STUDIES IN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

SHS

VOL. XV, NUMBER 1& 2, 2008

Editor
VARSHA BHAGAT-GANGULY

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDY
RASHTRAPATI NIVAS, SHIMLA

STUDIES IN
HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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ISSN: 0972-1401

STUDIES IN

HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Journal of the Inter-University Centre for Humanities and Social Sciences

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Book Reviews

EDITOR'S NOTE

Though 'better late than never' is a cliché in most situations, this issue bears this spirit. Back date issue of any academic journal is a challenge; it asks for various explanations. For some known and unknown reasons, this issue could be brought out only this year. However, we could add on some advantages; for example, making it a peer review journal so that the inter-university associates are benefited under the ranking system of UGC, we could accommodate topics of contemporary relevance, and invited scholars of repute to contribute to this volume, over and above IUC associates. The authors, IUC associates had a chance to relook at their papers, written back at least five years ago, with fresh eyes and mind and while revising the paper, recent work could be cited on the topic. Some contributions therefore carry references of later years than 2008.

The variety of academic disciplines, regional representation, review of existing theories, and newly emerged debates have made this issue rich and versatile. It covers issues related to Buddhism in historical perspective, philosophy of time and Vivekanand's predicament as well as language inter-subjectivity, theoretical approach to language engagement, experiences and thoughts shared on population stabilisation, film studies on nationalism, and contemporary debates on dialectics through poems on race milieu and moment. Two book reviews include two different disciplines, a book on dramatics written by a Sanskrit scholar and reviewed by a theatrical personality while the other book on modern political though in retrospection is reviewed by a political scientist.

Siddharth, in his essay on Ananda's offences, argues that the orthodox elements were in action inside the Buddhist order during the time of the Buddha and after the demise of the Buddha. He feels that post-Buddha history of Buddhism has not drawn the attention of the scholars so far as it genuinely deserved, and a careful investigation of the whole episode is truly needed to understand the function of the First Buddhist Council. He overviews modern scholars' views, textual description of Ānanda's offences, Ānanda's response to the offences, mutual relations of Ānanda and Mahakashyapa and concludes that except making efforts for women

to be part of *Saṁgha*, all other offences were trivial. Opening the doors of the *Saṁgha* for women was not an ordinary job, especially in the order, which owes most of its density to the Brahmins, who were, generally, not in the practice of seeing the women at the parallel platform in the Brahmanical system before they entered the Buddhist *Saṁgha*. Undoubtedly, this incident might have hurt those puritanical monks and lay supporters of Buddhist order who were against the admission of women in the *Saṁgha*.

Anirban, in his paper on Swami Vivekanand's predicaments, delves into the relation between philosophy (a philosophy aspiring to timeless truth: *mahākālikāsatya*) and history (in the sense of a certain time: *khanḍakāl*) and other relevant questions. He observes a tendency in much of Vivekananda's writings as well as writings on him to somehow accommodate different radical strands within the broad sweep of his kind of Advaita Vedanta Philosophy, trying to re-establish Hinduism. He highlights the presence of contraries in Vivekananda's writings and presentations, depending on whether he is speaking in India or to western audiences. While speaking to an Indian audience, he is much more critical of the ills in the then Hindu society and practices while in the west he is deliberately silent about those. Thus, he remains relevant in Indian psyche and politics, open to being co-opted by a Gandhi as well as a Subhash Bose, or in the contemporary by the secular as well as the Hindu right wing. There are bits in him that each conveniently find and use.

Meti approaches language engagement in a theoretical manner, highlighting some critical concerns of the present times in India, such as language loss, language shift, dominant language and its use, and language death. He captures debates on each issue after examining its definition or important characteristics, quantitative data, identifying trends and policy issues. After considering linguistic diversity in India, he refers to standardization and modernization of language as politicized discourse and a sociolinguistic attitude. Towards the conclusion, the paper stresses language maintenance, in the context of various economic and socio-political pressures in the country.

Sreekumar begins his paper on language, inter-subjectivity and transformation of being saying that the linguisticality of one's existence implies that inter-subjectivity is embedded in one's being, as language is necessarily a domain of inter-subjective subsistence and constitution of meaning. The paper refines understanding on the inter-subjective domain of language based on works of Heidegger and Gadamer to show relevance and usefulness of the

ancient Greek conception of "truth as unconcealment". He refers to the situatedness that characterizes human existence and inter-subjective linguistic horizon and shows how the infinite is always found manifested in and through the finite, and how a language is ontologically significant as it enables us to know and to undergo experience, and as something that transforms human beings. Quoting three temporal dimensions—the "ahead-of-itself" stands for future, "being-already-in" for past and "being-alongside" the present—he then explains human's potential to live in truth owing to its essential facticity and structural incompleteness and how facticity deconstructs the idea of a pre-structured world, and accent to truth and knowledge. The experience of truth and knowledge begins and ends with self-understanding within the enclosure of a language.

Nigamananda has explored presence of theoretical concepts of 'Ecotopia' and 'Ecocracy' in the pre-colonial Indian literature, including selected Vedic, post-Vedic works and works from medieval literatures upholding ecological concepts, and the select literary works from South-Eastern to North-Eastern Indian provinces. The paper exhaustively addresses thoughts and debates on 'Ecotopia' and 'Ecocracy' through deep ecology, shallow ecology, and spiritual ecology. It encompasses various concepts in ecological thoughts, including economy of nature, concept of real wild nature as depicted in the romantic literature, as a science and its strong connection to a history of verbal expressions. The paper describes Vedic literature that upholds the cosmic glory of five elements to provide stability/strength to the human society; Vacana poetry of twelfth century mocked animal sacrifice and narrated Sangam poetry with rich accounts of nature; and Ecofeminism through *Laxmi Purana* was propounded in sixteenth century in Oriya literature saying that there would be economic and ecological stability in the society by honouring women and downtrodden. Such detailed accounts of poetry from Bengal, North-East and South-East regions are presented with commentary highlighting principles of ecocracy.

Sunetra spots grandeur and valour through a review of Bollywood films which have portrayed Indian military personnel and have substantial reference to the army. She discusses war movies produced between 1973 and 1997 as well as films dealing with wartime situation, but each has as its protagonist a defence personnel. She notes that the topic of war surfaced on the Indian celluloid only following a real historical incident, with a few set patterns, depending on the nationality of the war and the prominence of

the characters and other characteristics and tendencies of these films. The other genre of films is not much different, yet some paradigm shift is observed wherein the films show the conflicting stance adopted by secular, patriotic and pro-peace state officials.

P. K. Kalyani has developed her essay based on French critic Hyppolyte Taine's scientific approach to literature that it was the race, milieu and moment which have shaped the creative mind. This paper focuses on selected poems of the two Jewish poets, Nissim Ezekieland Irving Layton, an Indian and a Canadian respectively, living in two entirely different socio-cultural situations. Ezekiel's poems convey that various factors in the society corrupt human mind and having been corrupted people remain alienated. The idea is ideal and appears practical as both extremes cannot be rejected from life. This attitude of Ezekiel who tries to resolve problems is not so much found in Layton. Layton perceives that every human being is an exile for the simple reason that the spirit of his/hers belongs to another realm and it never belongs to the body forever. He believes that God is taking the Jews for a ride giving them false promises of Justice, Love, Peace and a Land of their own; and Cosmos has created the Jews to use them as a tool to expose God. Thus, the difference between the poets is the milieu and therefore, the moment as well, though the race is the same and their poems are reflections of this belief.

Manas focuses on dialectics in the light of contemporary debates, calling it unruly spiral. The dialectical tradition is influential in various disciplines of social sciences, and it has been under sustained challenge with the advent of poststructuralist theorizing. The paper attempts an intellectual cartography of the state of dialectics after poststructuralist incursions. He revisits several thinkers and their thoughts to capture different dimensions and applicability of dialectics and reflects on its convergence, differences and challenges. He goes back and forth on Marx's dialectical materialism, Derrida's understanding of dialectical reality and supplementarity, and towards the end he discusses Malabou's reading of Hegel against the grain and its evitable dispersions.

Leela shares some reflections as a demographer based on her work experience related to population growth and stabilisation in India. She discusses factors responsible for population growth referring to fertility—total fertility rate, women's desire for family planning and population momentum. State-wise figures show the level of fertility and state specific share of population and its implications such as density of population, rural-urban distribution

and urbanization process, inter-state migration of people, and increasing number of elected representatives in both the Houses of Parliament. In this context, critical concerns for planners like options for population stabilisation, its cost, whether it occurs are raised. Policy implications such as family planning, delaying marriage of girls, reducing infant and child mortality and eliminating son preference are addressed. She concludes the paper saying that population stabilisation achievement and sustainability would depend on creating conditions in which individuals, regardless of sex, age, caste, religion, can exercise genuine free choice.

The book reviews include two publications, one an edited volume *Political Ideas in Modern India: Thematic Explorations* by Mangesh Kulkarni and the second, *New explorations in the earliest living tradition of Sanskrit theatre Kutiyattam theatre* by Mahesh Champaklal describes the essence and importance of the book. In the process of review, both of them spell out what these books could have offered otherwise as a contribution to the respective discipline.

I'm grateful to all the peer reviewers for insightful comments and feedback on each paper within a short time. The book reviewers need special mention, as reviewing a book within a short time needs dedication and an inclination of a special kind. I had a chance to interact with some of them personally, which has enlightened me on many counts.

I am very happy that within a span of six months, we all together are able to bring out this volume. I'm thankful to IIAS for appointing me as an editor of this volume, to provide the needed assistance, guidance and autonomy to function and decision-making to shape up the volume to match up to its reputation and recognition. I took it as an opportunity to enlighten myself and equipping to edit a volume of an academic journal of high-quality repute. This process became very educational in many ways; reading of work done by IUC associates across different disciplines of social sciences and humanities, understanding ongoing debates within each academic faculty and locating a particular paper in a wider scholarship, ways of articulating and shaping up of papers as well as inviting academics to contribute to the volume.

This volume could not have been possible without the contributors' will, efforts and cooperation. I pay due respect to all the contributors for their contribution, reviewers and bearing with me for demands of being an editor. Negotiations on time, quality of paper and working back and forth for quality outcome between three of us provided depth of humane interactions. In the process

of editing this volume, support of Publication Department, Academic Resource Office and the Director of the Institute needs special mention and appreciation. I'm specially thankful to Prof Chetan Singh, Dr Debarshi Sen, and Sangeeta Rana.

In acknowledgement, though many names are not spelt out individually, each one of the person and the process are acknowledged respectfully, as such ventures are collaborative, team efforts. With this spirit, I thank all those whose names are not specially mentioned but they have been co-travellers in the journey of this publication.

1 May 2014

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Fellow, IIAS

RESEARCH ARTICLES

THE EPISODE OF ĀNANDA'S "OFFENCES": AN ATTEMPT TO UNDERSTAND THE PARADOXES OF THE BUDDHA'S TEACHINGS

Siddharth Singh

The episode of Ānanda's "offences" seems to be one of the most striking features of the whole post-Buddha history of Buddhism which, unfortunately, did not draw the attention of the scholars so far as it genuinely deserved. A careful investigation of the whole episode is truly needed to understand the function of the First Buddhist Council as, though unfortunately, is left by the stalwarts of Buddhism like H. Oldenberg, L. De La Vallee Poussin and R.C. Majumdar in their thorough investigation of the proceedings of the First Buddhist Council. The present researcher, by applying historical research methodology, has made a humble attempt to find out the cause of the paradoxical teachings of the Buddha contained in the *Tipiṭaka*. This researcher has scrutinized not only the episode that took place during the proceedings of the First Buddhist Council but also the general mindsets of Ānanda and Mahākassapa, their previous mutual relationship before the *Mahāparinibbāna* (great demise) of the Buddha and their personal approach towards women; the focal point of the offences attributed to Ānanda; the internal equations of the Buddhist *Saṁgha*; politics played behind the compilation of the *Tipiṭaka* and on the origination of the schism in the Buddhist *Saṁgha* in the First Buddhist Council (held three months after the Buddha's demise) that manifested in a more clearer way in the Second Buddhist Council (hundred years after the Buddha's demise).

Modern Scholar's Views

Before proceeding further, let us have a look at how some of the celebrated scholars have taken up the issue of Ānanda's offence.

Oldenberg is gravely doubtful about the historical authenticity

of the whole event of the First Buddhist Council. The linchpin of his proposal is the description found in the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*. He opines:

"Everything that the legend of the council *(Pañcasatikā Khandhaka* of *Cullavagga)* alleges as a motive for and as the background to the story about Kassapa's proposal for holding the Council, is found here (in *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*) altogether, except that there is no allusion to the proposal itself or to the council." (Oldenberg, 1969: xxvii)

He concludes by presenting his thesis as — "What we have here before us is not history, but pure invention and, moreover, invention of no very ancient date." (ibid.: xxvi) Denying the whole event of the First Buddhist Council leaves no scope for Oldenberg to investigate the truth of the charges attributed to Ānanda because, of course, that is also a part of that "pure invention" in his own views.

Poussin, in his discussion over the First and the Second Buddhist Council, doesn't pay any special attention to investigate the mutual relations of Ānanda and Mahākassapa. Most of the evidences and arguments regarding the First Buddhist Council of this great savant are meant either to prove the historical validity of the First Buddhist Council or to counter with the claims of Oldenberg's thesis that "all the chapters of Cullavagga is a forgery, but a forgery well done." (Poussin, 1976: 12) Poussin, through his extraordinary erudition in most of the pages, tires himself in the evaluation of the opinions of previous debate begun by Minayeff and Oldenberg regarding authenticity of *Cullavagga's* account of First Buddhist Council preventing him to look deeply into common facts provided by the *Cullavagga*, *Mahīsāsaka*-s, *Dharmagupta*-s, *Mahāsāṁghika*-s and *Sarvāstivādins* regarding the First Buddhist Council and, especially, Ānanda's offences. Relentless over concern, and over involvement of this Belgian scholar keeps him busy with the examination of historical authenticity of the First Buddhist Council and he couldn't focus his attention towards Ānanda's position in the whole episode.

The only noted Indian scholar who has participated in this historical debate is Majumdar in my limited knowledge. Majumdar, in his lucid style, begins the discussion with the account of *Cullavagga*. Oldenberg's statement that the story of the First Council as it has come to us in the *Cullavagga* "is not history, but pure invention and, moreover, invention of no very ancient date" baffles Majumdar and he considers it as the "most dogmatic view of this character, based on nothing but the flimsiest grounds". (Law, 1983:

39) This celebrated scholar, despite assigning a separate small section of approximately three pages based on *Cullavagga* and Tibetan *Dulvā* on "the part played by Ānanda", doesn't feel it necessary to examine how much true Ānanda's offences may be. However, he, very sympathetically, remarks that "the replies of Ānanda would appear generally satisfactory to most persons, and except one or two important ones, such as the admission of women into order, most of the other offences would seem to be trivial in the extreme." (ibid.: 38)

Why Ānanda's reply concerning the admission of women into order did not appear satisfactory to Majumdar is unanswered by him. This section flatly presents the account of offences attributed to Ananda and his reply of those offences, not more than that.

Textual Description of Ānanda's Offence:

Let's have a look how different texts have described the offences of Ānanda in their accounts.

The *Pañcasatikā Khandhaka* of the *Cullavagga* presents the list of following offences (Horner, 1975: 398-407):

1. Not asking the Lord what lesser and minor rules may be abolished after his *Mahāparinibbāna*.
2. Stepping on the Lord's robe for the rainy season (*Vassikasāṭikā*) while sewing it.
3. Inviting women first to honour Buddha's body after his *Mahāparinibbāna*. The Buddha's body was defiled by the tears of crying women.
4. Not praying the Master to remain in this world for a full life span (*Kalpa*).
5. Making efforts for the going forth of the women in the *Dhamma* and discipline proclaimed by the Lord.

Tibetan *Dulvā* contains the list of following offences (Rockhill, 1972: 152-154):

1. Requesting the Buddha to allow women to be admitted into the order.
2. Not praying to the Master to remain in this world for a full life span (*Kalpa*).

3. Stepping on Buddha's golden-coloured raiment for a whole day (no reason of stepping on it is given).
4. Not offering water to the Master when he was high unto death and demanded it.
5. Not asking the Lord what lesser and minor rules may be left after his *Mahāparinibbāna* during the recitation of the *Prātimoksh Sutra*.
6. Showing the *Tathāgata*'s hidden privy parts to men and women of low habits.
7. Showing the golden body of the Blessed one to corrupt women which was defiled by their tears.

In the list of *Dulvā*, No. 4 and No. 6 are the offences which are not found in the account of *Cullavagga*. Rest of the offences are common except a little difference in the case of stepping on the Lord's robe by Ānanda. In the *Dulvā*'s account, no reason of stepping on it is given, whereas in the *Cullavagga's* account, Ānanda's purpose is to sew it.

Mahīsāsaka-s (Poussin, op.cit. 6) present the list of six offences except No. 6 of the above mentioned *Dulvā*'s list. *Dharmagupta*-s (ibid.) don't give place to No. 6 of the above list but add another offence as: "Buddha asked Ānanda three times to serve him as one who offers things (?) to the Buddha, but he declined him" and puts it at No. 2. Mahāsāṁghika-s (ibid.: 7) are almost in the accordance with the seven offences described by *Dulvā* with a slight difference in No. 3 where it renders a specific reason for Ānanda to step on the robe as to sew it. At No. 6, it speaks of the offence as- "Showing the golden-body of Blessed one..." and leaves the line in an incomplete form.

Author of these lines shall have discussion here on the basis of the *Cullavagga* and *Dulvā*, the two most important and detailed accounts of the First Buddhist Council.

ĀNANDA'S REPLY TO THE OFFENCES:

Before proceeding further towards the discussion, let's see how Ānanda responds to these charges.

1. On the charge of not asking the Buddha concerning lesser precepts:

   Cullavagga: I had forgotten to ask. I don't see this as an offence of wrong doing, yet even out of faith in venerable ones; I confess that as an offence of wrong-doing.

Dulvā: I was overcome with grief at the prospect of losing the *Tathāgata*.

2. On the charge of stepping upon the Master's robe:

   Cullavagga: I did not do it out of disrespect.

   Dulvā: Because at that time there was no friendly *Bhikshu* (monk) present there to help me.

3. On the charge of getting honoured the remains of the Master's body by the women firstly:

   Cullavagga: "Do not let these be here at a wrong time" — thinking thus I did it.

   Dulvā: If they see the Blessed one, many of them would conceive a longing to become like him.

4. On the charge of not praying the Master to prolong his life-span:

   Cullavagga: I was then possessed by the Evil one (*Māra*).

   Dulvā: I was then possessed by the Evil one (*Māra*).

5. On the charge of making efforts to admit women in the Buddhist order:

   Cullavagga: "This Mahāprajāpati Gotamī is the Lord's aunt, foster-mother, nurse, giver of milk, for when the Lord's mother passed away, she suckled him" – thinking thus I did it.

   Dulvā: I thought of all that Mahāprajāpati Gotamī had endured, and how it was she who had nursed the Blessed one when his mother died. I only asked that women who were relatives and friends might enter the order.

6. On the charge of not offering water to the *Tathāgata*:

   Cullavagga: Not found in *Cullavagga*.

   Dulvā: I did not give it to him because five hundred wagons had just crossed the *Kakusthana* river and had made the water muddy.

7. On the charge of showing the *Tathāgata*'s hidden privy parts:

   Cullavagga: Not found in *Cullavagga*.

   Dulvā: I thought that women, being naturally sensual, if they but saw the privy parts of the Blessed one, would they not cease being so?

Whatever may be the actual number of offences made on Ānanda, be it five as promulgated by *Cullavagga* or seven as is mentioned in *Dulvā* or six as established by *Mahīsāsaka*-s; it is a definite indication

by the vigilant observance of the offences that it was only the offence of Ānanda's efforts in making admitted the women to *Saṁgha,* which existed in the bottom of all the charges made on him. All other offences are not only insignificant in its nature but it also seems that those were fabricated by a group of monks or any particular influential monk just to prolong the number of offences somehow, so that even if Ānanda could escape from one offence, he could be trapped in another one. Another reason to prolong the number of offences might be not to expose the real agenda of anti-feminism of the accusers.

Ānanda seems to be aware of this strategy of accusers. He tries his best to satisfy the accusers about each and every offence. Ānanda's position is presented in a more explicit way in the Tibetan *Dulvā* than in *Cullavagga. Dulvā* evidently renders Ānanda's pain, from deep within, at the moment Mahākssapa excludes him from the assembly:

"Bear with me, venerable Kāsyapa. I have neither sinned against morality, the doctrine, nor against good behaviour, neither have I done aught unseemly or detrimental to the congregation. Be forbearing then, O Kāśyapa." (Rockhill, op.cit., 152) This request of Ānanda could not melt Mahākassapa and he told him: "thou canst not be among pure-speaking men". (ibid.: 155)

Dulvā speaks: "Great was Ānanda's grief". (ibid.)

Ānanda has no regret for what he has done. He rejects the charges out rightly and emphatically claims after replying against each and every charge: "it was no wonder, nor there aught to be ashamed of, if I did not do so..." (ibid.: 152) Ānanda's answer to every charge has been convincing and justified. The admission of women in Buddhist order was the heart of all the charges and, perhaps, was the only genuine charge. It was answered by Ānanda very cleverly. It would be a wrong notion to believe that he is being defensive while he justifies his case by praising Mahāprajāpati Gotamī for nursing and suckling Gotama, but by doing so he is praising the virtues like compassion, soft-heartedness and gentleness, etc., found naturally in the creatures called women. The name of Mahāprajāpati Gotamī was used just as a symbol by Ānanda to put his case strongly favouring admission of women to the Buddhist *Saṁgha* and he could be successful in it.

Certainly, this achievement of Ānanda would not have been liked by many in the *Saṁgha.* Opening the doors of the *Saṁgha* for women was not an ordinary job, especially in the order, which owes most of its density to the Brahmins, who were, generally, not in the

practice of seeing the women at the parallel platform in the Brahmanical system before they entered the Buddhist *Saṁgha*. Undoubtedly, this incident might have hurt those puritanical monks and lay supporters of Buddhist order, who were against the admission of women in the *Saṁgha*. Same must have been the case with those too who had been jealous of close relations of Ānanda with the Master and his importance in the *Saṁgha* because of that proximity.

Mutual Relation of Ānanda & Mahākassapa

Mahākassapa, as is evident from the Pāli sources, have been over-purist and anti-feminist both in his nature and, resultantly, Mahākassapa appears as a leader and voice of those who always waited for their time and chance to frame Ānanda for his sin of making efforts to admit women in the *Saṁgha*. Certain facts in order to make a comparative analysis of stature of Mahākassapa and Ānanda might throw the light on the possible cause of charges attributed to Ānanda and Mahākassapa's suspicious involvement behind it.

The accounts of Pāli Literature often speak of unpleasant behaviour towards Ānanda by the side of Mahākassapa. Ānanda always paid him extreme regard and on one occasion refused to take part in an *Upasampadā* i.e. ordination because he would have to pronounce Kassapa's name and he did not consider this respectful towards Kassapa (Malasekera, 1995: 258). The most sober, humane, kind and sweet-natured character among all the disciples of the Buddha was, undoubtedly, Ānanda and probably this virtue of him brought him so close to the Blessed one. The Buddha himself would pay remarkable respect to Ānanda. All the great disciples offered their service to the Master, but were not accepted by him. Ānanda alone was left; he sat in silence. When asked why he did not offer himself, his reply was that the Buddha knows best whom to choose. When the Buddha signified that he desired to have Ānanda, the latter agreed to accept the responsibility on certain conditions. The Buddha was never to give him any choice food or garment gotten by him, nor appoint for him a separate cell, nor include him in the invitations accepted by the Buddha. For, he said, if the Buddha did any of these things, some would say that Ānanda's services to the Buddha were done in order to get clothes, good fare and lodging and be included in the invitations. Further, he was to be allowed to accept invitations on behalf of the Buddha; to bring to the Buddha those who came to see him from afar; to place before the Buddha all his perplexities, and the Buddha was

to repeat to him any doctrine taught in his absence. If these concessions were not granted, he said, some would ask where the advantage of such service was. Only if these privileges were allowed to him, people would trust him and realize that the Buddha had real regard for him. The Buddha agreed to the conditions. Thenceforth, Ānanda served the Buddha, following him like a shadow, bringing him water and toothpick, washing his feet, sweeping his cell and so forth (ibid.: 250-251).

Ānanda was the Buddha's equal in age and it is touching to read of this old and most devoted attendant ministering to his eminent cousin, fetching him water, bathing him, rubbing his body, preparing his bed and receiving last instructions from him on various matters of importance as is shown in *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta.* Once, when an elephant named *Nālāgiri*, sent on the instructions of Devadatta and maddened with drink ran on the Buddha's path to trample him, Ānanda immediately took his stand in front of the Buddha (Fausboll, 1963: 335). Also, he was like a bridge between monks and the Buddha, society and the Buddha and monks.

