set of principles for living a life based on the principle of universal love. As such it is a reaction to the divisive, alienating and destructing effects of materialism.

To resolve these globally challenging problems we need to adopt a universal outlook. Neohumanism provides a new interpretation for the meaning of human existence. It will help people understand that human beings have the responsibility to take care and protect the entire universe to sustain the social and economic growth. We have to spread universal love among all. We need to live a simple and contented life and think holistically. Man must remember that we are just a microcosm of the macrocosm and whatever damage is done to microcosm will automatically affect the macrocosm. As a unit of this macrocosm we must follow some basic principles in our day to day life to retain ecological balance and harmony. We have to think beyond humanitarian plane and contemplate on universal welfare. We should adopt some principles like non-accumulation of wealth and natural resources; reduce the use of machines and vehicles. Use the technology for the development of entire universe. We have to protect environment and biodiversity, popularize vegetarian diet to save lives of innocent animals, etc. Human beings should be contented. He should think of the development of other forms of life, equally. Neo-humanism is an ideology that aims to bring a balance and harmony between the worlds. A constant effort is to be made to create spiritual consciousness in the world.

According to Neohumanism, love for the Supreme is the most valuable treasure of human beings. This devotional love will develop rational thinking along with spiritual consciousness. It helps human beings to recognize existential value of other living and nonliving beings of the universe. We will realize that everything is the expression of the Supreme. Every animate and inanimate being has its own value and meaning in the existence. As Sarkar says, "they will realize the fact that everything is in Him, everything cometh from Him, remaineth in Him and goeth back to Him". Everything in the universe is on move, from imperfection to perfection. This spiritual awareness is a state of perfection where we forget all differences and thinks of the welfare of the entire universe. This movement towards the subtlety will initiate human beings to liberate self from

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social and religious bondages. At this point the entire universe will be in complete unison. This perfection ends in harmonious living.

Neohumanism is such a movement that transforms imperfect world into a perfect universe. So our approach to life should be Neohumanistic and our goal is spiritual perfection. We will have to educate the world on the lines of Neohumanism. As our national poet Rabindranath Tagore says “The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence.” This education and lifestyle of Neohumanism can save our universe thereby saving human life. So now we have to sing a song of Neohumanism. We should forget the past and welcome future with the philosophy of Neohumanism.

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13. Here is Bhutan's Plenty

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Introduction

The Circle of Karma, the debut novel of Kunzang Choden, the Bhutnese author has earned a niche in South Asian Women's Literature. Kunzang Choden has succinctly dealt with the never assuaging thirst of an illiterate girl, Pema Tsomo, the protagonist of the novel, to become an *anim* (female monk), the vocation denied to the women of Bhutan. The spiritual journey of Tsomo is in very similitude of the twelfth century pilgrimage to Canterbury in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. The pilgrimage of Ningche Drukpa Achi begins in the hamlet of Kurtoi of Bumthang Zhong of Central Bhutan to the National Memorial Chorten in the capital city of Thimphu, Bodhgaya, India and Boudhanath Chorten, Nepal. The journey undertaken by Tsomo may be forced by circumstances as the author succinctly has knit the events but it is the inner urge of Tsomo to recieve the joy of religious experience.

Bhutan- Location

Bhutan is located in the Assam-Bengal Plain of India to the south and the Chinese occupied Tibetan Plateau in the North. To the East Bhutan borders Arunachala Pradesh of India and in the South west it borders the Indian State of Sikkim. The Bhutanese who travel from the East of Bhutan to its west take quite often the Indian National Highway passing through Assam and Bengal. As the result of this people are exposed to language contact –exposure to speech communities of Assamese, Bengali, Hindi, Tibetan and Sikkimese. Hence the people of Bhutan used different languages in different domains.

Bhutan is a Himalayan Kingdom magnificently rich in traditions, customs and beliefs. The belief in religion, Buddhism is inseparably entwined in their everyday life. The Bhutanese irrespective of status - economic and social – implicitly follow the religious rituals. Every function begins with a religious custom, prayer and offering. The rituals they observe the songs they sing, the prayers they recite, the dances they perform – all these are thoroughly known to all people from all walks of life. The villagers may not be able to explain everything but they will strictly adhere to them as if they were specially educated for the observation of those rites, rituals and customs. Every family deems it a sacred honour and a great blessing if one of the sons in the family joins the monastery and becomes a monk. They are chosen even when they are young.

The Bhutanese show great respect to the elders. It is a value-ridden and value-laden society. Affection, kindness and respect to all human beings are the values they cherish in their lives. It is said that if two quarrel, both of them are punished. Often disputes arise only when there is problem in land holdings. It is interesting to observe that all Bhutanese adhere to the dress code. Men should wear *gho* and women *kira* and should be used in all official work and religious and social occasions and those who violate the dress code are punished. People of all walks of life wear only hand-woven fabric for their office work and functions. Even the farmers and labourers used to wear the national dress as any other Bhutanese wears. They take pride in wearing the national dress as they themselves weave them in their homes. It is difficult to distinguish farmer, artisan, student, engineer, teacher, official in their national dress on festive occasions. Everyone wears a white scarf except higher officials like Dashos who use red scarf. The author never fails to describe the weaving abilities of Pema Tsomo, the protagonist of the novel and her friend Dechen Choki. Tsomo learns from her mother the art of weaving. "She (Dechen Choki) sat in the loom relaxed and confident. Her body moved with practiced ease. Her hands moved skilfully and rapidly and the patterns emerged –

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flowers, bands, squares and triangles” (p152). The Royal Government of Bhutan patronizes weaving skill and encourages with training, exhibitions and fairs. “During late autumn there was no rest for the womenfolk. It was time to weave the fabrics which were to be submitted as tax to the Government. The cold weather and the overcast skies seemed to reflect the general dark mood of the people and this time was referred to as ‘weather of tax worries’. Tsomo, the protagonist of the novel, is from a tax payer’s family, higher in social status than the serfs and slaves. Her mother took pride in the fact that they had always been ‘straight taxpayers’ or *threl pa nagjang*. Women are not allowed to learn religion nor privileged to be educated. Yet “Tsomo longs to be educated, to learn to read and write and chant those beautiful prayers like them (boys)” (p20). Today the status of women is different from what it was decades ago. Bhutanese women receive higher education in India and in foreign countries and serve in various capacities and take part in crucial decision making processes in the kingdom and they adore the upper echelons of the Royal Government of Bhutan. The form secular education started with the First Development Plan 1961-1966 with free and universal Primary education. In the educational policy in 1962 English was made the medium of instruction. According to Dorji (2005) ‘English became the medium of instruction in our country not because it was convenient language but because it was already the lingua franca of the world. It has also been noted that this was perhaps necessary to maintain links with other countries and for the socio-economic and educational needs’.

A monastic education encourages individuals (monks and anims¹) to dissociate themselves from a world alien to them in order to seek inner enlightenment, while the university “...is supposed to capture and present the deeper philosophy of the nation, the worldview of its people, their dreams and aspirations, their imagination of perfection and goodness, the principles of national and social life, and their attempts to understand and use the possibilities opened up by science and mathematics” (Powdyel 2005: 6). Tsomo feels that it is her karma that she is denied opportunities, to read and to write and to learn religion. Reading scriptures will accumulate more merit for the next birth. Males have the advantage of a better birth (p20). “Tsomo laments ‘I am only a woman’. She repeats it like a mantra until she begins to believe that many things in life are different for women and men” (p23). But Tsomo’s inner thirst for religious experience had never been quenched. She cannot become a *gomchen*. She cannot earn merit for the next birth.

People in the village did not have weddings. Only the nobility and the rich had them. Young people court each other first discreetly and then openly and when the girl becomes pregnant she is obliged to announce it. There is a purification ceremony called *tshangma*. The boy has to accept to be the willing father of the child during the ceremony and unless it is done the girl will be responsible for any natural catastrophe that befalls that year in the village. If the boy doesn’t accept to be the father, an effigy of dough is made for the ceremony. It is considered shame to the girl as in the case of Tsomo’s friend, Chimme where the monk, (*gomchen*) refused to be the father of the child in the purification ceremony.

Bhutanese believe in three kinds of blessings – first the abundance of people, second the abundance of religion and third material wealth. In the case of our protagonist, Tsomo is blessed with two kinds of abundance. They were expecting the thirteenth child and father being a religious person there is religious abundance and for the third wealth they were struggling.

If someone dies in the family, there are prayers held on 7th, 14th, 21st and 49th day. Monks, relatives, friends and the whole community attend the ritual and a death changes the economic status of a family into a more disastrous one. A host of people attends the rituals and they will be fed and the guests also bring presents to the bereaved family. Bhutanese believe that the rituals make a safe passage for the deceased and better birth. People refrain from crying for the dead. They believe that their tears turn into rain and breath into fog and obstruct the journey of the dead to rebirth.

Values

Bhutanese believe that their homes and hamlets teach them timeless lessons of great values. “Our myriad humble homes and hamlets have been our university of a special kind to teach us the timeless lessons of humility and tolerance, the power of love and compassion, the need to care and share, the laws of action and consequence, the essence of simplicity and the value of *thadamtsi*, the love of our sacred institutions, and the goodness of humanity. These, our priceless lessons of life, are dear to us as a nation and as a people” (Powdyel, 2005).

Tsomo was twice betrayed; first betrayal, her husband was found in bed with her sister. The husband never revealed that he has already been married. She believed him without a shade of doubt even when her father made a letter of agreement. The second time by a dubious and unreliable character she believed he would be faithful in an alien place and her belief and trust in him had almost driven to the point of committing a murder. Yet Tsomo transcended all these ignominy and humiliation to find herself finally an ecclesiastical character.

Another major theme in Kunzang Choden’s Circle of Karma is the raw deal faced by the rural women in South Asian society. Tsomo feels that being born a woman must be a punishment for bad karma from previous lives – the book portrays a world in which misogyny, sexual abuse, and injustice are daily realities. India is no Exception. Sexual abuse, foetus extermination, dowry deaths and exploitation of domestic workers are ever increasing as India is growing and developing!

In adverse circumstances, it is very difficult for a woman to protect oneself and more difficult to protect the other woman by a woman especially in a sexual assault. Yet, in adversity, Tsomo shows extraordinary strength to save her friend and co-worker, Dechen Choki from the sexual abuses of the supervisor; one night, Tsomo told Dechen Choki about Wangchen and Kesang. Dechen Choki was very much touched emotionally listening to the story of Tsomo and after ruminating on the happenings in their lives, in deep thought Choki remarked, “Our stories are so similar and yet so different. Everything happened because we are women. You loved a man and suffered. I hated the man and suffered” (p109).

Like any other Bhutanese woman Kunzang, the author is a weaver of events, stories, anecdotes and religious principles. The salvaging of positives from suffering is one of the many Buddhist tenets woven through the book. With much of its narrative taking the form of parabolic episodes through which Tsomo learns truths about the world and herself, the novel almost reads like a manual for progression to enlightenment at points.

The spirit of Tsomo is restless and her mind makes an endless journey into the realm of religious experience and this fervent longing had goaded her to several places, though she was beset by tragedies, failures, betrayals and losses in the itineraries. These had not deterred her in any way in her quest to ‘learn religion.’ In the Bhutanese society there is no discrimination to women. The arrival of girl child is the cause for celebration, women do the same work as men and widows are even encouraged to marry again. But the author says, there exists a dichotomy about women not being encouraged to study the scriptures.

Tsomo, the Dreamer

Tsomo is a dreamer. She had a lot of dreams-(i) of learning to read and write and to practice religion and to become a nun (ii) to go beyond this place (Dantak work on the road) (iii) being a good woman –good wife and mother with family (iv) to be called Wangleng Chokpo (v) to take vengeance on violence (to show in her village that she was capable of something) (vi) turn obstacles into opportunity (vii) to show Kesang and Wangchen that she was worth something (p102). Most of her dreams melted into thin air. The first dream was partially fulfilled as she became a nun finally.

Tosmo's life has always been controlled by the events in other people's lives. She lost her mother and her father married Tashi Lhamo from Trongsa no older than Tsomo within the third death anniversary. She had to accept the new *aming* (step mother). She must light the butter lamp for mother's death anniversary at Trongsa. She became the wife of Wangchen 'by choice. She felt that Wangchen was with her because of her karma. Her child had no birth breath. While she was grappling with the mysteries of birth and death her husband was grappling with lust. He took Kesang, her sister as his wife rejecting Tsomo. Tsomo was overwhelmed with a sense of defeat – barren, desolate and infertile. So she slipped from the house and she was on the road to Phuentsholing. She moved to Kalimpong through the events that happened to Dechen Choki, her co-worker. "Where do we go from here?" was the question in her life. But there she had found her brother, Gomchen Gyalsten Phuentsho. "That was a miracle in itself" (p140). When Dechen Choki married Tenzing and left, Tsomo thought "No marriage. No children. No home. What a curse!" (p162). She wanted to go to Tso Pema, a sacred place. But a 'kokpa' (stupid fellow), Lhatu became a part of her life even though with her swollen belly which she thought a karmic illness. But she had obtained a blessing. She had an opportunity to change her negative karma, her karmic illness through an operation. Lhatu's character proved a betrayal to her. The events brought her close to the Rinpoche. The Rinpoche said to Tsomo that his wife left him sixty years ago. "She realized that suffering knows no boundaries and she forgot her own pain". The Rinpoche spoke "Drukpa Achi, You came into this world alone and you will depart alone" (p285). His words flowed right into her being. He suddenly ordained her. He made her pass through all the preliminary steps to become a nun. The Rinpoche pronounced, "Isn't this what you always wanted but you kept forgetting, because you were too busy living your life?" Ningche Drukpa Achi became Ani Samphelma. He blessed her saying, "now go and practice religion with a wholehearted commitment as you have always wanted to do." Her brother was praying for the family even though a monk, not without attachment. "I have prayed that each one of you finds your own way in this life and in the next". His dialogue has given Tsomo a revelation of the sterling qualities of a pilgrim.

"Our lives are like that lamp on the altar. We are born and we live for a while like the lamp. We can either shine brightly or flicker, but we all must die. Life is transient. We are just passing by. Think of yourself as a pilgrim on earth and in your own body because that too you must surrender. But take heart in this, a pilgrim has a definite purpose even if it is only for the duration of the pilgrimage. A pilgrim wants to accumulate merit and pray for all sentient beings. We can all choose to be pilgrims" (p145). The longing to be a monk in Tsomo's depth of the heart poured out thus: "I want to try and become a simple pilgrim. I cannot be an educated pilgrim. I would like to meet as many lamas as possible and get their blessings, visit and pray at all, holy place before I die". It is true "she was born to be a pilgrim" (p146). Some of the distinctive customs and traditions, exceptional beliefs and inimitable practices more unique to the Bhutanese society are quite interesting. The unassailable belief in karma of the Bhutanese is the law of moral causation in so far as inequality exists in mankind. Whatever happens to them in their lives is based on their karma. Karma depends on their birth as well as the merits they earn in their past lives and present life. One's future life is based on the merits accrued in past lives. Generally the people of Bhutan cremate their dead except the people from the Southern part of Bhutan. But the southern Bhutanese bury their dead and they speak Lhotshamkha (Nepali) which is an Indo-Aryan language. The other Bhutanese called Brokpas, (the author uses this term) have a tradition to give a *sky burial* to the dead. They take the corpse to the top of the mountain and leave it there for the vultures. This burial represents the compassion and generosity of the people towards the diseased. Archery is the national game. Every hamlet has an archery range. Another traditional sport called *Khuru* can be witnessed during holidays and festival times. The dart should be thrown at the target which is 30 metres away. The most interesting part is the singing and dancing, cheering and jeering at every throw.

Kunzang Choden, the author of *The Circle of Karma*, paints an array of wonderful portraits of different characters in her novel- ecclesiastical, military, official and social. Lama Karsang Drakpa Rinpoche, Rinpoche from Kham, Gomchen Gyelsten Phuentsho (Tsomo's brother), Ani

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Choini Lhayang, Ap Thinley, Gomchen Lhatu (Tsomo's second husband), ani Deki (Nun from Bumthang) are monks and nuns. Letho is from army. Kumari, Naina Devi, Shanti, Lata Didi, Maya, Dechen Choki are co-workers and Dantak labourers. We find doctors and Dantak officers. Along with Tsomo, Yeshila, Aum Kuenlay Pem from Ha, Namgay Wangmo from Tashi Yangtse, Ani Deki, a nun from Bumthang, Kinely Dorjio from Trashigang, Kesang Choden, Aum Namgay Om and two women from Mongar are pilgrims to Bodhgaya and Kathmandu. There are commoners like the khalasi and the worker in the American hospital.

Among all the characters that we find in Kunzang Choden's novel, *The Circle of Karma*, we see people from different walks of life with a wide range of occupations and status. Yet Pema Tsomo stands alone as a zealous pilgrim as she travels with the same determination till she attains the status of Ani Samphelma. The author, Kunzang Choden has wonderfully woven Bhutan's plenty in the miraculous pilgrimage of Pema Tsomo with the colours of Bhutan's traditions and customs and beliefs in the fabric of her novel, *The Circle of Karma*. Our myriad humble homes and hamlets have been our university of a special kind to teach us the timeless lessons of humility and tolerance, the power of love and compassion, the need to care and share, the laws of action and consequence, the essence of simplicity and the value of *thadamtsi*, the love of our sacred institutions, and the goodness of humanity. These, our priceless lessons of life, are dear to us as a nation and as a people.

Notes:

1. "Anims" (anems) are lay female who practice dharma. Some are celibate; others are not.

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14. When East Meets West

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Indian women writers have been abounding in full bloom spreading their unique aroma in the vast field of literature. They are identified for their freshness, versatility and native flavour. The patriarchal set up that has been transforming, resulted in the emergence of many Indian women writers who are known for the vigorous and poignant feminine confession. Many women writers have subsequently taken up such themes and published hordes of works in India and abroad. A lion's share has been taken by these writers in such thematic works. A host of Indian women writers have been trying their hands in channelizing greater discontent and disgust on various social problems. They have raised their voices against a range of serious problems faced by women that are accepted under the garb of customs and traditions. The treatment of women characters in the novels of many of these women writers, particularly in the works of Bharati Mukherjee and Anita Rau Badami transcends boundaries and universalizes their female subjectivity. Their works reveal the actual position of women in the Indian society and the treatment they are subjected to with all diversities in the guise of 'Unity'. On the whole, they wrote about the urban middle class people, the segment of the society they know the best. These writers reveal the characteristics of diasporic fiction which expresses a deep felt concern for the fate of the immigrants in cross cultural contexts and the state of 'in-betweenness'. The confrontation between tradition and modernity is the key factor behind the works of acclaimed migrant writers like Anita Rau Badami and Bharathi Mukherjee. "*Women write differently not because they are different psychologically from men, but because their social experiences are different.*" – Virginia Woolf. Anita Rau Badami is one among such most sensitive writers of modern India who is undoubtedly a perfect artist capturing the complex subtleties of human relationships in the smooth textures of simple and lyrical idiom. Magnificent obsessions with childhood, family relations and other values in life are the chief features of her writings. Her writings display the struggle, anguish and rebellion of women in a society of prerogatives and imbalances. In such a literary world that is quickly being packed with many local but foreign authors, Anita Rau Badami stands out with her outstanding, thrilling and creepy novel *Tell it to the Trees*. Bharati Mukherjee, a scholarly writer who has lived in India, Canada, and the United States, is uniquely positioned to examine the fragmentary nature of characters with "*multiple identities*". Politics of identity permeate Mukherjee's texts. Her novels, *Jasmine* and *Wife*, and explore the shifting identities of diasporic women, both in the present-day United States, Canada, and India, and in the past literary texts. Samir Dayal describes the title character of *Jasmine* as "a perpetual nomad" who "shuttles between differing identities". Thus, the paper is an attempt to discuss the construction of mobility and identity in Anita Rau Badami's *Tell it to the Trees* and Mukherjee's *Jasmine* and *Wife*.

The story of *Tell it to the Trees* centers around the family of Dharma. Vikram Dharma is the head of the family who lives in an isolated house, built so many years ago by his father, J. K. Dharma in the remote wilds of Merrit's Point, British Columbia. It deals with the burden of the secrets of a dysfunctional family migrated from India. The mysterious spell it causes to the family as well as others who are associated with the family is the real essence of the novel. Vikram's age old mother Akka, his second wife Suman, 13 year old Varsha, daughter of Vikram and his first wife Harini (Helen) and 7 year old Hemanth, son of Vikram and his second wife live in the house along with Vikram. The plot delves into many issues like love and arranged marriages, wife and child abuse, immigrants in Canada and above all the crisis of identity. It reveals the increasing isolation of the Dharma family in the location – an isolation that matches with that of Suman's isolation from the rest of the family. A symbolic sense of wildness, isolation and coldness surrounding the Dharma family is beautifully portrayed by the author. In fact, this symbolic representation is completely in

contrast to the real beauty of Suman who is found distinctly affectionate, soft spoken, and always pleasant in her colourful saris, preparing varieties of delicious Indian food.

One does not need to see a monster arise from a peat-bog waving a chain-saw to get spine shivers; you just need to marry the wrong man and live in the wrong place. It is true in case of both Helen and Suman, Vikram's wives. Helen was a messy housekeeper, a bad cook but she loved to dress up and go out. Vikram was jealous of her and treated her poorly with contempt and hatred. She has had enough of Vikram and really got vexed. Unable to bear with Vikram and his ways of living any longer, one day, Helen decides to leave her daughter and his lonely house. She takes her car and off she goes. But, very mysteriously, Helen is killed in a car accident. Vikram is shocked and out of senses with wrath and fury. Thus, the woman, who imagines a beautiful, joyful and lovely life in an alien land, meets with a fatal end.