More than just being an attendant, Ānanda has the credit of delivering several important discourses like *Aṭṭhakanāgar Sutta, Sandaka Sutta, Bhaddekaratta Sutta,* etc. Buddhaghosa gives a list of discourses which bring out the eminence and skill of Ānanda; they are the *Sekha, Bāhitiya, Ānañjasappāya, Gopaka-Moggallāna, Bahudhātuka, Cūasuññatā, Acchariya-bbhuta, Bhaddekaratta, Mahānidāna, Mahāparinibbāna, Subha* and *Cūaniyalokadhātu* (Malasekera, op.cit. 257). Among all the disciples, this was only Ānanda who was put on highest position in five virtues by the Buddha himself namely: (1) wide knowledge, (2) retentive memory, (3) good behaviour, (4) strong resolution and (5) personal care of Buddha (Woodward, 1970: 19-20 No one else got the credit of being chief in even more than two of the virtues, including Mahākassapa who was treated as chief in only one virtue i.e. foremost among the proponents of the ascetic practices. (*Dhutavādānaṁ*) (ibid.: 16).

In comparison to Ānanda, Mahākassapa is not known to the time of Buddha in eminence as is evident from the canonical literature of Pāli. He was just one of those many, who were counted as the disciples of the Buddha after the place of Ānanda, Sāriputta and Moggallāna. Mahākassapa's sudden emergence in the First Buddhist Council is inexplicable to any student of Pāli Buddhism and indicates the beginning of a kind of priesthoodness, which was always discarded by the Buddha. We don't have a single Sutta in the whole *Tipiṭaka* exclusively delivered by Mahākassapa to show his scholarship. *Kassapa*

Saṁyutta portrays the presence of Mahākassapa in all of its thirteen Suttas but those sermons also are either delivered by the Master himself or by Sāriputta. Mahākassapa, however, here seems to be extremely puritanical, who was not ready to abandon the practice of *Dhutaṅgas*, even on the suggestion of the Buddha himself (Rhys Davids, 2005: 136). This uncompromising attitude probably prevented him to accept the admission of women in the Buddhist order.

Kassapa Saṁyutta gives at least two stories which noticeably show that it was not everything healthy with the relation of Ānanda and Mahākassapa. The core issue of this cold war was the open-minded nature of Ānanda in contrast to that of Mahākassapa. Malalasekera writes:

"He (Mahākassapa) was evidently sensitive to criticism, and would not address them [women] unless he felt them to be tractable and deferential to instruction. He was very reluctant to preach to the nuns" (Malasekera, op. cit., Vol. II: 480).

Upassaya Sutta renders the story of a nun called Thullatissā. Mahākassapa was very reluctant to deliver sermons to nuns but on one occasion, Ānanda, after requesting him three times and then making him agreed, took Kassapa to a settlement of the nuns. Mahākassapa visited the nunnery and preached to the nuns. He was probably not popular among them, for, at the end of his discourse, the nun Thullatissā was not pleased and gave vent publicly to her displeasure: "How does Kassapa think it fit to preach the Dhamma in the presence of the learned sage Ānanda? It is as if a needle-peddler were to deem he could sell a needle to a needle-maker" (Rhys Davids, op. cit., 145). Mahākassapa was indignant by her words, but Ānanda appeased him, somehow, by mollifying his anger calling Thullatissā a fool and requested him to pardon her. Malalasekera rightly says that, "it was perhaps Ānanda's championship of women's cause which made him popular with nuns and earned for him a reputation rivaling even that of Mahākassapa" (Malasekera, op. cit., Vol. I: 259).

Another instance is of *Cīvara Sutta*. There is a story recorded here in which Mahākassapa insults Ānanda by calling him "Corn-trampler" and "despoiler of families", and he ends up by saying "this boy does not know his own measure". Ānanda had been touring *Dakkhiṇāgiri* with a large company of monks, mostly youths, and thirty of those youths re-entered the householder life again. This incident gave a chance to Mahākassapa and we find him blaming Ānanda for admitting into the *Saṁgha* new members incapable of

observing its discipline and of going about with them in large numbers. He says to Ānanda: "Corn-trampler methinks art thou! Despoiler of the families methinks art thou! Thy following is breaking up. Thy youngsters are melting away! This 'boy' does not know his own measure." (Rhys Davids, op. cit., 147). Ānanda felt badly hurt on being abused as a "boy" and makes objection, "Surely my head is growing grey hairs, your reverence, and yet I am not vexed at the venerable Mahākassapa even at this time calling me boy." (ibid.) Mahākassapa did not stop on the objection of Ānanda and he repeated exactly the same words again.

When Thullanandā, a nun, heard that Ānanda had been chidden and pronounced "boy" by Mahākassapa, she raised her voice in protest, saying: "What now! Does Mahākassapa, who was once a heretical teacher, deem that he can chide Ānanda, the learned sage, calling him boy?" (ibid.: 148) Mahākassapa complained to Ānanda hearing her words that it was a disgraceful and thoughtless words which should not have been said to him.

This incident, says the commentary, (Woodward, 1977: 133) took place after the Buddha's death, when Ānanda was a new arahant and he was enjoying the honour of possessing the bowl and robe of the Buddha. If the fact provided by the commentary is true, then either this incident occurred just before the commencement of the First Buddhist Council or after the First Buddhist Council. It is hard to believe that just after the Buddha's death, when everyone in the Buddhist Saṁgha must have been thinking of compiling the Buddha's words, these close disciples of the Buddha would have thought of delivering the sermons to the nuns. If it happened after the First Buddhist Council then it indicates continued ill behaviour by Mahākassapa towards Ānanda even after his Arahantship. It further signifies Mahākassapa's enormous unpopularity among nuns and it manifested in the form of reaction expressed by Thullanandā. This reaction was certainly produced due to Mahākassapa's known aversion to the nuns. It also throws the light on the fact that mutual relation of Mahākassapa and Ānanda had become more acerbic after the First Buddhist Council over the issue of women's admission and charges made against Ānanda as a penalty for that. *Dulvā* speaks of another mortifying behaviour by Mahākassapa with Ānanda that he initially appointed Ānanda to supply water to the Saṁgha before the commencement of the First Buddhist Council, and that also when they required it (Rockhill, op. cit., 150). Poor Ānanda, who once owned one of the highest positions in the Buddha's disciples, had no other option than accepting it.

It was not so that after the demise of Mahākassapa, Ānanda could get freedom from the forces that never pardoned Ānanda for his liberal attitude towards women and always held responsible for breaking male-domination in the *Saṁgha*. There is a story in the *Dulvā* about the humiliation of Ānanda by a monk even after the demise of Mahākassapa, while he was heading the *Saṁgha*. In this context, that monk is reciting a *gāthā* which wrongly presents the Buddha's views. Ānanda makes correction in his *gāthā* (Pāli verse) and then, that monk went to his master and said thus: "Ānanda has grown old, and his memory is impaired; he has become broken down by old age" (ibid.: 163). His master, instead of stopping him for his derogatory remarks and telling him the correct version of the *gāthā*, instigates him saying, "Go and say, Thera Ānanda, you are again wrong" (ibid.). That monk went to Ānanda and repeated these words. The word "again" shows here that it had become a common practice by certain opponents of Ānanda to abuse and humiliate him. Ānanda's pain at this moment can be seen in his words: "Sāriputra, Mahāmaudgalyāyana have passed away, ...I stand alone; I am like an outcast" (ibid.: 164). Immediately after this incident, Ānanda decided to entrust the function of the *Saṁgha* to *Sāṇavāsika* and passed away.

Mahākassapa, very strategically and cleverly, doesn't appear in the front while prosecution of Ānanda was going on. In *Dulvā*, he instructs Anuruddha to identify the person still subject to passions, anger, ignorance, desire or attachment. Anuruddha discovers that person as Ānanda and Mahākassapa excludes him from assembly (ibid.: 152). *Cullavagga* states that unnamed Theras blamed Ānanda in the presence of Mahākassapa (Harner, op. cit., 398). Moreover, Mahākassapa made puppet to all those who had been close to the Lord even prior to his Buddhahood. One cousin of the Buddha was entrusted the responsibility of identifying another cousin Ānanda as an offender. Then, Ānanda was given the task of charging *Brahmadaṇḍa* (a form of penalty that imposes social excommunication) to Channa, who was charioteer and a very old companion of Buddha. As a justification of this *Brahmadaṇḍa* story, it was incorporated in the *Pañcasatikā Khandhaka* that *Brahmadaṇḍa* was decreed by the Master himself before his *Mahāparinibbāna*. But this question still remains—"was it really so necessary for Buddha to decree a simple penalty like *Brahmadaṇḍa* to his very old companion and that also when he was on the death-bed?" This doubt becomes deeper by the fact that Channa episode is neither found in the *Dulvā's* presentation of the First Buddhist Council nor in the

Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, which exclusively deals with the last journey of the Master and presents each and every minute detail of his last words. It seems that it was actually a punishment to Channa by anti-women forces, under the leadership of Mahākassapa, for his sin of favouring nuns in a dispute between monks and nuns and, probably, the decree of the penalty was put in the mouth of the Buddha to authenticate its validity.

Pañcasatikā Khandhaka's whole description flatly presents the proceedings of the First Buddhist Council and generally favours Mahākassapa and blames Ānanda which creates serious doubts about its authorship. It also doesn't seem to be just a coincidence that *Pañcasatikā Khandhaka* is preceded by *Bhikkhunī Khandhaka*, consisting of eight humiliating rules (*Garudhamma*) for nuns. The total attitude of Mahākassapa towards women puts him in the circle of doubts that he and his like-minded followers have played a major role in preparing firstly, *Bhikkhunī Khandhaka* to curb the freedom of nuns and afterwards *Pañcasatikā Khandhaka,* which justifies Ānanda's penalization with the fabrication of some other charges on him. It seems that Mahākassapa's intention to take the place of the Buddha had gravely influenced the internal relations of the monks. The *Saṁgha* was divided into two groups. One and probably larger group was the follower of Mahākassapa and another one was that of Ānanda, which raised the voice demanding induction of Ānanda in the First Buddhist Council. It was the first unrecorded schism in the Buddhist order which contains the roots of Second Buddhist Council also.

From the very first line of the *Pañcasatikā Khandhaka* and second paragraph of the Chapter V of *Dulvā*, Mahākassapa directly appears as a head of the order. Who selected him as a head and what was the selection procedure is still unknown. As a head of the order, he selected 499 *arahata* (worthy ones) monks and Ānanda as a 500th member on the demand of other members. Obviously, Mahākassapa would have selected like-minded monks in more numbers in the comparison of those with the neutral attitude or with the supporting attitude to Ānanda. On this occasion, a monk named Purāṇa, who was travelling in the mountain of the South with 500 monks, on reaching *Rājagṛha* and hearing about the recitation of the *Vinaya* and the *Dhamma*, and being invited to be associated with the choir, replies:

"The Dhamma and the Vinaya have been well chanted by the Theras. However, in that way that I have heard and received the

Dhamma from the mouth of the Lord himself, in the same way I will bear it in my mind." (ibid.: 402)

This was the same Purāṇa who is said to be founder of the *Mahīsāsaka* school of Buddhism, (Adhikari, 1991: 234) which was not only older than the *Mahāsāṁghika*-s but also the oldest, besides only the *Theravāda*, of all the orthodox and unorthodox Buddhist Schools. It appears from the above facts that there were monks like Purāṇa in the *Saṁgha* who were not ready to accept a new head of the *Saṁgha* at the place of the Buddha and they felt better to keep themselves away from the words, which was compiled as *Buddhavacana* (Buddha's words) under the headship of Mahākassapa and decided to remain separate.

Perhaps, Ānanda took it as a moral responsibility to remain in the *Saṁgha* despite disrespectful behaviour of Mahākassapa and his followers with him. Another reason of his remaining in the *Saṁgha* may be his own followers, who were liberal and open-minded and they, under the leader like Ānanda, were not ready to give up the reign of the *Saṁgha* in the hands of fanatic and rigid forces.

We come to know by the records of different Buddhist texts that these were Upāli and Ānanda who narrated the *Vinaya* and *Dhamma*[*] respectively and it was remembered by other *Arahata*-s. It is beyond the domain of common understanding that such a huge collection especially that of Sutta, can be recited by any one person. Moreover, *Sutta Piṭaka* contains several discourses delivered by the disciples like Sāriputta, Moggallāna, etc. and by Ānanda himself. It has varieties of ideas, which are very often contradictory to each other. A student who has read realistic stories of the Suttas like *Brahmajāla, Sāmaññaphala, Ambaṭṭha, Kālāma* and *Mahāparinibbāna,* etc., can never believe that the texts like *Buddhavaṁsa, Apadāna* and *Cariyāpiṭaka,* etc., can also be narrated by the same person who recited the former suttas. Same words can be said regarding Buddhist standpoint towards women also. The Buddha who congratulates King Pasendi for becoming father of a girl child by saying- *"Some women are indeed better than men. Bring her up, King, There are women who are wise, and virtuous ..."* (Rhys Davids, 1979: 111) is illustrated implementing eight humiliating rules for nuns in the *Bhikkhunī Khandhaka*, while admitting them to *Saṁgha*. These contradictions raise serious question concerning the authenticity of the words which were compiled as a *Buddhavacana*.

First Buddhist Council as a foundation of the Second Buddhist Council

There was certainly a role of other members of the First Buddhist Council apart from Ānanda and Upāli in the incorporation of different portions in the *Sutta Piṭaka* and *Vinaya Piṭaka*, which they added as per their own agenda and outlook. Mahākassapa and his followers must have been dominating and they could be successful in imposing firstly, the Eight rules (*Aṭṭha Garudhamma*) like portions in the *Bhikkhunī Khandhaka* and afterwards, in prosecuting Ānanda on the basis of that. Several other portions would have been added by this group. Therefore, it would not be exaggeration to say that the *Tipiṭaka* came before us in the form of a mixture of at least two kinds of views: (i) Words presented by Ānanda and his followers; (ii) Words presented by Mahākassapa and his followers. Mahākassapa and his followers seemingly have played a major role in incorporating the humiliating rules and words to women. It was Ānanda's position in the *Saṁgha* and his degrading experiences after the Buddha's *Mahāparinibbāna* probably, which gave a reason for his followers to revolt against then existing *Saṁgha* which, technically known as *Theravāda,* was being governed by the followers of Mahākassapa. It may be said with certain amount of possibility that this group began to separate themselves from the *Saṁgha* soon after Ānanda's demise and manifested in due course of time in the form of revolt by *Vajjian* monks of *Vesāli* (Vaishali) causing the need of Second Buddhist Council.

Let's take a look at the possible arguments in the favour of above statement. These arguments although help us to make just a hypothesis of the background story of the Second Buddhist Council, not to reach a final thesis; even then, this hypothesis might lead us towards a new discussion, which could probably explore some new dimensions in post-*Mahāparinibbāna* history of Buddhism.

Ānanda seems to have very special relation with Vaishali. After being excluded by Mahākassapa, Ānanda directly went to Vaishali and his attendant was a local monk named *Vrijiputra. Dulvā* claims that this was he, whose instructions guided Ānanda to attain Arahantaship (Rockhill, op. cit., 155). When he decided to pass away, he proceeded towards Vaishali, because if he had passed away in Magadha, the Vajjians would have been deprived from a portion of his relics because of their unhealthy relations with King *Ajātashatru.* Finally, he passed away in the middle of the river Ganges flowing between both the countries. The monks of Vaishali built a

caitya and placed half of his body-relics therein (ibid.: 167). There is an instance in the *Kathāvatthu* that *Vajjiputtaka*-s are involved in a controversial point with the *Theravādins* regarding the person who taught the Dhamma and they claim that it was actually Ānanda who, after learning Dhamma from the "created shape", taught the Dhamma on this earth (Aung, 1974: 325). This created shape was sent by the Exalted one, who actually lives in the city of Delight. *Aññhakanāgara Sutta* tells us that having heard the sermon of Ānanda, a householder named *Aññhakanāgara* of Vaishali built a precious vihāra in Vaishali exclusively for Ānanda (Horner, 1977: 18). Another example is that of *Ratana Sutta*. It was preached at Vesāli on the invitation of the inhabitants of there, who begged the Buddha to rid the city of various dangers which had fallen upon it (Fausboll, 1998: 36-39). According to the commentaries, the Buddha first taught the Sutta to Ānanda and asked him to go round the city, accompanied by the *Licchavi* princes, reciting the *Sutta* and sprinkling water from the Buddha's bowl. Immediately all the evil spirits fled from the city and the people recovered from their diseases (Smith, 1915: 278). The inhabitants felt indebted to Ānanda for his holy act to take the pain of reciting the Sutta and moving around the city to protect them.

During the time of the Buddha, and even up to his death, the Vajjians of Vaishali were a very prosperous and happy community. The Buddha attributed this to the fact that they practiced the seven factors of welfare (*Satta Aparihāṇiya Dhamma*) in their social life (Rhys Davids, 2000: 80). These seven generally throw the light on the democratic, virtuous and rational nature of *Vajjians* and out of these seven, one is about their respectful behaviour towards women. It was during the Buddha's stay in Vaishali that Mahāprajāpati Gotamī followed him with five hundred other *Sākya* women, and, with the help of Ānanda, obtained permission for women to enter the *Saṁgha* (Horner, 1975: 352-353). Probably, she deliberately chose this place having realized the fact that local condition of freedom and honour to women might influence the Master to grant them permission. We find the example of Ambapāli who, despite being a courtesan of Vaishali, had obtained a very high status in the society. Ambapāli, *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* says, was offered by the *Licchavi* princes a huge amount of money and wealth in exchange of transferring the opportunity of offering the meal to the Buddha but she refused saying: "Even if you were to give me Vaishali together with its territories, I could not give up the opportunity to offer this meal" (Rhys Davids, op. cit., 103). This statement shows her free

status in the Vajjian society, which renders a glimpse of women's position also, in general.

Vajjians, because of the their special respect towards women community and prosecution of their beloved Ānanda on this very ground by the post-*Mahāparinibbāna Saṁgha*, felt hurt and it would have formed a mine of differences between them and the then *Saṁgha*. After Ānanda, who was a link between different segments of the *Saṁgha*, passed away; those who had closeness with Ānanda and were bound to stay with the over purists of the *Saṁgha* just because of Ānanda's presence there, must have become more vocal. These differences became wider and deeper in the future years and lastly, approximately hundred years after the Buddha's death, the Second Buddhist Council was called in Vaishali and a large number of Vajjian monks were expelled. The ten points (*Dasa Vatthu*) (Horner, op. cit., 407) might have been used as a justification to expel the dissents and the historicity and truth of those ten points is still needed to be examined. This move hardly damaged the religious and social position of them because of their enormous following. They formed a separate sect, named *Mahāsāṁghika*, numbering ten thousand monks and held a recital of their own.

Conclusion

The findings of the preceding lines may be summarized in the following points:

1. The real cause of the charges attributed to Ānanda lies in his "crime" of making efforts to admit women in the *Saṁgha*. All other offences were trivial in nature and were added with the real offence just to exclude Ānanda somehow.
2. The thoughts existing in the *Tipiṭaka* can be divided in two major categories: forward-looking ideas and backward looking ideas. First was of Buddha's own words supported by Ānanda and his

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[*] *Dulvā* renders the opposite order. It says that "Mahākssapa decided that in the forenoon the *gathas* of the Sutras will be recited, and in the afternoon the Sūtanta, the Vinaya, and the Abhidharma will be taken into consideration. Then Bhikkhus asked which of the Sūtanta, the Vinaya and the Abhidharma would be collated first, and Mahākassapa decided that the Sūtanta should first receive their attention." The first Sutta Ānanda recited here is *Dharma Chakrapravartana Sutra*, not *Brahmajāla Sutta* like in Pāli tradition (Rockhill, 1975: 156-7).

followers and another of Mahākassapa and his followers. Ānanda's standpoint was liberal, democratic and based on equality of the caste and sex but the standpoint of Mahākassapa and his followers was orthodox, rigid, caste-minded and in the favour of male-domination. The roots of these two may be searched in the mindsets of participants of the First Buddhist Council.

3. *Tipiṭaka* despite being the most authentic source of comprehending the Buddha's teachings could not be saved from the large amount of stuff inserted by Mahākassapa and his like-minded monks. They were angry with Ānanda for his liberal attitude and after the Buddha's death they incorporated eight restrictions (*Aṭṭha Garudhamma*) on nuns and several derogatory remarks for women in the *Tipiṭaka* to make the status of nuns inferior to monks. The Buddhist monks of the same mindset could be successful in giving Buddhism a Brahmanical shape and sidelined the true followers of the Buddha in the later period.
4. The huge tree of schism, which appeared in the Second Buddhist Council, was already planted in the First Buddhist Council. These two should not be seen completely distinct from each other. The grand cause of the Second Buddhist Council was already existent in the First Buddhist Council in subtle form.

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HISTORY IN PHILOSOPHY, PHILOSOPHY BEYOND HISTORY: SWAMI VIVEKĀNANDA'S CURIOUS PREDICAMENT

Anirban Mukherjee

The manner in which we do Philosophy involves an extensive engagement with the history of ideas, the ideas which shape political and social institutions, and sometimes the engagement is with the idea of history and writing itself. Philosophy develops through and in that engagement. While doing Philosophy, the ideas being engaged with need not be necessarily treated in chronological sequences. It may help one's thirst for narrative to set ideas in temporal order positing one as evolving as a reaction to another. But that ordering may not be a necessary exercise and may not have the obvious benefits that it may have in another discipline. The chronology does not add to the worth of the idea, although it may help us to understand the motivations. Its history cannot justify an idea, though it could excuse the agents for being led by a certain idea at a certain point in time.

In doing Philosophy, one could just engage with ideas as if they were atemporal, ahistorical, as if they were not there before one thought of it or one heard of it; one could deal with an idea just as it appears to one. What I am suggesting is that this also could be a legitimate way of doing philosophy; I am not suggesting that this is the only way or one that I approve of.

If someone argues that the historical, as in the wider socio-cultural context, is important for judging the worth of an idea, one could retort that the way you grasp an idea blooms with all those aspects at the moment of *your* grasping of the idea. If we take an idea to be like an onion with all its scales, then your holding it, standing at a certain time and place also becomes an inseparable part of the description of the onion. One often thinks that it is the onion which stands for the idea and that one needs to unravel it gradually by showing the historical tinges curled up inside it. But

actually what one ends up doing is gradually getting the idea tinged with one's own idea of history, of what must have happened, of possibilities that one can conceive of. In carefully historicizing the past, one necessarily fails to realize the implications of this act of historicizing itself. One does follow methods to avoid such a trap. But the problem here is that it may not be possible to grasp the trappings of the present. Even in doing History what we end up doing is studying our present.

Another point to ponder is that in doing a study of the extensively available writings, some formal (meant for publication) and others informal (letters, lecture notes, conversations, and anecdotes), of a certain philosopher/writer, one is liable to *find* what one is looking for. So one has to be careful and even then one may fail oneself.

With this entire caveat, let me get to Swami Vivekānanda (1863-1902). Nehru applauds repeated stress on reason in Vivekānanda and stakes him as the link between India's past and present in his *Discovery of India*. How did Vivekānanda understand the relation between philosophy (a philosophy aspiring to timeless truth: *maha kaalik satya*) and history (in the sense of a certain time: *khaṇḍa kāl*)? How does time influence the reception of timeless truths? How could one access such truths? Is reason a suitable tool? And, what would be the status of the historical truths from a meta-historical plane? Vivekananda expresses his awareness about the import of history, and how every idea needs preparation, when he says:

> There come periods in the history of the human race when, as it were, whole nations are seized with a sort of world-weariness, when they find that all their plans are slipping between their fingers, that old institutions and systems are crumbling into dust, that their hopes are all blighted and everything seems to be out of joint (vol. 3: 156). [1]

> That you are here today to welcome one who went to Europe to preach Vedanta would have been impossible had not the materialism from Europe opened the way for it (vol. 3: 157).

Vivekananda's philosophy was deliberately historically grounded in the sense that he was reacting to his contemporary situation and recasting the philosophy of his own religion, viz. Hinduism along the discourse of 'being relevant'. This attempt at updating a belief system necessitates attributing certain significance to history. He was trying to contemporize while at the same time believing that the truth in Hinduism was timeless. He ordains, "Let us be as progressive as any nation that existed, and at the same time as faithful

and conservative towards our traditions as Hindus alone know how to be" (vol. 3: 174-5). One could resolve the seeming paradox here by stating that however timeless be the claims of the philosophico-religious position being propagated, the methods of communicating the message as well as the message *per se* would need tweaking as per the demands of the time. The crucial issue here is regarding the complexity and the viability of an exercise to do the tweaking at the surface level without affecting the essence of the thought presumed to be ahistorically true. The predicament for him was how to reconcile the pressures of the contemporary with the everlasting truth. History seeps in and influences the phrasing and the project of his praxis-oriented philosophy, the essence of which in the end has to be discovered as being beyond history.

Does having to reform take away from the timelessness? One has to argue that what needs reform is the misperception of the truth; the truth itself being timeless requires no alteration. Vivekananda projects himself as a reactionary, a radical, but only in the task of rediscovering the truth already in the system. Similar to many of the other reformers, he uses the strategy of connecting the present with the gems of the old hidden by a middle period of ignorance and ritualism. Vivekananda was aware that just connecting the present with the past was not enough as he had his reservations even about the then 'imagined past' which included the ills of the 'then present' like casteism. So the past had to be created not in terms of the prevalent imagination of the past but in terms of a certain reading of the authoritative texts.

Another argument for the timeless basis for changes, according to Vivekananda, is grounded in the belief that:

> Now a changing something can never be understood, without the idea of something unchanging; and if it be said that that unchanging something, to which the changing is referred is also a changing phenomenon only relatively unchanging, and is therefore to be referred to something else, and so on, we say that however infinitely long this series be, the very fact of our inability to understand a changeable without an unchangeable forces us to postulate one as the background of all the changeable (vol. 4: 382).

When is reform warranted? Reform implies a reformulation, the change in formulation, a shift to another formulation of the beliefs. The change is justified in terms of the felt unease with the contemporary way in which the belief system presents itself. There might be three kinds of people: those who feel the unease and want a change, those who feel the unease but are not ready to change and those who do not feel the unease. For the first category of

people, the felt unease is sufficient justification to reform. For the second category, the felt unease may not be a good enough reason; they would be ready to endure the unease for doing what they think is the right thing to do. This understanding of the right action or way of life is usually in accordance with their (or the dominant) reception of the authoritative text or the prevailing reading of the spirit of the tradition. Pointing out the contemporary deviations from the original message of the text or the original spirit of the tradition can be an argument in favour of reform in the belief system communicable to all three categories of people. Even the third category of people may be motivated to feel a sense of unease due to a reminder that their comfort with the present is not in line with the original message. This kind of move in reformulating a belief system requires, first, a discovery and a formulation of the original, or some might even argue an invention of the original, and secondly, suggesting reforms towards ways of being in conformity with that formulation.

On the other hand, Vivekananda might have been a reformer of the second order, propagating a more radical change in the very essence of his religion. He does float the idea of universal religion wherein all religions need to be accepted as true and not simply tolerated.[2] In tune with the talk of Universal religion go such statements as 'Truth alone is my God; the entire world is my country' (vol. 7: 193). Sometimes the aim seems narrower, that of dissolving the cracks among Hindus, a call for Brotherhood among all Hindus—Brahmins and chaṇḍāls and sometimes among all religions; at others, he says, 'Our main concern is his (i.e. Shri Ramkrishna's) religion. Let the Hindus call it Hindu religion – and let others similarly name it (what they like)' (vol. 7: 246-47). But in the end he is also reluctant and cautious about being too radical. He is always wary about how much can be achieved. He says, 'The history of the world teaches us that wherever there have been fanatical reforms, the only result has been that they have defeated their own ends' (vol. 3: 214) Vivekananda was quite convinced about the significance of the project of educating people about the need for reform. He says:

> The whole problem of social reform, therefore, resolves itself into this: where are those who want reform? Make them first. Where are the people? The tyranny of a minority is the worst tyranny that the world ever sees. A few men who think that certain things are evil will not make a nation move. ...even for social reform, the first duty is to educate the people, and you will have to wait till that time comes. Most of the reforms that have

> been agitated for during the past century have been ornamental. ...The question of widow marriage would not touch seventy per cent of the Indian women. (vol. 3: 216)

The other clash that worried Swami Vivekananda was the one between spirituality and reason in the discourse of being practical, an upshot of Utilitarianism. The contrast between spirituality and reason was also linked in his mind to the deeper predicament of being true to philosophy (timeless spiritual truths) or to history (the current, the then contemporary pressures of being rational, utility-oriented). This dichotomy, he reads at times, also as one between theorizing (rationalizing) and action (the zest to make a dent in history). In this dichotomy, he reads the tendency towards endless theorising unfavourably and calls for real effort to drag people out of suffering (through love and sympathy). According to him:

> Everybody can show what evil is, but he is the friend of mankind who finds a way out of the difficulty. ..."We have had lectures enough, societies enough, papers enough; where is the man who will lend us a hand to drag us out? Where is the man who really loves us? Where is the man who has sympathy for us?" Ay, that man is wanted (vol. 3: 215).

However, he is aware that in this duality between reason and spirituality, the application of reason and knowledge acquired through rational methods may seem to be more practical and scientific as opposed to the spiritual which gets tagged with/as Philosophy. In this discourse of being practical, he argues that there could be different views of life and being practical would then be graded according to the scales of those life worlds. Vivekananda in this tension between the ordinarily contradictory epithets of being practical and being spiritual proposes that being spiritual could be one of the most practical things to do for someone; that there are different ways to being practical, that being spiritual and being practical are not contraries. However, in doing so he often groups Hindus as spiritual, and Westerners as upholders of reason; setting himself/getting himself into that easy trap of colonizing discourse, becoming a representative of the mystic east, the irrational east.

> The Hindu is just as practical as the Western, only we differ in our views of life (vol. 2: 185).

> Your idea that only the West is practical is nonsense. You are practical in one way, and I in another. There are different types of men and minds (vol. 2: 187).

On the other hand, one could argue that Vivekananda actually is

aware of the trap, is cleverly challenging the discourse and initiating a talk about the politics of reason: the subtle ways in which certain pursuits are termed unreasonable, irrational. He, in a sense, confronts from within the discourse of being rational, the dichotomy of reason and spiritualism, and breaks it down by pointing out that the latter has its own rationality.

Another argument against the utilitarian branding of 'the struggle towards the infinite' as impracticable and absurd is through his connecting such pursuits with the possibility of being ethical. Vivekananda says:

> ...we cannot derive any ethical laws from considerations of utility. Without the supernatural sanction as it is called or the perception of the Superconscious... there can be no ethics... The Utilitarian wants us to give up the struggle after the Infinite, the reaching-out for the Supersensuous, as impracticable and absurd, and in the same breath, asks us to take up ethics and do good to society. Why should we do that? (vol. 2: 63)

Now what constitutes Vivekananda's kind of spirituality is a thirst of the spirit to know the why of everything and this he thinks cannot be achieved ultimately by science which deals with the manifestations rather than with the deeper unity, the *raison d'etre* of life.

> Generally all knowledge is divided into two classes, the aparā, secular, and the parā, spiritual. One pertains to perishable things, and the other to the realm of spirit...this difference is one of degree and not of kind. It is not that secular and spiritual knowledge are two opposite and contradictory things...they are the same knowledge in its different stages of gradual development. This one infinite knowledge. We call secular when it is in its lower process of manifestation and spiritual when it reaches to corresponding higher phases (vol. 4: 433)

> I must know the heart of this life, its very essence, what it is, not only how it works and what are its manifestations. I want the why of everything ... It is good and great to be scientific, God bless them in their search; but when a man says that is all, he is talking foolishly, not caring to know the raison d'etre of life, never studying existence itself (vol. 2: 186)

The difference between reason and realisation, as conceived by him, is again another formulation of the difference between history-determined philosophy and a timeless truth-giving-philosophy, a difference between *ānvikshiki* and *darṣan* (seeing). He is unable to let go of the former and yet aspires to the latter. The justification of the first, i.e. reason is in its preparatory role for the second i.e. realisation to take place. He says, in the mould of Wittgenstein of

Tractatus Logico Philosophicus, how reason can take us only to a certain point; Wittgenstein refers to his book as the ladder which has to be let go and in understanding the book you discover it to be meaningless. Vivekananda says that the ultimate truth cannot be achieved through reason, but has to be realised, experienced. 'The intellect is only the street-cleaner, cleansing the path for us'. (vol. 2: 306) This is also the strategy of Advaita Vedanta.

> Talking is one thing, and realising is another. Philosophies, and doctrines, and arguments, and books, and theories, and churches, and sects, and all these things are good in their own way; but when that realisation comes, these things drop away. For instance, maps are good, but when you see the country itself, and look again at the maps, what a great difference you find! So those that have realised truth do not require the ratiocinations of logic and all other gymnastics of the intellect to make them understand the truth (vol. 2: 284).

> Suppose you have seen a country, and another man comes to you and tries to argue with you that that country never existed, he may go on arguing indefinitely, but your only attitude of mind towards him must be to hold that the man is fit for a lunatic asylum (vol. 2: 285).

> Do you not know from the history of the world where the power of the prophets lay? Where was it? In the intellect? Did any of them write a fine book on philosophy, on the most intricate ratiocinations of logic? Not one of them. They only spoke a few words. Feel like Christ and you will be a Christ; feel like Buddha and you will be a Buddha. It is feeling that is the life, the strength, the vitality, without which no amount of intellectual activity can reach God (vol. 2: 307).

The tendency in much of Vivekananda's writing as well as writings on him is to somehow accommodate these different radical strands within the broad sweep of his kind of Advaita Vedanta Philosophy, upon which he tries to re-establish Hinduism. The general understanding of Vivekananda's message comes out as a call back to Vedanta; to the original message of the Vedas which form the cornerstone of Hinduism. By instituting the Vedas as the essential and timeless truth, he goes on to find a way out of his predicament of being in history, being receptive to the demands of the contemporary as well as sticking on to the ageless and eternal. According to him:

> There are two sorts of truth we find in our Shastras, one that is based upon the eternal nature of man-the one that deals with the eternal relation of God, soul, and nature; the other, with local circumstances, environments

> of the time, social institutions of the period, and so forth. The first class of truths is chiefly embodied in our Vedas, our scriptures; the second in the Smritis, the Puranas, etc. (vol. 3: 173)
>
> ...the Vedas being eternal will be one and the same throughout all ages, but the Smritis will have an end. As time rolls on, more and more of the Smritis will go, sages will come, and they will change and direct society into better channels, into duties and into paths which accord with the necessity of the age, and without which it is impossible that society can live...
>
> In plain words, we have first to learn the distinction between the essentials and the non-essentials in everything. The essentials are eternal, the non-essentials have value only for a certain time; and if after a time, they are not replaced by something essential, they are positively dangerous (vol. 3: 174-75).

At the very core of Vivekananda's ability to balance the demands of the historical and the philosophical is the distinction between the *vyavahārikā* (historical) and the *pāramārthikā* (transcendental) levels of knowledge present in Vedanta. However, unlike the *Vedāntin*s, who believe that the *vyāvaharikā* is *māyā* and non-existent from the *paramārthikā* level, Vivekananda believes that *Maya* is not unreal, but a fact about the nature of the world and its contradictions. The *Vedanta* dictum- *Jagat mithyā* is usually translated as 'world is illusory, unreal'; however Vivekananda interprets *mithyā* as temporal, changing, not as unreal.

> ...Maya is not a theory for the explanation of the world: it is simply a statement of facts as they exist, that the very basis of our being is contradiction... that wherever there is good, there must also be evil ... life and death, smile and weeping (Jnāna Yoga: 64).
>
> This eternal play of light and darkness – indiscriminate, indistinguishable, inseparable – is always there ... this is a statement of fact and this is what is called Māyā (vol. 2: 112).

If we try to understand his search for the experience of God which got him to Sri Ramkrishna, his initial skepticism, his, in a sense, wanting to verify the existence of God, empirically, are desires difficult to connect with Vedanta's view of *Brahman*. God is conceived as reality from a religious point of view, metaphysically it is absolute *Brahman*; for the Advaitins God is *Maya*, with *Pāramārthika dṛśti* it disappears; but for Vivekananda, ultimately the distinction between them is dissolved. We should remember that Vivekananda had flirted

with Brahmoism and its *nirākārvāda*, founded on the principles of Advaita Vedanta, without satisfaction before he encountered Ramkrishna. Ramkrishna, his own eccentricities notwithstanding, on the other hand, was a priest posted at Rani Rashmoni-supported Dakshineswar temple, following a regular version of Hindu ritualistic practices, engaging in idolatry and, in fact, reporting to have viewings of the Goddess Kali. Vivekananda found Ramkrishna initially searching for the experience of God, of seeing God and gradually moved from idol worship to realization of *Nirvikāra Parabrahma* through meditation. Hence, he went on to condemn those reformers who denounced idol worship. He says, 'Brothers if you are fit to worship God without form discarding all external help, do so, but why do you condemn others who cannot do the same?' (vol. 3: 460) He keeps maintaining the reality of the religious as well as the metaphysical Beings: the god as well as the *Brahman* through the ultimate experience of their non-duality. In this way the truth of common religious experience is protected.

Vivekananda sees religion as central to the Indian consciousness and the best way of communicating even progressive ideas to an audience immersed in poverty, discrimination and lack of education and other opportunities. He says, 'Each nation has a main current in life, in India it is religion' (vol. 4: 372-73). He understands religion as a supplementary discourse to that of science. He says:

> The English can understand even religion through politics. The American can understand even religion through social reform. But the Hindu can understand even politics when it is given through religion; everything must come through religion (vol. 3: 314).
>
> In India, religion is the only ground along which we can move, everything must come through religion. For that is the theme, the rest are the variations in the national life music (vol. 3: 314).

With that realization of the centrality of religion and urge to use the selfless practitioners of religion, the *sannyasins*, for inclusive and egalitarian goals, Vivekananda formulates practical Vedanta which mixes the craving for social work with the world-transcending views of Advaita Vedanta. Vivekananda himself, in addition to his spiritual/religious inclinations, was also deeply disturbed by the material condition of people in India; the extreme poverty that he came across in his travels across India moved him. Hence, the reform that he aims for is not a mere doctrinal reformulation but a reform in the way in which religion connects to and improves the life of people, not just in a spiritual sense, but also in a material sense. It is

this social work oriented 'constructive' approach to reforms that he claims as distinctive of his project. He says:

> That is where I differ entirely from these reform movements. For a hundred years, they have been here. What good has been done except the creation of a most vituperative, a most condemnatory literature?' (vol. 3: 215)

In another context, he lauds certain earlier Hindu reformers like Shankara, Ramanuja, Madhva and Chaitanya as 'constructive ...according to the circumstances of their time'. And then he goes on to add that 'All the modern reformers take to European destructive reformation, which will never do good to anyone and never did...' (vol. 5: 217)

Vivekananda was also agitated by the deep contradiction between valuing the material and the spiritual aspects of life inherent in the popular discourse of religions. He says, 'We talk foolishly against material civilization. The grapes are sour' (vol. 4: 368). He developed a particular dislike for valorizing asceticism and lack in the human situation.

> I do not believe in a God, who cannot give me bread here, giving me eternal bliss in heaven...India is to be raised, the poor are to be fed, education is to be spread, and the evil of preistcraft is to be removed (vol. 4: 368).

Vivekananda was born Narendranath Dutta in an elite Bengali lawyer family of Calcutta with cross-cultural connections; but by the time he finished college his father had died and his family suddenly had become impoverished. Even while taking up the life of a *sannyasin* at the behest of Ramkrishna he was always worried about the financial upkeep of his family. He was directly aware, in a sense, of how important it is to be materially well placed in order to be comfortable on the road to spirituality and higher realizations. He does subscribe to the material/spiritual as features of the west/east civilizations dichotomy and understands the mode of exchange in terms of that dichotomy. In fact, one of the chief motivations for his taking on his journey to America was one of collecting money to work for the ambitions he had set up for himself here in India.

> A nation which is great in the possession of material power thinks that that is all to be coveted, that that is all meant by progress... On the other hand, another nation may think that mere material civilization is utterly useless... The present adjustment will be the harmonizing, the mingling of these two ideals. (vol. 4: 155)

I may conclude by pointing out that at every point in Vivekananda

there is this insistence on sustaining the reality of both the historical as well as the transcendental, to keep history in philosophy and yet have at the core a philosophy which is beyond history. He says that 'Man is man so long as he is struggling to rise above nature, and this nature is both internal and external' (vol. 2: 64-65). Although Vivekananda understands human existence in terms of this striving towards the transcendental, a-historical, he remains reluctant to neglect the reality of the daily grind. His philosophy connects the Non-dualist Vedanta of the Brahmos, the devotional insight of Sri Ramkrishna with his own social concerns. His prescription allows for timely interventions in conformity with the ideals of timeless truths.

Vivekananda tends to accommodate in his writings many of the apparently contrary practices of idolatry with a belief in formless *Brahman*, a spiritual quest with a concern for the material, a demand for reason with an ultimate spin achieved through realization. The tone in which Vivekananda talks varies depending on the audience, on whether he is speaking in India or to a western audience; when speaking to an Indian audience, he is much more critical of the ills in the then Hindu society and practices; while in the west he is deliberately silent about those. He mentions it being unwise and pointless to wash one's dirty linen among strangers.

Vivekananda is chiefly concerned with the aim of religion as leading to realization of *Brahman*, with the failings of practiced religion, more so of his own religion, Hinduism, and yet someone who has immense faith in the regenerative power latent in Hinduism (sometimes he also refers to it problematically as Hindu race (*Hindu jāti*) or Hindu Civilization (*Hindu Sabhyatā*)). In other contexts, he does talk equally strongly about accepting other religions as other paths to truth and countering sectarianism. He sees the Indian civilization as essentially religious and is hesitant to go for radical reforms; he, in fact, takes on as his project one of revitalizing the religious through appeal to a discourse of reason and trying to connect religion with social service in a bid to make material change in the lives of people. Due to the presence of such *contraries* which Vivekananda nevertheless manages to blend in his thinking, he remains relevant in Indian psyche and politics open to being co-opted by a Gandhi as well as a Subhash Bose, or in the contemporary by the secular as well as the Hindu right wing. There are bits in him that each conveniently find and use.

NOTES

1. References in this article are to *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vols. 1-9, Calcutta, Advaita Ashrama, 1989-1997.
2. 'I believe in acceptance. Why should I tolerate? Toleration means that I think you are wrong and I am just allowing you to live' (vol. 2: 374).

LANGUAGE ENDANGERMENT: THE FATE OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES (A THEORETICAL APPROACH)

Meti Mallikarjun

INTRODUCTION

Language loss has been a reality throughout the history. But the irony is, the loss of language is of no great moment either for science or for human intellectual life. It is very evident that these ideas are very wrong and that language loss is a serious matter or it is a socio-cultural shock. However, it is often heard that many of the native languages which are seriously imperilled across the world.

Language shift is defined as the process by which members of a community, in which more than one language is spoken, abandon their original language in favour of another (Tsunoda 2004). Here is an attempt to understand something about the death of indigenous languages and culture as a historical process and sociolinguistic perceptions of language endangerment in India. Language shift and death have long been a topic of discussion among sociolinguists, linguists, language planners, educators and others. The result has been an extensive literature on the causes, processes, symptoms and results of language loss and death (Denison 1977; Dorian 1977, 1980, 1981, 1987, 1989; Gal 1978; Skutnabb-Kangas 2000).

Primarily, language shift is defined as the switch of L_1 and L_2. After that primary language shift, a dominant second language is used in most domains of life, instead of the mother tongue. The switch from one's mother tongue to another language in most domains is, according to Sasse (1992:10-13), always triggered by some change in the external setting, in the environment of a linguistic community. Part of that change in the external setting is a new or changed contact between the linguistic community that shifts from its traditional mother tongue to the language of other linguistic and cultural community. As a result of new sociolinguistic

contact, there will be a change in the attitudes towards their mother tongue. Their mother tongues are restricted to very few domains i.e. home domain.

The dominant language is predominantly used in all the other functional domains in which the mother tongue was supposed to be used earlier. In this is a process, where languages are at extinction. It can be said that linguistic groups that have become minorities because of their politico-economic and cultural subordination. This condition is a final stage of language death. But it is very interesting, linguistic group that has sprung up in response to the challenges posed by the erosion of the world's linguistic diversity.

This paper goes on to analyze some of the issues and dilemmas confronted by minorities, the crisis in the context of the Indian situation, paying special attention to the challenges are confronting by indigenous languages. These challenges may lead more ethical and more relevant research. Each case raises a different question therefore, Indian case has to situate separately, that can't be generalized based on models that are available outside India. India is extraordinary for its linguistic and cultural diversity. According to official estimates, the country is home to at least 400 distinct tongues, but many experts believe the actual number is probably around 700. But, in a scenario replicated around the globe, many of India's languages are at risk of dying out. The effects could be culturally devastating. Each language is like a key that can unlock local knowledge about medicinal secrets, ecological wisdom, weather and climate patterns, spiritual attitudes, and artistic and mythological histories. Efforts to save minority languages from extinction and foster a deep sense of community may compel to develop a stringent language policy for minorities. It is felt that unless drastic measures are taken to preserve and promote them, all minority languages might be abandoned in favour of dominant languages in the next century. It is already discussed that throughout human history, the languages of powerful groups have spread while the languages of smaller cultures have become extinct. This occurs through official language policies or through the allure that the high prestige of speaking the dominant language can bring.

These trends explain, for instance, why more language diversity exists in India than in the entire world, which has a long history of large states and imperial powers. It is necessary to discuss the relevant theoretical issues regarding language death in terms of the following aspects:

1. What it means to be an endangered (or extinct) language, how

a language becomes endangered and how it can be saved. It is also addressed, what the loss of a language can mean, both for a culture and for the field of linguistics.

2. Can it be said that linguistic groups that have become minorities because of their politico- economic subordination lack a historical context?
3. Is language shifting a language loss?
4. Is language endangerment a politicized discourse?

Language Endangerment: How? Where? Why?

"A language is endangered when its speakers are using it in fewer and fewer communicative domains and/or are ceasing to pass it on from one generation to the next. Language endangerment may be the result of external developments and policies (whether military, economic, religious, cultural, or educational), or it may be caused by internal factors, such as a community's negative attitude towards its own language" (UNESCO, 2000, p. 9). On the other hand, Michael Cahill has said, "A language is endangered when it is in fairly imminent danger of dying out". He gives two ways to quickly recognize when a language is on its way to death: when the children in the community are not speaking the language of their parents and when there are only a small number of people left in the ethno-linguistic community. David Crystal has written on language death and gives the following common reasons why we should care for language (ibid.: 27-66):

1. Linguicide – when a ruling group forbids the subjugated group to use their own language
2. Genocide – when a dominant ethnic group deliberately tries to annihilate another ethnic group
3. Natural disaster – tidal wave, severe earthquake, disastrous famine, or a measles epidemic could wipe out a group of people
4. Displacement – breaking up of the language community
5. Socioeconomic – simply being overwhelmed by the encroaching industrialized world. The main reasons for language death today seem to be as much economic as anything.

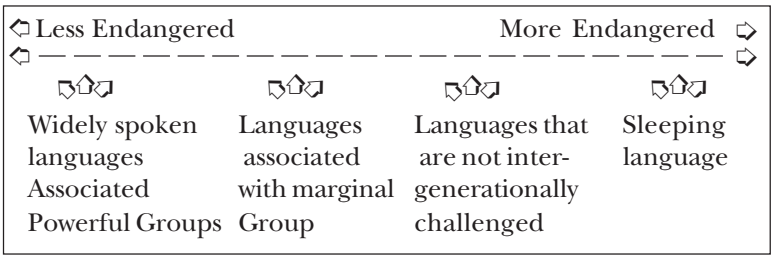
Language vitality has been evaluated from different angles. It could be defined as a measure of the lifespan of using a language or it

could also be defined as the ability a language to meet the societal needs of language users. When language vitality is less, it could lead to language shift or language death. Home and community domains are considered as the strongholds of the traditional language. Fasold (1984: 240) points out that one of the earliest signs of language shifts is the advance of one language into domains that used to be retained in the old. Language vitality refers to the overall strength of a language and the possibility of continuing it through the coming generations.

Why does a particular language pose a threat to the maintenance of another language? It is a very important question in order to evaluate the Indian linguistic situation. But the cases of language endangerment and loss are probably as old as the contact between human communities. This occurs because of unequal socioeconomic, political and technological status. However, the real issues are the confrontation between majority and minority languages. The role of language in education and other functional domains is decided by the privileged class/community. The dogmatic rigidity in claiming privileges and parity of their (different) language selection is also responsible factor in language shift/death (Khubchandani 1984a: 42-68). In fact, language shift among these societies occurs more often due to social and political compulsions (Burdhan 1973). It is often argued that language shift is a sociocultural integration/ diversity. On the other hand, Doshi (1972: 462-63) described it in a different way, "It rejects the claim that language shift indicates the process of integration; rather than it shows the process of assimilation of people into majority cultural group". Many linguists have developed the different hypothesis in order to understand the various levels of language endangerment process. For example, Krauss categorizes in the following ways:

1. Moribund – This refers to languages that are not being taught to children as their $L_{1.}$ Unless something changes, moribund languages will cease to be spoken within a generation.
2. Endangered – languages are those that are currently still being learned by children, but that will no longer be taught to children within the century.
3. Safe – languages are those that are neither moribund nor endangered — they are currently being learned by children and are safe from extinction, for the time being at least.