Vikram then goes to India and marries Suman, who is a complete contrast to Helen. She is quiet, timid and loving. Knowing pretty well about Vikram's first marriage, Suman agreed to marry him and willingly took the responsibility of his child. Six months later, Suman arrives at the Dharma house with lots of hopes and aspirations. In the distant land miles away from her home, she imagined a beautiful and lovely life with Vikram. But on the contrary, after she entered the secluded house of the Dharmas in the cold Merrit's Point, she encountered many strange and painful experiences. She was shocked and started feeling lonely very soon. Silence is the sign of not knowing what to do. Hence Suman started compromising with the hard realities of life very silently. While managing the bleak reality of her life with excessive cooking and cleaning in the house, she frequently gets tempted to escape from Vikram and the haunting secrets of the house. Vikram is the chameleon of the man, who used to beat his wife and children, but makes appearances. "Man endures pain as an undeserved punishment; woman accepts it as a natural heritage." – Anonymous. He is hence described as a cloven-hoofed monster that dissolves into regretful tears and regret whenever he is interrupted in his beatings. 'Why do you make me do this?' he frequently bleats in the archetypal style of the criminal blaming the victim, 'She made me do it your Honour!'

It is highly interesting to note the remarkable patience and tolerance Suman puts up with Vikram and his cynical behavior. Patience and silence are two powerful energies. While patience gives mental strength; Silence gives emotional strength. Suman is a person who is found with these two ideal potentialities. There are obvious reasons and references from the plot to understand the reason for Vikram's split behavior. His father J. K. Dharma's own habitual abuse of his family could be one of the reasons for Vikram's untoward and unseemly behaviour. This idea can be justified by Vikram's mother's regretful verdict towards her son's behavior – genetics – that comes off as a pat rather than a complete and valid reason. Under such situations it would be mysterious to guess the intentions of Akka also who kept quiet when Vikram marries Suman. If it is assumed that Helen is deceived and Suman is trapped, then worst is the case with Anu Krishnan, Vikram's tenant in the back-house, a thoroughly modern and up-coming writer. She invited troubles by hiring their house assuming that the isolated, calm and serene surroundings of Merrit's Point would be much suitable and encouraging to her to bring out her effective creative output.

Anu Krishnan wanted time away from the busy city so that she could experience the perfect silence of the isolated land that influences her uninterrupted thinking while producing wonderful journals and also felt inspired to write short stories. She had found the house through one of her university friends who kept in touch with everyone in the graduating year including the quiet and reserved Vikram Dharma and his first wife Helen. Anu didn't remember Vikram properly, but she did remember Helen, a pretty, fun loving, wonderful and outgoing woman. During her stay in the Dharma house, she befriends Suman, and Akka, the matriarch of the Dharma family. Suman found a good companion in Anu and Anu liked Suman's pleasant manners, soft spoken nature and more particularly, her Indian flavoured dishes. Thus much intimacy grew between the two along with Akka who used to narrate many things about India and share some interesting issues about their

family. She sat for hours incessantly listening to the tales told by Akka. But, her arrival soon changed the balance of the Dharma household and Anu got wrapped up in the family drama as the secrets of the family are being unraveled. Thus she had to meet with an unexpected mysterious fatal blow in a distant alien land for no fault of hers.

Varsha Dharma, the 13 year old daughter of Vikram and his first wife Helen, is another character who suffers from the sense of isolation, alienation and insecurity. The troubled teenager, who was abandoned by her birth mother, is susceptible about her stepmother, the sweet and gentle Suman. She is not ready to lose her step mother, Suman who cares much for her and loves her unconditionally. She could envisage Suman's dreams of escaping from Vikram, her abusive husband, and hence keeps her Visa and Passport secretly under her control. Hemant, the sensitive seven-year old son of Vikram and Suman is also kept under the hold of Varsha who is smart enough to check Suman's plans of escape as she could not leave behind her son as Helen did.

The internal dialogue of the characters reveal a deeply wounded psychology, one that evolves from the suffering of domestic violence and the feelings of unworthiness, helplessness, and a lack of freedom, power, and control. This voicelessness of each character is emotionally rerouted in different ways. For Helen, Vikram's first wife, she finds means of escape through the fantasy and adventure of an adulterous affair and eventually the courage to walk out from her abusive husband and only child. For Akka, Vikram's mother and children's grandmother, she finds solace in the nostalgic memory that her own abusive husband is now long gone, having died from the freezing temperatures of British Columbia's harsh winter. And the continual hope that others like her, who find themselves trapped in abusive relationships, might muster the courage to flee towards freedom. Hence she encourages Suman to flee from her abusive husband and live an independent life. "Patience and silence are two powerful energies. Patience makes you mentally strong. Silence makes you emotionally strong." For Suman, Vikram's second wife, she is in a desperate and pathetic condition to stay back and survive the disheartening conditions for want of money, refuge and familiarity with the foreign land. For Anu Krishnan, it is death that she encountered compensating her intimacy with the Dharma family.

Thus, it is Badami's commendable skill which lays out how the victims of abuse become either compliant cases of Stockholm-Syndrome, (a condition experienced by some people who have been held as hostages for an extended time in which they begin to identify with and feel sympathetic toward their captors) like Suman or abusers themselves, like the pre-adolescent Varsha and the aged Akka. Hence it can be said implicitly that the characters faced isolation and loneliness as they lived in a distant land, not amidst their kith and kin. If they had their people around, they would have someone to share, support and understand. The very fact that both the children are haunted by the stories of ghosts and feel burdened by the many other secrets floating in the multi-generational Indian home is another psychological factor that influences the plot greatly. The strange idea that the children should share the secrets of the family to the trees in their estate, but not to anyone else, speaks about the idea of isolation and loneliness. Hence when East meets West, the nostalgic attitude of the Easterners is predominantly observed.

Bharathi Mukherjee's characters redefine themselves with each new spatial pattern. However, in *Jasmine*, Mukherjee explores what happens to a gendered identity that has been smashed by hammer blows, and melted down to triviality. Jasmine, the title character and narrator of the novel, was born approximately 1965 in a rural Indian village called Hasnpur. She tells her story as a twenty-four-year-old widow who is pregnant, living in Iowa with her crippled lover, Bud Ripplemeyer. It takes two months in Iowa to relate the most recently developing events. But during that time, Jasmine also relates biographical events that span the distance between her Punjabi birth and her American adult life. These past biographical events inform the action set in Iowa. Her odyssey encompasses five distinct settings, two murders, at least one rape, a maiming, a suicide, and three love affairs. Throughout the course of the novel, the title character's identity, along with her

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name, changes again and again: from Jyoti to Jasmine, Jasmine to Jazzy, Jazzy to Jase and Jase to Jane. In chronological order, Jasmine moves from Hasnpur, Punjab, to Fowlers Key, Florida (near Tampa), to Flushing, New York, to Manhattan, to Baden, Iowa, and finally is off to California as the novel ends.

The state of exile, a sense of loss, the pain of separation and disorientation makes *Jasmine* symbolic of the quest for identity in an alien land. Jasmine, the protagonist of the novel, undergoes several transformations during her journey of life in America, from Jyoti to Jasmine to Jane, and often experiences a deep sense of estrangement resulting in a fluid state of identity. This journey becomes a tale of moral courage, a search for self-awareness and self-assertion. Uprooted from her native land India, Jyoti does her best to introduce herself into the new and alien society as an immigrant; the culmination finally indicated in Jasmine's pregnancy with the child of a white man - Bud. Jasmine changes herself constantly, ferrying between multiple identities in different spaces and at different times. Jasmine shows the most predictable crusade towards Americanization and its obvious uncertainty and without feeling infuriated she survives to make a new start in the host country.

Geographically, the story begins in India and takes off from Europe to America, where it bounces back and forth from Florida through New York to proceed to Iowa, then finally lands in California. The novelist deliberately transports her in time and space again and again so as to bring in a sense of instability into the novel. She is seen against the backdrop of the rigid and patriarchal Indian society in which her life is controlled and dominated by her father and brothers. However, Jyoti seeks a modern and educated husband who has no faith in dowries and traditions, and thus finds a US based modern-thinking man, Prakash. Prakash encourages Jyoti to study English, and symbolically gives Jyoti a new name Jasmine, and a new life. "He wanted to break down the Jyoti as I'd been in Hasnapur and make me a new kind of city woman. To break off the past, he gave me a new name; Jasmine....Jyoti, Jasmine: I shuttled between identities." (Jasmine- 77) Jyoti's transformation starts here from a village girl under the shell of her father and brothers to a wife of an American traditional husband who gives her all liberties. Jasmine's happiness is short-lived. She is widowed and returns to India to her family. Now she has to choose between the rigid traditions of her family and perform Sati (a woman jumps into fire after her husband's death), or continue to live the life of Jasmine in America. Jasmine sways between the past and the present attempting to come to terms with the two worlds, one of 'nativity' and the other as an 'immigrant'. Hailing from an oppressive and a rural family in India, Jyoti comes to America in search of a more fruitful life and to realize the dreams of her husband, Prakash. Jasmine sets off on an agonizing trip as an illegal immigrant to Florida, and thus begins her symbolic trip of transformations, displacement, and a search for identity. Jasmine undergoes her next transformation from a dutiful traditional Indian wife Jasmine to Jase when she meets the intellectual Taylor and then moves on to become Bud's Jane. It seems likely that as Jasmine leaves for California with Taylor and Duff, her identity continues to transform. The author depicts this transformation and transition as a positive and an optimistic journey. Jasmine creates a new world consisting of new ideas and values, constantly unmasking her past to establish a new cultural identity by incorporating new desires, skills, and habits. This transition is defined not only in the changes in her attitude, but more significantly in her relationship with men. She continues to transform from Jasmine to Jane and Jase. The author depicts this transformation and transition as a positive and an optimistic journey. Jasmine creates a new world consisting of new ideas and values, constantly unmasking her past to establish a new cultural identity by incorporating new desires, skills, and habits. This transition is defined not only in the changes in her attitude, but more significantly in her relationship with men.

In New York, Jasmine clearly recognizes her ability to adapt. "I wanted to become a person they thought they saw: humorous, intelligent, refined, and affectionate. Not illegal, not murderer not widowed, raped, destitute, fearful." (Jasmine- 171) The abilities to adjust to the requirements of a changing environment and to free from the past are Jasmine's survival skills. They allow her to deal

with the ethics and culture of two dissimilar worlds and her occurrence with different identities of Jyoti and Jasmine, where Jasmine feels hanging between the traditional and the modern world and with controlled and independent love, offered by her Indian husband, Prakash. Jasmine then meets Lillian Gordon, staying with whom begins her process of assimilation by learning how to become American. Lillian bestows upon her the nickname 'Jazzy', a symbol of her entrance into and acceptance of American culture which she welcomes gladly. After that, she moves in with a traditional Indian family in Hushing, New York. Jasmine soon finds herself stifled by the inertia of this home for it was completely isolated from everything American. Considering it to be a stasis (motionless) in her progression towards a new life, she tries to separate herself from all that is Indian and to forget her past completely. *Jasmine* proceeds with her migratory pattern and moves to New York City, to become the 'au pair' (*Care Taker*) for an American family. With Taylor, his wife Wylie and their daughter Duff, she creates yet another identity upon a new perception of herself. But though Jasmine creates a new identity for every new situation, her former identities are never completely erased. They emerge in specific moments in the text and exacerbate the tension, thereby causing Jasmine to create another more dominant identity, different from all those that came before. While living with the Hayes, Jasmine begins to master the English language, empowering herself to further appropriate American culture. Taylor begins to call her 'Jase' suggesting that she does not have power in the creation of her new self. Also, for the first time in the Hayes household, Jasmine becomes aware of her racial identity because Taylor and his friends understood that she was from South Asia and tried to associate her with that community. Jasmine constantly shuttles in search of a concrete identity. Bharati Mukherjee ends the book on a novel note by emphasizing the complex and alternating nature of identity of a woman in exile.

In the novel *Wife*, the protagonist Dimple wants to break through the traditional taboos of a wife. The opening sentences of the novel introduce the protagonist and set the ironic tone. She marries Amit Basu who is migrating to U.S.A. She is expected to play the role of an ideal Indian wife, stay at home and keep the house for the husband. Her frustration is built up gradually by the circumstances. She resents being a wife in the Basu family and rebels against wifedom in feminist perspectives as seen in Bharathi Mukerjee's novels in many ways. One such way is including a miscarriage by skipping herself free from her pregnancy, which she views as a Basu's property even in her womb. But her self-identity is avoided by her marriage. She aspires for herself recognition and fulfillment of her dream. But Basu behaves in a different way. He wants her to be a docile and submissive wife. So Dimple hates Basu and his behaviour. He needs her only to satisfy his sexual desires. Finally, in a state of depression, she kills Amit in an act of self liberation and commits suicide. Her act, in this sense liberates her as she disregards the discourse that culturally and ideologically has so far construed her identity by harmonizing her feelings and desires as a woman. In *Wife*, Mukherjee iterates the concept of marginalization of woman by explaining- and exploring the way in which culture and ideology construct feminine identity. In *Wife*, we see Mukerjee's enigma of existence than constructing identity leading to psychological imbalances which causes neurosis. But throughout the novel the protagonist Dimple has been portrayed as a free minded and rebellious wife. She has no inhibition in expressing whatever she feels. Finally, it can be understood that the protagonists of the two novels of Bharathi Mukherjee experience a sense of loss, alienation, and thrive for identity. But they desperately try to get adjusted in the West to the extent possible to them in order to meet their ends successfully and satisfy their long-cherished dreams. Thus, the words of Rabbi Sofer - "No woman is required to build the world by destroying herself" rightly justify the perspective.

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15. A Study the Differences, Corelational Relationships, and Effect of Some Psychological Variables onAggression among Adolescents Across Cultural Study Between State of Kuwait and Czech Republic

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Introduction

Aggressive behavior is defined as any behavior intended to hurt, harm, or injure another person (Coie & Dodge, 1998). More specifically, relational aggression, in which the relationship or friendship serves as the means of harm, is observed when malicious gossip, lies, or secrets are spread, as well as by intentionally ignoring (i.e., "silent treatment") or maliciously excluding a peer from an activity or group interaction (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995), as a behaviour directed towards another individual (Bushman& Anderson, 2001), in terms of violent, attacking and destructive behaviour carried out with proximate, intent to cause harm (Geen, 2001). Harre and lamb (Cited in Bharadwaj, 2008, p: 2) mentioned that "aggression might be viewed as a motivational state, a personality characteristic, a response to frustrate, an inherent drive or the fulfillment of a socially learned role requirement". The study of aggressive behavior during early childhood is an important endeavor given the salience of emerging peer relationships and friendships for the academic, social, emotional, and cognitive development of young children (Crick & Zahn-Waxler, 2003). The interest in early onset and the developmental course of aggression results in part from concerns about the stability of aggression across development (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Early Child Care Research Network, 2004) and the developmental significance of early onset aggressive behavior (Moffitt, 1993). Understanding the development of children and a adolescent's aggressive behaviors and experiences of victimization in the school setting has been an important goal of school professionals for decades. In fact, school psychologists have identified bullying and harassment as one of the key issues currently faced by children and a adolescents (Crockett, 2004). In addition, government and public pressure for school intervention programs addressing aggression and victimization is increasing (Limber & Small, 2003; Walker, 2004). This focus in part reflects the understanding that aggressive and victimized children and adolescents exhibit a number of adjustment problems, such as depression, poor school performance, school avoidance, and dropping out of school (Miles & Stipek, 2006).

The Surgeon General (2002) stated that youthviolence is a pervasive problem of "epidemic proportions," demonstrating his increasing concern about adolescent aggression. This concern reflects changes in juvenile crime from 1984-1994 when juvenile arrests for violent crimes in the United States increased by 75%, and female arrests more than doubled (Cirillo et al., 1998). Saner and Ellickson (1996) reported that the adolescent violence perpetration rate is at least 53% on self-report data of junior high students. Another study (Kingery et al., 1997) indicated that 43% of high school freshmen hit another student, 8% hit a teacher, and 16% carried a weapon to school during six months prior to sampling.

Grunbaum et al., (2004), reported that more than one-third of responding high school students reported being in a physical fight during the past twelve months, and 6% reported carrying a weapon during the preceding 30 days. In other words, the violent crime index or arrest records do not accurately represent either the prevalence or qualitative variability (e.g., differences in severity of violence) that may be relevant to prediction and preventive interventions for adolescent aggression. Although the estimated overall risk of fatal injury at school in less than 1% (Dahlbert, 1998), such tragedies have focused public attention on the need for understanding risk and protective factors for adolescent violence but not on the realization that there are differences in

violent behavior relative to location--rural versus urban. It is important to note, for example, that of the 29 school shootings in the United States between 1996 and 2005 (Infoplease, 2005) fully 25 or 76% of the sites were schools serving non-metropolitan or rural areas. With the risk of such incidents, understanding developmental contributors to rural adolescent aggression is clearly a critical domain of investigation

Crick and Werner (1998) also studied the response decision step of the SIP model and found that girls evaluated relationally aggressive responses to peer conflicts more positively, whereas boys evaluated physically aggressive responses more positively. Taken together, the results of these studies suggest that relationally aggressive children, children with particular social goals, and girls relative to boys, may process social information in ways that contribute to the use of relational aggression. Some indicators of adolescent aggression, such as gang violence, appear to be more characteristic of urban settings, with gang violence reported in 87% of cities exceeding a population of 100,000 but only in 12% of rural county agencies (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2004). However, crime rates in some rural counties have been noted to exceed urban crime rates by as much as 25% (Spano & Nagy, 2005). Additionally, rural youth have identified violence among teens as a serious concern in rural communities (Kulig et al., 2006).

Other findings suggest that risk factors for adolescent aggression appear to be moderated by rural/urban locale. For example, although poverty and low socioeconomic status are significant risk factors for adolescent aggression in urban youth samples (Gorman-Smith et al., 1996), poverty and household income do not appear to be a significant risk factor for rural youth (Osgood & Chambers, 2003) despite significantly higher rural/frontier poverty levels -14% rural vs. 8.7-10% urban- (Stamm et al., 2003). Research regarding rural/urban risk factor differences have been investigated mostly by sociologists and, consequently, have focused on demographic characteristics (e.g., socioeconomic status, household composition). There are many causes of aggression as antipathy, central component of the antipathy definition is that the dislike is mutual--that is, both partners agree that the other is a disliked peer (Abecassis, 2003). However, although all antipathy relationships involve dislike. In addition, the behaviors expressed in the context of these relationships may include aggression, increased interaction, or avoidance (Abecassis, 2003). Also prejudice of ethnic, religion, and group...etc, will lead to aggression, so we can observe many patterns of prejudice around the world whether in Iraq, South Africa, Serbia...etc, during the interaction of social or religion inter-groups. Moreover there are many dimensions and phases of stress across the members of groups, the live, scholastic, and work. There are some kinds of stress as inter-group stress will oblige the members of the group to apply many antipathy directions and feeling and inter in the fighting systems with other, so automatically as these works will support the system of aggression between the individuals.

Method: Sample

The present study was administrated among two samples, the first sample was across the male's and female's secondary schools students in the fourth grade in Stat of Kuwait, the total number of the samples (N=220), whereas (110 = male's, 110 = female's) with M=16.3 year, SD=1.2. The second sample was across the male's and female's secondary school students in the fourth grade in Republic of Czech, (N=220), whereas (110=male's, 110 = female's) with M=16.7 year, SD=1.3. For the standardization purpose, the researcher was administered the tools among the other sample (N=100), whereas (50 = male's, 50 = female's) in each country.

Objectives of the Study

This study seeks to explore and determine many psychological aspects of aggression, its various processes and dimensions, more specifically, the study seeks to fulfill the following objectives:

- 1- To examine the differences across the total samples of Kuwait and Czech among the variables under study which are: aggression, prejudice, stress, and self confidence.
- 2- To investigate the directions of the correlation between the variables under study, especially between aggression with other variables.
- 3- To reach a sound framework concerning the dimensions of aggression and relevant psychological and environment variables, by examining the variables under study and their correlational relationships with aggression.
- 4- To test the main effect of aggression across the variables under study.

The Questions of the Study

In the light of the empirical literature, the samples, and the objectives of the present study. Five questions guided the study:

- 1- Are there differences between Kuwaiti and Czech total samples across the variables under study which are: aggression, prejudice, stress, and self confidence?
- 2- Is there a positive relationship between aggression and prejudice among the total samples (male's and female's) in Kuwait and Czech?
- 3- Is there a positive relationship between aggression and stress among the total samples (males and females) in Kuwait and Czech?
- 4- Is there a negative relationship between aggression and self confidence among the total samples (males and females) in Kuwait and Czech?
- 5- What is the main effect of aggression among the variables under study of Kuwait and Czech samples?

Instruments

The following instruments were used for the collection of the relevant data as follows:

Aggression Scale

This scale created by Majed (2008) was constructed with fourteen Likert items (three choices) to measure various components of aggression which are: hostile attitude, behavior, and thinking, the score for the three choices ranged from 1-3. Split half method was used to test the validity of this scale, the computed coefficient of Spearman – Brown was .78 in Kuwait, and .71 in Czech. Alpha Cronbach coefficient was computed to establish the reliability of the scale. The scale yielded alpha coefficients of .68 in Kuwait, and .73 in Czech. These values are satisfactory and acceptance for the validity and reliability of the present scale.