Many a times, the term 'endangerment' is perceived in both terms of endangered and moribund. Contrary to Krauss, Leonard uses the concept "extinct", which is commonly referred to understand that language is no longer used by its speakers. His intention is to understand this linguistic situation in terms of organism, because an extinct species will never have a chance to resurrect themselves. Whereas, languages can be revitalized, if not all, few can be done. However, further, Leonard explains it schematically:



THE DEATH OF SANSKRIT: A CONTINUATION OF SOCIOLINGUISTIC HEGEMONY

From a global perspective, the trend is the same, many smaller languages are dying out due to the spread of a few world languages such as English, French, Chinese, etc. (Romaine 1989: 39) There are many pitfalls in trying to generalize on a global scale about what causes for language attrition. As it is discussed above, there are many reasons for language shift and language death. Most studies of language shift have looked at a community's transition to the new language. But, in the case of Indian context, dealing with language endangerment is a problematic one. It is very subtle and complex phenomenon. It can't be analyzed based on western modals alone. However, it can be argued differently. The language of Cosmopolis, i.e. Sanskrit (Sheldon Pollock), plays a very important role in India in the process of language shift/loss. We have always been aware of the ambience of many languages in our environment. Many languages are alive in our environment and we have always perhaps switched from one language into another unconsciously (Ananthamurthy 2009). The 'ecologist' perspective — is a useful focus for linguists who call for measures to reverse this trend of language shift. If we value biological diversity and strive to protect it, surely it is equally important to take moral responsibility for the conservation and development of linguistic diversity.

"The status of Sanskrit is an instance of this — for close to a

thousand years, this prestigious language was the chief vehicle of the (exclusionary and undemocratic) transmission of knowledge; however, today it is this language, rather than the less prestigious Prakrits, that is dead. As Sanskrit-speaking ruling classes could only capture the public domain, the centuries of its dominance had no permanently crippling effect on the less prestigious Indo-Aryan, Austro-Asiatic and Dravidian languages that flourished alongside it" (Ayesha Kidwai: 2008). This Sanskrit is still alive implicitly spreading across India into the languages and cultures. So Sanskrit did not die. It grew, it developed and it gradually split into Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, and the other Indo-Aryan languages, to some extent, Dravidian languages too, and it is still with us under those guises. There's something a bit odd about lamenting the death of Sanskrit language when it has in fact taken off like this. Given the existence of modern Indo-Aryan, why be upset that Indians don't speak Sanskrit? Speaking Indo-Aryan pays homage to their Hindu-Vedic heritage, without requiring them to have frozen their culture as it was in one place and time. Thus, language shift involves bilingualism (often with diglossia) as a stage on the way to monolingualism in a new language. For example, Hindi has got several dialects, Bhojpuri, Maithili, Awadhi so on and so forth. The fact is, these varieties of Hindi have never been used in the domains like education, administration, massmedia, literature (there may be some exceptions) and other public domains. The Sanskritized Hindi, i.e. Khariboli took over their place. This new avatar of Sanskrit is the revitalization of old Sanskrit. It also rejects the claim that Sanskrit is the dead language. Standardization is nothing but Sanskritization of the Indian languages, it is not a new practice, and it has been there throughout the history i.e. sanskritizing the nation. In my opinion, when Mahatma Gandhiji suggested, making Hindustani as an official link language, instead of Hindi, there was a lot of resistance to it. Hindustani is a combination of Hindi and Urdu, in which Sanskrit had no place. If Hindustani were in the place of Hindi in contemporary situation,it would have been a definite shift for dehegemonizing the hegemonic structures of Sanskrit.

Sanskrit established a clear-cut dichotomy among Indian languages like *marga* (the world of Sanskrit) and *deshi* (indigenous languages). This can be dealt with reference to Kannada. Unfortunately these dichotomies are used as the qualifying characteristics of a standardized variety of languages, which results in the creation of vernaculars (i.e. Native Languages) and Cosmopolis

(i.e. Sanskrit). U.R. Ananthamurthy (2009) describes it in an optimistic way, vernacular has always had its advantage and use despite the power of the language of Cosmopolis – Sanskrit in the past and English in our times. It is very evident that it is a kind of prevailing sociolinguistic hegemony on Kannada language and culture. It can't be considered as an advantage.

There has been a strong resistance throughout the history of Kannada language and culture in order to dehegemonize Sanskrit. As a result, the sociolinguistic hybridity has been developed by our various poets through their work. For example great Kannada poets like Pampa, Andayya, Nayashena, Kumaravyasa and Vachanakaras (mystic poets), by combining, *marga* and *deshi*, is also a kind of resistance to the Sanskritized Kannada. The concept of 'hybridity' is important in understanding the multiplicity of language practice. "This concept is inspired by the work of Bakhtin (1981) on the hybridity of the dialogue of languages, by Anzaldu'a (1987) on the hybridity of being the 'borderlands' and by Bhabha (1994) on the hybridity of the postcoloniality" (Ofelia Garcia 2009: 33). As in views of Mohanty, "it is precisely this hybridity of language practices that is responsible for the maintenance of the many languages of the Indian subcontinent" (2009: 34). This fluidity in multilingual interaction demonstrates that different cultures have different ideas about the integrity of their own group in relation to outsiders. If speakers of minority language manage to find an ecological niche in the majority community which is conducive to language maintenance, they may have a better chance of survival.

In many (minority) languages there are competing pressures towards (re)vernacularization and (re) standardization, which have their origin in the competition between the school and home varieties. There has always been tension between standard dialect and other regional/caste dialects. The standardization and modernization, these two tendencies which are greatly affected indigenous languages in terms of their structural and functional loss. Bernadett Biro and Katalin Sipocz, are identifying language shift in two types of linguistic processes such as; functional loss and structural loss. When a language shift takes place in any speech community in India that obviously affects the functional loss of a language and structural loss as well; the former means there is a decrease in functional use of a language in thevarious domains, whereas later one refers to the changes that are occurring in the structure of a given language in the process of a language shift. Due to the linguistic hegemony and cultural dominance of Sanskrit

on Indian languages, all our indigenous languages are suffering from both functional loss and structural loss. The attitudes of Sanskrit towards the other Indian majority/minority languages can also play a decisive role in a language shift. As far as functional aspect is concerned, a necessary condition for the survival of the indigenous languages, but language shift would bediminishing of its functions. As far as the structural side of language shift is concerned, we can only sketch tendencies based on data provided by some case studies (e.g. B.P. Pandit, Sourashtrasi in Tamil Nadu, D.N.S. Bhat's on Kannada).

As if the provincial languages are conspiring against the India unity (U.N. Singh: 1992), Suniti Kumar Chatterji (1943: 3) made a statement such as, "we feel that we ought to have a common language for the whole of India as symbol of common Indian Nationality". A similar opinion was held by the language planning commission in 1957, which is discussed by Sumathi Ramaswamy (2007: 344) in her paper: "It is clear, however, from the report submitted by the Commission a year later, in November 1957, that it saw its task as being more than just pedagogical, for at stake was the very survival of the emerging nation. The Commission was fiercely anxious about 'the growing fissiparous tendencies and linguistic parochialism which are jeopardizing the political unity of the country and are rocking the very foundations of our freedom'." A decade of linguistic jealousy and bitterness had marred the joys of independence; there had been much squabbling within the nation over state boundaries and territories; and Hindi, the proposed official language of India, had been found unacceptable by large numbers of its people. Everywhere, 'regionalism' and 'linguism' were on the rise. The Commission's solution to these problems was clear-cut: to put Indians on a good and steady diet of Sanskrit by making its study compulsory in schools, and by instituting it as the official language of the nation. Sanskrit was ideally suited for this role, for it was the "Supreme Unifier" (ibid.: 201) and the "Great Unifying Force" (ibid.: p. 81). "The Indian people and the Indian civilization were born ... in the lap of Sanskrit" (ibid.: 85). It is "in our blood" (ibid.: 81). It is "the breath of our nostrils and the light of our eyes" (ibid.: 87). Mixing its metaphors, the Commission also variously described Sanskrit as "the bedrock" of Indian existence, the "main thread which runs through the entire fabric of the cultural life of an Indian" (ibid.: 102), and the anchor that keeps the youth of India from losing their "cultural moorings" (ibid.: 51). "If the binding force of Sanskrit (is) taken away, the people of India would

cease to feel that they were part of a single culture and a single nation" (ibid.: 70). So, by restoring Sanskrit back to its citizens, the nation, too, would be restored, and its troubled waters calmed. In Sanskrit, it was declared, brings a "symphony to our life" (ibid.: 84). These views signify the linguistic chauvinism and fanatical attitudes towards Sanskrit and its religion. In my opinion, they are merely slogans and emotional bursts. It is quite true; they are also conspiring to establish the hegemony of Sanskrit with the sanction of India Constitution. Even otherwise, the continuity of Sanskrit is spread across the other Indian languages and cultures in terms linguistic structure, functional usages and imbibed in cultural practices. This is to be considered a greater damage to all the indigenous languages of the Indian subcontinent.

Language Policy: The fate of indigenous languages

Language policy plays a very vital role in the building of a nation. A nation is not a single entity. Plurilingualism and pluriculturalism are the qualifying characters of a nation like India. Languages are equal, yet language hierarchies prevail. The fact is that not all languages have equal access of having their languages/varieties in education (Ofelia Garcia, 2009, Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009). However, it is often felt, managing multilingualism in India has become a big task. Though there are constitutional privileges are extended for sustaining linguistic multiplicities, many a timesthey are only in principle. But in reality, these safeguards are not implemented properly in order to achieve their goals. There is also accumulating evidence that language policy and language education can serve as vehicles for promoting the vitality, versatility, and stability of these languages (Phillipson, 1992). Thus, this paper considers the role of language policy and language rights in education and revitalization efforts, taking up cases of indigenous languages and their vitality into consideration. However, the Indian Constitution provides many guarantees and safeguards for linguistic and religious minorities, besides overall promoting a multilingual India:

I. Article 29 enshrines a commitment to the maintenance of India's linguistic diversity: "Any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same."
II. Article 30 guarantees minorities the right to develop and

propagate these languages (and their speakers) through education: "All minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice."

III. Article 350A provides for instruction in their own mother tongues at the primary stage of education to children belonging to the linguistic minorities: "It shall be the endeavour of every State, and of every local authority within the State, to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother-tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups; and the President may issue such directions to any State as he considers necessary or proper for securing the provision of such facilities."

IV. Articles 345 and 120 seek to promote governance that is multilingual. Article 345 leaves a State free, through its legislature,to adopt Hindi or any language used in its territory as its official language(s). Article 120 permits member(s) to use his/her mother tongue within the Indian Parliament.

These constitutional guarantees are relevant to foster India's linguistic diversity. At the same time, they also ensure that preserving sociolinguistic pluralities of heterogeneous speech communities of India is an assurance of the protection of human rights. These provisions also uphold the socio-cultural values and ethno-linguistic vitalities. Even though this has very serious consequences in education, "as the smaller a language, the more likely it is to be dismissed as 'primitive' and incapable of further development so that it may come to bear the weight of modern human knowledge and intellectual discourse. Responding to this implicit classification, speakers therefore 'choose' not to access education in their mother tongue(s), because that choice will disadvantage them in the not-so-long run" (Kidwai, 2008: 2). This argument proves that people who belong to tribal/minority communities will never have a chance to choose their choice. Language rights may be a necessary condition to spread primary education in India to improve quality of life, to build human capital and ensure rapid economic growth. While supporting the minority languages, it is necessary to consider the way in which and the purposes for which they are used that are crucial for maintenance of minority languages. The laws may ignore or subverted by the state on some administrative, financial or political reasoning, which is made possible by the way laws are formulated so

as to permit administrative laxity and contingencies (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1998). This can be made very clear by looking at three-language formula and its paradoxical stands also. As it is discussed, "Education holds the key to development and progress. Therefore, in multilingual India, language is the defining criterion for the evolution of societal growth. The three-language formula was a strategy to cover all linguistic groups in the country" (Bayer J.M., 2005: 21). The main problems in the implementation of three-language formula are found to be the following:

I. The formula does not provide a place for such mother tongues that are different from regional languages.
II. There is a dissonance between the Constitutional directive to use mother tongue in primary education (Article 350 A) and the languages prescribed in Three Language Formula (TLF) (National Policy on Education: 1968, 1986), particularly as the first language in schools.
III. It does not allow flexibility in the choice of language and gives primacy to the interests of the State ignoring the interests of individuals.
IV. It does not address to the problem of offering classical languages of choice.
V. The motivation assumed in TLF for learning Modern Indian Languages (MIL) by students in the Hindi States is inadequate (quoted from Jennifer Marie Bayer, 2005: 21).

Is Multilingualism stable in India?

How do we implement the Constitutional Provisions of protecting language rights of the minority and minority language speakers? In what way we match between home language and school language? The home languages are important, as primary education up to the age of 14 is free and compulsory. How the language planning and language policy are to be designed? What are the ways and means we have to find out in order to protect the sociolinguistic plurality of India? In multilingual India, language is the defining criteria for the evolution of societal growth.

In raising these questions, I have in my mind that multilingualism is a fundamental value in today's world. Preserving and maintaining the core values, cultural entities, ethnic identities and linguistic diversities of Indian multilingualism is a very big challenge. The

several reasons are responsible for this crisis. Due to the socio-political developments, Indian multilingualism has changed in its nature. The traditional Indian multilingualism was a combination of mother tongue, (i.e. tribal/ethnic language) regional language (i.e. Kannada in Karnataka, Tamil in Tamil Nadu, etc.) and link language or whatsoever. But what sort of multilingualism, we have in India today? Thus, is multilingualism stable in India? This question remains without an answer. Apart from constitutional provisions, language rights, education and economic benefits, we are still in a dilemma, what is a stable bi/multilingualism? Therefore, we have to give up the slogan that "bi/multilingualism is a norm but monolingualism is an exception in India". Of course, I do agree, almost every Indian is a bi/multilingual in India. My contention is bi/multilingualism is not stable India; it is constantly changing in its nature.

As in the table, it is shown, the 1991 Census concludes that the "Languages" spoken in India number 114, even though the raw data of language names collected by its enumerators totalled 10,400. The 2001 Census, on the other hand, from the much smaller set of 6,661 raw language names returned, arrives at a figure of 122.

As a consequence of the decision to include only those languages that have more than 10,000 claimants, many tribal languages simply vanish, given that *adivasi* and North-East tribal communities are small (together they constitute a mere 2.1% of India's population). Moreover, disparate languages end up as grouped under one Language. For example, more than 50 languages, including Chhattisgarhi, Bhojpuri and Garhwali, are grouped under the Language Hindi, even though 33,099,497 Bhojpuri speakers, 13,260,186 Chhattisgarhi speakers and 2,267,314 Garhwali speakers told the Census enumerators that they do *not* speak Hindi. Maithili speakers, however, strike it rich: the 2001 Census lists it as a Language for the first time in three decades – but this is only because their

Table: From Raw Language Returns to Languages

Census	Languages Returned	Languages after Rationalization	Mother tongues after classification	Languages
2001	6,661	1635	122	234
1991	10,400	1576	216	114

Sources: Ayesha Kidwai, 'Managing multilingual India', *The Marxist*, Volume XXIV, No. 2: April-June 2008

language was included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution in 2003 (Kidwai, 2008).

Standardization, Modernization and Diglossia: The status of linguistic diversity

Tribal languages and other minority languages do not institutionally support for their communicative functions. And also, they have no written literary tradition and no access to technology and science. In any of these domains, equal potential and access does not extend to them. Language revitalization and maintenance are and have always been politicallysanctioned. Because language policies are always discriminatory, favouring to some privileged class/ communities. It is quite true that constitutional support and rights are extended to them in order to maintain their languages. Practically, they are not in favour of minority languages. The possibility of recasting the communities' interests and perspectives is never taken into consideration in order to achieve their aspirations.

"The processes at work in standardization and hierarchies of styles and genres also give rise to what Bourdieu calls legitimization and authorization. Both these turn on how language is socially evaluated. Legitimacy is accorded to selected ways of speaking or writing in that they are recognized by other producers, by the dominant classes and by mass audiences" (Bourdieu 1991, p. 331; Garnham, 1993). Differences in social and economic position tend to be reproduced in unequal knowledge of legitimate language, which in turn reinforces constraints an access to power. However, censorship, authorization and the reinforcement of the dominant languages are all traceable to the pervasive effects of power (Gal & Irvine, 1997; Lind storm, 1992).

Standardization and modernizationis a politicized discourse. "Standardization of languages can be regarded as a legitimizing activity expanding its institutional order through a 'programmed course' in socialization" (Berger and Luckmann, 1966, quoted by U.N. Singh 1992).

According to Fishman (1974), "the social context of language modernization is most commonly discussed in terms of (a) the growing identification with the standard version of the national language on the part of the general public, (b) the increased accessibility of all varieties within the speech community, (c) the more rapid diffusion of linguistic innovations and status markers, resulting in repertoire continuity rather than discontinuity across

classes" (p. 345-46). This linguistic inequality leads to the mismatch between home and school languages. This tendency reinforces to neglect the mother tongues of the tribe and minorities as well. As a consequence, linguistic assimilation takes place, in turn; this forces the tribal/ minority children into subtractive language learning in a form of submersion education in the dominant language. Institutions like education must promote mother tongue education in the multilingual situation.

Fishman (1971) divides all the multilingual developing nations into three clusters: nations with several Great Traditions, nations with one Great Tradition and nations with none (quoted by H.R. Dua: *Hegemony of English*). Sanskrit took over every tradition into its account, considering that there is only one great tradition in India. As a result, Sanskrit is considered the only language of knowledge, philosophy, literature, great tradition and resource of vocabulary. Due to its monistic attitude, it imposed its monistic realities on all other indigenous languages. As a consequence, linguistic homogeneity was developed instead of sociolinguistic heterogeneity. It is another way of levelling the diversities and nullifying them in the domains of socio-cultural milieus. The knowledge systems and intellectual diversity were also integrated into Sanskrit tradition.

Characterizing linguistic codes in terms of 'High' and 'Low' is another way of differentiating sociolinguistic and cultural hierarchy. This dichotomy is linguistically called as Diglossia. It is not only a linguistic reality, but also a sociolinguistic attitude. Primary speech varieties with localized or restricting domains as 'Low' (i.e. colloquial Kannada) and superposed varieties enjoying access wider or enlarging domains as 'High' (i.e. Standard Kannada) has led many investigators to attribute *ad hoc* values to diverse codes available in a community. Such studies focusing on language attitudes generally rate primary speech as conceptually 'deficient' and sociologically as 'deprived'. This raises certain issues of fundamental nature, such as how does language structure reality. How far do the differences in speech behaviour reflect differences in adequacy as opposed to acceptable variation! In what manner does the 'high brow' values of speech — uniformity, precision, elegance, purity of form, allegiance to literary tradition, elaboration of language through coining of new terms — actually meet with the demands of adequacy and effectiveness in everyday life communication in a society? (Khubchandani, 1981)

The relationship between Kannada-Sanskrit and Kannada-English is also a Diglossic situation. The former is dealing with

standardization whereas later one is dealing with modernization. The hegemony of both Sanskrit and English is imposed on Kannada. As a consequence, Kannada has to struggle with both Sanskrit and English in order to retain its structural and functional usages. In the formalized communication, and in the domains like literature, criticism and other discursive writings Standard Kannada (i.e. Sanskritized Kannada) is preferred. On the other hand, English is preferred in the domains like Science, Technology and Law. The similar situation can find in Hindi, which interface with Sanskrit alone, "those bilingual speakers belonging to the North-Central region (characterized as the Fluid Zone, cf. Khubchandani 1972a, 1978) who retain their regional or caste dialects either of Western Hindi or of altogether different languages of the region (such as Pahari, Lahnda, Panjabi, Rajasthani, Awadhi, Chhattisgarhi, Bihari) for informal communication within their speech group, but prefer to use Khariboli (standard Hindi) for formalized communication. In this diglossia situation, these speakers think of Khariboli as having a more prestigious role than their native speech, which has a casual use. They regard their native speech habits as mere substandard variations of the all-powerful standard Hindi (Khubchandani, 1981).

The distinctions between Standardized Kannada (i.e. pure, high, powerful, elegant and standard variety) and dialects (i.e. impure, low, powerless, non-standard, corrupted variety, substandard) is a big split. As a result, caste/regional dialects are at the tip of extinction. It leads to not merely ironing-out the dialects alone; it also leads to the cultural loss.

WHY LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE IS NEEDED?

It is always debated across the world: will languages survive in increasing globalization? Do dialects of those languages survive among native speakers? Are the indigenous speech communities of India still surviving today? In what capacities are they surviving? Do these tongues have a future? These are common apprehensions among the Indians.

Economic and social pressures are capital factors in the process that leads a language to fall into disuse. For the economic, political, social and educational benefits, speakers of minority languages assimilate to the local dominant language. However, a number of Indian communities are striving to revive their indigenous languages, or foster its widest possible use, and to preserve it against the perspective of extinction. For example, Kannada dialects have so

far resisted the pressure of Sanskritized Kannada, and succeeded in preserving a wide use. The future of these tongues depends on the will of their speakers to maintain their use. Judging by the strength of their identity feeling, which commands this will, it seems that some, at least, of the languages that coexist with widespread languages might survive for some time.

Languages and dialects spoken in Karnataka are not threatened by globalization. But they are threatened by standardized Kannada itself. Due to the Kannada hegemony, linguistic minorities and minor languages in Karnataka are also suffering and increasingly become disused. It is quite true that in an era of globalization and increasing cross-cultural contact, it is necessary to explore the existential and communicative status of minority and indigenous languages. The fact is, socio-cultural and politico-economic factors are also supporting for language shift.

On the other hand, it is realized that, as far as the Indian linguistic situation is concerned, it is not directly affected by globalization; increasing globalization concerns international commercial relationships rather than private communi-cation. Of course, language has a greater role in the process of globalization. It is unlikely that dialects, which are constantly used in oral exchange, will be ousted by literary languages (e.g. Standard Kannada, Khariboli-Hindi, this is the case with all the major Indian languages), which is not spoken as a common conversation language in any part of the given speech community.

Languages represent vast storehouses of human knowledge. Most languages are not written down, but live only in the memories and cultural practices of human communities/groups of people who over millennia have devised unique systems of survival in difficult circumstances. "Human languages are catalogs of plants, animals, insects, people's stories, weather patterns, diseases, social paradigms, songs, jokes, aphorisms, strategies for war and peace, practices of trade and negotiation" (Sargent, Benjamin B. 2008: 01). A small culture also carries within itself the potential of contributing to the larger ethos. Every culture, irrespective of being big or small, serves as a bridge between others and as an instrument of interaction which is humanly universal (Pogcnik, 1986 quoted by L.M. Khubchandani, 1997).

Thus, it is argued, India has several Great Traditions, but Sanskrit is only considered as the Great Tradition. Other indigenous languages and their socio-cultural values, beliefs, ethos and ideals constituting the world-view are not considered relevant to the

characterization of tradition. It is another way of devaluing the local and small traditions. Non-linearity formation of Indian history is a strong witness to the process of levelling of sociolinguistic diversities and differences of India. Though, it is often felt, India is a country of long survivals (Kosambi, 2008: 8). The importance of small languages/cultures is also being discussed by various linguists, fore.g. Fishman (1982) elaborates on treating ethno-linguistic diversity as a worldwide societal asset. Profiles of small cultures can provide a lot of insights into the probing of such questions as how to channel the concerns of ethnic identity in a positive and sublime manner to enrich the nation's heritage, instead of provoking linguistic and religious conflicts between majority and minority cultures and languages, or accepting the assimilation of small cultures into the dominant cultures (L.M. Khubchandani, 1997: 108).

The importance of language diversity can also be remarked from a historical point of view. Today's languages consist in huge parts of remnants of old, dead languages, such as Latin (Sanskrit in case of India). Those dead languages survive in modern languages in the form of borrowings, or leave us some structural or morphological features. This fact not only contributes to a lexical variety, but also allows us to investigate the exact processes of a language that is undergoing from its beginnings until today. The history of a language is closely linked to the history of its speakers. The knowledge of when a certain feature first appeared in a language and from which foreign language it was taken makes it possible to re-establish the genealogy of a nation (Horak, 2008). This is another reason why the maintenance of language diversity is important. When speaking of languages, we should not only focus on so-called official (standard) languages. Moreover, dialects can also have the function of identification and are, therefore, to be treated the same way as languages. "The boundary between dialect and language is arbitrary, dependent on sociopolitical considerations (...). Dialect death is language death (...)" (Crystal 2000: 38). Although the argument that language helps to keep one's identity is evident, the consequence of dialect death is remarkable and can be noticed in the fact that people have always tried to collect and compile old words and regional tales (often in dialect) containing rural expressions (Horak, 2008).

Varying between the boundaries of languages, dialects, cultures, or speech varieties in Indian subcontinent can only be explained in pluralistic point of view. The success of linguistic minorities in retaining their language, therefore, frequently depends on their

ability to mobilize super-national, or informal, sources of support (Thomas Hylland Eriksen, 1992: 1). Efforts to save minority Languages from extinction and foster a deep sense of community may compel to develop a stringent language policy for minorities. It is felt that unless drastic measures are taken to preserve and promote them, all minority languages might be abandoned in favour of dominant languages in the next century.

The reasons for language shift are complex, and Fishman (1964) has stated that "it is currently impossible to specify in advance an invariant list of psychological, social, and cultural processes or variables that might be of universal importance for an understanding of language maintenance or language shift" (p. 49). According to Crawford (1996), there seems to be no established and comprehensive theory of language shift, especially in terms of causes and varying conditions that might prevent them. As big languages spread, children whose parents speak a small language often grow up learning the dominant language. Depending on attitudes toward the ancestral language, those children or their children may never learn the smaller language, or they may forget it as it falls out of use. This has occurred throughout human history, but the rate of language disappearance has accelerated dramatically in recent years.