Prejudice Scale

This scale created by Majed (2008) to measure components of prejudice which are gender, ethnic, religion, and professional intolerance, it consists of 20 multiple choice items, each item is followed by five choices from which the respondent is to choose the one that applies to him, the score for the five choices ranged from 1-5. Split half method was used to test the validity of this scale, the computed coefficient of Spearman – Brown was .74 in Kuwait, and .79 in Czech. The scale yielded alpha coefficients of .69 in Kuwait, and .72 in Czech. These values are satisfactory and acceptance for the validity and reliability of the present scale.

Stress Scale

Stress scale was developed by Alen (1999) has been used. This scale was constructed to test various domains of stress which are: school, society, family, personality, it consists of twenty multiple choices items each item is followed two choices (yes, no), its consist of 20 multiple choice items. Split half method was used to test the validity of this scale, the computed coefficient of Spearman – Brown was .69 in Kuwait, and .65 in Czech. Alpha Cronpach coefficient was computed to establish the reliability of the scale. The scale yielded alpha coefficients of .65 in Kuwait, and .70 in Czech. These values are satisfactory and acceptance for the validity and reliability of the present

Self Confidence Scale

This scale was developed by Robert (2001) to measure some domains of self confidence which are: Freedom from doubt, belief in the self, abilities, and the personality, its consists of 22 multiple choice items, each item is followed by four choices from which the respondent is to choose the one that applies to him, the score for the four choices ranged from 1 - 4. Split half method was used to test the validity of this scale, the computed coefficient of Spearman – Brown was .67 in Kuwait, and .69 in Czech. Alpha Cronpach coefficient was computed to establish the reliability of the scale. The scale yielded alpha coefficients of .77. These values are satisfactory and acceptance for the validity and reliability of the present scale.

Procedure

All students were given instruments during sessions held during the school academic year, participation was voluntary, the instruments was administrated in five groups of 22 students each, whether among the male's or female's sample in each country, with each group supervised by an academy staff member. After distributing the booklets, answer sheets and the instruments to the students, they were shown model answers on the blackboard. The students were instructed to fill in the personal information before they proceeded to deal with the test items. After answering the finishing the specific time for each instrument, they must return the instruments to the academic staff member for the second academic step in the present study, which was correction the questionnaires then collection the data for SPSS statistical analysis.

Results

t-test was used in order to detect the difference between total samples of Kuwait and Czech among the variabl

Table 1. Mean Differences Between Total Sample of Kuwait and Czech Among the Variables Under Study

Variables	Country	M	SD	t-value
Aggression	Kuwait	24.9	4.6	4.9**
	Czech	22.9	4.0	
Prejudice	Kuwait	45.3	7.9	6.5**
	Czech	33.4	6.1	
Stress	Kuwait	29.2	3.2	1.7
	Czech	29.4	4.0	
Self Confidence	Kuwait	64.4	8.7	1.3
	Czech	60.3	7.3	

Note: ** P<.01, N: 220 Students in each country

Table 1, presents t-values for the differences between total samples of Kuwait and Czech among the variables under study, in aggression it was found that ($t = 4.9, P<.01$), prejudice ($t = 6.5, P<.01$), stress ($t = 1.7$), and self confidence ($t = 1.3$). In order to observe the inter correlation among all the variable taken in the study 4x4, correlation matrix was computed of total sample of Kuwait (N=220), to find out the relationships between aggression and other variables. The correlation coefficients were sorted separately and presented in the following table 2.

Table 2. Person's Coefficient of Correlation Between Aggression and Other Variables of the Total Sample of Kuwait

Variables	1	2	3	4
Aggression	–	.210* *	.352**	.059
Prejudices		–	.021	.038
Stress			–	-.190**
Self Confidence				–

Note: ** P <.01,

N=220

Table 2, presents the correlations between aggression and other variables under study across the total sample of Kuwait. Aggression was found to be positive correlated with prejudice ($r = .210, P<.01$), and stress ($r = .352, P<.01$), but was not found to be related to self confidence ($r = .059$). Prejudice was not found to be related to stress ($r = .021$) or self confidence ($r = .038$). Stress was found to be negative correlated with self confidence ($r = .190, P<.01$). In order to observe the inter correlation among all variable taken in this study across the total sample of Czech (N=220). The correlation coefficients were sorted separately and presented in the following table 3.

Table 3. Person's Coefficient of Correlation Between Aggression and Other Variables of the Total Sample of Czech

Variables	1	2	3	4
Aggression	–	.268* *	.466**	-.022
Prejudices		-	-.185**	-.025
Stress			–	-.167*
Self Confidence				–

Note: ** P<.01, * P<.05, N=220

Table 3, presents the correlations between aggression and other variables under study across the total sample of Czech. Aggression was found to be positive correlated with prejudice ($r = .268, P<.01$), and stress ($r = .466, P<.01$), but was not found to be related to self confidence ($r = -.022$). Prejudice was found to be negative correlated with stress ($r = -.185, P<.01$), but was not found to be related to self confidence ($r = -.025$). Stress was found to be negative correlated with self confidence ($r = .167, P<.01$). In order to determine the impact of sex and academic specialization on aggression across the sample of Kuwait. Tables 4, presents summary of the findings of ANOVA (2X2) as follows.

Table 4. Summary table of ANOVA Showing the Impact of Sex and Academic Specialized on Aggression Across the Sample of Kuwait

Source of Variance P	S.S.	df	M.S.	F	
Sex (A)	44.5	1	44.5	6.1	<.01
Academic Specialization (B)	57.2	1	57.2	2.7	<i>N.S</i>
(A x B)	12.3	1	12.3	.77	<i>N.S</i>
Error	3459.5	216	16.0		
Total	119026.0	220			

Table 4, presents summary the findings of ANOVA method. The main effect of aggression was significant is sex ($F = 6.1$, $<.01$), and there were no significant values of ANOVA across academic specialization ($F= 2.7$) or the interaction of sex with academic specialization ($F = .77$) among the sample of Kuwait. Table 5, presents summary of the findings of ANOVA across the sample of Czech as follows.

Table 5. Summary table of ANOVA Showing the Impact of Sex and Academic Specialized on Aggression Across the Sample of Czech

Source of Variance P	S.S.	df	M.S.	F	
Sex (A)	33.6	1	33.6	6.4	<.01
Academic Specialization (B)	24.7	1	24.7	2.0	<i>N.S</i>
(AxB)	17.3	1	17.3	1.07	<i>N.S</i>
Error	3491.4	216	16.1		
Total	119026.0	220			

Just like previous analysis data were also subjected to analysis of variance and the finding given in table 5. The results reveals that the main effect of aggression was significant is sex ($F = 6.4$, $<.01$), and there were no significant values of ANOVA across aggression academic specialization ($F= 2.0$) or the interaction of sex with academic specialization ($F= 1.07$) among the sample of Czech.

Discussion

The main purposes of this study was to examine the differences between the total samples of State of Kuwait and Czech Republic across the variables of aggression, prejudice, stress, and self confidence, in addition; determine the directions of correlation among the variable of aggression with other variables under study, moreover; study the effect of sex, academic specialization, and its interaction on aggression.

Recent reviews emphasize that school counselors and psychologists are better equipped to address increasingly complex peer relationship and adjustment problems when they understand and assess for relationally aggressive behaviors (Young et al., 2006). In addition, to facilitate this assessment, a call for the use of ecologically valid observational systems for use in the classroom and on the playground has also been raised by school psychologists (Leff & Lakin, 2005). To date, though, school and developmental psychologists have neglected the important early school years. Theorists have postulated that subtypes of aggressive behavior (i.e., physical and relational aggression) are present and salient during all developmental periods, including early childhood (Crick & Zahn-Waxler, 2003). The majority of past developmental theory, methods, and research designs have concerned physical (i.e., using physical force or the threat of physical force as the means of harm) or verbal (i.e., verbal insults and mean names) aggression, and these empirical

traditions are not necessarily applicable to the study of relational aggression in school settings (Crick & Zahn-Waxler, 2003).

Many school psychologists have called for more extensive research of young children's and adolescents peer relationships and, in particular, relationally aggressive behavior at school (Young et al., 2006). Recent social cognitive theorists have conceptualized aggressive behavior as a dynamic interaction between latent social knowledge structures (e.g., scripts) and online processing (e.g., hostile attribution biases) (Huesmann, 1988; Zelli et al., 1999). Specifically, these knowledge structures or "normative beliefs" are hypothesized to regulate aggressive behavior via their impact on patterns of social information processing.

Regarding to the finding of present study, and referring to the t-test results, it indicates that the level of the sample of Kuwait is higher in comparison with the sample of Czech across the variables of aggression and prejudice, because there are a lot of politics, religion, and social events and its problems around the sample of Kuwait with its side effects and reflections of Kuwait environment, in addition; the structure of Kuwaiti Society enhance and support the dimensions of aggression and prejudice between the politics and religion sects and groups, moreover; multi interventions from the close counties of Kuwait in the field of religion, so as these causes automatically will build negative dimensions between social interacts of Kuwaiti individuals, and will enhance a lot of negative phenomenon's and variables as aggression, prejudice, stress, and social conflicts...etc, that is why we can realize why there are positive relationship between aggression with prejudice and stress across the samples of Kuwait regarding to the person's coefficients of correlation.

Allport (1954) suggested that attitudes toward out-group members often reflect hatred and aggression, emotions that non-prejudiced individuals are able to keep in check. Negative affect has also been shown to predict attitudes toward out-group members. Stephan and Stephan (1985) found that anxiety about interacting with out-group members predicted attitudes toward them. Stangor et al., (1991) and Dijker (1987) report that emotions were better predictors than stereotypes of attitudes toward ethnic, cultural, and religious groups. The basic assumption behind these and other studies is that affective and motivational variables play an important role in attitudes and behaviours toward own and other group members (Ashmore & Del Boca, 1981).

The findings of ANOVA across the samples of Kuwait and Czech indicated that the main effect of aggression is sex, and there are no significant values of ANOVA across academic specialization and interaction between sex and academic specialization. That's mean there is differences between sex of aggression whether across the samples of Kuwait or Czech, as this result reflects to us that the educational environments and experiences, scholastic activities, social and family influences among the males and females whether in Kuwait or Czech are not equal or similar, that is why there is effect of sex on aggression in both countries. More over as these dimensions already reflected among the sample of male's and female's in both countries, so there is difference of the level of aggression between male's and female's.

The intervention of parental emotional support is very important to protect adolescents of any negative directions or phenomenon's. Studies have shown that parental emotional support is an influential protective factor against adolescent aggression with urban adolescents (Boyum & Parke, 1995; Gaoni et al., 1998; Kershner et al., 1996; Valentiner et al., 1994; Young et al., 1995). This continues to hold true even in the presence of such potent risk factors as poverty, parental psychopathology, and social disadvantage (Gaoni et al., 1998). In addition, mother-son relationships with violent juvenile offenders are characterized by less positive communication and warmth than those of nonviolent offenders. (Henggeler et al., 1985).

The implication of this study is that gender is an important factor when examining the development of aggressive behavior patterns in the school context across the sample of adolescents. First, consistent with the study of (Crick et al., 1999), they found that boys were more likely than girls to be physically aggressive. In contrast, girls were at increased risk for relational aggression. Thus, school professionals concerned about boys' and girls' involvement in aggression would benefit from attending to relational, in addition to physical, forms of such experiences. Second, this study highlights the fact that problematic peer relationships such as mutual antipathies are associated with negative experiences for both boys and girls, but that the specific form of maladjustment may differ by gender. Thus, mutual antipathy involvement may facilitate identification of boys and girls at risk for different types of behaviors and experiences. Implications for understanding adolescents at risk for aggression. The findings of present study have important implications for the profession of school, and adolescent's psychology. This study has the potential to contribute to the identification of adolescent's at risk for developing problems with aggression.

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16. The Institution of Marriage

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“Wed-Lock” with a ready-key is marriage. The event which destines life through ‘Pin-turns’, the concept and execution are the aspects which channelize life into variation. Antediluvian era has been a Monolithic, in making this institution a Bastion. To figure out the sense of this togetherness is the variegated life of living but not existence. The norm which has been auspicious, the utmost tough-aspect in life is two-unknown individuals living together for life time, with offspring. The best point of this matrimony is the vicissitudes, which get back to equanimity. What a might!!! Beyond imagination is virtue of marriage, as a vital-role with absolute-composure. The past, fades as it enters the jaws of present and future. But there is no way without the past. Since it is the residue to merge into present facade the future-power. The pristine-era makes this relationship to build a fort of security, protection amity, progeny and so forth. The glory of the people is so concerned for the happy-society. Magnanimity to render alms for the needful is good but implementation for the best happening, for the unknown and future generations is beyond the thought process. The authenticity of life is to be what one is as one to nexus with others in the society. Yes!!!-this is where a man and woman share lots of feelings passions, thoughts, to emote and demote.

Indian Mythology

It is the edifice for culture, tradition, custom and made a genesis for civilization. To mark the threshold of an ocean is to prove oneself a simpleton. Rather than being struck in the enigma it is better to follow axiom. Undefined science with comprehensible answers is the manifold of this temple. The Sanctum-Sanctorum is the altar of marriage which conveys that simplicity of marriage. Unlike today ancient people never-ever been ostentatious in the vulgar display of money. The Coconut leaves with native flowers woven make opulent scenario. What a spectacular view of the Bride and Bridegroom. The other specification which stands as an incantation is the giver and taker mode of action. It is the groom’s family which implores for the hand of the suitable bride. The priest who is equal to Brahma-Rishi-Vashishta is the Good-omen for the marital-status. The Benediction from him and elders of great hearts, who are ritualistic in performing their religious duties-with austerity, with turmeric rice on their head, makes them immortal through births. The Urge to meet each other, pave path for the next-birth. Wow!!! What a relationship which is conditioned for unconditional love and affection.

The multi-dimension home where, everything can be taken care of is this place of sanctity. The vermilion, sandal-paste turmeric, fruits, vegetables, flowers, etc. speak tomes of the core elements of nature. Amidst which, Fire-God is the witness for nuptials. The Couple take seven steps around the altar together for seven-Births. The vibration and benediction, bestowed by primordial Couple- Parvathi (Nature) and Purusha (Shiva) is through births and the cycles of birth and death. As a flabbergasting revelation, the symbolism is the compendium of (Shiva-Linga) Ardha-nareeshwar. He offers half of his body to his wife. As a whole the pedagogue guides and teaches the paradigm to face the perilous situation. The other apothegms, which make the serene-go is to nourish the relationship with both the families. Every moment of Pre-Marital and Post-Marital aspects keep teaching and preaching the values, which make life better and the best. The Pinnacle of Successful life is love and affection. Such was the (benign-eon) of the marriage-union, which has taught the society to come to life. The Almanac depicts the Kali-Yuga as 4, 32, 000, Dvapar double this time, Thretha three times this era and finally Kruta-yuga 4times-this period. Precisely, whatever may be the epoch, era or time, the Institution carried the same reverence and esteem. Entire world venerates Indian culture, for this institution. In truncate, impetus of the matrimony is the part and whole of life.

Family-unit makes to climb the ladder in making it grandeur and finally society becomes resplendent and reveling. Today, it has become a vicious-circle with Ordeal- approach.

Healthy-society is the untainted lineage. The Seers and Rishis have conceived and established this basement for the protection of Do's and Don'ts. The Indian perception is not the physical relationship which exists between two-people, but the union of the entire-clan. The ancient scriptures reveal the matrimony as a wonderful creation but not for sensuousness. The aspect is used and taken as an instrument for progeny. "The learning and unlearning happens through this system. This alignment, which projects, the aspect, is pregnant, bearing the seeds, as infants and shoots up into a massive tree to burgeon. In accrue to this, one undergoes augmentation. This is definitely, to whet the knife called life. In spite of honing the life it also leaves, certain stains of dejection and depression of venomous situations. The essence is to share life with the partner throughout life and so on. Every fledgling will ameliorate into a complete human. Despite this powerful nuclear family got into fission- nuclear family. Who is the sufferer? Ultimately the kid, the Child undergoes loneliness. Who is responsible for this plight? The irresponsible individuals.... The Modern age is topsy-turvy, for this all the families should come together as one to protect this great institution and make the entire universe happy.

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17. Translation of Sangam Literature for Elements of Love

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Sangam literature is considered to be the oldest literature, belonging to the 'Sangam era' of ancient Tamil history. Sangam literature primarily belonged to the genre of metaphorical poems, written by passionate poets of different backgrounds, belonging to different walks of life, from a Pauper to a Prince, with no discrimination between men and women. These poets were of different occupations, from different social classes, and held different positions; this versatility in their background helped the cause of successfully portraying day to day themes.

Sangam literature dealt with both emotional and material topics such as love, war, governance, trade and bereavement. Sangam Poems falls into two categories: the 'inner field' as 'Aagam', and the 'outer field' as 'Puram'. In the 'inner field' the subtlety of love and the intensity of lust for the loved ones are portrayed with beautiful metaphors, that panoramically paints the picture of people's 'Aagam' life, i.e. personal life. The 'outer field' topics discussed all other aspects of human experience such as heroism, bravery, morality, benevolence, philanthropy, social life and customs which can be categorized in public life.

The beauty of Sangam literature lies in classifying it in thematic way. The Tamil culture of embracing nature and intertwining life with environment surrounding the civilization is the idea behind the classification. The classification ties the emotions involved in 'aagam' poetry to a specific landscape. These landscapes are called 'thinai'. These are 'kurinji' consisting of mountainous terrains; 'mullai' consisting of dense forest regions; 'marutham' consisting of green and phosphorus agricultural land; 'neithal' with exotic coastal terrains; 'paalai' representing hot deserts with sand dunes. There are sub clauses in this distinction, which are 'Kaikilai' representing unsolicited love and 'Perunthinai' representing unsuited love.

'Natrinal' an anthology of poems, is from Sangam Literature, from the book 'Ettuthogai', compiled by 'Paratham Padiya Perundevanar'. He compiled it under the patronage of the Pandya king, King Māran Vazhuthi. Peruntēvanar also wrote an invocatory stanza after its compilation. Among the 400 poems, poets of 56 poems are not known and 192 are known. Poem 234 is missing and considered extinct. Part of the 385th poem is also missing from all the available manuscript copies. These poems are monologue in nature. These poems are translated by Vaidehi Herbert, she has done a great job in translating these poems, and in keeping the cultural elements intact and she has also tried to overcome the untranslatable terrains with her abundant knowledge and Love for literature. Among the 400 poems in this anthology, the first poem considered for research is from Kurungi Nilam consisting of Mountainous terrains; this poem is not only known for its rich cultural value but also for its information about flora and fauna of this region. The hunting was not for necessity, but was to exhibit their Strength and Valor. This poem is 17th poem among the 400 poems and is penned by 'Nochi Niyamankilār', monologue of the heroine said to be her friend in a poetic way.

*“Early morning rains that fell
on his fine, lofty mountains
flowed down like dark ocean waves”*

The beauty of mountainous terrains is metaphorically compared with the hero's shoulder; the allegory here is representing Kurungi nilam.

*“The waterfalls in the huge, wide forest
is where we used to meet,
and it hurts me to see that beautiful spot.*

*I was unable to tolerate my pain.
Tears flowed down from my beautiful,
wet eyes.
“Why are you crying?” mother asked me.
“Let me kiss you, my daughter with
splendid teeth,” she said with tender words.
I almost forgot to guard my shyness
that is more precious than life, and began
to tell her that the reason for my sorrow
was that I missed the chest of the man from
the mountains, where bees swarming on
glory lily flowers sing like sweet lute strings.
However, I caught myself before I
said anything and stopped, my friend!”*

The culture element is very well captured while translating the lines, “I almost forgot to guard my shyness that is more precious than life”. The chastity and sanctity of those women were considered even more precious than life. The probable untranslatability in this context was word, ‘*Verpan*’ which meant “the man belonging to Mountain terrain”, translated into the poem beautifully as “man from the mountains.” The next poem belongs to the category of ‘*Mullai thinai*’ consisting of dense forest region, with exorbitant varieties of flora and fauna, the flora are mainly jasmine flower known as Mullai in Tamil, while reading Mullai poems, the astonishing element is usage of ‘Mullai’ in their poems. This poem written by ‘*Kabilar*’. Monologue by the hero to his charioteer.

*“The town where she lives is in
the harsh forest, where delicate
mullai buds open as flowers,”*

Harsh forest represents ‘*Mullai nilam*’ abundant with dense forest and the life style of cowherds and shepherds who take their cows to graze in the forest for greens.

*“A hunter kills monitor lizards,
digs up striped frogs,
hunts rabbits during the day,
carries them on his shoulders,
drops everything at home,
and forgets it all and settles for
abundant toddy with sweet arrogance.”*

This verse contains a beautiful allegory, in it, like the hunter forgets the animals, he hunted and settles down to enjoy the toddy talks. Hero who goes out to bring richness and money, will forget all his money and richness on meeting the heroine, he will keep them aside and start enjoying the chat with heroin in sweet arrogance. Almost every, one in four poem talks about toddy or liquor, In terms of content, it is interesting to note the extent to which the poems are soaked through with toddy. The warrior king is forever indulging in his favorite toddy, made from palm, mohua flowers and other fruits. It was regularly drunk before battles and to fight off fears and shivers. Strong liquor is clearly more heroic. After the drink, the warrior-king becomes more generous with his gifts, and a shared drink is a sign of bonding, etc. Liquor is used in many ways as tool to reflect the emotions and customs. A couple of poems mention wine, which was brought to them by the *yavanas* (Greeks).