Conclusion and perspectives

The kind of relationship is always found between the contexts of multilingualism and social justice depending upon the sustainability of linguistic ecology in India. It is not just about the needs of a particular speech community's benefit, but also the entire country is going to benefit from the multilingualism. Education is one of the vital factors for fostering and sustaining multilingualism. Simultaneously, education can be used as a weapon by dominant language speakers to eliminate the multilingualism. For example, the government of Karnataka dictates that Kannada is compulsory in all the functional domains. Consequently, the minor languages like Tulu, Kodava, Lambani, etc., are confronting the threat of endangerment. But the irony is 'Kannada is compulsory' in Karnataka never affects the domination of Sanskrit and English as well. Therefore, this paper strongly believes in multilingual education that sustains linguistic ecology and rights of all the Indian languages. The very concept of multilingual education itself justifies linguistic liberalism and social justice. This linguistic liberalism can contribute to greater social justice, by protecting and promoting

linguistic human rights, it is possible to accomplish the needs, aspirations of every speech communities of this country.

Maintaining languages in a few private domains will never accomplish the intended social justice which equips both to maintain and develop their languages and cultures in the wider society. The accessibility of social, political, economic rights and the democratic participation is directly connected to the language. This argument is not merely justifying how language can play a decisive role in socio-political and democratic contexts,it is also proving the significance and paramount of importance of a language.

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LANGUAGE, INTERSUBJECTIVITY AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF BEING

Sreekumar Nellickappilly

> Life experiences and the study of Plato had led me quite early to the insight that the truth of a single proposition cannot be measured by its merely factual relationship of correctness and congruency; nor does it depend merely upon the context in which it stands. Ultimately it depends upon the genuineness of its enrootedness and bond with the person of the speaker in whom it wins its truth potential, for the meaning of the statement is not exhausted in what is stated. It can be disclosed only if one traces its history of motivation and looks ahead of its implications.
>
> (Gadamer, 2007: 331)

INTRODUCTION

There is a certain way in which one "comes into being" in language. This, however, does not assume that one has a "way of being" before one comes into being in language, which is pre-linguistic or extra-linguistic. On the contrary, it only suggests the possibility of one constantly encountering different — and in one sense, infinite — possibilities of being by virtue of one's situatedness in a particular linguistic and historical horizon. Language contains such infinite possibilities and owing to the fundamental linguisticality of one's being, one has the possibility of encountering this infinity in the course of existence. Each such possibility offers a possible "way of being" as they transform man's ontological core, altering his way of being in the world. It also refers to one's recognition of intersubjectivity and the process of mutual and collective constitution of meaning that happens in our day-to-day life. The linguisticality of one's existence implies that intersubjectivity is embedded in one's being, as language is necessarily a domain of intersubjective subsistence and constitution of meaning. It is therefore, inevitable that one is constantly constituted and reconstituted in the intersubjective domain of language.

This paper is an attempt to understand the nature of this intersubjectivity that constitutes the core of language. It tries to show, how language, while on the one hand determines our specific facticity and therefore, our finiteness, on the other hand enables us to transcend this specificity and transform and evolve into other possible ways of being. It examines how we encounter and engage with the other in language and also the phenomenon of "otherness". To explain this process that constitute man's way of being, this paper draws from the works of German philosophers Martin Heidegger and Hans-Georg Gadamer. It explains how the phenomenological and hermeneutic approaches of these thinkers initiate a paradigm shift in our understanding of the conceptions of knowledge and truth, by replacing the model of 'perception' advocated by the consciousness-centered philosophy with a model of 'understanding'. In this hermeneutic model, the being of man is not situated outside the reality which it cognizes—as in the case of perception and representation—but is constitutive of the process of creating, representing, comprehending and transforming it. This paper, therefore, tries to argue that this model, which as Heidegger and Gadamer claim is rooted in the ancient Greek conception of "truth as unconcealment", emphasizes the aspect of "individual transformation" that is involved in the processes of comprehending knowledge and truth and, therefore, proposes a way out to many conceptual riddles traditional philosophical thought grapple with; relationship between subject and object, between oneself and other minds, between finite and infinite, the realities of man and the world, etc. By proposing a different perspective — which actively involves the being of man in the process of understanding the conception of reality or Being — the phenomenological-hermeneutic approaches suggest certain other ways to situate the problem, which makes methods and solutions in the traditional line unwarranted. The central aspect to these approaches is the recognition of the fundamental linguisticality of all being, including the being of man.

Martin Heidegger's notion of *Dasein* captures this sense of being, which humans possess, by virtue of their unique rootedness in particular linguistic horizons. *Dasein* is the being of man, which is a "being-in-the-world", in the midst of other human beings and objects to whom and which it is ontologically connected. The world is given to this existential situation of man in language, and he comports to it from where he is positioned in it by virtue of being rooted in a specific ontological space determined by that situation. Such

rootedness implies two things. First, it limits our scope of comprehending the world and our grasping of meanings to a particular horizon. This defines the situatedness that characterizes human existence. This also defines our particularity and subsequently points to the fact that there are aspects of reality that are not revealed to our specific situation. Hans-Georg Gadamer points out, there is an important dimension of reality that lies beyond what we perceive and can accurately represent. However, this is not to acknowledge the possibility of an unknown terrain of reality like the Kantian *noumenal* realm, but only an acceptance of a certain kind of limitation that characterizes our existence. The second aspect of the rootedness suggests that, this limitation, however, does not amount to a complete separation from those other aspects and dimensions of reality that are not currently available to us. Our situatedness in the intersubjective linguistic horizon, rather suggests the possibility of accessing many more dimensions of reality in it, by virtue of the very fact that this horizon of meanings virtually contains infinite possibilities of being.

All our encounters with meaning and truth — and also our "coming into being" in language — happen in this common intersubjective realm, which in a sense is infinite, as it contains virtually all possibilities of being. The essential linguisticality of being also implies that it is given in language and, therefore, is embedded in the actual and possible conversational contexts where language actualizes itself as a concrete reality. Such contexts, in turn, involves man as a concrete and finite entity. Hence, the infinite is always found manifested in and through the finite and is accessible only with such finite manifestations, which are historical and linguistic. The being that is to be understood, declares Gadamer, is language. (Gadamer, 2004: 243) To bypass the language-reality dichotomy in this way is to proclaim that all understandable being is language.

This position exposes a very interesting and important aspect about language-reality relationship and also the relationship between man and being. Heidegger conceives language as the house of being and affirms that human beings dwell in its home. (Heidegger, 1939: 239) But as Gadamer says, "other is not just himself at home in language, but rather "being" *[Sein]* is there in the language that we speak with each other. (Gadamer, 2007: 136) Hence language, man and being are intimately interconnected. He never envisages a reality that is inaccessible in language or is beyond language. Instead, he asserts two important things that reveal the interconnectedness between man and being; first, as mentioned above, being is there

in the language that we speak and second, it is important for an event of language use to have the person of the speaker in whom it wins its truth potential (ibid.: 331). The meaning of the statement is not exhausted in what is stated. The latter is always found related to conditioned and situated existences in which it realizes its truth potential. Gadamer here refers to the Greek-Aristotelian idea of the process of *phronesis* — the application of the universal to the particular — and *aletheia* — the unconcealment or disclosure of being to man. Accordingly, it has been argued that, the universal, though transcends the particulars, occurs always and only in the latter where it finds its truth potential.

Language makes us encounter truth; as being gives itself in it as disclosure to man, revealing a unique dimension of itself and also making us realize a unique aspect of our reality in relation of this disclosure. In this sense, we may find language ontologically significant. It may enable us not merely to "know" but to, what Martin Heidegger calls, "undergo an experience" with language. This is to be, or to come into being in a certain way in language. By this Heidegger means language befalls us, strikes us, comes over us, overwhelms and transforms us. (Heidegger, 1971: 57) This is a form of submission, where we submit our being to language and in that process, gets transformed by it. In this sense, it decides our ontological status and defines our being by touching the innermost nexus of our existence. (ibid.) It both defines and fulfills our ontological space.

Viewed in this way, language — as something that transforms us — places us in relation to truth and knowledge dynamically, so as to change our being by continuously unravelling its different dimensions in each moment of disclosure and subsequently making us realize our potentials of "being" in different ways. Such disclosures bring both reality and man's being to its structural fold and eventually materialize the "coming into being" that happens in language. As mentioned above, language, according to Heidegger, is the house of being, and since human beings dwell in its home, it is their ontological domain. It is in language being gives itself to man. But the disclosure of being happens only in relation with a finite being, which nevertheless also comes into existence as a linguistic entity and comes into being in each such events of disclosure.

To reiterate what is stated above, the intersubjective domain of language, therefore, on the one hand determines the finiteness of human existence and on the other hand suggests man infinite

possibilities of being through constant disclosures and unconcealment of being. While being infinite in terms of the possibilities it offers to *Dasein,* language also takes recourse in *Dasein's* specific being for its concrete manifestations. The first will explain the finiteness of human understanding—its perspectival nature. This involves an understanding of the essential temporal nature of the being of man, which is revealed by Heidegger with the three ways of understanding *Dasein*: as being-ahead-of-itself, as being-already-in-the-world and as being-alongside other things in the world. It also brings out the essential mediated character of the experience of truth. Secondly, it suggests the possibility of the overcoming of any specific rigid individual perspective in the intersubjective horizon of language, where we constantly encounter the infinite horizons that language brings to us and, therefore, the possibilities of infinite "ways of being" in the world it suggests to us. The features of facticity and linguisticality—both being aspects of the intersubjectively rooted finite being of *Dasein*—need further elaboration.

Facticity, Universal Linguisticality and Truth

For Heidegger, facticity is a fundamental feature of *Dasein.* Heidegger says that the possibility of *Dasein's* Being-as-a-whole is manifestly inconsistent with the ontological meaning of care and care forms the totality of *Dasein's* structural whole. (Heidegger, 1978: 236, 279) The primary item in care according to him is the aspect of "ahead-of-itself", which invariably determines *Dasein's* Being. It is present in all of *Dasein's* states of existence and in all of its attitudes towards the world and itself. He adds:

> "The 'ahead-of-itself', as an item in the structure of care, tells us unambiguously that in Dasein there is always something *still outstanding,* which, as a potentiality-for-Being for Dasein itself, has not yet become 'actual'. It is essential to the basic constitution of Dasein that there is *constantly something still to be settled".* (ibid.)

Citing Heidegger's description of *Dasein*as "care"— as "ahead-of-itself-Being-already-in-(the-world) as Being-alongside (entities encountered within the world)"— Robert J. Dostal points out that this reveals the three temporal dimensions of *Dasein.* The "ahead-of-itself" stands for future, "Being-already-in' for past and "Being-alongside" the present. *Dasein's* potential to live in truth is based on this temporal structure. Dostal observes that for the most part, the present is the predominant aspect of the temporal triadic unity of human experience and, hence, *Dasein* is fallen and inauthentic and

lives in untruth, by getting lost in the present and in the anonymous crowd. Dostal adds that truth happens in the authentic present moment in which we resolutely face our future as mortals, as Being-towards-death. Though for the most part *Dasein* is in untruth, in its authentic moments of existence, it finds itself in the truth. (Dostal, 1994: 52-53)

Gadamer's analysis of facticity, which follows Heidegger's analysis of the temporal dimensions of *Dasein*, clarifies this aspect further. He approaches this scenario from a different perspective and draws certain other conclusions from this existential structure of *Dasein* and its potential for living in truth. He focuses on those moments where truth is encountered and observes that owing to its essential facticity and structural incompleteness, *Dasein's* encounter with truth (and also with the world) happens from definite perspectival horizons. The disclosure of the world—which happens in language—thus takes place in a nonobjective manner and hence in a noncognitive fashion. As mentioned above, the element of care constitutes the totality of *Dasein's* structural whole. This makes *Dasein's* perspective peculiar and in a unique sense the disclosure of the world and truth to that perspective "subjective". But this is not the subjectivity of the consciousness-centric philosophical tradition, as it functions outside the cognitive framework of encountering the world. In other words, it is not the subjectivity that encounters the objective world so that its encountering moments are haplessly imperfect. In such encounters the world discloses to the being of man in significant ways, where the latter's existential situation, the sum total of attitudes, approaches, concerns, purposes and projects are brought to the world, which then appears an integral part of it. *Dasein's* encounter then is a participatory kind and, hence, the knowledge that results and truth that appears in such disclosing encounters are potentially transformative. Cristina Lafont observes that Heidegger, thus, substitutes the model of "perception" paradigmatic of the philosophy of consciousness, with the model of "understanding" (Lafont, 1999: 59), where the being of man is wholly involved. While the former separates the subject from the world or the object and relates truth and knowledge with the accuracy of the former's representing relationship with the latter, Heidegger prefers to go back to the ancient Greek tradition in order to reinvent the original Greek idea of truth as *aletheia* or disclosure or unconcealment of Being. Here the disclosure happens as an event of understanding, which involves the "giving of Being" to the existential context of

the being of man, which nevertheless is situated in a linguistic horizon. Hence, the primary structure of our relationship with the world can only be analyzed as understanding, where the Being of the world is disclosed to our unique environment, which is determined by 'care'.

This model of understanding significantly alters the ideas of knowledge acquisition and accent to truth and also the ideas about the reality of man and the world and their interrelationships. The thesis of facticity drastically deconstructs the idea of a pre-structured world, understood both by the realist and the idealist traditions. Instead of a mere totality of objects and facts, the world is something that is presented to *Dasein* in the hermeneutic medium of language. Heidegger says that the fundamental *existentialia,* or the Being of the "there", the disclosedness of Being-in-the-world, are states-of-mind and understanding and he asserts that discourse is also existentially equiprimordial with them. (Heidegger, 1978: 161, 203) Discourse is very important for him, as it is the existential-ontological foundation of language. It is the articulation of all intelligibility of what is "there", and hence underlies both interpretation and assertion. (ibid.: 204) It is in discourse that being is presented, disclosed and concealed.

Again, this essential aspect of finitude of human existence is not in contradiction with the idea of multiple possibilities of being humans having in their specific situations. Both finitude and infinity are encountered from the same ontological domain; the intersubjective domain of language. The universal linguisticality of human existence refers to the way we 'exist as conversation' within a specific linguistic horizon, where we nevertheless encounter infinity, as all possibilities whatsoever are contained in the language we speak. The possibilities of human existence depend on the possibilities of disclosure that happens in language, with *Dasein* being placed dialectically in the discourse, which determines the being-already-in structure of its existence. Gadamer combines his hermeneutical understanding of Hegel—which proclaims that only the whole is truth—with this and argues that this shows the essential limitation of any one specific perspective. The very possibility of our experiencing the world and gaining any knowledge whatsoever depends on the fact that our primordial form of being in the world is 'understanding'. Hence, while it is not adequate to take the true claim of any one perspective as incomplete, it is equally inadequate to consider it as incorrect and erroneous. The disclosure that happens in each encounter with being has a unique validity of its

own, as it unravels certain true and valid aspects of being to the existential situation of a *Dasein's* historical being, depending on the latter's potentials and possibilities. While *Dasein* historicizes being by appropriating it to its unique situatedness, it simultaneously transcends its historicity in such encounters and evolves into something "more" than what it was before. This is the dynamism of the being of disclosure and for Gadamer this is the most important implication of the application of the Hegelian truth regarding the limitation of facticity in hermeneutics. But, as seen above, this situation—all our encounters with reality presuppose that we are already placed in language in certain ways—also suggest that we are conditioned by our facticity and are also prejudiced by our historicity.

This essential 'prejudicial' nature of our understanding calls for a drastic reversal in our conceptions of knowledge and truth. Since we always find ourselves in language and specific linguistic horizons, Gadamer says that we are prejudiced by them, as they constitute our essential hermeneutic medium to encounter reality and to ascend to truth and knowledge. But this is also to recognize that there is no truth or reality whatsoever that is not given to man in and through such hermeneutic medium. In fact, our situatedness in such a medium also situates us to a universe of infinite possibilities, which are given to us in a process of unconcealment of Being. The truth and reality of Being are not accessed in any other ways. There is not such truth or reality of Being independent of this *aletheia* of Being to *Dasein,* which involves the latter not as a mere spectator, but essentially as a participant whose inner core is transformed in this process. As we have seen earlier, the universal can never appear without a particular. Hence objectivity, as conceived by the consciousness-centric epistemological tradition is an undesirable ideal.

This prejudicial nature of our ontological status and existential situation — and the fact that we experientially dwell in our historically conditioned linguistic horizon — seems to be imposing tremendous limitations on our abilities to ascent to truth. This may make our perspectives haplessly limited. To overcome this ineluctable vulnerability Gadamer proposes the rehabilitation of prejudices and a constant recreation of the self where it constantly reinvents itself as well as discovers the fulfillment of its being in the intersubjective domain of language. This is to reinvent and recreate the infinite moments of intersubjectivity language is capable of nurturing and procreating. Situatedness in linguistic horizons not

only limits, but also throws open possibilities of being that makes human life a constant endeavour of discovering within oneself novel possibilities of coming into being in language.

Intersubjectivity and Encountering Otherness

As mentioned above, the dynamism of all engagements with Being embroil the whole of man's being, which subsequently comes across and actualizes infinite intersubjective moments to which it is necessarily related by virtue of being placed in a whole to which it is a part. This happens in all our encounters with language. We speak or talk which others can understand. In other words, most of these speech and talk are for others and are carried out already in ways which others have suggested us. Gadamer develops the idea of tradition, following all the implications of this situation and by supplementing the paradigm of "understanding" reiterated by Heidegger, highlights its value and role in our knowing and understanding. In a peculiar way, the other is not an "object" to which I am placed against as a subject. It is rather a reality to which I myself contribute. Heidegger shows that the moments of intersubjectivity are already constitutive of *Dasein's* structural ontology, which is evident from its "Being-already-in" structure. Gadamer further elaborates this structurally intersubjective nature of our encounters with being and engagements with others and explores its normative dimensions in the very fact that we are "beings who have logos or language". We create ourselves and the world in and through language in which we always find ourselves. It is in this sense that language is described as our ontological domain as well as our essential hermeneutic medium.

Gadamer substantiates this view with an etymological redescription of the ancient Greek definition of man, as a "being who has logos" as a "being, who has language" (Gadamer, 2008: 59). Language is here a living reality, which places man in a dynamic relation with infinite conversational contexts and as a result enables him/her to create and reinvent him/herself in such infinite contexts and moments. Even in my most private self-descriptions, I do paradoxically contribute to the creation of the other, as all such self-descriptions necessarily presuppose a context of pre-understood meanings, which are reflected in what both others and we speak. In the real sense, this is neither self-creation nor creation of others, but the creation of an intersubjective description which suits both others and us. Therefore, these moments of intersubjectivity are

actually moments of transcendence, where we transcend our individual horizons and transpose ourselves to a common intersubjective plane. They enable us to transcend our immediate temporal and spatial horizons. Gadamer asserts that words and language obviously stand at the beginning of human history and the history of humanity.(Gadamer, 1998: 3) He adds:

> "Since we are a conversation and can hear from one another—in these lines of HÎlderlin, mankind's conversation with one another and with the divine sound like a single conversation. Because we are a conversation, we are the one story of mankind. In constantly discovering more early cultures, more of the oldest traces of human life, and in investigating ethnic islands hitherto unreached by the stream of world-historical tradition, we come to know more and more of this story". (ibid.: 3-4)

The shift of attention to language as conversation and dialogue, which can be treated as the essence of language, helps Gadamer to overcome the conceptual difficulties associated with the idea of world engagements and knowledge dominated by the model of perception. Thus, in the event of one coming into being in language, there are possibilities of discovering the other and oneself in its intersubjective sphere. This intersubjectivity is both discovered as well as created. It is discovered by discovering the other and created by bringing into our engagements with being a peculiar perspective, our existential situation. Hence, it is at the same time both dialectical as well as dialogical. The disclosure of being, which is the 'there' happens only in language, and in language we essentially encounter an otherness, with which we have to necessarily engage with. Such engagements not only change the status of what appears as the other, but also transform us in essential ways. In language, we encounter two different types of otherness. One is the reality, which is revealed to us in apparently direct ways. This happens through a language that is already there. A talk is already there in which we also participate. Hence, understanding presupposes a context of pre-understood meanings with which we encounter the otherness of the 'there'. Another important context where we come across otherness is when we meet with the horizons of other people where they too express the ways in which Being is revealed to them. This may offer serious challenges to our ways of being as the other may radically vary from me in terms of their accounts of the disclosure of Being. Gadamer's accounts of knowledge and understanding attempt to resolve the problems related to such diverse accounts. He does not endeavour to "know" what others "know", but to "understand", the diverse aspects of reality through language that

we speak with each other. This happens when we participate in conversations that are ongoing and continue them ceaselessly. But being part of such conversations is to constantly encounter otherness, by questioning others and get questioned by others. This is not just to perceive reality, but understand it as unconcealment. It gives itself to us as answers to our questions and, hence, we relate with it the whole of our being. Such events of unconcealment suggest us different ways of being, by revealing hitherto unknown aspects of our being.

Truth as Unconcealement and Knowledge as Disclosure

This model of understanding — engaging in ceaseless conversations, often arriving at consensus and often not — recognizes truth and knowledge as associated with disclosure or unconcealment. But as mentioned above, this disclosure involves our being in its entirety. But these events of disclosure are context specific and, hence, never represent being or reality in its entirety. In other words, the whole of being is never revealed to us owing to our essential historicity and facticity. This makes the experience of truth and assimilation of knowledge necessarily historical events, which happens to us as historical beings. Hegel shows how historicity imposes limitations on our perspectives as it makes our vision partial and incomplete. The striving for completion, Gadamer argues, can never be actualized in the form of "absolute knowledge" in the Hegelian sense, as historicity is final and fundamental to our being. According to Heidegger, the experience of truth is at the same time an experience of disclosure as well as the experience of the withdrawal of being. This is because, owing to the historicity and finitude of man — to which being gives itself as disclosure — the whole of being is never accessed in human understanding. In every event of disclosure, being transcends the finite moments to which they happen and hence they are also moments of withdrawal of being.

Knowledge, in this sense, cannot claim finality and absolute status. It is partial and incomplete. This incompleteness owes to the finite ontological situation of *Dasein*. Knowledge as disclosure here happens as an event of truth where some hitherto concealed aspect of being is unravelled to us. This is a unique event, because it is intimately connected to the context of a particular *Dasein*. In other words, the unconcealment is with respect to a unique ontological context, which only a particular *Dasein* is capable of bringing to the world. In Gadamer's words, in this unique context, a truth potential

is realized. It is uncovering, where *Dasein* discovers its possibilities by relating itself with being. In such moments of disclosures, the truth about Being is 'unconcealed' to *Dasein*.

But this involves the possibility of us taking the way in which being is disclosed to us as absolute and fundamental. We may identify what is disclosed to us as the whole of truth. But knowledge is, at the same time, both disclosure and concealment or withdrawal and the appropriate view would be to have a pluralistic conception of truth. Accordingly, many accounts of the same phenomenon are possible, because a single, perspectiveless, exhaustive account is precluded by the inherent richness of the phenomenon as well as the inherent embeddedness of phenomena in historical contexts (Dostal, 1994: 9). We come across the realization of our certain potentials of our being in every such event of disclosure, as in every such instance, the disclosure is made specifically to us. Gadamer explicates this with his theory of prejudices. He says that when we understand a proposition, we understand it as an answer to a question, which we raise and which presupposes our peculiar ontological horizon. The horizon of the question is rooted in our existential situation. In this sense, every understanding is self-understanding, as the unconcealment that is involved in the process also fulfills our being with what it preserves for us; only for us. Hence, in our understanding of being, we gain specific answers to our questions, unique responses to our projections that necessarily involve a realization about the different possibilities we have; different ways in which we can "come into being in language".

The thesis of pluralism also underlines the importance of conversation. Knowledge about being is never a complete appropriation, but only a partial disclosure that involves a concealment as well, which invites us to see other possibilities. Language, thus, perpetually invites us to its conversational structure, offering us diverse possibilities, where we can potentially gain an "I-lessness", if not a complete transcendence of perspectives. It presents before us as a process of unravelling where the different accounts of the same phenomena that are embedded in different historical contexts are synthesized in the intersubjective moments that constitute every conversation. In this sense, language enables a fulfillment of our being. This is because, as Gadamer says, language is essentially conversation and our being is not independent of the 'conversation we are' and can potentially be fulfilled by the infinite perspectives of a conversation.

Moreover, language also enables the achievement of an I-lessness.

Gadamer says that whenever we speak, we speak to someone and whatever is said has to be placed before the eyes of the other person to whom we speak and speaking does not belong in the sphere of the "I" but in the sphere of the "we". Language unifies I and the thou and hence he asserts that the actuality of speaking consists in the dialogue. (Gadamer, 2008: 65-66) Gadamer writes:

> ...in the successful conversation they both come under the influence of the truth of the object and are thus bound to one another in a new community. To reach an understanding with one's partner in a dialogue is not merely a matter of total self-expression and the successful assertion of one's own point of view, but a transformation into a communion, in which we do not remain what we were. (Gadamer, 2004: 371)

This is the moment of fulfillment we may attain as the result of our successful participation in the creation of the moments of intersubjectivity that happen in conversations. The very fact that we are able to participate in a conversation implies our participation in such moments of intersubjectivity. In such moments, we discover the other; the discovery of the other perspectives to which disclosure happen and the recognition that they might be a better account of the phenomenon which is uncovered to me. This may enhance my awareness about it and may suggest revision to my own views. In a peculiar sense, this is self-creation by means of a fulfillment of our being with the enhancement of our individual perspectives. It is also self-understanding. Gadamer writes:

> ...in the end all understandings are reducible to a common level of an "I know how to go about it", that is, a self-understanding in relation to something other... it is to discover what is hidden in the soul and apprehend how we ought "to go about it". In this case one rightly says that accomplishing an understanding is to form a project from one's own possibilities. (Gadamer, 2004: 130-131)

The disclosure that makes possible the experience of truth and knowledge begins and ends with self-understanding within the enclosure of a language that befalls on us and envelops us. It also helps us to transcend and, thus, it functions like a ladder. Once we reach there we may throw it away, not in order to free ourselves from it completely, but for venturing into it — to its conversational structure — and see what lies beyond. As Hegel says, each perspective is limited and knowledge is a constant search for the infinite. Acknowledging our essential linguisticality, we may conclude that this search happens in our being part of a ceaseless conversation, potentially with the whole of humankind.

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THE IDEA OF ECOTOPIA AND ECOCRACY IN PRECOLONIAL INDIAN LITERATURE: A STUDY OF LITERATURES FROM SOUTH-EAST TO NORTH-EAST INDIA

Nigamananda Das

Ours is primarily an era of eco-scams. Pollution, degeneration, degradation, decadence, waste colonialism, marginalization of nature and the likes have been the key words in our day-to-day life. Man's imperialism over nature and the resultant constant ecocidal tendencies have been paradoxical and self-destructive in the postcolonial times, which have invited ecological visions translatable into social, economic, political and individual programmes of action. The term "ecology" which is now-a-days, used in a much looser sense than the scientific, presents the cultural manifestations and complex realities about anthro-pocentrism and ecocentrism in the post-natural world (Kerridge 2006: 536). In our era, various concepts in ecological/green thoughts uphold the economy of nature or the concept of real wild nature as depicted in the romantic literature (Mc Kusick 2007: 200-01) as a contrast to the grim environmental threats of the postindustrial times (ibid.: 199). Another important aspect of Ecology as a science is its strong connection to a history of verbal expression: "In the medicine rites of early people, shamans sang, chanted, and danced stories to heal diseases or prevent disaster, which they saw as states of disharmony or imbalance in nature" (Howarth 1996: 71). Deep ecology, shallow ecology and spiritual ecology are the important aspects of the ecological ethics which propound the ideas of Ecotopia and Ecocracy. Shallow ecology seeks prevention of eco-scams whereas Deep Ecology seeks sincere realization of them, to avoid any kind of involvement in destroying/doing harm to the environment/ecology.

According to Matthew T. Fox, there are four paths to a spiritual ecology: (i) to experience the Divine in terms of delight, awe and wonder at being present in the world; it involves the intuition that creation is a blessing, and response of gratitude (via *Positiva*) (ii) it

"comes through experiencing darkness, deprivation, suffering, and pain" (via *Negativa*) (iii) it "involves identifying new ecological virtues for living such as vegetarian, recycling, relearning the sacredness of nature, defending creation through political action, and making new rituals to celebrate sacred places, times, and being in nature" (via *Creativa*) (iv) it "is a transformation to a more compassionate society in which all beings love one another" (via Transformativa); such compassion includes the making of justice (Fox 1998: 228).

Ecotopia or Ecological Utopia is a novel concept of an ecological ideal world which is free from all sorts of pollution. Ernest Callenback in 1975 published a book entitled *Ecotopia*, which achieved the status of a "classic environmental book" (Geus 1990: 170). In this fictional travel story, he has provided a sketch of an unknown ecological, utopian society. In his other work, *Ecotopia Emerging* (1981), he refers to Ecotopia's main issues towards eco-friendly society. The contemporary world politics has been dominated by democracy. The activities of our states have been dominated by politics. To control the ecological crisis, we shall have to adopt the ecological democracy or ecocracy and follow its principles. Ecology, thus, can be a means for learning how to live appropriately in a particular place and time, so as to preserve, contribute to, and recycle the ecosystem (Murphy 2000: 194). Enthno-ecology, Deep/shallow ecology and ecofeminism are the important concepts/movements that uphold conservationist and preservationist ideology.

In religious literatures and practices, which present spiritual ecology, there is profound inspiration for preservation and conservation of the environment through the four ways as mentioned earlier. The whole creation is a blessing of the Divine Almighty and we need to acknowledge it through our gratitude, devotion/bhakti by being humble and faithful to the Almighty. Our love for the Almighty and his creation should all time remain exposed. During the Vedic age the human society remained obliged to the Nature. Lapses came with the change of time. The saints and devotees have been born in the different parts of the world to reform society and prescribe principles of living for all concerned. Those great men have created/named/established sacred places, prescribed rituals and times for all their followers, advised them to be vegetarian (in many cases) to conserve and preserve the ecology. The places established or sanctified by them may be called ecomuseums because these have been sources of solace or tourist spots for all. The virtues prescribed by them are followed for maintaining the deep and shallow ecologies and bringing in strength of the spirit of all the

humans providing them the divine bliss. Even devotees/saints realized the spiritual ecology through their suffering, pain and deprivation, which have purged of the worldly impurities blessing them with the heavenly bliss.

The Vedic/ Post-Vedic References to Ecology

The Vedas are the earliest ecological literatures which have kept record of the preservationist ideology and practices: The Gods and elements of Nature have been prayed to provide stability/strength to the human society. The Vedas uphold the cosmic glory of (five elements: earth, water, fire, air and sky). Since the time of the *Rigveda*, man had been maintaining close relationship with various natural elements, without treating himself as a Supreme Being (Jena, 2002: 14). Man's aberrations during modern times and the industrialization of the world have brought in the ecological imbalance, hampering the equilibrium. In the *Rigveda* the Sun is prayed as the source of light and energy: *Taranirvishwa darshato jyotishkudasi surya,/Vishwama Bhasi rochanam* (RV/ 1.50.4). In the *Atharvaveda*, the earth is glorified and is praised that the whole world comes to life in her breathing and moving: *Vaishyanaram bibhrati bhumiragnimindra rishabha dravine no dadhati* (AV.XII.1.6). (The earth feeding all, treasure house, firmament, gold breasted, passage for the whole world, she bears the Vaisvanara Agni, consort of mighty Indra, may give us wealth) (ibid.: 29). In *Srimadbhagavadgita*, Lord Krishna explains Arjuna, how he is the essence in every worldly things and beings: *Punyo gandhah prithivyanch tejaschasmi vibhavasou/jivanam sarvabhuteshu tapaschasmi tapaswishu/ vijam mam sarvabhutanam vidhi partha sanatanam/Vudhir Vudhi matamasmi tejastejaswinamaham/* (7-9/10). (I am sacred and fragrant in the earth, heat in the fire, life in everything/being, penance in the sages, eternal seed in the creation, the intellect in the intellectuals and brilliance in the saints). (Tr. by author).

Though the word "Ecology" was coined by the German biologist Ernest Haeckel in 1869 AD, from the Greek root "*Oikos*" which means "house", a similar term is there in a verse of *Atharvaveda* (3.2.2) where "*Okas,*" a Sanskrit word means place or house (Jena 2002: 17). The essence of the creation, the humility and all kinds of divine virtues and principles are gathered in various embodiments in the ecology. The realization of the greatness of this spiritual ecology is named as Deep Ecology and the attempt and practices of stopping erosion and imbalance in the ecology is the shallow ecology.

The sages, saints, devotees and great men of all times have been caretakers of the society and they have guarded the society against all kinds of ecological degenerations. During the post-vedic era Buddhism influenced the eco-consciousness of the humanity. Buddhism in its proper perspective is an ecological religion or a religious ecology (Batchelor and Brown 1994: viii).

Lord Buddha advised his disciples about right action and other virtues as follows:

> What is right action? Abstention from killing breathing things, stealing, misconduct in sensual desires: this is called right action. There are five trades that a lay follower should not ply. What five? They are: trading in weapons, in breathing things, meat, liquor and poisons (Batchelor 1994: 7).

Concern for the welfare of the natural world has been an important element throughout the history of Buddhism (ibid.: 12). Lord Buddha was the supreme physician who prescribed *panchashila* (non-injury, non-stealing, non-infatuation, non-lying and non-addiction) for all humans for maintaining proper spiritual ecology and upholding the Deep Ecology and maintaining shallow ecology. Adi Sankar in his *Mohamudgaram* has prescribed the human's association with the sages/saints for crossing this ocean like illusory world. Everything in this world is transitory. The Buddhist religious practices became polluted afterwards. The Saivite and Vaishnavite saints took the leadership to reform the society thereafter.

In South India before the rise of Saivism and Vaishnanvism, the Nature influenced the imagination of the people. The Tamil Sangam poets have very beautifully narrated the nature. Buddhism and the worship of Indra and Kumara were the prevailing religions of those days. The Sangam poets formulated an environmental aesthetics and made a five-fold categorization of the environment into *Kurinci, Mullai, Marutham Neidal* and *Pallai,* combined with the corresponding flora and fauna. In those poems, over two hundred plants of all five regions have been named and described (Das 2007: 31). Tamil Alwar saints influenced the Vaishnav saints of Eastern and North-East India also.

The Vacana Poetry:

The religious literature propagates *bhakti* (devotion to Lord). "Vacanas are *bhakti* poems, poems of personal devotion to a god, often a particular form of the god. The vacana saints reject not only the great traditions of Vedic religion, but the 'little' local traditions

as well (Ramanujan 1973: 25). The vacanas mock at the defects of folk-religion like animal sacrifice which are narrated in sangam poetry though those poems are rich in nature description.

Basavanna (1106-67), the leader of Virasaivite move-ment, expressed a kin-sense and kindness for all living things, which is the very essence of ecoethics. He derides the human activities by saying:

> They say: Pour, Pour the milk!
> When they see a snake image in a stone
> But they cry: Kill, Kill
> When they meet a snake for real.
>
> (Ramanujan 1973: 54)

He further says about a sacrificial lamb and the destiny of everybody in this world to arouse the eco-consciousness of the humans: The sacrificial lamb brought for the festival ate up the green leaf brought for the decorations.

> Not knowing a thing about the kill,
> It wants only to fill its belly:
> Born that day, to die that day
> But tell me.
> Did the killers survive,
> O lord of the meeting rivers? (ibid.: 76)

The poems of Basavanna expose the nine-fold devotion to Lord Siva. He addresses the Lord with all his sentiments and rejoices in his own thoughts over the Lord. Sometimes he scolds the Lord as if the Lord were his friend, and at the other times he exposes his servitude and exposes his humility. He sings:

> Siva, you have no mercy
> Siva, you have no heart
> Why did you bring me to birth
> Wretch in this world
> Exile from the other?
>
> Tell, me Lord,
> Don't you have one more
> Little tree or plant
> Made just for me? (ibid.: 71)

Basavanna sees the presence of god everywhere and in everything as a polytheist, but he is a monotheist and his only god is Lord Siva. He says:

> Gods, gods, there are so many
> There's no place left
> for a foot.
> There is only
> One god. He is our Lord
> of the meeting Rivers (ibid.: 84)

Devara Dasimayya, who is supposed to be the earliest of the vacana poets, was a devotee of Ramanatha, the Lord Siva, Rama's Lord. His devotional songs speak of the world's ecology, the spiritual ecology and the ways of salvation in this world. He says:

> You balanced the globe
> on the waters
> and kept it from melting away,
> you made the sky stand
> without pillar or prop.
> O Ramanatha,
> which gods could have
> done this? (Ramanujan, 1973: 97)

He says how everything in this world is the gift of Lord Ramanatha:

> The earth is your gift,
> the growing grain your gift,
> the blowing wind your gift,
> what shall I call these curs
> who eat out of your hand
> and praise everyone else? (ibid.: 103)

The devotee's devotion to the Lord and his creation is essential. The whole world is merged in the Body of the Lord or the devotees' thought/perception of the Lord. So visiting sacred places is if no use for a devotee who can concentrate his thought on the Lord at his own place. He sings:

> What does it matter
> if the fox roams

all over the Jambu island?
Will he ever stand amazed
in meditation of the Lord?
Does it matter if he wanders
all over the globe
and bathes in a million sacred rivers?
A pilgrim who's not one with you,
Ramanatha,
roams the world
like a circus man (ibid.: 104)

The five elements of the world, the Sun and the Moon, and all the mysteries are but the creation of the Lord Ramanatha and Devara Dasimayya offers his soul and humblest devotion to the Lord for everything in this world.

Allama Prabhu was a miraculous devotee. He was considered as an incarnation of Lord Siva. It is said that Goraksa was stunned at Allama's spiritual powers. Allama was a true spiritual ecologist. In one of his vacanas, he makes a contrast between the shallow ecology and spiritual ecology:

Feed the poor
tell the truth
make water-places
for the thirsty
and build tanks for a town you may then go to heaven
after death, but you'll get nowhere
near the truth of our Lord.
And the man who knows our Lord, he gets no results
(ibid.: 167)

Mahadeviyakka, a fine poet and saint, was a younger contemporary of Basavanna and Allama. At ten, she was initiated to Siva-worship by an unknown guru. According to one legend she died early in her twenties, getting her body mingled in the air being one with Lord Siva. She was mad for the Lord's love, when she sings:

Not seeing you
in the hill, in the forest,
from tree to tree
I roamed
searching, gasping:

Lord, my Lord, come
show me your kindness!.....
O Lord, white as jasmine
to your hiding places (Ramanujan 1973: 119).

She again says:
O Swarm of bees
O mango tree
O moonlight
O koilbird
I beg of you all
one favour:

If you should see my Lord anywhere
my Lord white as jasmine
call out
and show him to me (ibid.: 122).

She becomes impatient to see her Lord. She realizes His presence everywhere and asks Him to show her His face:

You are the forest
you are all the great trees
in the forest
you are bird and beast
playing in and out
of all the trees
O Lord white as jasmine
filling and filled by all
why don't you
show me your face? (ibid.)

Citing the evils and good and the human passions in this world, she thinks of the virtues like peace, patience, forgiving and self-command which uphold the ecology and stabilizes the ecotopia and ecocracy in this world. This contrast between shallow ecological practices and spiritual ecology presents her realization of the deep ecology.

Orissan/Utkaliya Bhakti Literature:

The 16th century Orissa was a great time of religious fermentation. Prior to it the Oriya literature had religious trends and was

influenced by the Buddhist and post-Buddhist Nathapanthis. The great poet of the *Oriya Mahabharat*, Sudramuni Sarala Das, who was a devotee of Goddess Durga, claimed himself to be a peasants' poet and the poet of the downtrodden and his literary works presented the early tradition of Bhakti (spiritual ecology) and the tradition set by him was carried forward by five poet saints of 16th century who have been called clandestine Buddhists for their Buddhist-like theoretical orientations in the propagation of Bhakti. Prior to the advent of these five saints popularly known as *Panchaskha,* the Vishnu-cult was prevailing in Orissa. Vaishnav prophets from South like Ramanuja, Ballabhacharya, Madhvacharya, and Nimbarka visited Puri and established their monasteries and propagated ideologies there. Narasimha Muni and Narahari Tirtha of Kannada speaking country came after them and established the tradition of Krishna worship what was introduced by Ramanuja. The five saint poets named Achyutananda Das, Balaram Das, Ananta Das, Jagannatha Das and Yashobanta Das dedicated themselves to the spiritual upliftment of the downtroddens and wrote in colloquial language the vedic/vedantic/philosophical theories, medicinal treatises and apocalyptic prophecies and devotional principles of life like the Buddhists. Their writings reflected the main tenets of Mahayana Buddhism and the pinda-brahmanda theory of the Natha-Yogis (Mansinha 1962: 88). These five poet-saints were the followers of the two streams of Bhakti – *Jnanamishra Bhakti* and *Shuddha Bhakti.* Puri, the shrine of Lord Jagannath and the monasteries established by these five saints in different parts of Orissa have been the eco-museums which have the ideals of a casteless society, spiritual initiation and value-promotion and sites of harmlessness and eco/bio-ethics. Like their predecessor, Sudramuni Sarala Das, these five saints conceived Lord Jagannath as Lord Buddha, *Nirakara*, *Sunyapurush* and *Purushottam* -the formless Brahman (Chaini 1998: 2).

The oldest of the five saints, Balaram Das initiated intense devotional activities and was called a 'Lunatic' (Matta Balaram Das). In his *Laxmi Puran*, he established the greatness of the women and outcaste (shudras) in the society. The *Laxmi Puran* is one of the earliest feminist texts and the author is supposed to be an ecofeminist in the sense that he propounded how by honouring women and the downtrodden, there would be economic and ecological stability in the society. Jagannath Das was a stable saint and his *Bhagavat Puran* is the most popular moral textbook of every household in Orissan village, where there has been one *Bhagavat Tungi* (Hut of

Bhagavat) which is also an ecomuseum. The following lines from *Bhagavat* give the hint of the aphoristic trend:

> Born on this earth
> even the gods die/
> ...wealth acquired is for religious deeds
> and through that you attain to the Lord./
> ...with humble words like nectar
> you should please men's minds./
> ...This human body is a rare gift
> meant only to aspire for salvation/
> ...Karma is your own guru.../
> The mind is the giver of pleasure and pain
> the author of sin and guilt
> (Mahapatra 1989: 37-39)

The other three saints — Achyutananda Das, Ananta Das and Yashobanta Das — were very much prophetic. They wrote *Malikas*, (the rosaries of prophecies/future foretelling), which are messianic, and which warn the mankind not to involve in any kind of immoral activities. The concept of *Kalki,* an incarnation of the Almighty to appear in the Kaliyug is very much present in the *Malikas* composed by the three saints. There are severe warnings not to act against the Earth, which is very eco-ethical. Among the three, Achyutananda Das was the most prolific, who, it is said, had composed one lakh books, which are the interpretations of the Vedas, Upanisads, contemporary events and his own views about the society and principles of ideal life. His books entitled *Bata Varnnana, Sharika Varnnana, Sthala Varnnana, Chitrotpala Mahatmya, Sunya Samhita, Gurubhakti Gita,* narrate many ecological and spiritual ecological episodes which provide ideas of ideal life to the readers. In the first three books mentioned, he speaks about the greatness the banyan trees, and places highlighting their importance and presence in this world since time immemorial. In *Chitrotpala Mahatmya*, he celebrates the greatness of a river named *Chitrotpala*, a tributary of Mahanadi, the biggest of river and a male river of Orissa, by assigning it a superior position to the sacred river Ganga. He says that river Chitrotpala came to this earth one hundred years earlier than the Ganga and its water is purer than that of the Ganga. This is an attempt by the saint to establish the river as an ecomuseum. In *Sharika Varnnana*, he has narrated the importance of many places which he calls *Bata*, i.e. places having dense cover of banyan and peepul

trees. These *Bata*s are eternal places which exist on the bank of the river Chitrotpala at many places and those are the most sacred places where under each tree there lives a god/saint. It is an attempt to provide the sense of holiness to the people so that they would not cut those trees and would worship them. All these *Bata*s are also ecomuseums. He says:

> These *Bata*s are places eternal
> equal in status with Indra's garden. (Tr. author)

He also prescribed some mantras, by uttering which under those banyan trees, one can achieve many things. To get rid of all the sins in life one can chant the mantra:

> *Om vishnum vishnum dhrim dhrim radhe radhe svahah.*

One can get his desires fulfilled by chanting the following mantra and moving around the banyan at *Sharika Bata*:

> *Om hrim shrim iim iim aim aim svahah.*

The liberal religious tradition set by the *panchasakhas* was carried forward by Vaishnav poets in the succeeding eras. This mystic tradition even influenced poets from other castes. A Muslim soldier named Salabeg who was born of Lalbeg, the then *subedar* of Bihar and a Brahmin widow of Danda Mukundapur, Puri was a great poet and devotee of Lord Jagannath. Lalbeg kidnapped the widow from a village tank where she came for bath and forcefully married her. Salabeg, the muslim, under the influence of his mother became a great devotee of Lord Jagannath and his songs still influence the pious devotees of Orissa. His songs are replete in the tenets of nine kinds of Bhakti. An example from his devotional songs may suffice to prove his spiritual humility:

> Oh magical flute! Happily I surrender myself
> to your lotus feet...
> you won the green garden of my body
> listening to your sweet songs, rocks melt,
> and yonder flows the Yamuna wild... .
> No salvation without chanting
> the honeyed names of Radhakrishna,
> thus sings Salabega, the low born. (Mohanty 1998: 270)

So many other devotees, saints, saivites, Buddhists and Vaishnavs of Orissa have left behind their poetic monuments which provide evidences of a strong argument concerning the conservation and preservation of internal and external ecologies.

Bengal/Gaudiya Vaishnavism

The late 15th century and 16th century Bengal witnessed social upheaval for various reasons. Political instability, brahminical autocracy and feudal oppressions obsessed the populace. The emergence of Sri Chaitanya at this juncture brought in a cultural renaissance. His devotional insanity and propagation of love among the populace pacified the troubled souls of the time. During the pre-Chaitanya era, Advaitacharya led the Vaishnav society of Bengal. The activities of Advaitacharya and his associates were confined to close-door chanting of the name of Hari and to some stray religious discourses held in strict secrecy only for the fear of Muslim tyrants (Sastri 1988: 23). The emergence of Sri Chaitanya helped flourishing of the propagation of *Prem Bhakti* in the whole of Bengal and beyond. Sri Chaitanya's Bhakti movement was very ecological in nature as it disseminated the spirituality and encouraged the *Panchashila* as was propagated by Lord Buddha. Sri Chaitanya was basically a religious activist and saint and through his chanting of the holy name (*namasamkirtan*) he mesmerized the world, making the denizens engaged in holy/virtuous activities healthy for internal and external rational ecology. In his only religious literary work *Sikshastaka* (*Octet of Teaching*), he has prescribed the modes of chanting the holy name. In the first verse, he has said about the seven-fold efficacy of the chanting of holy name:

> polishing all dirts
> from the mirrors of our hearts,
> quenching the great forest fire of affliction
> from the cycle of births and deaths,
> shedding moon-beams
> upon the lily of eternal good,
> life of His charming bride,
> muse of real burning,
> augmentor of the swelling ocean of eternal bliss,
> Imparting, at every utterance of the holy name,
> the perfect relish of pure nectar,

ensuring the cooling immersion
of every limb of the soul,
may the chanting
of the holy name of Krishna
be intensely glorified (Sastri 1988: 82)

Regarded as an incarnation of the Lord in the Kaliyuga, Sri Chaitanya moved and has been moving every now and then the hearts and minds of the millions to spirituality and religious humility.

Bhakti and Animist Literature from Northeast India

Sankardeva (1449-1569) was the propagator of Neo-Vaishnavism in Kamarupa (Assam). Before his advent, Saktism had been the most dominating religion of Kamarupa and Goddess Kamakhya was the prime deity and the inhabitants of the land were overpowered by magic and all sorts of tantric rites, including human sacrifice in the Kamakhya temple. Hinduism was on the verge of extinction under the influence of the later corrupt forms of Buddhism. Caste prejudices and negligence of women are at the top of the social demoralization. Sankardeva, through his preaching of the singe-minded devotion to Lord, propounded the principles of *Ekasarananama-dharma*. In his *Kirtanaghosha*, he declares from the mouth of Lord Krishna:

If women and sudras cultivate bhakti for me, impart to them this knowledge, O great minded one. (Dev Goswami 1982: 20)

He propounded the doctrine of self-surrender and advised his disciples:

Throw thy body, soul and all at the feet of that
vast one with single minded devotion and thou
wilt enjoy the bliss of human life (ibid.: 22).

Sankardeva has proclaimed the supremacy of Bhakti *dharma* by saying:

There is no other great religion in the world than bhakti or devotion:
this is the essence of all the four Vedas (ibid.: 30).

He has said further:

The name of Hari is higher than crores of tantras,
mantras, sacrifices, penances and pilgrimages (ibid.: 31).

His disciple Madhavadeva was his great associate in propagating the principles of Bhakti, which channelizes the human activities to eco-ethics and preservationist ideology.

A Sufi saint named Ajan Fakir, who migrated to Assam from Baghdad in the later part of 16th century, is credited with the composition of 200 *jikir* songs for the Muslims of Assam. Similarly, another *fakir* named Chand Khan (Chand khai) was a disciple of Sankardeva. Ajan Fakir in his *jikir*s has spread the Bhakti principles both for the Hindu and Muslim communities of Assam. He has said:

Kurane purane ekeke kaise bujiba giyanar loke (The *Quran* and the *Puranas* preach the same thing. If you are a wise man, you will understand).

He has emphasized on the control of mind and sense to overcome the worldly illusions. He says, "Keep your wild senses under control. You will be victorious." (Malik 1990: 31)

The Vaishnav and Sufi saints of Assam have propagated the principles of spiritual ecology for realization of Deep Ecology.