*“She with an understanding heart
is waiting patiently.
If I don’t marry her, she’ll feel sad!”*

This poem is again a beautiful poem to capture the love, with its metaphorical language. The patience of the women and this patience which causes impatience in heart of Men are more beautiful

and same has been captured too. Women were known for their gentleness, patience, forgiving nature and kindness.

The next poem is from *Marutham thinai*”: Marutham Nilam is like a canvas bordered with coconut trees, in these lands, pulses and paddy crops embrace each other, there is always an abundance of water resources, such as wells, rivers and tanks. And all we could see was green! Marutham Nilam is surrounded by women with a 'lotus face', 'arjuna eyes' and 'water-lily skin'. Men were hard working and used to wake up before sunrise! Men predominantly remained agriculturists, binding themselves in the past culture, where they always worked hard for the future! The ducks swam in a river of milk over water, since the cow's poured milk, like skies pouring rain! Marutham Nilam is known for auspiciousness that they always hear marriage and harvest drums. Marutha Nilam can be described as a typical painting of harmony, merriness and prosperity. The poem is as follows:

*“Bright bells with long clappers
ring in a protected house
where a pavilion with spread sand
and rustling frond thatch is set up.
On one side,
women adorned with perfect jewels
stand waiting for a good omen,
like a big bard who protects
the man of the house from concubines.
The fragrance of newborn is there.
The baby sleeps with his foster mother
in a fragrant, soft bed. The rich woman,
the baby's mother, sleeps after white
mustard paste was rubbed on her delicate
body along with fresh ghee, and given a bath.
Like a thief he comes in the thick of night,
the man from the town with wide ports, when his
son who bears his noble father's name was born.”*

The mention of mustard paste and fresh ghee shows their richness and prosperity. Foster mother is again a mention of beautiful Tamil culture, those mothers with rich heritage won't be able to look after their children, so they appoint a woman, who is considered equal to their mother. The children get attached to Foster mother more than their own mother. Foster mother is given equal importance like the real mother.

Neithal Nilam is embodiment of the stunning coastal lines, where the feel of soft sands, fills in between toes, where people get drenched in sun and their nostrils are filled with salt breeze, the beautiful maids, with wheatish skin greet their lovers who head into the sea, for catching fishes, and returns back to mingle with their loved ones, while the sky is filled with golden orange ray and sun goes to sleep in the Sea's lap. This poem is the 19th poem in the anthology of '*Natrinai*' describing about Neithal land and it is a monologue of Heroine's friend to the Hero. To denote that this poem belongs to Neithal land, words like shrimp, sharks, waves, shore etc are used.

*Lord of the shores with powerful waves,
where scaly trunks of screw pines look like
backs of curved shrimp, their thorny
leaves like swords of sharks, their mature
buds like tusks of huge elephants, their
appearance like fine deer with tufts
and their scents like that of festival grounds!*

*If your charioteer drives away your tall chariot
with many bells, she will not live even for a
few days. Understand this, and do the right thing!*

The friend of lady, who fell in love, or the Lady's maid, serves as an invariable structure when it comes to love poems. Generally a Lady wasn't allowed outside the house, and the mode to communicate with her lover was hence restricted. The Lady's maid as a savior, used to bring messages to the Lover from her Lady and take back messages. She used to act like a Messenger between the couple. This Lady's Maid as an irreplaceable part and the same is well captured in so many Sangam poems. The serenity of the vacuum, the capricious nature and the solitude, like the braveness and silence of desert, is the mind of the inhabitants, like the ecology and environment around them teaches, they are best in surviving with the best they have, they are survivors and strivers. These traits found in locales of 'Palai Thinai' is well embedded in this poem written by 'Siraikkudi Anthaiyār', the poetic lines are as follows:

*If I want to unite with her,
I will not be able to earn wealth.
If I want to earn wealth,
I will not be able to unite with her.
You know whether I need to go or not!
Wealth will be lost like the path of fish
in the middle of a pond with fresh flowers.
Even if I get wealth seven times the measure
of this world surrounded by oceans,
I do not want it!
The calm, moist, red-streaked eyes
of the girl wearing thick earrings,
has stopped me from leaving.
I don't care about wealth! May you live long!*

A monologue by the Hero to his Heart, the moral element in the words of hero, says "Wealth will get lost, like the path of fish in the middle of the pond with fresh flowers". The metaphorical comparison of wealth getting lost, to that of fish losing its path in pond is simply awesome. This poem is a beautiful capture of emotions. A man who wants to earn money, and make a successful livelihood has to leave his lover and go. The dilemma between leaving her and being with her is the essence of poem. This poem ends with a philosophical note that, no wealth is more important than loved ones.

*O small white heron!
O small white heron
with bright white feathers
like shore-washed clothes!
Come to our town, search our
ponds for pregnant keliru fish,
and eat them until you are sated.
Go to his town with fertile fields
and wide sweet waters, and kindly
remember to tell my beloved man
that I am sad and afflicted with love,
and that my jewels are slipping down.*

This poem is quite an interesting one, the Heroine uses the Heron as a messenger and wants it to go to the Hero and tell him, her feelings on her behalf. The Heroine urges the Heron to go to the Hero and to convey the message, "my body is prone to love disease that I can't eat or drink and I am becoming so thin that my bangles are slipping from my hands". This love disease is named as

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Building A Global Village (GV) Through Inter Dialogue

'*Pasalai*' caused due to separation from loved ones, resulting in love pangs. This poem is written by '*Veli Vithiyar*', and this poem belongs to Marutha Thinai, i.e land with agricultural lands.

The love in Sangam literature is very unique and different, this anthology '*Natrinai*', particularly has brought in beautiful cultural elements and craziness associated with Love. The poem not only tells us about culture, it also speaks about the beauty of the land, the mode of communication, the flora and fauna of the land, the inhabitants of that particular land, their occupation, their hobbies etc. to capture the essence and beauty in a few lines is a challenging job, but to translate it and keeping the elements intact is even more tough, but we see that the translations are really good and they have captured the inner depth with ease. The rhythms and sounds have missed their effect in translation, but essence and beauty is captured, excellently while translating. The love here is a combination of subtlety and intensity. The words are subtle and the emotions are fierce, this is mainly due to gentle attitude of women and shyness in exhibiting their love. Translating these emotions into words of a foreign language is really a challenging job, but nevertheless an interesting one too.

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18. Ngugi's *Matigari* as a Mirror of African (Kenyan society) Revolution in Post-colonial World

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Revolution as a concept is a special form of the process of development, which we call historical change. All realms of historical existence are subject to this change, each of them capable of being initiated by a wide range of assorted factors. There are, for example, the almost imperceptible, protracted developments, which preserve continuity as they unfold, that is, follows an evolutionary course. Evolution, seen as a gradual adjustment of institutions and forms of existence to altered human living conditions, is not to be equated with adjustment by means of deliberate reforms which presuppose an understanding of the need for change coupled with the determination to preserve continuity. However, change can also be eruptive in the form of sudden discharges and 'accelerated processes', as when preceded by periods of acute crisis. It should be noted that the development of a specific revolutionary concept entails subjective revolutionary awareness and a determination on the part of supporting or activist groups to change prevailing organization and systems in accordance with certain programmatic ideas. Revolution is, undoubtedly, the most widely studied problem among the major scope of the historical process, which is the main thrust of this paper. The difficulty of defining the specific content of a term increases as its range of application expands. This is true of the term 'revolution', where the individual revolution is concerned. Therefore, one must concentrate on the occurrence, which in the course of events is marked out by relatively hard facts or sequences of facts. The great modern revolutions are total revolutions to the extent that they embrace all spheres of life and transform them with varying degrees of permanency and completeness.

African writers played an important role in the struggle for political independence after their independence. They successfully depicted the way the colonizers exploited African masses and natural resources. At the same time, they urged Africans to be aware of the real intention of the white colonizers, that is, the exploitation of African resources to enrich the Western capitalist countries. At different levels, especially through the revolutionaries, they urged Africans to be aware of dangers of the presence of colonialists on the African continent. Ngugi's *Matigari* is a typical example of contemporary African novels and it is the focus of this paper. The issue of revolutionary temper and how the novel reflects it are discussed. So, this contemporary African novel sensitizes the consciousness of the colonized Africans to the exploitative and ugly nature of the Colonialism. It reflects the conflicts between natives and capital, the oppressed and oppressor and the attempts made by the oppressed to achieve political and economic emancipation. With the Marxist undertone, Ngugi makes the masses aware of their condition and make them to fight for liberty and freedom with in the nation. Such attempts at improving the people's standard of living cannot but involve revolutionary actions. It is observable that the ability of the fictional historian to portray the travails of the people in the society is linked with Ngugi's emotional ties with *Matigari*'s problems, is the central character of the novel, hopes and aspirations this author shares.

The novel opens *Matigari* ma Njiruungi, is known as *Matigari*, emerges from the woods, he finds that his country has been sold, that his new leaders have been corrupted, that his war has been for nothing , and that John Boy Junior is another character in the novel, the son of Settler William's cook, has taken over his house. *Matigari* then sets off on a quest for truth and justice. He asks students and teachers, shoppers and shopkeepers, shepherds and priests where he can find them. No one can tell him, so he ndecides he has to take back his house, and his country, himself. *Matigari* reflects the exploitation of Africans by the fellow Blacks. When Kenyans were fighting for independence, they all had one voice and one common enemy. But with the attainment of independence, the reality becomes that of a hen feeding on her laid eggs. In his independence

speech, Jomo Kenyatta, the first Prime Minister of Kenya, remarked that: *“Our march to freedom has been long and difficult. There have been times of despair, when only the burning conviction of the rightness of our cause has sustained us. Today, the tragedies and misunderstandings of the past are behind us. Today, we start on the great adventure of building the Kenya nation.”*

Maughan-Brown 1985: 184

Matigari, the main character whose name provides the title for the narration, is the revolutionary par excellence, a fact made more than evident by his physical, ethical, and moral traits, his relationship with fellow human beings, nature and the realistic, as well as by the character of his inscrutable destiny. The birth, childhood, and teenage years of Matigari are not presented; he comes into the tale as a man of indeterminate age who has the mysterious capacity to look old, complete with wrinkles, one minute, and young and fresh the next. On several occasions, he mystifies onlookers by visibly changing before their very eyes from old age to youthfulness, or vice versa:

“Age crept back on his face; the wrinkles seemed to have increased and deepened. How everything had changed. What was this world coming to?”

Ngugi 1987:29

“The courage of truth had once again transformed him. It seemed to have wiped age off his face, making him look extremely youthful” (31).

“Matigari felt sad.... Age seized him. His pace slackened, and he merely dragged his feet along” (41).

“His eyes shone brightly. All the creases on his face had gone, and youth had once again returned to him” (43).

His physical size is also a matter of mystery. At one time, he is reported to be “a tiny, ordinary-looking man” (75), at another, he is described as “a tall, well-built, elderly man” (111), and still at other times it is said of him that “The man is a giant” (76, 159). He also seems to be situated in a timeless existence, measuring his age in centuries of African historical experiences and in terms that seem to make him coeval with Africa itself. In what we can only describe as an epic understatement of time duration, he remarks:

“I have seen many things over the years. Just consider, I was there at the time of the Portuguese, and at the time of the Arabs, and at the time of the British” (45).

Matigari also has revolutionary personal traits that link him with such African, and other cultural revolutionaries as Sunjara and Ozidi. His voice, for instance, sounds like thunder (80, 124); his snoring is “like the roar of a lion in the wilderness” (137); his look penetrates one’s soul (123); he communicates with animals (143); he has a superhuman capacity to sustain hunger (12); he fears no man but rather strikes fear into others (31, 114-15); he accurately foretells the future, as is the case with the prediction that John Boy will not live in his house as long as he, Matigari, is alive (124) Matigari is credited with performing miracles. The stones that are hurled at him by children, for instance, are miraculously deflected (73) and he “seemed to be protected by some magic power, for the bullets did not hit him... It was as if on reaching him they turned into water” (173). He escapes prison, a mental hospital, and a burning house, and he outwits the combined team of the police and the army who are hunting and shooting to kill him (80, 161-69). He traverses the whole country, making mysterious appearances to different people at different times and places, and all in one day (67-113). The mysterious torrential rains, which start to fall at the very moment he is about to be captured by his enemies and which aid his mysterious disappearance, vividly recall the frequent protective interventions by the gods on behalf of the heroes in such epics as Mwindo, Gilgamesh, and the Iliad. Indeed, Matigari with his mystery and power reminds us more of the demi-gods like Gilgamesh and Achilles than of ordinary mortals who are merely favored by the gods such as Sunjara and Hektor.

Not only does Matigari communicate with animals, and not only are natural elements such as torrential rains and fire friendly to him, but nature as a whole sympathizes with him and seems to exist solely to reflect his mood. Each of the three days constituting the temporal setting of the tale is a perfect mirror of Matigari's changing states of mind. The sun shines even though the heat is oppressive on the first day of his hope-filled return to liberate his people from the oppressive heat of imperialist exploitation (2, 5). On the second day, when uncertainties pervade Matigari's mind regarding the possibility of finding truth and justice as the guiding principles of rightful governance in the society, the weather too is ambivalent: "There was no sunshine. There was no rain. It was neither warm nor cold. A dull day" (71, 89, 101). On the third day events rush dramatically to a conclusion with the epic chase of the hero by the combined forces of secret service men, the police, and the army, who are depicted as modern-day monsters, and who corner him into a house bombarded with the awesome power of their united guns. That house burns in a mighty conflagration, but Matigari nonetheless escapes only to be chased like a hunted fox by an army of government forces on horseback and accompanied by police dogs. On this third climactic day, the weather is portentous: "The sun was blazing, hotter than the hottest coals, and scorched them mercilessly. The grass withered and wilted in the heat" (137). Indeed, the conflagration that subsequently devours the house and the bloody events of the climactic day have been foreshadowed on the first day by nature: "The sun had set by now, but it had left behind a blood-red glow in the evening sky, lighting up the house, the gate and the road on which they stood" (47-48).

Matigari, who thinks of the origin of social evils in cosmic terms, is depicted as a returned hero after a long absence. The length of his absence, which engenders in him a naivete and ignorance of contemporary reality, elicits sympathetic wonder and admiration in his followers (29, 143) and a satirical comparison with the American legendary character Rip Van Winkle by his enemies (118). However, his name, Matigari ma Njiruungi, which identifies him as a veteran of the Mau Mau patriotic army that waged the ten-year guerilla war (1952-62) that finally compelled the British colonial administration to grant independence to Kenya, invites a more respectable comparison with the heroes of return epics such as Odysseus. Just as the ancient Greek hero, for instance, comes back to set his house in order, so Matigari returns, consumed with righteous indignation against those who have wrongfully appropriated what he calls his home. His home, we soon discover, is a symbol for the Kenyan nation, which he believes has been usurped and vandalized by inimical neocolonial forces comparable in greed and selfishness both to Penelope's suitors and to the pretender king who had cheated Sunjara out of his royal inheritance. The mission of Matigari, as the symbolic embodiment of the Kenyan people, is to regain his kingdom, which has been lost to the ethics of greed and avarice, and to restore it to its traditional philosophy of communal sharing: "How can I return home alone?... What makes a home?... We shall all gather, go home together, light the fire together and build our home together. Those who eat alone, die alone" (6).

Matigari is the archetypal legendary national revolutionary hero who is "cast as a deliverer of his people" (Okpewho 1979:126). He comes into the tale with an already established patriotic history, for his name indicates that he is the embodiment of all "the patriots who survived the bullets" of the Mau Mau war of independence and who had remained in the forests and mountains "to keep the fire of freedom burning" (20, 23, 37). It is in this capacity as the representative symbol of the patriotic fathers of the nation that Matigari claims kinship with all the people of Kenya, all of whom he calls "my parents, my wives, my children" (6). Except for the Kenyan comprador elites, Matigari's antagonists who are depicted as monsters, his claims are also universally acknowledged especially by the children and the workers, whose leader rhetorically asks: "And whose family do you think we all are?" (23). Muriuki on his part firmly proclaims: "Yes. We are the children of Matigari ma Njiruungi. We are the children of the patriots who survived the war" (139, 144-45).

Matigari's identification with the worker is total. He asserts that "there is no job that these hands of mine have not done for the settler" (143). As the symbolic embodiment of all those who exploit the labor of workers, the settler is the antithesis of Matigari. As a figurative embodiment of the worker, Matigari variously represents himself as a farmer, factory hand, driver, tailor, soldier (patriot), and builder (21-22, 38, 60, 74, and 143). Most often he identifies himself not just with Kenyan peasants and workers and women alone, but also with peasants and workers and women everywhere. Once, he muses to himself: "For how long shall my children continue wandering, homeless, naked and hungry, over this earth? And who shall wipe away the tears from the faces of all the women dispossessed on this earth?" (88).

Matigari is thus not only a national hero, but also a class (revolutionary) hero who has come to set aright "this world" that "is upside down" (150). "The human race," Matigari asserts, "has the same roots.... It's only that they have been dispersed by time and space into different camps" (146). The very first sentence of the novel, in fact, suggests the universal dimension of Matigari's mission as a class (revolutionary) hero by presenting him in the image of an armed warrior who for many years has looked "across many hills and valleys, in the four corners of the globe" (3). The Mau Mau patriot, who identifies the interest of the Kenyan nation with the interest of the dispossessed majority, is thus also the symbolic representative of the patriots of all nations. Rather than be diminished into the confines of a mere national hero, Matigari overrides the narrowness of ethnic chauvinism, the all-time bane of the world and to whose growth most national epic heroes have often blatantly contributed. In this way, Matigari is perhaps better classified with Beowulf than with Odysseus and with Christ than with David.

Matigari is aware of his role as a modern political hero; hence he consciously tries to distance himself from the usual agonistic tradition of national epics by burying his weapons. However, his attempt to substitute the weapons of peace—logical reasoning and persuasion—for the weapons of war—brute force and firearms—fails, and he is compelled to revise his strategy (63, 160). To the extent that he makes this revision, he rejects the philosophy of non-resistance and of turning the other cheek, thus distancing himself in this respect from Christ. While he pursued his initial theory of peaceful change, he often appeared a naive ideologue and was frequently ridiculed and labeled a drunkard or a lunatic. On the other hand, whenever he displayed agonistic traits, he was perceived in the popular imagination as an authentic hero, such as when he confronted the two policemen who brutalized Guthera, or when he outwitted the combined forces of the army, the police, and the secret service agents and destroyed John Boy's house even as he escaped the shower of bullets aimed at him. Matigari then is a character who both reaffirms and revises our traditional concept of the revolutionary hero.

As in all epic tales, Matigari has a set of formidable antagonists to confront. These antagonists naturally come from the camp of the bourgeoisie, whose interests are challenged by Matigari's championship of the proletariat cause. Matigari, in fact, is thrust into an unequal battle because the bourgeoisie constitute the powers-that-be and possess an awesome arsenal of coercive instruments ranging from the dictatorial monopoly of the media and super-efficient secret agents, to the control of school and university curricula, and on to the robotized minds of college professors, news media personnel, civil service executives, priests, judges, the police, and the army—a typical example of a contemporary African police state.

Matigari as a Mirror of the African Revolution in Africa, the socio-political and economic situation Post-Colonial era was so repulsive that the people of Kenya especially, had to re-make their own history. Kenyans had had enough of dehumanization. There is always a time for everything under the sun, which is a general belief. The time had come to put a final end to the native exploitation of Kenyan's natural and human resources and the denial of their rightfully owned land.

In order to achieve this aim, there is the need to revolutionize the society. In human history, nothing is static. Revolution simply means a struggle that is more or less successfully and completely accomplished in which the ruling power of the country passes from an economic class or political group to another class or group. Man's society is an embodiment of dynamism. Ngugi's novel is a demonstration of the truth and validity of Lenin's analysis as applied to the post-independence state, not only Kenya, but also Africa. Nevertheless, Ngugi is deeply conscious that imperialist finance capital is the real enemy in Africa today. As one of the characters in the novel reflects, it is because of imperialist finance capital that a man who has never set foot on this land can sit in a New York or London office and determine what I shall eat, read, think, do, only because he sits on a heap of billions taken from the world's poor... Georg, 1985: 130

Matigari, being primarily concerned to expose vividly, powerfully and memorably the clients nature of the post-colonial state in Africa, is also concerned to depict the proletarianization of the African peasantry and the rest of the working masses of the continent. Ngugi, like Karl Marx, can see the revolutionary side of poverty in that poverty engenders resistance, revolt and insurgency as well the search for a way out of exploitation and misery. In this paper, *Mitigari* actually reveals Marxist vision, which states that, the proletariat, "the comradeship of the down-trodden" will achieve revolutionary change in the society especially as a mirror of the African post independence revolutionary actions in the wake of mass political awareness in the novel. This means that the novel is being portrayed as a mirror of the African in general Kenya in particular revolution that is the demonstration of truth and reflection of African revolution in the society as a whole.

This paper analyzed that African writers played an important role in the long struggle after independence for political independence. They successfully depicted the way the imperialist exploited African masses particularly in Kenya and natural resources, at the same time. They urged Africans to be aware of the real intention of the imperialist that is, the exploitation of African resources to enrich the Western capitalist countries. African writers through their works tried to conscientise Africans to the issues of imperialist exploitation. At different levels, they urged Africans to be aware of dangers of the presence of colonialists after independence on the African continent.