Mamang Dai, an eco-historian, and a former IAS (recipient of the first Annual Verrier Elwin Award, 2003, of Arunachal Pradesh), in her bioregional narrative has narrated the state of disharmony in nature in her homeland Arunachal Pradesh in form of myriad evils. Her debut novel *The Legends of Pensam* (2006) constructs a subaltern history involving Arunachal's Adi tribe, pristine animism, mysterious ecology and its tribes' profound sense and idea of the existence of Evil in numerous forms. Narrating the tribal faiths since the remotest past, she reflects how the Evil is inevitable at every walk of tribals' life and during the current years of ecocidal devastations, how the Evil has incarnated in novel shapes. The novel displays and bridges the gap between the tribals' ancient and present mindsets, their innocence and experience, and narrates the elaborate ritual practised to thwart the Evil and the roots of Evil along with the concepts in the tribal religion, the mystery of the creation of cosmos, the deity of Donyi-polo — the Sun and the Moon, and the multiple incarnations of Evil. The pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial times and Arunachal's transgression through the times of the current post-colonial turmoil has beautifully been depicted. The work debates on both deep and shallow ecology, the former demanding recognition of intrinsic value in nature and the latter arguing for preservation of natural resources only for the sake of humans (Garrad 2007: 21). As a contrast to the toxic consciousness aroused by the ecocidal/ecological disaster of postindustrial era depicted in the postnatural American fiction (Deistering 1996: 197), the pristine

landscape ecology or its postcolonial metamorphosed shape evokes toxicity or psychopathy in the tribal minds in Arunachal.

Mamang reconstructs the animist principles and the idea of Evil in the ecology of the Adi tribals. Animism is "the belief that plants, objects and natural things such as weather" (literary ecology) have a living soul (Dai 2006: 52). It is a belief in a power that organizes and controls the universe (ibid.). Like human rights, animism pleads for the ecology rights (ecofeminism) and animal rights. The humans smell the Evil in the huge ferocious ecology and the tribes practise the rituals to propitiate the Evil for peace and prosperity of all concerned. The Evil in the Adi culture as has been portrayed by Mamang may be classified and (i) supernatural, (ii) physical, (iii) ecological, (iv) symbolic and (v) mysterious/ magical. These evils essentialize the tribal cultural ecology.

Evils experienced by the Adi tribals have become legends and as such there are some guiding principles to deal with them properly. The *miri* (priest of Adis) and the experienced elderly men know many small histories about the role of Evils in affecting the tribes. The powerful priests have very important role in the Adi society. They propitiate the evil spirits and bless the householders for peace and prosperity. The householders need to perform the rituals in frequent intervals by inviting the *miris*. If there is any negligence in the rituals the spirits become angry and harm the children and the householders. For good harvests, wellbeing of the domestic animals and the household, rituals and propitiation of spirits, travelling the road during the *Ponung* festival being led by the *miri* are necessary. The *miri* has the most important role in driving away the Evil. He is the storyteller, the healer, and the rhapsodist par excellence. He sings the legends, invokes, chants and reminds. In his songs all aspects of the daily life of man are touched from guidelines for construction of shelters to the techniques of making a bow, arrows, the preparation of poison, and the origins of community hunting. If culture is what makes life worth living, then the *miri* celebrates this in words" (Dai, 1998: 108). *Miri* (Nyibu) "is the mouthpiece of the people to communicate their grievances and suffering to the spirits and to request them for redressal—a sort of intermediary between the human and the spiritual world." (Riba 2000: 259)

The Evil is the constant obsession with the Adis. Mamang presents the Adi Ecotheosophy along with the various shapes of Evils in the narrative. The central logic in Adi Ecotheosophy is generally explained by the Nyibu, as is etched by Mamang:

> In the beginning, there was only Keyum. Nothingness. It was neither darkness nor light, nor had it any colour, shape or movement. Keyum is the remotest past, way beyond the reach of our senses. It is the place of ancient things from where no answer is received. Out of this place of great stillness, the first flicker of thought began to shine like a light in the soul of man. It became a shimmering trail, took shape and expanded and became the Pathway. Out of this nebulous zone, a spark was born that was the light of imagination. The spark grew into a shinning steam that was the consciousness of man, and from this all the stories of the world and all its creatures came into being. (Dai 2006: 56)

It is believed by the Adis that "the life of a man in measured by his actions and his actions are good if their origin is pure" (Riba 2000: 57). The existence of Evil is unavoidable and unpredictable. So every man has to be cautious all the time to pacify the Evil. According to the Adi belief there are numerous spirits and evils residing in the biodiversity.

The Supernatural Evils

Adis believe that all agents of ecology are the abodes of spirit. The trees, forest, lake, river, place and the likes have spirits. They have harmful effects on the humanity. The supernatural evil spirits dealt in the novel are Biribik, the Water Serpent, Mitimili, Dimitayang, Danki, etc.

(i) Biribik, the Water Serpent: On a night of heavy rain, a fisherman who was all alone with his nets by the river, heard a rushing sound as the water parted and when he looked up at the tree, he was sheltering under, he saw a serpent with a head with horns coiled up in the branches looking down at him. He then ran for his life. He never recovered from the effects of the terrible vision and died within a year of wasting illness. The name of this mysterious serpent was Biribik. Hoxo's father had also seen this serpent named Biribik (Dai 2006: 9-10).

(ii) Mitimili: Mitimili is a race of supernatural beings. These small, quiet people first prepared the mysterious si-ye, that is the yeast used to ferment rice into beer. Before this race disappeared, deranged by strange visions, they gave this sacred powder to mankind warning that this sacred powder had special powers and was to be handled with respect by women only. This white powder mixed with ground rice, roots and berries are shaped into small flat biscuits called si-ye cakes which when eaten make people hallucinate like

mitimili race and as such are forbidden before a hunt or a journey (ibid.: 28-29). It is believed that a bad spirit lurking in the si-ye makes men go mad.

(iii) Dimitayang: It is the lonely spirit who stirs up the lake waters and clutches trespassing men in an embrace of ice. Every winter Adis set out on a journey to the snow Mountains to harvest a precious root (the deadly aconitum) for preparation of poison arrows. They trek to the realm of silent waste and hallucinations. After collecting and packing the roots, before return, they address the mountains and air turning in every direction and bid farewell with promise to visit again. They convince the jealous spirits to permit them safe return. But once in spite of all prayers a group of Adis had to face the wrath of Dimitayang or some monstrous vision that devoured them in cyclonic wind, dust and cloud. When they reached home and the cyclonic danger subsided they found a dead praying mantis, which they took to be the evil spirit and performed rituals to ward off the danger.

(iv) Danki: The fabulous vessel owned by the Lotang family of Migu clan, Danki was made of the strongest metal alloy. It was believed to be an auspicious gift from the gods. It has been passed down from father to son for generations in the family. One day, the eldest son of the family noticed that the vessel was lying overturned in its usual place. He was surprised to see the moisture and patches of moss on its surface. Since then he was cleaning it everyday and next day finding it filled with bamboo leaves of the variety which is available only in far north hills. After such strange behaviours, the danki was afterwards split into two halves and disappeared. With that the fortunes of the Migu clan declined and the last son bearing the Lotang title who lived to the ripe age of ninety-eight had no male heir (ibid.: 62-63)

(v) The Python Spirit: A tragedy that befell Karyon Togum family of Yabgo village was that Togum's son Kepi was suffering from fever for long and his condition was not improving. Kepi was taken to the hospitial at Pigo, and was given tablets and an injection. But his condition did not improve for long. The child was crying and his small torso twisted stiff and unmoving. Someone told the parents to think about performing a special ceremony because it was the spirit of a snake that had coiled around the body of their son. So it was Hoxo, the nyibu, who was called to conduct the ceremony. Hoxo

narrated from his vision how Togum killed a python in the timber depot in the middle of the forest. It was fact. Togum who had no experience of hunting, had killed a python which was inside the pile of logs, for which the elephant which saw it was not drawing the logs. Togum killed this terrible python with two gunshots. The spirit of the python took revenge on his son Kepi. So Hoxo had to perform the serpent ritual all night, chanting and negotiating with spirits calling them to restore the sick child. But the spirits had moved away to a place beyond recall. "They are the most dangerous ones, the ones who go away and never return", Hoxo said (Dai 2006: 24).

(vi) The Tiger/Fire Spirit: Pinyar, the widow, who was deserted by Orka, her first lover, and whose husband Lekon died in a hunting accident, was living all alone. Once her house caught fire and everything was burnt down. As per rule, she was banished to the outskirts of the village and had to undergo the taboo (Dai 2006: 28). This fire is generally caused by a spirit known as the Tiger Spirit or Fire Spirit. During the period of taboo when the Adi householder is banished to the outskirts of the village no one could go and eat with him/her for fear of provoking the Tiger Spirit which follows the people to their home. The angry fire spirit completely gutted twenty houses in Duyang village and the village had to perform special ritual to propitiate the angry fire spirit (ibid.: 122).

In the old days fire watching had been a sacred duty. All young men were expected to give their time, taking turns to stay together in the bango, the boy's dormitory, and keep vigil through the night (ibid.: 121). The angry fire spirit causes immense harm.

2. Symbolic Evils

Turmoil in the tribal world happens due to some fault/error in human behaviour or due to the negligence in rituals. When such turmoil take place, the old people of the village sit around speculating on clan titles and origins, on births, loves, marriages and spirits and ghosts. The right or wrong kind of marriage, the right or wrong kind of life, could always be traced to something in the blood. Down the line certain traits appear suddenly in a nephew, an aunt, or a great grandson. Some bloodlines are almost taboo to mention. It is due to the defect in the blood that some see visions visited by spirits, etc.

Beyond this phenomenon, there are other things or agents which represent certain good or evil values; for example, the tooth of a tiger and a wild boar are symbols of luck and success (ibid.: 35), whereas the aborigine plant growing into a size of a tree with small poisonous-looking flowers, and long bloated fruit becomes a ghostly tree that creates psychopathic behaviour in people who come under it. It is believed that after sunset women should not linger by streams and rivers, because those places are visited by ghosts and spirits. Again it is believed that some people are auspicious and some inauspicious (ibid.: 83).

3. Ecological Evils

Ecology comprises of both biodiversity and abiodiversity. Before the advent of colonizer migluns into Arunachal, it was only the homeland of the tribes. No road links were there. High mountains, dense forest full of wild animals, poisonous snakes and insects, rivers, streams, gorges and intense valleys proved the land a difficult terrain and its people, wild and innocent. The people practiced animism, believed that everything had a soul and the spirits, if not propitiated, would harm them. Beyond that, elements of nature like wind, water, fire, sky and space have also spirits which avenge humans, Life becomes difficult because:

It rains during the day, it rains all night. It can rain non-stop for sixty two days at a time. Not a peep of sunshine. Not a breath of wind. Every summer the tangled undergrowth clinging to the hills is swept away by the downpour, causing landslides that cut off all communication and links (Dai 2006: 37).

The fierce hissing of rain would cover the land like the sea. It seems that the heavens brush very close to the earth. The nature displays its wilderness:

The wild fruit born is of unknown family, bittersweet, pungent, often misshapen and hardy, or swollen to an unnatural size. Hidden by mountains and covered by a charcoal sky the forest and rivers become battlefields ferocious with the struggle for survival. Astonishing plants with gills spring up in clumps. Delicate green shoots unfurl into monstrous fans and umbrellas with stinging hair. The wild berry covers itself with ants. Insects like miniature armadillos emerge out of nowhere and move about briskly until a flick of the broom transforms them into crumpled balls protected with green headlights (ibid.: 36-37)

After the early 1800s, when the first white priests, surveyors and soldiers had begun arriving in the region, rapid changes came over the landscape. The migluns struggled hard to make the land inhabitable for them. With the thunder of cargo trucks and bulldozers, and the shouts of men the jungle burst into flame as the mountaintops were blown off and the labour force struggled to claw their way through the rubble and drag the wretched road across the mutilated hills. There are ferocious places like the Lake of No Return, where so many airmen had lost their lives flying the Himalayan Hump during the war. About the nature of the forest a British officer wrote in his notebook. "The forest is like an animal. It breathes all around us... like a green snake out of the decaying vegetation.... The trees are enormous and sinister". (ibid.: 52)

The destruction of forests by the colonizers was politically motivated. There was an evil motive behind it of "alienating natives from ceremonies and rituals... for their replacement by alien systems" (Tripathy 2007: 101). This attempt was destined at taming the wild also. As a result of the decimation of trees, they became homeless and went away leaving us unprotected (ibid.: 42). Other evil spirits residing in trees or hills and valleys became jealous and angry and harmed the humans. With the cutting of trees, the canopy of shelter and tradition has fallen and the wind and sun and burning our faces now. Besides that the wild rivers and mountains seem to be hungry for human lives. They are the ecological evils.

4. Mysterious /Magical Evils: The spirits of wind, place, big trees, rivers and streams which harm the humans are mysterious and magical. Nemen, it was said, was carried away by wind and she was found dead at the water point beyond the orange trees. The ghostly aubergine plant that poisons the minds of men who go under it is mysterious like the behaviour of the evil spirits.

Myriad landscape of Arunachal and her people who consider themselves "peripheral people" (Dai, 2006: 190), their living amidst may religious rituals and festivals, ancient memories, many events and incidents of life make them integral to the rhythms of ecology. Shaman's stories elaborate the truths and realities of life. He is the guardian of time and destiny. He is also the mentor of every soul and regulator of life and activities of the individual. As such he upholds the ecological vision and maintains both the deep and shallow ecology.

Adis, the followers of animism, have profound knowledge about the evil spirits, mysteries of creation and ways of nature. Exorcism,

rituals of the propitiation of the evil spirits, listening to the miri/ shaman about the mysteries of the creation and the old stories, legends and small histories of the land keep them occupied in exploring the essentialism of life. The idea of Evil is the guiding principle of a cautious life that helps a tribal escape the danger at different stages of life and also enables him maintain sustainable social development and cultural integrity.

The religious literatures from Vedic times till 17th century from South to Northeast India have made efforts to promote eco-ethics and educate people in the lore of both internal and external ecology preservation and realization of the intrinsic values of ecology. So the human concerns for ecology and propagandas of our times are not new concepts.

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OF GRANDEUR AND VALOUR: BOLLYWOOD AND INDIA'S FIGHTING PERSONNEL 1960-2005

Sunetra Mitra

Introduction

Cinema, in Asia and India, can be broadly classified into three categories—popular, artistic and experimental. The popular films are commercial by nature, designed to appeal to the vast mass of people and to secure maximum profit. The artistic filmmaker while not abandoning commercial imperatives seeks to explore through willed art facets of indigenous experiences and thought worlds that are amenable to aesthetic treatment. These films are usually designated as high art and get shown at international film festivals. The experimental film directors much smaller in number and much less visible on the film scene are deeply committed to the construction of counter cinema marked by innovativeness in outlook and opposition to the establishment (Dissanayke, 1994: xv-xvi). While keeping these broad generalizations of the main trends in film-making in mind, the paper engages in a discussion of a particular type of popular/ commercial films made in Bollywood[1]. This again calls for certain qualifications, which better explain the purpose of the paper. The paper attempts to understand Bollywood's portrayal of the Indian military personnel through a review of films, not necessarily war films but, rather, through a discussion of themes that have war as subject and ones that only mention the military personnel. The films the paper seeks to discuss include *Haqeeqat, Border, LOC-Kargil,* and *Lakshya* that has a direct reference to the few wars that India fought in the post-Independence era and also three Bollywood blockbusters namely *Aradhana, Veer-Zara and Main Hoon Na*, the films that cannot be dubbed as militaristic nor has reference to any war time scenario but nevertheless have substantial reference to the army. The last mentioned films help us understand how Bollywood tries to build up on the image of the Army as they exist in popular perception. In my opinion, this depiction of the

fighting force leaves a more powerful impact on the audience though at the surface the films appear to deal with a completely different theme.

War films of Bollywood

Talking about genres in Indian, albeit mainstream Bollywood cinema, is no easy task. Yet the demand of our current topics calls for looking at the development of genres. "Our knowledge about the terms on which the industry addressed spectators through genre and the way spectators received genres, are as yet rudimentary", comments Ravi Vasudevan (2010: 103). Films made in Bollywood usually under the broad categories like romance, social, family drama, dacoity, off beat, good music, and tragic love story, which are as useful and legitimate as any other genre grouping! (Jaikumar, 2003: 24-29) Such classifications can be endless given the extreme flexibility of the choices with which films are thematically and spatially structured. Indian films are best understood through a discernment of the gradations and historical shifts within polyvalent and layered narratives, asserts Priya Jaikumar (2003). What emerges from such diverse thematic is the preponderance of the devotional and social films, with their emphasis on social criticism, to the favoured genres of the middle class. A running theme in sociaI films was the emphasis on maintaining indigenous identities against the fascination for Western cultural behaviour. The social theme successfully encouraged the induction of the sensational attractions of action, spectacle and dance. In many ways the labeling was superficial (Vasudevan, 2010). The social genre, observes, M. Madhava Prasad (1998), is a 'feudal family romance'— to individual romantic fulfillment and the formation of the couple for the nuclear family, consumerist orientations, affiliations to an impersonal state form — ultimately subordinated to the rule of traditionally regulated social relationships (Prasad, 1998). There is another yet dominant form in these rather undefined genres — the historical film that dwelt on a number of subjects: the glory of ancient, pre-Islamic India; Mughal kinship and its relation to Hindu ruling groups, the Rajputs, the heroism of the Maratha king Shivaji and after Independence, set of films based on Indian resistance to colonial rule (Vasudevan, 2010: 145-146). While some critiques have tried to credit the films as a bid towards forging amity between different communities, one cannot avoid the conclusion that there is a tendency towards rewriting of Indian history. (ibid.) According to Kishore Budha,

such genre development is dictated by the vagaries of the market conditions, a tendency most remarkably noted in case of the war films. This tendency is clearly linked, Budha notes to the growth of nationalistic fervor and the formation of a national identity in the Indian subcontinent (Budha, 2008). In the same breath, Budha notes that Bollywood has not much succeeded in developing the genre of war film and he points out that hyper critical analysis of the film researchers and scholars constantly trying to draw parallel with the realism of Hollywood and European narratives have robbed the enthusiasm of making war movies. The Hindi war films have been criticized for its absurdity, clumsiness, bizarre plot twists and canned nationalism as a prop for the standard mundane love story(ibid.: 9). No wonder, therefore, after the initial euphoria films did not remain as attractive a proposition to the movie-makers. We will come back to this point a little later.

As already stated, my paper will be looking at a particular type of films made in Bollywood in which the military plays an important role directly or indirectly. War, therefore, as a theme feature repeatedly in the discussion of the movies I have already mentioned. My paper, therefore, is not dealing with war films only. It refers to those cinemas that have reference to military and where the military has been deliberately bestowed with stereotypic imageries. It seems that the subject that the films have dealt with have been deliberately chosen, the choice being made after a particular historical development. War films can be very loosely described as film genre concerned with warfare usually about naval, air, or land battles, sometimes focusing instead on prisoners of war covert operations, military training or other related subjects. At times, war films focus on daily military or civilian life in wartime without depicting battles. Their stories may be fiction, based on history, docudrama, biographical or even alternate history fiction. The term anti-war is sometimes used to describe films which bring to the viewer the pain and horror of war, often from a political or ideological perspective. War films as a genre traces its development back to the period after First World War in Hollywood and a legacy still in vogue and as yet quite fashionable among film makers globally[2]. Though the themes of war and militarism have long interested film makers, it is really surprising that the number of movies that one finds being made on the subject of war in India, particularly in Bollywood, is really small while the notions of chivalry, courage, bravery and discipline have got repeated mention in the other kinds of movies removed from the subject of war. It is true that war has had a

powerful impact on the film industry. Again it is equally true that films influence war-time behaviour and incisively shape the way we think about the battles that have been waged.

The so called war film that was first made in Bollywood and was a great success was *Haqeeqat* directed by Chetan Anand and was made right after the Sino-Indian War of 1962. *Haqeeqat* is the quintessential propaganda film dedicated to Nehru, trading on the resurgence of nationalist sentiment in the wake of the India-China War of 1962. It dealt with an actual warfare and as natural with most war films it had large cast of characters played out by Dharmendra, Balraj Sahni and many more. The major part of the film was shot on location in Ladakh. Rightly exploiting the patriotic fervor, *Haqeeqat* in many ways revealed the anxieties of an extremely bewildered nation in the face of realities caused by the Chinese aggression. The Chinese debacle had led to much soul searching in India and had a dampening effect on the nationalist sentiments as captured in the films made during the 1950s. Commenting on this development, M.K. Raghavendra says that throughout the 1960s, the effort had been "to retreat from social responsiveness" and "the locale shifts... to the scenic spots and hill stations". (Raghvendra, 2008) The latter development according to Raghavendra marks a retreat from nationalism, from the dominant theme of the 1950s, when the making of the nation has been a major consideration. (ibid.)

A long list of films were produced and directed between 1973 and 1997, though it were the seventies and late nineties and the first few years of the present decade that saw most movies on the war theme being churned out. The list is headed by *Hindustan Ki Kasam (Swear By India, 1973)* once again by Chetan Anand. The movie for the first time described the exploits of the air force and had as its subject the Indo-Pak War of 1971. The film clearly identified Pakistan as the enemy and set the trend of a deployment of a strong anti-Pak sentiment in the ongoing exercise of forging and discovering an Indian identity. (Bharat, 2008) Ever since the Indo-Pak War or the War for Liberation of Bangladesh of 1971 remained the most talked about subject in the so called 'war movies'. This might be because by the seventies the Chinese War had almost been relegated to the background and the image of a confident, better equipped and more efficient fighting body comes into view. Lesser known films like *Akraman* (1975) too were made dwelling on the subject of Indo-Pak War.

Discussions in Hindi films of the theme of war, observes Kishore

Budha, have to be placed in the context of the rise of right wing politics during the 1980s, the eventual electoral victory of the BJP in 1998 and the box office success of *Border* by J.P. Dutta (Budha, 2008). Border is a 1997 blockbuster Bollywood war film based on the Indo-Pak War of 1971. The movie is an adaptation from real life events that happened at the Battle of Longewala fought in Rajasthan (Western Theatre) during the Indo-Pak War of 1971 and Bangladesh Liberation War. With *Border* one reaches the culmination of films made on the subject of Indo-Pak War of 1971. Unlike Dutta's earlier films which were grounded in caste tussles of the 1980s, *Border* comes after the exiling of conflict from within the space of nation (Raghvendra, 2008). *Border* is in sharp contrast to *Haqeeqat,* a film that immediately responded to a disastrous military engagement, a justification not available to Border. In *Border*, every other kind of problem that faces the Indian nation has been willed away, comments Raghavendra (ibid.: 267-268). Raghavendra makes an interesting observation while discussing *Border* that despite being a multi-starrer, no Indian actors "is allowed to play the Pakistanis, always represented by unknown actors. The logic is apparently that it would be unbecoming for an Indian actor to play a Pakistani..." (ibid.: 268-269). Narrative space in *Border* is strictly demarcated into two separate zones, the battlefield and home—a fact made conspicuous by absence of maps, indispensable to the war film as the genre is understood. The ventures into realism follow the convention of popular cinema being shot on location and including action sequences reminiscent of Hollywood war film (ibid.). It will be interesting to quote J.P. Dutta, the Indian film-maker whose effort and statement reminded the industry of its patriotic duties and obligation towards the martyr:

I don't care about industry... they would rather have me shoot inane films in Switzerland. I only care for the mother of a dead war hero who rings me up and blesses me. (J.P.Dutta cited in Unnithan, 2003)[3]

A very significant movie made on the subject but that received less attention despite winning the National Film Award for best feature film in Hindi is *1971,* directed by Amrit Sagar. The film is an account of the escape of six soldiers of the Indian Army taken as prisoners of war by the Pakistan army during the Indo-Pak War of 1971. Though not plotted in the immediate warring times, the story takes place in Pakistan in 1977, six years after the Indo-Pakistan War. The film is a moving account of the escapades that the six prisoners try to execute.

The films dealing with Kargil include J.P. Dutta's *LOC-Kargil* (2003) that provided a detailed account of the Kargil War from the start to the finish. In his effort, Dutta received production assistance from the Indian Army while his closeness with the right wing politicians helped him gain publicity for his film. Dutta is reported to have stated that the Indian Army, impressed by the success of *Border*, encouraged him to produce *LOC-Kargil*: "*I didn't want to go back and shoot another war film. But the army asked me to come over and placed the facts before me. After that I could not say no.*" (Nair, 2002)

Lakshya (*Target or Objective*, 2004) is a Farhan Akhtar movie, a fictional story based on the historical events of the 1999 Kargil conflict. Director Farhan Akhtar repeatedly mentioned that the film merely used Kargil as the backdrop to explore struggles of individuality. It will be interesting to read the promo that came out with the release: "It took him twenty four years and 18,000 ft to find about himself (selfhood and identity, in which the backdrop is Kargil, an event that took place in 1999)"[4]. *Lakshya*, is a patriotic tribute to those who fought the war and their bereaved families. *Lakshya*, can be treated, writes Daiya, both as a war epic and a film about protagonist Karan Shergill, (Hrithik Roshan) (Daiya, 2008). After *Lakshya*, the surge in the war movies dealing with the theme of Indo-Pak hostility ebbed and not too many films on the subject were made.