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19. Cultural shock of Indian women in colonial India: *The First Party*

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“Culture is the name for what people are interested in, their thoughts, their models, the books they read and the speeches they hear, their table-talk, gossip, controversies, historical sense and scientific training, the values they appreciate, the quality of life they admire. All communities have a culture. It is the climate of their civilization.” Walter Lippmann

Introduction

It is unavoidable fact that colonies could get affected by ruling race greatly. Their culture, language and up to some extent religion got mixed with colonial race. India was colony for many European countries and finally ruled by British for nearly two centuries. Post colonial Indian middle class and upper middle class youth were crazy for learning abroad and they brought the foreign culture to Indian families. It bewildered members of their family majorly their wives who could not cope with it easily. The great difference in value system troubled them much, a few of them got along with but most of women remained torn between two cultures. The present discussion focuses on the culture shock received by a wife in her first attended party with her husband. At every phase of the story author introduced a new clash of culture where the new bride stumbled with fear and shock. Attia Hosain was born into a Talqdar family in Lucknow, north India in 1913 and grew up knowing many of the major political and literary figures of the time. When Independence came to India and Pakistan in 1947, she was among the most privileged and perceptive observers of the partition of the sub-continent. Her characterization is original and lucid and imaginative.

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She watches as the Western woman’s “bare flesh of her body” exposes itself through her movement and the bride flashes with anger again (Dean Baldwin 535). A stranger in a strange land the woman questions her ability to be righteous of her beliefs” that are “deep-based on generation-old foundations” unlike the Western behavior of her husband (Dean Baldwin 535). She wants to be a good wife and share in her husband's happiness but her will power not to indulge in ways she does not accept shows that she will not perspire when her beliefs are questioned (www.markedbyteachers.com). Again cultures clash as the already upset wife witnesses a woman near the juke box. Turning her nose up at the music, the Eastern bride preoccupies herself with a girl who is dancing next to the music. She watches as the Western woman’s “bare flesh of her body” exposes itself through her movement and the bride flashes with anger again (Dean Baldwin 535). What is admirable about this woman is that she does not give up her beliefs, even for the sake of her husband in order to feel more comfortable and fit in. Her customs do not saturate even though she is in contact with a different culture who actually came from where she came. She wants to be a good wife and share in her husband's happiness but her will power not to indulge in ways she does not accept shows that she will not perspire when her beliefs are questioned (www.markedbyteachers.com)

Cultural difference soars

In the opening scene of story a semi educated Indian bride was brought to a party by her westernized husband where she felt alienated, frightened, ashamed and jealous. The first sentence of the story ‘After dimness of the verandah, the bewildering brightness of the room made her stumble against the unseen doorsteps.’ expresses symbolically great cultural difference between eastern and western. ‘Darkness forsaken as her old friend’ and she is forced into the bewildering gleaming brightness where everything is foreign and new. The host of the party asked her how she

was, and she replied in child like voice that ‘she was very well’ avoiding their eyes with her shy glances. She saw with utter astonishment woman with wine glass in one hand and cigarette in another. She starts thinking ‘how it felt to hold a cigarette with such self-confidence; to flick the ash with such assurance’.

Impediment of own tradition ethos

One confused in foreign culture and tread very carefully, ‘She sat on the edge of the big chair, her shoulders drooping, nervously pulling her sari over her head as the weight of its heavy gold embroidery pulled it back’ symbolizes taking her aback by her values and customs that she believes in her culture. When she observed, her husband and the host taking about her she felt the ‘pinpoints of discomfort’ what she hid with her smile. She blushed on her husband’s remarks and wished to be left unnoticed; felt relieved when other guest came in. whenever her husband came and introduced someone to her she could not understand whether to stand up or remained seated. What she wore was considered rich and pride in her belived tradition, still she felt ‘Her bright rich clothes and heavy jewellery oppressed her when she saw the simplicity of their clothes’. She sensed no one cared customs there and observing her as object on display. She surprised with the people’s preoccupation with their limbs and bodies which should be covered, and not face and features alone. She felt they made the simple things intricate what she took for granted. ‘When in Rome do as a Roman do’ says Mahatma Gandhiji which is aptly suitable proverb for culture. The bride in the story tried to do as context demanded but could not fit in the mould and remained in pandemonium. When the food was served at the party, she noticed all bringing food by and helping themselves. One girl came to her and offered a dinner plate and advised to ‘try this sand witch and olives are good’ she never seen olive before but she did not want to admit that. When she put it in her mouth she felt like spit it out and silently slipped when no one was noticed later afraid somebody would find it.

Ludicrousness of foreign culture

Her culture taught her a woman should be submissive and clad completely from head to toe how she is now, what she discovered at party complete reverse of her ethics that left her in chaos. She decoratively made up with Banarasee sari and all jewelry ‘She drew her sari over her hands, covering her rings and bracelets noticing other’s bare wrists, like widows. She compared ‘her own-unpainted, cut carefully short’ nails with the long, pointed and painted in scarlet nails of the tall woman and wondered ‘how anyone could eat, work, wash with those claws dipped in blood’. In India most people eat with hands so they cut nails and always kept them clean but what saw in party astonished her. For the bride ‘they were of her own kind but not yet not so’. She found them ‘wicked contemptible, grotesque mimics of the foreign.’ When she was insisently asked for a drink she took a glass of orange juice and used it as protection. She astonished by the reversal of values; she was taught drinking alcohol is a sin, but in party it seemed they objected her for not drinking.

Refusal to transformation

One takes time to accept any change in ones culture but the bride was thrown to new environment swiftly from her own ethnicity. She could not agree with the attire of the women at party she felt they were ‘disgusting, shameless hussies, bold and free with men, their clothes adorning nakedness not hiding it, with their painted false mouths, that short hair that looked like the mad woman’s whose hair was cropped to stop her pulling it out’ (stories from Asia:53). When men and women started dancing she felt ‘a sick horror at the way the men held the women’ then a man came and asked her for a dance she shrank back in chair and shaking her head in refusal. After some time her husband offered her teaching dance she felt a flame of anger as she looked at him, and kept on shaking her head until the man left her, surprised by the violence of her refusal.

Zealous to alien culture

‘Unknown thing interests everyone’ the bride was very snooping and curious about every new thing with child like enthusiasm when she found it absurd ‘turns her nose up’. Author compares the bride with child as she is very eager to know everything curious about every new thing, when find not of her kind completely detest it ruthlessly. “She watched, fascinated, the movement of the machine as it changed records; but she hated the shrieking moaning and discordant noises it hurled at her” (stories from Asia:53). She welcomed everything came to her whenever found it absurd to her she heartlessly discarded. She was fascinated by the functioning of the audio player at first and looked at it with approval but when it is played and emitted the noisy tunes to her she hated it completely.

Conclusion

Her coming to party along with her husband indicated that she valued her husband’s friends, their culture and she too wanted to part of it. She tried to adapt her husband’s trans-culture but find it very difficult and could not be successful. She wishes she had ‘the sanctuary of the walled home which marriage had promised an adventurous escape’ but she found ‘Each restricting rule became a guiding stone marking a safe path through unknown dangers’. She found her husband drinking and considered him a destroyer. At the end of the party she cried with resentment and frustration.

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20. The Origin and Impact of Buddhism in India

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The objective of this paper is to explain the origin and the impact of Buddhism in India. The 6th century B.C. was one of the cardinal epochs in human history. It was an era of great spiritual awakening as well as spiritual unrest not only in India but also in several parts of the world – for instance Zoroaster in Persia, Confucius in China, Buddha in India etc.

Causes for the religious unrest in India

The vedic religion was degenerated into meaningless rituals. They were dominated by the priests. They became too costly to be within the reach of the common man. The Upanishads had already reacted and revolted against the cumbersome rituals and bloody sacrifices. The common people were able to understand neither the vedic hymns nor the deep philosophy of the Upanishads. Hence, they were in a search of new faith to get salvation by simple means.

According to some scholars the racial rivalry between the Aryans and the non-Aryans was another cause for the spiritual unrest. Aryans did not penetrate into the Eastern and Southern parts of India, which were predominantly inhabited by non-Aryans. Moreover, it was in this region that new religions sprang out. Of the intellectual leaders of this region Mahavira belonged to Lichhavi and Buddha to Sakya clans. On this pretext, it is suggested that Jnatrika-Sakya origin was a Tibeto-Mongolian origin, a revolt against the Aryan race. It is advocated by some that there was a political cause for this unrest. It is said that Lichhavis and Sakyas, the upholders of Republicanism rised a standard of revolt against the monarchical absolutism of the Aryans.

The caste rivalries, the pretentious and caste exclusiveness of the Brahmins in the society had also added their might for the spiritual unrest of the age. That is the reason why the Kshatriyas, after asserting political authority over the Brahmins tried to wrest even the spiritual leadership from them. As a result of this spiritual unrest of 6th century B.C., many reforming schools or doctrines or thoughts numbering 63 or even more sprang up. Of these two viz., Jainism and Buddhism survived and the rest either dead or outlived.

Buddhist tradition aims at annihilating all forms of suffering and establishment of peaceful and harmonious society, where in all beings can coexist in a state of tranquility. Buddhist values are for universal happiness. Its main intension is to bring or progress in man's livelihood in both. Buddhist values subscribe the ethical perfection and its beginning can be seen only when an individual practices, cultivates and develops the values then only society can be transformed into a peaceful society. The values ascribed to achieve this altruistic goal are threefold: Ethical, Social and Economic. Buddhist ethical values are threefold: one has to avoid unethical conduct, cultivate good deeds, and train one's mind. To attain this man has to practice the fivefold perfection along with the triple stages of Right speech, Right action and Right livelihood.

Four noble truths or Dukkhavada

Buddha did not concern himself with the great metaphysical questions. He called them 'avyakta' or the undetermined or unanswerable. He regarded them unprofitable. The chief purpose of Buddha's enquiry was practical or therapeutic. The starting point of his religion is suffering (Dukkha). He thought deeply over the various forms of suffering like old age, disease, poverty and death which are inherent in life. His views about sorrow are explained in the formula of the famous four Noble Truths (Chattari Ariya Sachchani) or Arya Satyani: (1) there is suffering, (2) the suffering has cause, (3) suffering could be removed, and (4) there is a path that leads to the end of

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suffering. The suffering (dukkha) originates from desire or thirst (tanha or trishna). To get rid of sorrow, its root, namely, the desire must be destroyed. This can be done by following the Ashtangamarga (noble eightfold path).

Some western writers are of the opinion that the formula of four Noble Truths was borrowed from medical science. The four Noble Truths are compared to disease, diagnosis, cure and medicine. The theory of Dukkhavada of Buddhism and Jainism are not found in the early Vedic religion. The Rigvedic people wanted full life of one hundred years and more. It is only in some of the Upanishads that reference is made to the misery in the word.

Various theories have been advanced to explain the emergence of Dukkhavada in Indian philosophy.

According to the psychoanalytic theory, the roots of this theory are to be found in the character and temperament of the Buddha himself. He was an extraordinarily hypersensitive and a tender person who could not withstand the commonplace phenomenon like old age, disease and death. Another explanation is that eastern India which gave birth to Jainism, Buddhism and also the philosophy of the Upanishads was a region with an enervating climate.

A third anthropological explanation propounded by Griswold and others was that the racial fusion of Aryan and Dravidians resulted in the melancholy temperament of the Indians. The fourth explanation is advanced by the Marxists who state that Dukkhavada was propagated to protect the interests of the dominant classes by benumbing the revolutionary zeal of the oppressed classes.

The problem of the soul

Early Buddhism had three fundamental doctrines, namely, sorrowism (Dukkhavada), impermanence (Anityata) and non-soulism (Anatmavada). Nothing is permanent; everything is in a state of flux. So how can the soul which is regarded as permanent exist? According to Rahula Samskritayana the Buddha did not believe in the existence of the soul. Buddha regarded the doctrine of the permanence of the soul as a hindrance to spiritual progress. Hence he vehemently denied its existence even though Vedic religion and also the animists believed in the existence of the soul. The denial of the existence of the soul is known as anatmavada or anattavada. Hegel regarded Buddhism as a creed of final negation. But scholars on Buddhism like Prof. Schrader and Mrs. C.A.F. Rhys Davids in her later writings argue that Buddha did not propound the 'non-soul' theory. It was incorporated into the Buddhist doctrine later due to the hostility towards Brahmanas.

Concept of Nibbana or Nirvana

The main problem for Buddhism is suffering not only of the present life, but lives in endless rebirths. Suffering is interlinked with existence. As long as one exists, suffering will also exist. To eradicate suffering existence has to be extinguished. The root cause for existence is 'ajñana' and thirst for existence. The extinction of suffering is Nirvana. It has two facets. In this life 'nirvana' means peace, virtue and wisdom undisturbed by outward happenings. With death nirvana means total extinction with no possibility of rebirth.

Path to Nirvana (Ashtangika Marga or Eightfold Path)

Buddha has mentioned that nirvana can be attained by following the eightfold path - the Ashtangika Marga or Attangiko Maggo. The path is open to one and all irrespective of caste, creed and gender. Ashtangika Marga represents the original teaching of the Buddha. It consists of

- (1) right view (Samyagdristi)
- (2) right resolve (Samyagsankalpa)

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- (3) right speech (Samyagvak)
- (4) right conduct (Samyak Karmanta)
- (5) right livelihood (Samyagjiva)
- (6) right effort (Samyagvyayama)
- (7) right mindedness (Samyagsmruti)
- (8) right contemplation (Samyaksamadhi)

Buddhism and social revolution

Buddhism is generally equated with social revolution. Many believe that the Buddha was a true democrat who believed in the equality of all human beings and by his preachings he elevated the position of the lower classes and women.

Position of women

According to I.B. Horner the status of women in the pre-Buddhist era was very low and it is only during the Buddhist epoch “*women came to enjoy more equality and greater respect and authority than ever hitherto accorded them.*” Dr. B.R. Ambedkar also believed that the Buddha upheld the doctrine of the equality of genders. According to P. Lakshmi Narasu “*man and woman are placed by the Buddha on the same footing.*” The above statements presuppose that the condition of women in the pre-Buddhist period was very low and that it was due to the impact of Buddhism, that the position of women improved considerably. But these assumptions are against the true historical facts. Before 500 B.C. there was no Sati or child marriage and the women occupied positions of honour both in the family and society. Their position deteriorated only in the post-500 B.C. Further, the attitude of the Buddha towards women was not at all sympathetic. He was not in favour of admitting women as nuns in the Buddhist church. He reluctantly agreed after the repeated requests from his foster mother and aunt Mahaprajapati and that too after framing eight special rules for them.

Caste system

One myth that has gained considerable currency is that the Buddha attacked the caste system. Ambedkar felt that the Buddha stood for “no caste, no inequality, no superiority.” Rhys Davids also stressed that Buddhism “ignores completely and absolutely all advantages and disadvantages arising from birth, occupation or social status and sweeps away all barriers and disabilities arising from arbitrary rules of mere ceremonial or social impurity.” The above statements have to be examined on the basis of ‘anatmavada’ or soullessness, one of the three articles of the Buddhist faith. ‘Anatmavada’ holds that there is no universal soul (Paramatma). Hence there is no God. If there is no God, He could not have created the Veda which ordained the fourfold caste. Thus Buddhism by its tenets denied the caste system or Brahminism. But it is strange that the Buddha did not reject the notion of caste system. He felt very proud of his Sakya clan and proclaimed that the Kshatriyas are superior to Brahmins. “Buddha’s partiality for Kshatriya caste is apparent from several other facts. Firstly, in his Suttas and other Buddhist texts in the enumeration of the castes, the Kshatriyas are always mentioned first.” Further, the Buddha did nothing to undermine the position of the ruling classes. When King Bimbisara protested to the Buddha that the former’s soldiers deserted their positions in the army to become monks, Buddha prohibited the inclusion of soldiers into the Sangha. The gospel of the Buddha made compromise with the ruling class and failed to create social revolution.

Slavery and other social problems

To escape serfdom slaves entered the Sangha. Similarly, many took refuge in the Sangha to escape from the clutches of the money-lenders. But when the slave-owners and the moneylenders protested against the inclusion of the slaves and debtors into the Sangha, the Buddha conceded the demands of his rich supporters and prohibited their inclusion into the Sangha. Thus Buddhism could

not bring about social revolution in the country as it depended on the support of kings, rulers and the rich. It ignored the needs of the larger sections of the society which were economically and socially at a disadvantage. The gospel of revolution turned into an instrument of exploitation. Buddhism failed to create an egalitarian society. *“Buddhism with all its philosophical acumen and spiritual depth lost its hold on the masses because it failed in its revolutionary mission to improve the economic-political ills of the low caste.”*

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21. Trends in Telugu Poetry – A Study

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Introduction

No other literary form has been subjected to so many experiments as poetry. This is what has made it a live genre, preventing it from becoming a showpiece in a museum. Though poetry is not fast. Selling these days, a good poet is still a social and intellectual force to be reckoned with. Modern Telugu Poetry is rich and varied, and every year, much of it appears in publication in book-form: Several anthologies are compiled containing the works of different authors and selections from poems written by individual poets.

Modern poets, therefore, include progressives and revolutionaries, romantics and traditionalists as well as the neo-classicists. But whatever their label, the modern poets divide naturally into two broad groups – those who conform to and those who revolt against traditional patterns of composition. For instances, the early romantics revolted against the romantics. The modern Telugu poets, in their endeavour to reach the common man, have experimented – enthusiastically with form and expression. Gone are the days of feudal poetry describing the loves of kings and queens. The common and the anguish shared by mankind are the themes of the modern poets. They have created a social awareness which is the most significant achievement of modern Telugu poetry. The writings of Wordsworth, Shelley and Keats and the plays of Shakespeare have opened new vistas for young poets attracted by subjective poetry. Khandakavya (Short Poem), as opposed to Mahakavya (long or epic poem) has been their forte, concentrating on the depiction of emotion, they have created new imagery and new forms.

The Pioneers

Who then is the first modern Telugu Poet? Some critics consider Gurajada Venkata Appa Rao, 1861-1915 to be the first, While others name Rayaprolu Subba Rao, both distinguished poets. Gurajada was definitely a trend-setter. His outlook was modern and he discarded the traditional meters, using instead almost a new one, very near to an indigenous (desi) meter. Though not a prolific writer he popularized lyricism in modern Telugu poetry and revived folk traditions. His *Mutyalaralu* (Strings of pearls, 1910) clearly reveals his mind to the reader and presents a new vision charged with a universal outlook. In *Mutyalaralu*, which is about a comet Gurajada declares. If the whole world becomes one house. *'It racial distinctions vanish./ If on limitless bonds of love blossoms Joys.'* All religions will then disappear. *'Wisdom (Jnana) only will shine with brightness./ The so-called heavenly comforts./ Alight on the earth.'* In another poem (Lavanraju Kala, 1911) Gurajada remarks with equal vehemence. *'There exist among men only two classes: The good and the bad/ If 'Good' were the mala (mala meaning Harijan)/ I prefer to be a Mala'* (tr)Gurajada will always be remembered for his short but powerful poem *Desabhakti* (Patriotism, 1910) which consists of only 56 lines. In it he exhorted humanity thus; *'Desa Mante Matti Kadoi/Desa Mante Manusuloy'* (A Country doesn't mean a piece of earth/ A Country does mean its people)...Rayaprolu Subba Rao, on the other hand, is a traditionalist with a new outlook. His poetry is characterized by *amalina Srngara* (Pure and Unadulterated love) which encompasses platonic love, lyricism and subjectivity. Rayaprolu was influenced by Tagore's view that the creation is full of love and most of his poems portray pure love in bright colours.

The Romantic Poems

The romantic movement (Kalpani Kodyamam) is one of the earliest movements which shaped modern Telugu Poetry. Most of the romantic poets were considerably influenced by Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth, Rabindranath Tagore and Persian mystics, leading to some of them being called

the Andhra Wordsworths and by similar sobriquets. To the romantic poets, time-honored conventions had little attraction. Freedom was their very breath. They would not compose a verse to pleasure anyone, nor did they care whether others derived pleasure from their poetry. The romantic poets certainly enriched Telugu language. The renaissance in Telugu poetry also produced a spate of time translations or transcriptions of several renowned poems from Sanskrit, English, Persian, Bengali and other language. If Rayaprolu is the forerunner of the Romantic Movement in Telugu poetry, Krishna Sastri is its most eloquent exponent. His total literary output has not been much; but whatever he has written is enchanting, as may be judged from these translations. *'The full moon/Wanders like a royal swan*

*In the lake of the blue sky,/The sweet southern winds
Bide themselves under the leaves of branches/In the waves of the sea,
The River/Goes into deep slumber
Giving up dance and sweet music:
The Universe/Rests quietly
In the lotus-like hands of the Almighty.
Why should flowers spread fragrance
Why should the moon spread moonlight
Why should water flow/Why should the wind blow
Why should my heart love you (tr.)*

Nanduri Venkata Subba Rao's Yenki Patalu (Romantic lyrics on Yenki, 1925), is a fine collection of 35 songs which have attracted the attention of several scholars they also provide some beautiful imagery that defy translation. However, an attempt is here made to render in English some of the more popular lines from the lyric mentioned.

*'The garden went into slumber, hiding in the –
Womb of the river!'
'He refused to give an embrace even to the breeze.
Flowers know my heart – break and the water my
Disturbed heart
The river ruminates devouring all the light.' (tr)*

Traditional Poems

Even though free verse has gained ground, traditional poetry has not faded out completely. There are several poets who employ traditional meters though their outlook is modern. For instance, G Joshua, a well known traditionalist, has to his credit poems like Gabbilam (Bat – Messenger to Lord Siva) Which ridicules the caste – ridden society. Another memorable is Firadousi. To some of the traditional poets, lesser known characters of India's epics, such as Ahalya, Kunti and others, are as important as the major characters.

The Progressives

The progressives revolted against the increasingly stale and insipid poetry of the romantics, who allowed mellifluous expression and pleasing compounds to dominate their writings, pushing back the emotional element and becoming oblivious of social realities. The new poets waged war against the traditional rules of prosody and imagery. Sri Sri (Srirangam Srirangam Srinivasa Rao) Who is the live wire of the progressive movement, observed that when he attempts to express what he saw and heard, words came to him:

Crossing the burial ground like dictionaries
Freeing themselves from the shackles of grammar and
giving up the serpent – embrace of prosods.

Among his poems, Mahaprasthanam (The Great Journey, 1945 strikes altogether a new note and pioneers a new path in Telugu poetry. In Mahaprasthanam the poet sounds a clarion call to society to march towards a new world, thereby suggesting the necessity for a new order. In one of his poems, he declares:

The chariot wheels of Lord Jagannath
travelling along the sky-path
to the earth I'll bring down and
generate an earthquake!

In another well known poet Sri Sri Sings:

We build no walls
Our work is to smash them to shambles
unrest is our life-breath
Agitation is our movement
Rebellion is our only philosophy
We march a head
Despite boulders and obstructions

Though essentially a fiery and powerful prose writer, Chalam (Gudipati Venkatachalam, 1894-1979), a close friend of Krishna Sastri, Nanduri and Sri Sri, is also a poet in his own right. His prose translation of Tagore's Gitanjali is widely read in Telugu.

Musings

The night
Is your veil
 And the stars
 Your lamps
 The earth
 Is your cradle
 And I am your toy
 rocking
 in your
 embrace
With you
I play and prank
For you are
My pride
and frustration
 and
I bring
For your pleasure
 the glorious days
 and Joyful sunsets
within
you
 the world
and
 you
 within
 my desire

Conclusion

Of all the literary forms, poetry had undergone the maximum change, both in content and form. Several experiments have also been successfully conducted. Yet the modern poet continues to be relentless, conducting still more experiments in keeping with the changing values and changing human situations of the world. This ever-changing aspect of the world is what makes the vigilant and dynamic, and his poetry more and more vigorous. Otherwise, poetry which is in an archaic style, would be fit only for the shelf. Poetry may generate heat but it should spread light. Only such poetry which spreads light can dispel the darkness of social evils and ennoble the reader's mind.

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22. A Comparison of Culture in *Things Fall Apart* with Western Culture

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Many societies have beliefs rooted deep in ancient religion. Some beliefs include polygamy, polytheism, and patriarchy, or rule by men. One such culture is that of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. Polytheism and polygamy are custom in the clan, and the role of each family member is very defined. The men are overly domineering. The women and children are treated poorly and often beaten. Life in Achebe's Umuofia would seem very different to someone living in modern day America. Chinua Achebe's novel, *Things Fall Apart*, takes place in the 1890s, just before British colonization. The novel focuses on the nine Ibo-speaking villages of Umuofia, which is Ibo for "People of the Forest." Umuofia is the village in which Okonkwo, Achebe's protagonist, prospers in everything and is able to secure his manly position in the tribe. Now known as Nigeria, this land was a primitive agricultural society completely run by men. Umuofia was known, and as Achebe says, "... feared by all its neighbors. It was powerful in war and in magic, and priests and medicine men were feared in all the surrounding country". Perhaps, its most powerful and feared magic was called "... agadi- nwayi, or old woman it had its shrine in the centre of Umuofia ... if anyone was so foolhardy as to pass by the shrine past dusk he was sure to see the old woman". The people of Umuofia are very devoted to their religion and their magic. These ancient beliefs were believed to give the people some sort of power over their oppressors.

One custom of Umuofia that would be very different from Western culture is Polygamy, the practice of having many wives. This custom is practised in the connected nine villages of Umuofia. In fact, a man's wealth is partially measured by the number of wives he has. A wealthy man described in *Things Fall Apart*, had nine wives and thirty children. Okonkwo had three wives and eight children. Polygamy is not something many Americans are accustomed to. Western culture teaches that monogamy, as opposed to polygamy, is the proper, accepted form of marriage. Western culture places that morality into its people, often from youth. In Western culture, having more than one partner in a marriage is often cause for divorce; however, in Umuofia it is practised and even encouraged by most of its people. Another common belief in Umuofia is polytheism, the worship or belief in many gods. Included in their practice of polytheism is their chi, or personal god. Achebe says, "A man could not rise beyond the destiny of his chi" (131). He goes on to say, "Unoka was an ill-fated man. He had a bad chi, or personal god, and evil fortune followed him to the grave..." (18). Achebe demonstrates that this is a god of great importance that foretells one's future. It is custom to make sacrifices to the gods, like Unoka in Achebe's novel tells, "Every year... before I put any crop in the earth, I sacrifice A cock to Ani, the owner of all land. I also kill a cock at the shrine of Ifejioku, the god of yams" (17). This shows the importance of ritual, and religion in Ibo society. Okonkwo believed he was successful because he killed a couple of roosters, not because he planted good crops.

Western culture does not practice the ritual of sacrifice; most western religions look down upon living sacrifices. Judaism, a religion that used to practice sacrifices, has now opted to remove the ritual from its teachings in favor of a non-violent rite. Other western religions have never sacrificed animals to their gods. In most states, killing an animal sacrificially would violate animal cruelty laws, which would make animal sacrifices illegal in most of the U.S. Members in Umuofia's society often found flaws in their beliefs. The religion bothered and hurt many clan members, and aided their conversion to Christianity. Twins, who were outcasts, often left the religions of Umuofia for Christianity. Christianity offered them a spot in society when they would otherwise be hated. The western religions seem to offer the Umuofian people comfort and acceptance in a place where they would be disliked and treated badly. The western religion offered acceptance and love when the Umuofian religions offered banishment, and hate.

Their religious beliefs dictate many customs and rituals including communal ceremonies. These take place in the evenings once the sun becomes less brutal. It is clear when the ceremony is for men by the way that the crowd stands or sits. Even if there are many women, they are forced to stand off to the sides like outsiders. The titled men sit on stools while they wait for the trials to begin. In front of them are nine stools reserved for the egwugwu, the most powerful and secret cult in the clan. Two little groups of people stand at a 'respectable' distance from the stools. Before the ceremony begins, it is required for them to speak as loud as they can. Everyone is speaking at once, and it sounds as if they were in a market place. Once an iron gong sounds, everyone looks in the direction of the egwugwu house with anticipation. The drums sound and flutes blow, creating a chaotic atmosphere. Once the egwugwu appear, it is instinctive for women and children to flee out of fear. "And when... nine of the greatest masked spirits in the clan come out together, it was a terrifying spectacle," Achebe goes on to say, " (the egwugwu) looked terrible with the smoked raffia body, a huge wooden face painted white except for the round hollow eyes and the charred teeth"(88). Since, the egwugwu are in fact members of the clan, this ritual seems to emphasize that the men of the clan are like gods, and that women and children should fear them.

This religious rite seems like one performed by the American Indians. This ritual would not be done by anyone in today's society. No western religions practice customs as frightening or elaborate as the Umuofian one practiced here. The men and women of the village hold very set places and positions in the society. In Umuofia, men are considered the rulers and leaders of the village; and just like all patriarchies, the women are viewed as objects. One example of an Umuofian male is the novel's protagonist, Okonkwo. Okonkwo had done well in his life and earned a dominant role in Umuofia, he had three wives with many children, and was a successful farmer of yams. Yams were important because they "stood for manliness, and he who could feed his family from one harvest to another was a very great man indeed" (33). This would show that the people of Umuofia felt that as long as a man could feed his family in abundance, he was successful as the head of the family, and a leader of the clan. As long as Okonkwo showed the qualities of a man: strength, courage, and wealth; he could not be challenged by someone of lesser position. In one village meeting a man contradicted Okonkwo. Achebe wrote, "Without looking at the man Okonkwo had said: 'This meeting is for men.' The man who had contradicted him had no titles. That was why he had called him a woman. Okonkwo knew how to kill a man's spirit" (26). This shows that Okonkwo knew that calling a man a woman would break his feelings of self-worth and value. Okonkwo's comment also seems to show that all men in Umuofia would be insulted if they were called women. Most of the men of Umuofia seem to hold the same ideals that Okonkwo has, that women were placed here to be objects and trophies, not for companionship and comfort.

The women of Umuofia are treated very poorly. Women were required to cook, clean and take care of the children. If these duties were not taken care of, the women of Umuofia could be beaten. The Ibo tribe not only allowed, but encouraged wife beating. Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* describes beatings on a few occurrences. The first happens when Okonkwo's second wife does not come home to cook him an afternoon meal. Achebe says, " Okonkwo was provoked to justifiable anger when his youngest wife... did not return early enough to cook the afternoon meal." Achebe goes on to say, "Okonkwo bit his lips as anger welled within him ... when she returned (Okonkwo) beat her heavily" (29). Okonkwo beats Ojiugo again when she calls him a "gun that never shot." Here is one severe case of beating in the tribe, but not involving Okonkwo, Achebe describes as, "... my sister was with him for nine years... no single day passed ... without him beating the woman." Achebe goes on to say, "when she was pregnant he beat her till she miscarried" (91). After this trial was finished, Achebe quotes one of the elders by saying, "I don't know why such a trifle should come before the egwugwu" (94). This would show the overall indifference towards the suffering and ill-treatment of the women of the tribe. Achebe shows that the Ibo women have valuable parts in the society, though. The women paint the houses of the egwugwu. A man's first wife is also shown additional respect. Achebe shows this through the palm wine ceremony at Nwakibie's obi, "Anasi was the first wife and the others could not drink before her, and so they stood waiting" (20).

The importance of woman's role appears when Okonkwo is exiled to his motherland. His uncle, Uchendu, explains how Okonkwo should view his exile: "A man belongs to his fatherland when things are good and life is sweet. But when there is sorrow and bitterness he finds refuge in his motherland" (133). A man has both joy and sorrow in his life and when the bad times come his "mother" is always there to comfort him. A wealthy man in Okonkwo's village, Nwakibie, was described as having three huge barns, nine wives, and thirty children. These are the factors in prosperity, but the author states that, "No matter how prosperous a man was, if he was unable to rule his women and children (and especially his women) he was not really a man" (53). Because of this, Okonkwo was pleased when he heard his son grumbling about women. It showed that in the future he would be able to control his women. Achebe expresses the importance of beating women in Umuofian society. Western culture will no longer accept any type of beating. American laws dictate that no one can be beaten, prisoners are not even allowed to be beaten. American women are quickly becoming viewed more like men. They are out in the work place in force, and are even on the front lines in war time. Western society has slowly but surely incorporated women in the work place and raised the standard of equality. Such actions would never be allowed in Umuofia.

Achebe goes on to talk about Umuofia's most powerful being, the earth goddess. The fact that the ruler of life, Ani, is female, shows a great contradiction in Okonkwo's beliefs. Ani being feminine could also reflect Okonkwo's failure to seek balance between the manly virtues and the womanly virtues as understood in Umuofia. Each of the disasters that afflicts him can be seen as a crime against the earth. This could also be Okonkwo's tragic flaw: he is a man who lives in a culture that requires a balance between "masculine" and "feminine" that he would not accept. Okonkwo feared being like his father who failed to be a "real man." This may have been the root of his inability to accept the true role of women in society. Okonkwo's idea of manliness is different from that of the clan. Okonkwo felt masculinity was anger and aggression, and that was often the only way he acted. Okonkwo feels that showing any other emotion would be considered weak. Achebe did an exceptional job at showing the idea of balance. Okonkwo is very contrary to his emotions and feelings. His "manly" emotions are very conflicting to his "female" feelings. Okonkwo is so fond of Ikemafuna and Ezinma, in fact he even chases Ezinma into the forest. This act shows that he really is a loving, worried father. Okonkwo has no patience for unsuccessful men and anything considered "womanly", such as music, conversation, and above all else, emotion. His feelings for his daughter are, in his eyes, weak. Weakness contradicts his motives and actions in the end when he kills the white man's messenger. Okonkwo thought he was doing the correct, masculine thing to be done. He thought he could resist cultural change and keep his societal status. It is because he is so angry and narrow minded that Okonkwo cannot accept these changes. In his quick-to-anger attitude he destroys himself; and in the end, he ironically becomes just like his father: a failure. Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* brings to light the great cultural differences found in Western society and African society. Most of the differences in the religion, and the role of the male/female in Umuofia would not be easily accepted here in America. Okonkwo did everything he could to fight weakness, and change. In the end he lost, he failed. Achebe teaches us that there is a real balance between what we believe and what Ibo culture teaches. There must be some middle ground where women and men can exist, and excel, as equals. Until we are able to accept our weakness, and treat one another as equals we will all end up like Okonkwo.

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23. Post-Mandal Campus: Ideology, Pedagogy and Politics

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The 1990s created a breach in the easy flowing of ‘secular-progressive’ student movement centered on ideology and rationality in Indian campuses, not as direct response of surging multiculturalism across the globe, but a direct response to the Mandal commission and collapsing of fake bastions of secularism with the demolition of Babari masjid. Dalit and minority student activism emerged after 1989 Mandal implementation and the extension of reservation policies to OBC groups. As it is widely assumed at this particular turning point caste from invisible turned to be become extra visible and entered the space not only of mainstream politics but also university campus lives and wider public space. High caste students went out protesting extended reservations as it directly touched their monopoly in educational sphere and increased competition leading a few students to such drastic actions as to immolate themselves. Even though Mandal reservation policies did not relate directly to Dalit share in it, ferocious attack on reservations made Dalit students to unite not only in between themselves, but also with OBCs and start forming various organizations having the main objective to defend reservation policies, but gradually, in a run of time, to develop into ‘identity politics’ which is derogatory according to the main stream progressive narrations. Identity politics" often has been used in a pejorative manner to condemn student struggles linked to caste, gender, and sexual orientation. However, it instituted a counter-interpretation: That the efforts of diverse students to forge their own place in campus life through organized demonstrations may also be understood as a form of participatory democracy” (Rhoads, Robert A. Student Politics And Multicultural Reform: Making Sense Of Campus Unrest In 1990s) Extended reservations brought affront contemporaneity of caste” as “a live force in Modern Indian culture and politics” (Satyanarayana, Tharu 9-10) and revealed many contradictions inherent in Indian society, especially the mode in which caste was thought about and located in. One can question whether Mandal recreated caste or simply revealed its continuing latent existence. Since then till present times, and, especially talking about caste criteria involvement in Indian census debate of 2011, one can observe a deep division between caste articulating pro-reservation and caste neglecting anti-reservation thinking. Pro-reservationists were made to be thought about as casteist, lower quality citizens, meantime, anti-reservationists projected themselves as defending nationalist interest, meritorious and qualified citizens. As a result, caste as a national problem became associated, in principle, with lower caste groups meantime general category world of upper castes was seen as casteless (Satyanarayana 11, Deshpande).

The argument that the administrative modes and institutionalised strategies of addressing youth in the post Mandal campus have failed drastically to engage with the intersectionality of identities on contemporary campuses, seems to suggest on the one hand earlier the issues were addressed properly and merely the introduction of mandal gave a negative turn to this phenomenon or on the other hand the casteist consciousness of administrative , academic and student bodies came out unmasking the fake secular consciousness. The presence of students from the lower strata of society gave chance to ‘liberators’ to reveal their real face. So in this sense simply the introduction of mandal was sending a message to the lower sections of student community that their issues cannot be ever addressed within the framework of progressive student movements and they should organize themselves to address it. So simplification of the transformation within the campuses as response to this unmasking by putting ‘our campuses do lose their revolutionary potential and cordial fraternity ‘ is underlining the elite consciousness that only some sections of the society should be allowed to the campuses and other should remain as workers in paddy fields forever. This simplification comes from a traditional imagination about the campus. All narrations about the campus focus the luminal nature of the campus despite of caste, class and religion. This monolithic notion of the campus is embedded within a single frame and indicates it as a congruent to public space. Judith butler

elaborates on this frame work in her writings “Those who work within the presumption of a single and adequate frame work make all kinds of supposition about the cultural sufficiency and breadth of their own thought. As a result, they will doubtless think that the refusal to accept this monolithic framework (secular, legal) is nothing but a cover way of taking up and disavowing a position within that framework. Such reasoning confirms the monolithic hegemony of the framework. However, it remains indifferent to questions of social history and cultural complexity that reframe the very work is, and must be not just predominant, but the necessary way to understand the meaning of events. It may that the problem, as outlined, depends on a distinction between the “meaning” of the events and the “normative evolution” of those events (justified/unjustified; permissible/impermissible). (Volume 2: Is Critique Secular? Blasphemy, Injury, and Free Speech- Talal Asad, Wendy Brown, Judith Butler, and Saba Mahmood- The Townsend Papers In Humanities)

The values and aspirations implanted by this dominant normative framework preserves interest of some sections of the society in the name of modernity and secularism. Campus as a miniature of the larger society the campus space is in congruence with national public space. So the imagination of the campus in utopian space of communal harmony outside the national sensibilities will not hold water any way. The ideal citizenship which unmarked by any identities, silencing the voices of weaker sections of society following the nehruvian slogan of discarding one’s identity for the nation cannot sustain after three decades of independence. This was one of the testimonial instances for one cannot cover a reality forever. I will be elaborating in some details on this argument by citing some of the examples from some universities from Hyderabad and Kerala. The university administrations remained as brahmanical without any serious change and number of students enrolled from dalit and backward classes increased comparatively. This mismatch between admin with brahmanical consciousness and students from lower strata of the society led to at least some campuses into crisis as students from lower sections of society joined together to voice for their rights. This also created unrest for traditional ‘progressive’ student’s movement like SFI (Student’s Federation of India) as their double stands were revealed and their soil was shared by new student organizations in campuses. English and Foreign Languages University and Hyderabad Central University witnessed some new debates in reservations, religious festivals, public icons and symbols. Once we type “suicide” in google search the next term popes in the search will be Hyderabad. The suicide tendency among students due to discriminatory practices from the part of administration and faculty members became a huge issue in the campuses in Hyderabad. When Mudassir Kamran a research scholar from Kashmir was sent to police station citing him as ‘mentally retarded’ by proctor Harish Vijra, the intense mental humiliation on the verge of Afzal Guru’s hanging led to mental torture and finally to his death. On that night students demanded to suspend the proctor who is responsible and compensate the family of the deceased. The next day a candle vigil was organized with a participation of four hundred students in the campus. The following day university witnessed cunning tactics of brahmanical administration to put out the struggle of the students by dividing the students and sending false allegation against the deceased. The pedagogical discourse of the administration like “trouble makers” impressing some sections of the students was later on used by so called progressive student’s movements in the campus. Administration’s response was to institute the counseling centers both in EFLU and HCU as a response to the student’s demand of conducting judicial enquiry into the alleged issues. One way of engagement with hegemonic practices is done by the conduction of Asura festival. The celebrations happened in Osmania and EFLU universities, when Dalit students on the occasion of one of the major Hindu holidays Diwali started celebrating Asura festival, putting up in public as their gods various, assumed as negative, demonic mythological characters such as Ravana, Mahishasura, Shurpanakha and others. Dalit students claim that all major Hindu holidays are actually the celebrations of the killings of Asura kings or other subaltern heroes, which are assumed to be local Dravidian kings conquered by the upper caste Aryans. On the other hand, the celebration of Asura kings was thought as a challenge to rightist Hindutva groups that annually celebrated Diwali and Ganesh puja in university campuses with big uproar. In Osmania University in 2012 during Asura celebration big posters were put on the front walls of Arts College building with the notes and pictures calling for

the celebration of “Native Indian King Narakashoora”. In EFLU in 2013 Dalit and other minority students with the support of some upper caste students organized Asura pride week, which included face painting competition in Asura style, discussions and other cultural activities. Celebration in EFLU was disrupted by the police invasion called by the administration that accused students of the incitement of communal enmity.

The chemistry of friendship formation is not neutral from caste equations. The students from lower caste cannot cope with ‘the food culture’ and life style of their elite friends. There is a kind of friendship between these two sections that is not for the sake of friendship but to meet an external end like expressing the ‘liberal’ ‘progressive’ outlook. Their friendship has validity till the subaltern students talk out their politics of claiming state measures like reservation. Even the affairs between a girl and boy do not go beyond the walls of the campus. S. Joseph has illustrated this reality in his poem *Identity Card*: “*In my student days / a girl came laughing. / Our hands met kneading/her rice and fish curry./On a bench we became/a Hindu-Christian family./ I whiled away my time/reading Neruda’s poetry; / and meanwhile I misplaced / my identity card. / I noticed, she said / returning my card: / the account of your stipend / is entered there in red. / These days I never look at / a boy and a girl lost in themselves. / They will depart after a while. / I won’t be surprised even if they unite. / Their identity cards / won’t have scribblings in red.*”

Love Jihad as a phenomenon that unmasked the communal consciousness of student movements, and state missionaries like police and court deserves a serious look According to Wikipedia “love jihad also called romeo Jihad, is an alleged activity under which young Muslim boys and men reportedly target college girls belonging to non-Muslim communities for conversion to Islam by feigning love”. First it was used by a hindu right wing website named *Hindu Janjagriti Samithi* that calmed 30000 Hindu girls have been converted to Islam by Muslim boys in Karnataka alone. According to Kerala catholic bishop council 4500 girls have been targeted in Kerala. The media and governmental agencies accepted these statistics given in right wing hindutha website without any primary commonsensical enquiry into this matter. In late 2009 after placing a section of society on the shadow of doubt and hate high courts of both Karnataka and Kerala judged that the allegation was baseless. Inter-caste marriage is a tool of reformation in different parts of the country, which emerged as a result of engagement with caste. It was widely acknowledged as modern progressive phenomena by academicians and scholars of Indian sociology as it will bridge the gap between societies and castes. It was encouraged by many social reformers like Ambedkar, Annadurai, E.V. Ramasamy, Sahodaran Ayyappan. But in the case of love jihad these all ethos of modernity were completely discarded. Inter-caste or religious marriage becomes ‘savage’ and ‘primitive’ when there comes a Muslim male. The pamphlets and handbills distributed across the campus at the allegation of this issue carry the mainstream national rightwing imagination about the nation and Muslims. The subculture of campus which is supposed to rebel the dominant parental culture is entirely contained by the same dominant one. Is the activism in campuses is a byproduct of academics? Is there any connection with the syllabi of class room and activism outside? Dalit and subaltern student identity assertion could not be properly understood without looking to the broader context of the formation of new kind of knowledge from the subaltern groups that put forward their own understanding of Indian society, culture, politics and religion, based on their own caste experience. In the research universities, Dalit academic discourse and Dalit student movement feeds from each other, the former providing ideological foundation and the latter turning ideas into action—be it student protests, discussions or cultural activities. If sociologists, anthropologists can reduce social reality into academic concepts why not to take a look to the opposite direction and see academic world in terms of so-called “primitive” social relations. There is a particular anthropological gaze towards academic sphere, which looks at it though the very basic, so-called “primitive” human model of interaction – tribal relations (Becher, Trowler 2001 (1989)). This dissociation from the mainstream scholarship is happening not only due to Dalit’s former experience of caste discrimination in their native places, where caste is still practiced in its more or less traditional forms, but also because of the prevalence of certain caste discriminatory practices in

university space and knowledge production. One of the most renowned present Dalit political thinker Gopal Guru questions un-egalitarian nature of Indian social sciences, continuing social hierarchies, discrimination practices and humiliating experience of Dalits that pervade sophisticated intellectual field in terms of theoretical and empirical capacities of intellectuals belonging to upper and lower caste backgrounds:

“Indian social sciences present a pernicious divide between theoretical Brahmans and empirical Shudras. As an intellectual force, this type of hegemonic practice would lead to caricaturing of the Dalits or Bahujans as epistemologically dumb, push them into empirical ghettos, or confine their intellectual and theoretical ambitions to the dominant methodological modes to a significant degree” (Guru, 10, 13). The strict boundaries of pure discipline bring a lot of limitations for daily classroom activities and discussion as it negates the participation of larger students in the discussion. At the same time interdisciplinary subjects in some way motivates divergent thinking and provides a space for larger participation. The courses offered in an interdisciplinary area gives learners a lot of freedom and choices to exercise. Rather than putting it in these simple terms some departments traditionally opted by upper strata of the society tries to exclude the new comers with stringent rules and regulations. For example the English departments has shown always this tendency as ‘englishness’ basically represents the aspirations of urban elites everywhere and hence it was largely opted by upper class students at the beginning. “The study of English literature, introduced in the nineteenth century by the British, had played a significant role in the formation of the liberal humanist subject who would be both modern and nationalist. In India the secularism of the English educated subject enabled a displacement of both caste and community from the middle class sphere, so that these got marked as what lay outside was other than the middle class. During the anti-Mandal agitation upper caste English department students in many universities boycotted class *enmass* to demand the abolition of reservation altogether” (Subaltern Studies XI: Nationalism Refigured: Contemporary South Indian Cinema And The Subject Of Feminism). So English as semiotic system actualizes the aspiration of secular moderns who is always from the upper strata of the society and it is not curious that department also shares aspirations of same communities in issues like reservation and accommodation of other sections of the society. It seems that their emerged a new strata in department as some of the teachers from backward sections of the society with the help of reservation. The traditional elites began to show more eliteness by strictly imposing handbooks of academic writing as preliminary to the courses. Citing the conversation of some ‘MLA students’ about the ‘quota students’ will be interesting. Categorizing students on the basis of their academic capital is current in these departments. Some department like cultural studies may give motivation for activist as they are engaging critically with hegemonic practices in the society but not necessarily. The strict observance of a language code, protocols, body language and ground rules effectively converts seminar halls into a hostile structure that very often inflicts humiliation on the Dalits, who then feel too nervous or intimidated to enter such structure. Dalit might have a genuine insightful point that might challenge the big boss in social sciences, but the moment Dalit questions the premises of the big boss, immediate loud laughter full of crushing derision is collectively produced in such gatherings (Guru 20). Language issue appeared to be one of the most significant factor through which Dalit identity reveals itself. The majority of Dalit students are coming to universities from illiterate family background and regional language medium schools. In university space, which is marked by the dominance of English language, which has become a symbol of high caste/high class status, Dalits face extreme difficulties to overcome English language barrier, and even after learning the basics quite often their pronunciation and the way of expression reveals their essential difference from students coming from fluent and sophisticated English education background. Dalits and some other subaltern students quite often do not feel confident enough to express themselves publicly. There are a lot of students who is pursuing degree in Cultural Studies at the same time keep contemning mentality toward activism outside the classroom. Cultural Studies as a discipline emerged in a global context to unpack the politics of assumption in dominant narratives, historically has to address the question of caste and secularism in India. Upper-class who is always updated in academic cannot deny this radical shift in academics, instead they imbibe it as a discipline and rejects its extension in activism. The post-Mandal campus engages with dalit-OBC

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political agency with a kind of phobia, threatening their activism. The romantic notion of the campus as all sections of society comes together cutting across caste, religion, is possible only in a pre-Mandal campus where the presence of dalit and minority students was nominal or nil. The reinforcement of the value system that treats campus as centre of apolitical activity is completely disregarding the agency of the students from the lower sections of the society. In a nutshell campus adds to the national public space where some identities are threatening and can be solved only through uprooting them from the campus.

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24. Spread of Indian Composite Culture across the Borders: *River of Fire*

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“*Rig Veda* often regarded as the source, if not the beginning, of Indian culture repeatedly refers to the composite character of its society and to its pluralistic population. The other ancient records also state that even from the early years of its history Bharatha Varsha, the Indian land mass, has been multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-lingual. For instance, its society included, among others, Bhalikas (the Balks), Kiratas (hill tribes), Bhotas (Tibetans), Hunas (from Jungara), Sakas (Scythians), Parasikas (from Persia), Airakas (from Iraq), Yavanas (from Iona), Maidas (from Media) and Kambhojas (from Cambodia). This composite culture was the result of continuous influx of people from other regions and a dynamic interaction with them.”

The culture of India is the way of life of the people of India. The Indian culture, often labeled as an amalgamation of several cultures, spans across the Indian Sub-Continent and has been influenced by a history that is several millennia old. India's diversity has inspired many writers to pen their perceptions of the country's culture. These writings paint a complex and often conflicting picture of the culture of India. Among them *Aag ka Darya (The River of Fire)* which appeared in 1959 written by Qurratulain Hyder took the literary world by storm. Mind boggling in its span and scope, the novel is essentially a study in the absorptive culture and civilization of India and the growth of consciousness over the ages. The narrative also deals with the partition of India and its aftermath and shows how the communal and divisive tendencies were at odds with all that Indian civilization stands for and how some of the characters come to terms with these tendencies. The novel unfolds 2500 years of Indian history; it starts from Vedic age and literally explores thousands of years. The story moves from fourth century B.C., to the Post-Independence period in the Sub-continent pausing at many crucial epochs of history. In the initial chapters we see how Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam coexisted peacefully and enriched the culture and consciousness of the people of Sub-continent. The later part of the novel gives the socio-political and cultural details from 1939 onwards.

Aag ka Darya (The River of Fire) the magnum opus of Qurratulain Hyder was initially written in Urdu and later Trans created by the writer herself. The novel is divided into four Indian epochs in each section we find characters bearing the same names, interestingly these protagonists are not reincarnates with past lives. They are different people who recur through different centuries. Gautam, the troubled spirit of quest, begins and ends the novel. Champa, the enigmatic, embodies continuity, change and the experience of Indian women. Muslim Kamal, man of contemplation, appears (as the Muslims did) later in the proceedings, and loses himself in the landscape, just as Muslim culture took on a local colour. Cyril, the Englishman, the latest arrival: never able to identify with the country remains obsessed and fascinated by its ways and its women. The experiences of these figures, shaped by often confrontational relationships with their times, are disparate, but they reflect the oneness of Indian culture. Hyder argues for a culture that she sees as syncretic and inclusive.

In the first part of the novel Hyder writes about the golden times of Chandragupta Maurya, a powerful ruler of his times. His capital was regarded as the world's great center of civilization and commerce. His military might was formidable. It was after the victory of Chandra Gupta Maurya that the concept of a nation first emerged in the minds of the Indians. Every new victory or defeat is a turn in history and the world moves forward in many ways. She also wrote about the great tragedies of the world, the World Wars, divisions of borders and people, technology and mechanical life have increased the sadness of life. When Chandhra Gupta Maurya invades Magada and destroys the kingdom the baffled Gautham, the young ascetic- student of Shravasthi roars, “*Tell me why some killing is good and some bad? I am not interested in King Nanda, Vishnu Sharma and*

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Chandragupta. Why must they drag me into their conflict....?”(The River of Fire.39) In *River of Fire* Hyder says that the Tartars destroyed the art of the Persians and the knowledge of the Arabs. A hundred years later Samarkand and Herat once again found the light of civilization. Some Tartars became Muslims, others embraced Buddhism, Mahmud of Ghazni destroyed the power of Hindus but even with all these massacres and bloodshed the light of knowledge lived on. Books were being written, instruction imparted and somehow the fabric of civilization and humanity continued to be woven. Hyder records that the Sufi saints guarded the books of wisdom in their shrines. Many of them came to India after the conquest of Mahmud of Ghazni. The Chughtai Turk ravaged Delhi and went back to Samarkand. When Kamal entered the service of Hussain Shah Sharqi in India, he records his experiences on the foreign land in his travelogue by name *The Marvels and Strange Tales of Hindustan*. His memoirs provide insight into the Islamic culture he is suffused with. “*The populace is happy and has enough time to indulge its one great passion- religion. Right now their Bakhti and Sufi cults are flourishing.*”(*River of Fire. 67*) The ‘qalandars’ and the ‘Yogis’ all had taken up the task of the spiritual cleansing of the people. They sang of Allah, Mohammed or Radha Krishna. We can see Vaishnavism flourished along with Sufism. The Sikh faith spread fast throughout the Punjab in the fifteenth century. The Sikhs who were followers of Guru Nanak preached against division of caste, color and religion. Sher Shah Suri drove the great Moghal back to Delhi. But the Moghal regime endured and by the eighteenth century India had become the wealthiest of nations. Foreigners vied with each other to find commercial benefits and “Bengal became a great bazaar of European traders.”(ROF 103) The Moghals designated themselves as emperors and copied the pomp and splendor of the courts of Iran and Byzantium, but their glory was also short-lived. Constant warfare and strife was needed to guard these majestic thrones. Lamenting the sad change which comes with the arrival of the British, Hyder says, “A whale called Admiral Watson came out of the sea. Sirajuddaula proved to be a small fish because Mir Jaffer, a crab, turned traitor.” (ROF 103) The English became the new “warlords.” There were two major cultural centers of the pre-British India under Muslims: Delhi and Oudh. The British actually treated both these political and cultural centers as two major political entities. In choosing Lucknow as a model of Indian possibilities, Hyder privileges the possibilities of convergence over difference, for it was in Lucknow, the most culturally diverse city in the kingdom of Oudh, that the Muslims and Hindus were able to develop a culture that transcended their religio-linguistic Interactions Hyder portrays this particular aspect of the Lucknow culture as follows: “The Nawab Vazir's of Oudh banned the killing of monkeys in deference to the Hindu monkey-god, Hanuman. Dussehra and Holi were officially celebrated by many Mughal kings in the Red Fort at Delhi, Holi and Basant were official festivals in Lucknow. Asaf-ud-Daulah's mother, Nawab Bahu Begum, used to come to Lucknow from Fyzabad to celebrate Holi. Sadat Ali Khan, the fifth Nawab Vazir's mother, Raj Mata Chhattar Kunwar, built the famous Hanuman temple in Ali Gunj, Lucknow, with a crescent atop its spire. The Nawab Vazirs created a culture which combined the finest elements of the civilizations of Iran and India”. (*The River of Fire.131*) Hyder also portrays the degree of inter-religious alliances during the Indian rebellion. Her narrative, relies heavily on the aesthetic aspects of the relationship: of loyalty and honor accorded to the Oudh's rebel Queen by her Hindu as well Muslim nobles. Hyder captures this inter-religious allegiance in the following words: “*On the 16* of September Colin Campbell, Lord Clyde, entered Lucknow with his army. The Queen had summoned the feudal barons to her aid, and swashbuckling knights arrived on their charges from all sides. Raja Debi Baksh Singh of Gonda, Raja Sukh Darshan, Lai Madho Singh of Amethi. ... and the Pathan and Sheikh taluqdars of Nanpara, Maihabad etc.. The Begum visited the front line on- elephant and palki. Our men fought valiantly in defense of the city. On the 25 th of February 1858, in the fierce battle of Alam Bagh, the Begum again rode out on elephant and took part in the action. Raja Man Singh of Shahgunj showed such valour in Alam bagh that Begum Hazrat Mahal called him her son and gave him her own dupatta, along with the robe of honour.*” (*The River of Fire.160-61*)

Hyder adds a detailed narrative of the Queen and her followers fight against the British. This account of peace and wartime alliances between the Muslim rulers and then- Hindu nobles invokes a past of collective sharing and straggles for the Hindus and Muslims. It is this shared

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heritage, privileged by Hyder that had to be abandoned to articulate the future Hindu-Muslim politics of India. In another moving passage, Hyder describes the loyalty of the Queen's Hindu nobles after the defeat: "*Raja Beni Madho Singh had reached his castle in Shankarpur. He told Lord Clyde that he would surrender his fort because it was his property, but he would not give himself up because his person belonged to his Sovereign (The River of Fire.162).*" Many Rajputs loyal to their king, preferred to die rather than be subservient to the British. "*Twenty-seven thousand Muslims were hanged,*" (*The River of Fire.166*) This captures the hegemonic aspect of the Muslim Hindu alliances: the nobles were a part of the Muslim Queen's loyal group through their own consent and this consent was generated through a much deeper inter-cultural understanding. If the Muslim-Hindu differences had always been irreconcilable, then alliances like this would have never lasted especially when the Muslim power was on the wane. Lucknow as a setting also provides a real-life historical place where Muslims and Hindus were able to create a composite high culture, which the later national divide erased.

The colonization of Awadh and the city of Lucknow signaled the end of its cultural renaissance and marked the beginning of an era of socio-cultural transformation that radically changed patterns of livelihood. Hyder skillfully weaves the historic facts in her fiction so that her novel becomes an important Socio-historic document preserving the facts of history. The sad plight of the natives is brought home to the reader by the fact that the local business was showing signs of decline as the British were exploiting the religious and cultural differences between the Hindus and Muslims and generating a lack of confidence in each other. Bengal was once the richest province but under the British it was reduced to a wilderness. The monopoly on trade, taxes on edibles and the closure of factories left many jobless. Prices of commodities soared and Bengal was hit by a famine, people were hungry and destitute but nothing was being done by the masters. The journey into nineteenth century India is taken with Cyril Ashley playing the major role an impoverished student in London, who hits upon the riches of the Sub-Continent through the suggestion of a friend. While the western powers were devotees of reason. Cyril Ashley who read Donne and Blake had now assumed the status of a superior caste. His outhouse was occupied by, "low-caste" gardener, groom, washer-man, errand boy and cook. Hyder takes a dig at the upholders of justice and equality who usurp lands to show their inhabitants the light of civilization while themselves mocking the ideals of equality. Gautam wonders that had there been lawlessness, the British would never have ventured into the Sub-Continent. He says, "*True, we had no Roman law, but did the English abide by the book when they broke their treaties with native rulers.*" (*The River of Fire.144*) Radhay Charan argues with Cyril Ashley, "*You have plundered my people You who call yourselves Christians You sign peace treaties with us and break them, and you swear by the Bible. The Marhattas do not have a Bible but they keep their pledges.*" (*The River of Fire.122*) Hyder's honesty forces her to admit the role of local Hindu and Muslim feudals and business holders who were ready to play in the hands of the British for personal gains. Their greed and weakness made them easy targets for the British who cunningly manipulated the situation squeezing the maximum advantage. Gautam believes that the real reason for their downfall was that they were still "medieval and emotional" (*The River of Fire.144*) Hyder shows the moving face of history. As politics begin to play a role which is larger than life, loyalties and beliefs change. At the turn of the twentieth Century, Freedom Movements gain momentum, radically and rapidly changing the beliefs of the people. It is a time of shifting loyalties and ideologies, a time of distrust in the hearts of Muslims and Hindus, the two central players in the power mechanics of the Sub-Continent. Staunch Nationalists and promoters of Hindu-Muslim unity become the flag-carriers of Muslim League and Congress. The Partition of Pakistan and India unfolds a new world. People who had, before this time, lived in harmony became the worse of foes. Religious and communal sentiment was so strong at this time that close friends could not rely on each other. The world came crumbling down for them. The Partition was not merely a geographical reality; it carried strong emotional and social setbacks. Hyder tries to come to terms with it by reminding herself of the historic events of the past, the exodus of the Jews and the displacement of the Palestinians. History is invoked for consolation. Hyder shows how at the time of Partition believers in socialistic order adopted feudal comfort and security. This sad struggle is

understood in the context of time which is revolutionary and radical outside but is frozen inside the human mind.

The scenes may shift to Pataliputar to Magadh, to Calcutta, Bengal or even to England but there is a definite sense of sustained narrative movement in its sentiment and tone. Hyder's canvas is broad and she traces the patterns of cyclical history in the Sub-Continent. The first half deals wistfully with the composite culture in which the Hindus and Muslims lived together in great harmony and understanding for centuries, and then one witnesses the collapsing of this culture on account of the Partition. Hyder believes: "*The real reason for people's restlessness and disintegration was economic. The government gave it a Hindu-Muslim twist so that the masses could be diverted from the root cause...*" (*The River of Fire*, 199) Hyder outlines the debate that was going on during the pre-Partition period. People were struggling to define the Indian culture. Were the Hindus trying to "enslave the Muslims? Were the Muslims only unholy intruders?" These questions disturbed many minds. Hyder says. "*The ancient Hindu-Buddhist-Jain, the intermediary Turco-Mughal-Iranian and the latter day British features of Indian history were so inter-mingled that it was impossible to separate the warp and woof of the rich fabric. The jingoistic attempts of chauvinists to 'purify' this culture were creating bad blood and confusion.*" (203) In the last part young friends, Hindus and Muslims, Students at Isabella Thoburn College, Karamat Muslim College and Canning College, live relatively carefree lives until Partition alters nearly everything. They bear imprints of their ancestry and tradition; they carry the burden of their histories and appear more complex in the contemporary environment. The communal character of Lucknow is seen in the way Nirmala and Talat adjust to different schools, the one run by Christian missionaries and the other by local teachers where Hindus and Muslim teachers were held in equal esteem and loved by their students. The Indo-British culture, the Hindustani-Oudhi culture, the Persian- Urdu culture and the orthodox Hindu culture seem to be functioning side by side without posing a threat for any. The Imambaras and Mosques, the temples and Buddhist shrines existed simultaneously. The Anglo-Indian community also flourished side by side. It is a panoramic view from Vedic times till the partition. The truthfulness and reality of the landscape is an important aspect as it lends truth to the story and we see and accept it all together. Citing examples from history, Hyder shows the paradoxes of human nature and how religion, race and creed provide flimsy standards to judge human beings and their conduct. Hyder shows the loyalty of natives to their own rulers. Though fraught by personal sorrow, an old man tears himself from the crowd to denounce an English man who had spoken against their rulers. Truly heroic in her stance of showing the mirror to the colonizers, Hyder projects the sentiments of the natives. They may have been cowed down by power, but their hearts could not accept foreign rule.

Hyder studies the history of exile, the acute sense of grief which is the result of dislocation from one's country of birth. The historic event of Partition in 1947 is only one concrete example of the cyclical nature of history. She diagnoses this sense of displacement, this feeling of being forcibly uprooted as a colossal tragedy by affiliating herself with the millions of exiled unfortunates in the history of the world. This point is elaborated in while drawing the picture of the partition. Exile is a sorrowful phenomenon. The symbol of the river allows history to surface in the landscape and be seen anew. The acceptance of change, arrivals, departures and the turn of centuries is recorded beside the river. Life and language of one period is as impermanent as the shifting of land and matter and the temporary geological view of time. Nothing holds its full form for long. The wheel of life keeps turning. "*The farewell drum is beating night and day.*" (*The River of Fire*, 91) Hyder's narration itself has contradictory functions- it signals collapse and fragmentation while at the same time celebrating the insouciant resilience of the composite Indian culture. The reform and revolution seen in history as viewed by Hyder, results always in a sordid travesty of human ideals and aspirations. Hyder sees the mockery of revolution and yearns for the shattered past. Citing the Upanishads, the Vedas and Buddha, Hyder reiterates her belief in time and history. It is seen as a single entity. The present, past and future come full circle as seen in the collective condition of human life. Hyder shows how India, with one stroke of the pen becomes a foreign land for Muslims.

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Those who do not wish to leave the land of their ancestors are forced to do so by societal pressure. As Pakistan was created in the name of Muslims where they could practice their ideology without fear, Hindus expected all Muslims to leave and join the people of their faith and vice-versa. Hyder shows how old residents were made to feel unwanted and concrete examples of discrimination were seen in the way each country preferred only their own religious group for employment and property holdings. The anguish of these people is very poignantly put forth and their torn loyalties are well projected. They want to show their affinity with the newly-created states but cannot tear themselves apart from their ancestral roots. The narrative device lifts the novel to an epic plane. The novel resonates the cross-weave of 'Indian culture' both in and outside of the Subcontinent.

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25. Ritualistic and Hierarchical Nature of Medieval Kerala

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The caste system was very much prevalent in Kerala during medieval time, it was through the coming of Brahmins and agrarian consolidation strengthened the caste system. In the caste hierarchy, Namboothiris were the top and Kshatriyas, Nairs were also included in the high status. The Nairs were the domestic servants of Namboothiris and they were the military group also. The category of Kshatriya included Tampurans, Tampans and Samanthas. The lower caste section of medieval society included Ezhavas, Mukkuvas, Nayadi, Pulaya, Cheruman etc. The untouchable caste was the peasants and the menial workers. In Kerala, the high caste Hindus had been polluted even with the approach of polluting castes within a prescribed distance. The distance is closely related to the status of the caste. The unapproachable caste group also observes the distance pollution with themselves. The untouchable caste groups were not allowed to stay in the premises of temple and also from the houses of upper caste Hindus. The polluting castes were not allowed to use the roads and public place freely. They make sounds to inform their passing through public places. It helped the higher caste group to move smoothly without the attack of pollution. Lower caste also escaped from the punishment.

Mukkuvas are the fisher man of the Malabar sea coast; their caste had a chief known as Aryan. The aryan settle disputes and with the assistance of a council, punished by fine or excommunication those who transgress the rules of caste. They have their own caste deity known as Bhadra-Kali who is represented by a log wood, which is placed in a hut that is called temple. One of the caste members acted as priest. Like other castes, they have also the purification ceremonies. Instead of normal water they use sea water for purification⁵.

There has been lot of discussion on the principle of the distance pollution in Kerala society. That is the prescription of various Sanskrit legal texts. All the non-Brahmins kept a certain distance with the untouchable who also maintained the maximum distance. The term for distance pollution is *Teendappad* which literary means non-polluting or non touching, and thus this means that any person who transgresses this distance will commit the sin of polluting or touching the Brahmin. Again menstruating women were considered as *Teendari*-meaning polluted and were kept outside the house. So that she does not touch the person residing in the house and the house itself. Any form of such pollution is removed by a process of oblation. That is the ritual purification with water (*punnyaham*); this holy water is the one which proves the purifying power of water. This purification is the part of the legal prescription of purification or Shoucha. So a code of purity and pollution exists not only with respect to the untouchables but also between women and men of same caste. Comparing to the lower caste women, the upper caste women had no freedom and they suffer restriction. Women are never allowed to enter into the sanctum sanctorum. These prescriptions have been codified in various legal texts. But there are also social codes regarding purity and pollution, called *Vazhakkam*, *Mariyadha*. It was practiced by people, and society accepted these norms. These springs, ponds, tanks and rivers are the traditional modes used by Kerala people for bathing. For the purpose of removing dirt from our body and washing, etc water is used. So water is an indispensable part of our cleaning activity. Water is considered as most sacred and pristine thing. Even a single drop of water was supposed to be having the power to purify the pollutant things.

Bathing is also considered a purifying act. For bathing, commonly water is used. Bathing is the immersion of the body in a fluid, usually water or any other solution. It may be practiced for

⁵ Edgar Thurston, *Caste and Tribes Of Southern India*, Vol .5, Cosmo Publications, Delhi, 1975, pp.106-108

hygiene, religious or therapeutic purposes or as a recreational activity. Bathing is closely related with religions. Our ancestors considered all the rivers of India as sacred, Ganga being revered as the mother. Holy Quran mentions that Allah sends rains to the people he loves. Holy water is used by Christian for baptism and Christ extols the virtue of quenching the thirst by giving water. In religious ceremonies of all the faiths, water plays a purifying role⁶. Tanks and ponds form an integral part of the traditional irrigation system in Kerala until a few decades ago. A network of tanks and canal has been used for conservation and distribution of water for irrigation during the dry months. A number of places of worship in Kerala have tanks and ponds in their premises for purposes of bathing and ritual oblations. There are innumerable references in the books written by the travelers to Kerala to the tanks and ponds and the traditional habit of the people of Kerala taking more than one bath a day. There were also tanks exclusively meant for washing clothes and cattle⁷. Large tanks formed an integral part of the temple complexes. Mainly used for sacred ablution. These tanks also helped in recharging and maintaining the ground water table. The construction of these tanks called for high aesthetic sense and skill in masonry. Temple is constructed even in the middle of tanks. Tanks were also attached to some mosques and churches⁸.

Bathing is related to pure and impure notions. It was made by Brahmins. The word untouchability is more familiar to Malayalees. Bathing is the only way to get rid of untouchability. Purity of Brahmins begins from oblation to manes. All the customs related to the funeral oblation of parents demands bathing. On the day of oblation of manes, they should use dresses which are washed on that day not even the dress which are washed previous day⁹. From the birth to death, we confront different kinds of impurities in our life. These are made pure by water or by bathing. We can see hierarchical notions in caste relationship. The different caste group has their own customs and practices of bathing. Bathing became the monopoly of upper caste. It was considered that bathing should be before Sunrise. This practice can remove sins done in seven births within three years. The real bath is waking up in the early morning and writing Sree in the floor, walking through the sand in the cold breeze and taking bath in the river. Probably Malayalee bathe twice a day. While Brahmins should bath thrice a day-Morning, noon and evening, bath is compulsory. Morning bath is to tide over impurity due to the sleep at night, and to prepare for prayer. Noon is a time expected for reward. So it is necessary to become pure. Afternoon is a time for food and prayer. Brahmins have the permission to do these without being in pure and hence three baths reduce in to two¹⁰.

Tantra ratna describe bathing and cleaning. The reason for brightness of Brahmins is cleaning. There should be an awareness and effort in cleaning and all the actions are ineffective without Cleanliness. When one touches bones, fecal matters, urine, semen, bone marrow, blood, menstrual blood of others, they should take a special bath. If it is his/ her own he/she has to take a normal bath. And don't take cleaning in temple pond¹¹. The theories of our ancestors about bathing provide freshness to our mind and body. The main aim of bathing is body cleaning. According to Hindu mythology, bathing is related to their religious customs. In the words of traveler Feriya Vaisoosa, in Hinduism, bathing is not only for cleaning the body, but for cleaning the soul also. They use only a loin cloth while taking bath. At first they write Aum with one finger and pour water over it using three fingers. It is believed that Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva bathed there¹². Not only in Hinduism but other religions also given more importance to water for bathing and religious customs. In Hindu

⁶ Description From the Water Heritage Museum, CWRDM Kunnamangalam.

⁷ Tanks and Ponds of Kerala Final Report, CWRDM, Kunnamangalam, 1989, p.61

⁸ Description From the Water Heritage Museum , CWRDM Kunnamangalam

⁹ Kanippayyur Shankaran Namboothirippad, *Ente Smaranakal* Part 1(mal), Panchangam Book Stall, Kunnamkulam,1171,p.250

¹⁰ P. Bhaskaranunni, *Pathonpatham Noottandile Keralam* (mal), Kerala Sahitya Academy, Thrissur, 1988, pp.95,96

¹¹ Ibid., p.96

¹² Velayudhan Panikkassery, *sancharikalum Charithrakaranmarum* Part 2(mal), National Book Stall, Kottayam, 1977,p.125

religion, water has more importance for bathing. Christians use water for baptism; Muslims also use water for purification before offering prayer. Our ancestors regularly followed many customs related to bath. In the olden days, male took special oil bath on Wednesday and Saturday; while female on Tuesday and Friday. Women did not enter into kitchen or prepare food without bathing. Making food and visiting temples without bathing was considered a sin. It was believed that in certain days at certain times bathing is a sacred thing. That is the days of Pooram asterism, birthday, phases of transition of asterism, new moon and you have to take bath in holy rivers and also do oblation to ancestors¹³.

Generally water is pure. But we can see that in the earlier times people take bath in ponds after bathing by using hot water. It badly affect our health, and to the sons and relatives also; that bathing by using hot water on special days like *Samkrnathi*, *Sundays*, *sapthamigrahanam*. Hot water is used only for purification of body, while cold water for pouring on head. Bathing is closely related to customs. So in Hindu religion, bathing has very importance. Bathing was only for Brahmins because they control the rituals and practices. All the legal texts and Samhithas were written by them. Brahmin hood was accepted by the society based on the pure and impure notions. In Kerala, Brahmins are known as *Namboothiri*. We can see that the rules and regulations for them are related to bathing. Two things are compulsory for Namboothiri's: not to cross the river Korappuzha towards north. Another thing was, only plunge bath is allowed. If they violate these two practices, they will be excommunicated. There are occasions on a single day when the Namboothiri must necessarily wash oneself or bath. And this bathing has to be performed not by standing under a shower or by pouring water over one self with a mug; but only by immersing oneself in water –in a pond, a tank or a river. Cleanliness dominates the ritual and daily life of the Namboothiries.

Sankarasmrithy mention some restrictions on Namboothiries, during the daily bath, not to bath with the clothes worn. Not to use clothes worn during bath for wiping the body after bath (As a towel). Not to bathe before sunrise. Not to cook before bathing. Not to use water stored on the previous day for the next day's use. Excess water after Soucham (washing after using the latrine) Achamanam (Kaalkazhukal or washing feet etc.) shall not be used for other purpose. Brahmins, desirous of purity "suddhi" or cleanliness shall bathe if they touch shudra; bathing, if a lower caste person comes close by someone; bathe (in a different pond) if the water in a pond is touched; if the same has been touched earlier by a lower caste person; Bathing on stepping on the ground which has been swept with broom, but has not been sprinkled with water.¹⁴ There is a example of excommunication of a Namboothri from Kandanjatha Illam. The story is told a Namboothiri Brahmin who went to Kashi to submerge the remains of his parents in river Ganga. On his return, he committed a mistake of pouring water over himself to take bath, instead of doing plunge bath and he was excommunicated.¹⁵

From these things, we can understand the importance of plunge bath or *mungikkuli*. At that time plunge bath dominate the daily bathing. The situation of pond and its water is not taken in to consideration. Some time the water is full of waste and dirt; any way people prefer these ponds for bathing. There is a description of a pond in 19th century novel. When the pond is completely filled with water, for the cleaning activities like latrine cleaning, the dirty water is used; for cleaning mouth also. The presence of vaka, atthu, oil etc was also there. However, Malayalee preferred bathing in the green water (pachavellam). It is more pure water. But the water in the river and canal has flow; so this water has more neatness.¹⁶

Different types of impurity: There are different kinds of impurity.

¹³ P. Bhaskaranunni, op.cit., pp.96-97

¹⁴ Kanippayyur Shankaran Namboothirippad, op.cit., p.229

¹⁵ P. Bhaskaranunni, op.cit., p.97

¹⁶ Ibid., p.98

Eda shudham(intermediate impurity): This impurity is practiced mainly in the community of pater. At the time of eda shudham, without bathing one cannot take food. From Embranthiri, Varier to Pisharadi the impurity is not called as Untouchability. Even when the Namboothiri touches these groups, pollution occurred.

Kuliyashudham (bathing impurity): when we wake up, the first activity is to take bath. Without taking bath, they cannot prepare food. Thus, if bath is not performed, the impurity is called as bathing impurity. If anyone touches the person who suffers bathing impurity, they also are polluted. Night sleeping mat, bed etc had impurity; so such materials are separately kept in a room, or the places will be felt difficulty for daily routine. For celibate and widows if bathing impurity is occurred they had no permission to take food. If it is for Namboothiris, they can eat food. Bathing was compulsory for night invocations. Because of disease or any other reason, night invocations can be done without bathing.

If any serious disease affected some people, they were spared from taking a bath. If anybody does not take it was assumed that they were affected by major diseases. It was called as *kulimutti*. Generally it is said that the people who labeled as *kulimutti*, has no chance to survive. Another kind of impurity is among the Namboothiries. It is known as *Desham Maruka*. If Namboothiri leave the house and go more distant, their purity is lost; so for purification, bathing is needed¹⁷. For the Brahmins, bathing was a part of the customs and rituals. It was compulsory for them. But there were situations in which bathing was denied for the lower caste. The low caste people were not allowed to bath in the ponds used by upper caste people. There is a description of sacrilege by the children of Cherayan Marakkar in *vanjeri grandhavari*.¹⁸ We can consider these as the direct examples for the violation of pure and impure notions. The children of fishermen play in the bund and make it impure. It is made pure by sprinkling water. But once again Cherayan violate the law, purification process goes on. It shows the tendency of violating some rights and customs.

To Brahmins, bath means purity; while it is refreshment for the people of working class or lower caste who worked hard from dawn to dusk. It became a part of their life style, to remove the mud and dirt from their body. It was the temple which gave new meaning to purity and pollution. The people were allowed to enter in the temple only after a bath. So ponds were built near the temples and were partitioned into Ghats. The pond is considered as holy by the employees of temples and the public. Swimming and washing are prohibited here. There was a reference of a story from *Ithiyamala*. Peruthachan built a pond in the temple in his native village. At the time of construction, there arose a controversy between the temple trustees on the shape of the pond, i.e., triangular, circular, rectangular and square. Peruthachan solved this problem by constructing a magical pond. When stepped into the pond no one can recognize the directions. So Brahmins avoid this pond for their day to day offerings. The pond was questioned by the Brahmins; but it provided a good bath for the common people¹⁹.

The prayer rooms, in the houses were to be entered with the same purity as temples. Therefore, there was no entry to the prayer room without taking bath. The menstrual women were never allowed to enter the prayer rooms. The ponds adjoining the temples are not allowed for common bathing and washing. So for the purpose of bathing, the public ponds and tanks were constructed. These ponds and tanks brought a new culture. It is the gathering place of women,

¹⁷ Kanippayyur Shankaran Namboothirippad, *Ente smaranakal* part 1(mal), Panchangam Book Stall, Kunnankulam, 1171, pp.233,234,246

¹⁸ M G S Narayanan (ed.), *Vanjeri Grandhavari* (mal), Calicut University, Calicut, 1987, p.44

¹⁹ Kottarathil Shangunni, *Ithiyamala* (mal),kottayam,1970,p.51

children etc.; they share their feelings like sorrow, worries, happiness, jealousy etc. from the Ghats of ponds news circulated.

In the life of a person, from birth to death bathing had a vital role. Birth, choulam, upanayanam, puberty, Marriage, delivery, death, sanchayanam-all these ceremonies needed bathing or with bathing the pollution disappeared. Bath is mostly related to customs and rituals. These are practiced by the upper caste. Festivals and celebrations were to be attended with purity. These persuaded men to take bath. The holy water (punnyaham) is the one which proves the purifying power of water. The impurity of birth and death was removed by spraying holy water. The practice of untouchability strengthened the bathing system. Sudra and Brahmin do not bath in a same pond or tank. But they can bath in a river having flowing water. And then there is no impurity. *Pula* (pollution) is compulsory to all. This is observed during birth as well as death. If one touches a person who has pula, he should immediately take bath. The bath taken to remove pula is known as *Pulakuli* rite.

Birth: As soon as a child is born, the mother and baby undergo certain rituals of purification. The baby is placed on the floor and its father sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it. Pollution is observed for fifteen days after the delivery.

Choulam: After the hair removing ceremony of a child, bathing is needed.

Upanayanam: The earlier impurity removed oblation and shoucha are performed. After bathing sacred thread was worn.

Mensruation: The menstrual women are considered as impure for three days. Before taking their food they should take bath. The menstrual bathing is otherwise known as *thirandukuli*. To become pure on the 4th day another activity will have to be performed. This is known as *thuleeru veethuka*. For this three *matt* (Dress brought by Mannan- a lower caste in Kerala) which are washed by Mannan is required. At first itself the girl goes for bath by wearing *matt*. On reaching the pond and after the bath she should dip in water three times in the water and sit on the steps of the pond. Then the servant sprays three drops of water on her head from a copper plate. Then the early prepared paste with raw turmeric and seeds of Avanak is given to her. Then she should herself roll it three times on her face and should throw it away. After doing this three times the worn cloth is changed. Later she should put a Chandan bindi there with Karuka – a grass she should roll three times on her face by herself and should dip in water. Then the impurity of menstruation is completely eradicated; then she should wear her own dress and can have the bath²⁰. There is a song related to the origin of puberty and the song related with the rituals and ceremonies of Thiruvathira are codified by Dr. N. M. Vishnunamboothiri.²¹

Marriage: Before the marriage, there is some ceremony related with bathing-*manjal neerattu*: it is a custom held among the Brahmins on the fourth day of marriage.

Delivery: Pula (pollution) is held for 15 days after delivery. The practice of thulleeru veethuka is done to remove impurity, for 10 days²². Water boiled with medicinal leaves and nalpamaram (barks of four trees) is used to take bath. There were experts to prepare these for delivered women in every region. They apply liniment, turmeric, oil etc on the body of delivered women²³.

²⁰ Kanippayyur Shankaran Namboothirippad, op.cit., pp.238-239

²¹ Dr.M .V Vishnu Namboothiri, *Pazhaya Pattukal*(mal), National Book Stall, 1986, pp.72-73

²² Kanippayyur Shankaran Namboothirippad, *Ente Smaranakal* (mal), Panchangam Book Stall, Kunnankulam, 1171, p.239

²³ V Parukuttiyamma, *K P Keshavamenon* (mal), Department of Cultural Publications, Govt. of Kerala,

Death: After the death of a person in a Taravadu, they follow *pula* for 10 days. Then for ten days they never used the well. There is a custom itself, that is called *bathing pula* (*Pulakuli*). *Udakakriya* is done on the river bank, because it is required that two to three dips should be taken in the river. After that offering *Bali* is done in *Nadumuttam*. The importance of bathing never ends with death; post death ceremony also is accompanied with bathing rituals²⁴.

The literate personalities also describe bath in their biography. Some are related to their childhood experience. The childhood memory of B. Kalyani Amma is like this. “We children got opportunity to learn English. *Ezhava* childrens were also in our class room. So in the lunch time, only our parents allowed us to eat food only after bathing. Due to lack of time we are not permitted into the dining place. Food was taken outdoor, and in the evening after bathing we entered our home. During the time of fever, cold and rainy day we got some concession for bathing. After washing face, hand, leg etc. we change our dress and then we can enter the house. This is the first step for abandoning the practice of pollution in our childish thought. We questioned this, and asked why we have to take bathing for purification purpose. We argued that bathing is only for hygiene not for removing pollution”²⁵. The memories of different dignitaries are the interesting and informative source about the bathing practices. They described the rituals and materials of bathing. They had the childhood experience of untouchability, purity and pollution.

In Ayurveda bathing is a part of daily routine. Ayurvedic physicians say that bathing is refreshing, it invigorates the digestive system; increase semen; increase resistance. The wastes in the body and itching decrease. It keeps away fatigue, avoids laziness, sweat and thirst. It provides good blood and happiness. The morning bath has 10 advantages: healing of diseases, no bad dreams, no constipation, response to sex are some of the ten.²⁶ It was believed that bathing with hot water increases strength, but was not good for head and eyes. Cold water is better for head and eyes. Those suffering from fever and dysentery, ear ache, stomach ache, eye diseases, and mouth sore should not take bath. Bathing should not be done just after the food and midnight and when too tired.

Bathing is also prescribed in Ayurveda, as a part of their treatment. There was a reference about this in *Ithiyamala*. *Vellodu Namboothiri*: he was famous for Ayurvedic treatment in earlier times. One of the aunts of *Vellodu Namboothiri* suffered from leprosy and nobody was able to cure this. Finally the relatives approached him and sought his help. He started the treatment and suggested a hot bath. He himself prepared for it, collected some medicinal leafs and put it on the water and boiled it, along with this, a liniment was also prepared. He boiled water in a huge vessel and put his aunt on this. After a few minutes she comes out unconscious. After recovering consciousness the liniment was put on her body, and gave bath continuously for three days, and after this her illness and wounds were removed²⁷.

Malayalees’ everyday life has been changed because of many struggles. The ritualistic bathing is maintained by high class family or *Savarnas*. They always tried to distance the common people from the public ponds and tanks. Everyone has the right to take bath; the enlightened modern people understood that bathing is a part of individual life and to establish it they underwent many struggles. Once in a time temples and ponds related to temples were prohibited to lower caste members. If they bath or understood about cleanliness, the upper caste members thought that low caste people will

Thiruvananthapuram, 1988, p.9

²⁴ Kanippayyur Shankaran Namboothirippad, op.cit., p.103

²⁵ Gomathi Amma, *Ormayil Ninnu- B Kalyani Amma* (mal), Sahitya Pravarthaka Co-operative Society, Kottayam, 1968, p.26

²⁶ P.Chandran, *Rogavum Prathividhiyum Ayurvedathil Ayurveda Sarva Vigjanakosham* (Mal), Fine arts Publications, Thrivandrum, 1989, p.148

²⁷ Kottarathil Shangunni, *Ithiyamala* (Mal), Kottayam, 1970, p.319

acquire some internal light, which frightened them; so they prevented low caste members from these things. To become great, there is no other way than to lessen the position of others. Medieval legends narrate the case of Kakkasseri Bhattathiri, who has no difference between touchability and untouchability. He took food from whoever gave him, went to homes of Brahmins and temple servants and touches all. He considered bathing as for comfort and cleanliness²⁸. Bathing for bathing has many purposes. The aristocrats had a prime place for bathing. But it has changed the view of bathing as cleaning of the body. The untouchability, being defiled has ceased to exist. This is the spirit that pervaded the social movements in modern times.

²⁸ Ibid., p.84