It is interesting to note that the topic of war surfaced on the Indian celluloid only following a real historical incident. This is noticeable in case of all the films from *Haqeeqat* to *Lakshya* and the depiction has been more or less similar. The films were made primarily to support and promote war effort and nationalism. The films made after the war actually debated and critiqued the events and meanings of conflict. All the movies so far discussed share a similarity of experience caught in the gripping reality. The films have rightly analysed naivete among the general Indian population about the army and because the realities of war-like situation often become unacceptable to the people living in political and economic stability, there develops an aura of romanticism surrounding the army, of the horrors and challenges in the war. The films made are, therefore, artistic and powerful expressions of the actions of the men in uniform, a response to the consumer demand to see these events on screen. Over time, the relevance of the same films or the issues on which the films have been made gradually fades away. The wars gradually become memory, a fragment of its own reality.

The films that were discussed were not just grandiose portraits

of war or documents of passion. All the films mentioned so far follow the traits that war films tend to follow, a few set patterns, depending on the nationality of the war and the prominence of the characters (Bottomore, 2002: 239-242). It is not very difficult in discerning the anti-Pakistani preoccupation of the films discussed. There is an assumed threat from the border country and its possible repercussions on the mainland. While watching these movies one cannot escape from forming the impression that certain sections of the Bollywood film industry were virtually at 'war' with Pakistan. The films made sweeping generalizations that dramatized old dichotomies between right and wrong, good and evil. Their overall tone is bombastic, and they frankly manipulate the viewer's emotions. The films are explicit in identifying and labelling charges against the enemy and drums up fear of the enemy in order to defend the nation's, in this case India's involvement in the war. There are representations of the enemy, while relying on the narration as well to establish an enemy threat. However, such exaggerated passion and solidarity towards the militia were often forgotten soon after the war was over. The subjects of the films actually aid remembering the soldiers and their sacrifice. Thus, there is an appreciation of the great work done by the soldiers, a significance that has more poignant aspects.

While one can hardly anticipate the effect of the films on audiences, there is a strong belief among the film-makers that they can actually influence the feelings and actions of cinema audiences in general. Going by the relatively very few number of films that have been made on the theme of war and also the repetitiveness of the subject it occurs that as a subject the films are unpromising and unattractive. The success of a certain film actually generated the momentum to produce similar kinds of films but that too only at the opportune moment when the memories of the war are still fresh and passions are high. So far as Indian films are concerned, such a tendency can be explained by the near absence of wars for long periods of time and the wars that actually took place had not disturbed civilian life for any great length of time. Indian thinking on war clearly hovers in a twilight zone between facts and fantasy.

The way the army has been portrayed by Bollywood helps it emerge as a great equalizer. It unites Indians as a whole, transcending socio-political and economic divisions, thus, focalizing events through the heroic deeds of the national fighting body. Riding on the wave of patriotism that the war creates the Bollywood films try to convey a pan-Indianness that otherwise also is a hallmark of commercial

Indian cinemas made within and outside Bollywood. This explains a very visible trend in popular cinemas namely a tendency to reinforce the idea of an essentialized and a unitary nation-state and its apparatuses. The myth of the unitary nation is, thus, intensified. (Dissanayake, 1994) In this way, the relationship between nationhood acquires a new meaning in discussions of popular culture — a concept that privileges ideas of coherence and unity and stable cultural meanings associated with the uniqueness of a given nation. Being imbricated with ideological production, Bollywood war films thrive on situations or crises through which over and over, its members are reminded about their collective sorrows and hopes. This nationalism, observes Cynthia Enloe (1994), "sprang from masculinised hope", which also sexualizes and domesticizes the very fact of nationalism.

Conspicuous yet not unlikely is the fact that women play only a minor role in the movies, being mostly limited to scenes showing them weeping over their departed men. In most of the films, there is an invisible involvement of women, absolutely crucial as inspiration and support. Their actions are romanticized as heterosexual lovers who inspired, supported and gave meaning to the struggles the military undertakes. Defence of the nation and laying lives for the same become a masculinised duty. Women serve behind frontlines, well within the imagined safety of nation's borders. What matters for the military institution, the state and the public is the so-called biological or female destiny of women. Military historian Martin van Creveld claims that "men have made war their special province because they cannot reproduce".

Women's primary role is restricted as adornment, as nurturers of the nation, the community and the family. The maternal figure emblematizes the nation threatened by enemy, demanding loyalty, rescue and defence. The films conform to the nationalist demand of a specific kind of femininity, dictated through masculine imagination. The so-called war films thus consciously promote certain ideas of gender relations and femininities. The images produced are part of an ideological discourse aimed at keeping militarism and war in the domain of protective men who drew strength from suffering, supportive women figures. (Sumindyo, 1998)

The above narrative has tried to indicate the broad tendencies visible in the so-called Bollywood war films. The films discussed so far actually dealt with war situations and, thus, the depiction of the army and its bravery in the front has been repeatedly highlighted. There exists still another kind of films, though very few in number

which extols the rigors of training in Indian army. One of the less publicized film in this category is Govind Nihalni's *Vijeta* , made in 1982. *Vijeta* (*The Victor*) is the coming of age story of Angad (Kunal Kapoor). Confused like any other teenager trying to find himself and caught in between the marital problems of his mother Neelima (Rekha) and father Nihal (Shashi Kapoor). It is time for him to decide what he wants to do with his life. To select a profession and be someone, Angad chooses to become a fighter pilot with the Indian Air Force. What follows is his struggle to become a victor both with his self and the outer world. The film is notable for some rarely seen aerial photography of combat aircraft active with the IAF in 1980s. The central character of Angad himself is a MiG-21 pilot and is shown flying the aircraft in ground attack role in 1971 war. The film is memorable because of the effort it has taken in mapping the training of the air force commanders, the extreme hardships and challenges that one has to endure during the training session and the commitment and courage it requires to adhere to such strict regimentation and discipline. *Vijeta*, though not a commercial success, had wonderfully showcased the cause of the air force without taking recourse to excessive nationalistic fervour. However, these are rare movies which drive home the message without actually titillating popular emotions.

The other important film though eventually drifting to different story but nevertheless focuses on the army and the commanders is *Prahaar*. The opening scenes of *Prahaar* see some extremely brave and dedicated team of commandos rescuing a school bus held hostage by a hang of terrorist. The young commander who masterminds the raid got seriously injured eventually loses one of his feet, his dreams of making it big in the army dying with the same. The frustration of the young man is palpable and a good portion of the film highlights the rigorous training sessions, with Nana Patekar as the veteran commander. The recurring reference to the training part can be treated as hinting at the aspirations of the young commanders who were ready to sacrifice for a great cause. The shattering of the young commander's dream in the ambush that takes place between him and the terrorists, though ennobling for others signified a complete reversal of fortune for the individual concerned. For the young man no bravery award or appreciation could adequately explain the impact of the event. It was not an accident that put a full stop to his promising career but something that remains a possibility every time the soldier goes out to fight. What must have pained the young commander more than being

maimed by the event, was his inability to take part in action a feat that he must have looked forward to.

The discussion, however, remains incomplete without discussing a rather offbeat cinema that deals with the feats of the Border Security Forces (BSF)—*Tango Charlie*, a film directed by Mani Shankar in 2005. It got rave reviews and was well received by audiences, but did not perform well commercially. The movie aims to portray the different aspects of war and grief, and does not glorify these acts. It is, thus, a departure from the usual valorising tales. An interesting aspect of the film has been the way the national character of the BSF has been highlighted through their calling to services at extremely geographically distant places of India. The film focuses on the BSF jawans fighting the insurgents in Manipur, where they were fighting the Bodos. Later, the scene of action shifts to southern India, in Andhra Pradesh,to counter the Naxalites rebels wreaking havoc upon the countryside. On their next assignment, platoon tries to quench the religious riots taking place in the western province of Gujarat. The Kargil War between India and Pakistan soon begins and once again the platoon and the battalion move out to the state of Kashmir where they are assigned to defend a bridge. While the BSF jawans were ultimately the victors, it is not the victories that get the applauds at the end of film. Time and again the movie reflects on the great contradiction that is inherent in the so-called assaults on one another whether by the army or the BSF on the insurgents represented in the film by the Bodos, Naxalites, the fundamentalists or a fighting machinery from a country across the border. While both the parties claim that they were fighting for a greater cause, the ultimate fall out is mindless bloodbath resulting in killing lives. Thus, fighting becomes the only way to restore peace. *Tango Charlie* through recurrent emphasis on the dichotomy does not in any way glorify war but rather looks at the futility of military exercises and the grief that it ultimately brings. Tango Charlie marks an important departure not just in demystifying the glories usually associated with war but also looking at the enemies within. The standard Indian warfare narrative of identifying Pakistan as the wrongful nation and, therefore, India's greatest enemy had been cast off as Mani Shankar tries to locate other very potent sources of disturbances caused internally that also threatens the integrity of the country.

ANOTHER TALE, DIFFERENT YET NOT SO MUCH

In this part of the paper, I shift from the genre I was so long discussing. Here, the paper shall focus on three blockbuster movies, each significant in its own ways, not quite dealing with war time situation but each has as its protagonist a defence personnel. The films I discuss include *Aradhana* directed by Shakti Samanta, *Main Hoon Na* by Farah Khan and *Veer Zara* by Yash Chopra. *Aradhana* among the three makes a very fleeting reference to a fictitious war,where the other fighting nation has never been given a name. The other two movies have Sharukh Khan starring as the gallant Indian officer, though caught in very dissimilar situations. The three films bear a commonality in the way the hero has been depicted. In *Aradhana,* Rajesh Khanna plays a double role, each time portraying the role of a pilot in Indian Air Force. The way he is cast in the film, charismatic and romantic erode him of the usual marks of an air force pilot. But beneath the flamboyant exterior is a dedicated fighter who is ready to reckon with any situation and willing to sacrifice. He is fearless as becomes evident from the ease with which he takes his flight high up with his fiancee seating beside. His flight high up also reflects his ambitious nature. His untimely death leaves behind a grief stricken wife determined to make her son fulfill his father's unfinished dream. As the story unfolds one meets Rajesh Khanna-2 as Suraj, once again the handsome, youthful air force pilot—ambitious and courageous. The film is in no way an attempt to depict the greatness of air force pilots. *Aradhana* opens as a simple story—Vandana and Arun fall in love, have a marriage secretly carried out in temple. Before the couple had a social engagement, Arun dies in an air crash. Vandana, who was carrying Arun's child, was left with the hard task of bringing up the child. Despite the reverses she has suffered, Vandana was determined to help the child grow up as an air force pilot, the eternal wish of her late husband. Suraj did ultimately become an airforce pilot and Vandana learns about it many years later when Suraj comes to meet her fiancee. Suraj bore unmistakable resemblance in appearance and mannerisms with his father. And, on the day he was to be awarded with a civilian award for his achievements at the war front, Suraj discovers the truth about his birth. Suraj reacts in the most positive way—in the award function he calls his real mother Vandana to come up on the stage and give him the prize. In the last scenes of the film, speech of Ashok Kumar, the veteran Major, is significant

for our analysis. He opens by congratulating the civilian effort in recognizing the heroism of the army, a recognition he considers has greater significance than the ones awarded by the government of the country. Eventually, as the scene develops and he finds out that Suraj was the son of late Arun Verma, he extols Vandana for allowing her only son to take up such a risky career despite the fact that her husband had died in an air crash. Vandana, in this way, becomes the ideal mother who raises her son for a greater cause, a cause that is something as important as the case of fighting for the nation. While there is little scope for depicting gallantry of the air force pilots in the film because of the storyline adopted one cannot miss the element of medieval chivalry connected with the depiction of the air force pilots. The medieval code of conduct that bound the knight to his duties becomes reflected in the way Suraj acknowledges her real mother's sacrifice. His actions embody the obligations devised for this exclusive class of men, catering to the more important duties of an honest man and a good citizen. Suraj had not desisted from war — that was an impossible requirement — but he delivered for the just cause, to succor to the oppressed (here his mother) (Williamson, 1919: 330-339). Suraj's boldness transcends the societal sanctions and becomes emulative for others.

A commercial success, the blockbuster *Main Hoon Na (Don't worry, I'm Here, 2004*) directed by Farah Khan is a remarkable departure from Bollywood's usual portrayal of fighting personnel waiting to avenge the wrongs of the enemy nation. The army here is shown to be extremely pacifist trying to settle an amicable solution to a long-standing conflict. The story, thus, runs: Major Ram Sharma (Sharukh Khan) joins college as a student to protect his senior General Amarjeet Bakshi's (Kabir Bedi) daughter Sanjana (Amrita Rao) from the ex-Army man turned terrorist Raghavan (Suniel Shetty). Raghavan is dead against 'Mission Milaap' a strategic move where two enemy countries, India and Pakistan will release 50 of their mutual prisoners as a peace initiative. He is willing to go to great lengths to stop the project. What stands out in the movie is an attempt to revive the feeling of camaraderie between India and Pakistan instead of battle. This definitely is a paradigm shift where the directors move from escapist cinema to reality. While the tensions in the Indo-Pak relationship is a central concern, the film shows the conflicting stance adopted by secular, patriotic and pro-peace state official like Major Ram Prasad Sharma on one hand and the threat to the nation from within of anti- Pak forces like Raghavan, who incidentally is an ex-army man determined to sabotage the Indo-

Pak peace process. Interestingly, Raghavan is a Hindu villain at centre stage (Daiya, 2008). Major Ram Sharma neither from his appearance nor from the way he is presented corresponds to the usual image of the military that conjures up in our mind. He is like any other civilian, matured and sensitive enough to handle frivolous young men. At the same time he has a romantic disposition. He is in every way a global man who understands the futility of the long drawn out conflict between two nations, each weighing down under its multiple problems. This image is in consonance with the tune of the movie which actually endorses the tune of international peace and friendship by making goodwill gesture first. Raghavan, again an ex-Army man turned militant is in sharp contrast to the freshness of outlook as seen in Major Ram Sharma. Raghavan has a kind of negativity about him which makes him give in to fait accompli, that India and Pakistan can never be friendly neighbours because "we have been in a state of war with Pakistan since 1947".

Another important film which also capitalizes on the Indo-Pak bilateral relationship and tries to weave a tale of amity is Yash Chopra's *Veer Zaara*. This film has no reference to any war situation. It only shows Shahrukh Khan as Squadron Leader Veer Pratap Singh as a rescue pilot with the Indian Air Force, who risks his own life to save the lives of others. One day, on duty, he comes across a stranded girl from Pakistan, Zaara. Zaara, a carefree, sprightly girl has come to India to fulfill her surrogate grandmother's dying wish. She meets with a bus accident leaving her stranded in a foreign land. Veer saves her life... and his life is never the same again... Twenty-two years later, Saamiya Siddiqui, a Pakistani lawyer on her first case, finds herself face-to-face with an aging Veer Pratap Singh. He has languished in a Pakistan jail cell for 22 years and has not spoken to anyone all these years—and no one knows why. Her mission is to discover the truth about Veer and see to it that justice is served. And thus starts her journey to unveil the truth... the story of Veer and his life her. The qualities that Squadron leader Veer Pratap Singh displays do not have any uniqueness about them- he is brave, courageous, helpless. What can be surmised in hindsight about Squadron Leader is his helplessness in face of diplomatic complexities, which made maneuverings possible on an issue that was largely personal. The fact that he remained quiet for 22 years was, perhaps, an indication of the futility to reach any consensus about proving his innocence. Like most films, *Veer Zaara* ends on a happy note.

Conclusion

There are very few war movies which have been able to show that wars actually are 'brutal wastes'. War films usually glorify and romanticize militarism, there is an inevitable glamour attached to fighting. The films that have been discussed in their widely divergent ways have sought to recapture history as a way of making sense to it. All the films discussed in the foregoing narrative carry the portrayal of the soldier's psyche both in war and in peacetime. Stark shots of jawans who die defending their posts in sub zero temperatures against an external enemy validate war as a genre in the industry. There is no denial though that "a potential cinematic milestone has been sunk by the deadweight of songs, flashbacks and expletives, out of sync with a battle zone, where survival alone dictates every other consideration... in other words, Bollywood, by its very being and circumstance, is rather mismatched with a genre configured on a different set of skills, attitudes, aptitudes and expertise." (Talukdar, 2004) Such tendencies are also reflective of the way popular Hindi movies have speculated and commoditized that history. The films, dealing with war and their diverse thematic, show us the way in which cinema becomes the terrain for historical reconstruction and contestation of historical meaning. The movies clearly reveal how the changing imperatives of the present take on the authority of the past. Together the analyses of the films in a major way develop certain stereotypes that leave an indelible impression on the minds of the audience/ spectators. One does appreciate the difficulty of making war films which many a times requires permission from the government as also a clearance from the army about the content of the film. Lack of access to the military archives for detailed research acts as a constraint on a more realistic portrayal of the army. It now depends on the future researchers to put in place the many missing links in the reality and their celluloid representation. That again is another part of the story we have just started narrating.

NOTES

1. Popular cinemas made in Bollywood are often bracketed with commercial cinema. For a detailed discussion see, M.K. Raghavendra. 2008. *Seduced By the Familiar, Narration and Meaning In Indian Popular Cinema,* OUP. Also, Ravi Vasudevan. 2000. *Making Meaning In Indian Cinema*, OUP. Ravi Vasudevan. 2010. *The Melodramatic Public, Film Form and Spectatorship in Indian Cinema.* Permanent Black
2. Robert T. Eberwin. 2004. *The War Film*, Rutgers University Press; Marilyn J.Malelski and Nancy Lynch Street. 2003. *War and Film In America: Historical and Critical*

Essays, Mcfarland. Lawrence H. Suid. 2002. *Governments and Glory: The Making of American Military Image in Film,* University Press of Kentucky.

3. Suresh Nair. 2002. Playing a War Hero is a Dream Role: JP Dutta, *The Economic Times,* October 17.
   Cited in Kishore Budha, *Genre Development in the Age of Markets and Nationalism: The War Film* in Bharat and Kumar (eds). 2008. *Filming the Line of Control, The Indo-Pak Relationship through the Cinematic Lens,* New Delhi: Routledge, p. 7.
4. Cited in Kavita Daiya. 2008. *Violent Belongings: Partition, Gender and National Culture In Postcolonial India*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

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RACE, MILIEU AND MOMENT: A CONTEXTUAL READING OF THE SELECT POEMS OF NISSIM EZEKIEL AND IRVING LAYTON

P.K. Kalyani

The French critic Hyppolyte Taine, while trying to establish a scientific approach to literature through an investigation of what created the individual who created the work of art, propounded the concept that it was the race, milieu and moment that shaped the creative mind. By "race" Taine meant the inherited disposition or temperament of the poet; by "milieu" he meant the circumstances or environment that modified the inherited racial disposition of the poet; and by "moment" he meant the momentum of past and present cultural traditions.

This paper is an attempt to understand the voices of the two Jewish poets namely, Nissim Ezekiel and Irving Layton through their select poems foregrounding the concept of Taine. The paper will scrutinize the respective individual voices after briefly introducing the two poets, though an introduction of the two poets may be a little redundant taking the literature students into consideration.

Ezekiel was born on 16 December 1924 in Mumbai. His father, Moses Ezekiel, was a professor of botany at Wilson College, and his mother was principal of her own school. The Ezekiels belonged to Mumbai's Jewish community, known as the 'Bene Israel'. In 1947, Ezekiel earned a graduation degree in Literature from Wilson College, University of Mumbai. He had a brief stint as a teacher of English literature after graduation and published literary articles during this period. For a while he dabbled in radical politics and shortly after that he sailed to England in November 1948. He studied philosophy at Birkbeck College, London. After three and a half years, Ezekiel returned home earning his passage as a deck-scrubber aboard a ship carrying arms to Indo-China.

Ezekiel's first book, *The Bad Day*, appeared in 1952. In 1960, he published another volume of poems, *The Deadly Man*. He worked

as an advertising copywriter and general manager of a picture frame company during 1954–59, and in 1961, he co-founded the literary monthly *Jumpo*. He edited *Poetry India* during1966–67. His fifth book of poems, titled *The Exact Name*, was published in 1965. During this period, he held short-term tenure as visiting professor at University of Leeds (1964) and University of Pondicherry (1967). In 1969, Writers Workshop, published his *The Damn Plays*.

The major themes of Ezekiel are: love, loneliness, lust, creativity and political pomposity, human foibles and the "kindred clamour" of urban dissonance, as rightly observed by one of his critics. However, "Among them 'alienation' and 'belongingness' are the most striking issues in the entire bulk of his poetry" (Awasthi, 2008: 79).

Ezekiel became the pioneer of "New Poetry" by his greater variety and depth than any other poet of the post-Independence period. In the words of Bruce King, "Of the group of poets—attempting to create a modern English poetry in India, Nissim Ezekiel soon emerged as the leader who advised others, set standards and created places of publication ...Ezekiel brought a sense of discipline, self-criticism and mastery to Indian English poetry. He was the first Indian poet to have such a professional attitude" (ibid.: 78).

Commenting on the tone of Ezekiel's poems in general, John Thieme (2005) observes that, "...his work is centrally concerned with perception and his poetic persona is both that of an observer who regards his social world and his own behavior with a degree of amused detachment, and that of a complete insider" (xxi).

As if endorsing the observation made above, in one of his interviews Ezekiel said that, "I would like to see some alienation among Indo-English writers. However, undesirable from moral, social and other points of view, it has been aesthetically very productive provided it is genuine. You can't pretend, you can't play the game of alienation. If you are genuinely alienated... and feel you are hostile towards others and they are hostile to you, you hate their guts and they hate yours; this can produce great literature. This genuine alienation is really absent." (Mahan, 2001: 102).

Irving Layton, the Canadian poet who has been taken up for the current investigation, was born on 12 March 1912 to Jewish parents in the Romanian town of Tirgul Neamt. His family immigrated to Montreal in 1913, and was forced to live in a poor St. Urbain Street neighborhood. As a child he faced daily struggles with, among others, the Montreal French Canadians, who were uncomfortable with the growing numbers of Jewish newcomers.

When Irving was a young boy, his Mother was the centre of his world, and between receiving an alternating onslaught of Yiddish curses and warm displays of affection, she taught him about the duality of human nature. Layton's father Moishe had a strong effect on his young son especially his strong sense of the Divine, of the Poetic.

Irving's early literary influences included the poets Tennyson, Walter Scott, Wordsworth, Byron, and Shelly; the novelists Austen and George Eliot; the essayists Bacon, Goldsmith, Johnson, Addison, and Swift; and, of course, Shakespeare and Darwin. Layton also read Marx and Nietzsche. As for his political ideology, he began to deem himself a socialist, and in later years Layton identified with the New Democratic Party of Canada. He joined the Young People's Socialist League for a short time, and had fierce debates with budding politicians such as David Lewis and poets such as A. M. Klein.

When Layton was at his most prolific, he published a book almost every year. He won Canada Council grant, the first of which was in 1957, was for *The Improved Binoculars*. By the mid-1950s, Layton's work had become recognized by Canada's large publishing houses, and it was in 1959 that McClelland & Stewart published Layton's *A Red Carpet for the Sun*. It was the beginning of a long-standing and mutually rewarding relationship between Layton and McClelland & Stewart. This book won the Governor General's Award. It was also in 1959 that Layton won the prestigious Senior Arts Fellowship. The fellowship enabled Irving to travel abroad; and at this time he visited India, among the many countries he visited. In 1980, he was nominated for the Nobel Prize by Italy and Korea, though eventually the prize was won by Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

Layton's biographer T. Jacobs (2013) makes the following pertinent observation on the poet:

> Throughout his career, Layton's "tell it like it is" style won him an equal amount of enemies and worshippers. Fighting a battle against Puritanism for most of his life, Layton's work had provided the bolt of lightning that was needed to split open the thin skin of conservatism and complacency in the poetry scene of the preceding century, allowing modern poetry to expose previously unseen richness and depth. The 1940s through to the 1960s were years of discovery, and many writers have acknowledged Layton as both Teacher and Prophet. Layton inspired many to follow his lead and tirelessly helped younger poets and writers in need. Throughout the years, Layton has bestowed his love of words, sound, and indeed his love of life itself upon audiences and readers. (8)

Layton's poetic voice fell silent on 4 January 2006.

Having introduced the poets, in the following pages I have taken

up the analysis of the select poems of both the writers separately because, though both are Jews, they have adopted two different countries as their homeland and are exposed to two entirely different socio cultural situations. For the present investigation, I have opted for the Ezekiel's *Collected Poems of Ezekiel: 1952-88* since it contains most of his significant poems. As for Layton, I have opted for his collection titled *Fortunate Exile*. This collection is a selection from the previous publications and as rightly observed in its blurb, this collection "is a summing up of the poet's long quest for the meanings of his own religion in a universe marked by turmoil and makes a contemporary statement about man's relation to God."

The very opening lines of the very first poem in this collection titled "A Time to Change", strikes one of the major notes that runs through the whole collection of *The Collected Poems: 1952-1988*. It is about the yearning of the poet to return to the fold from which he has strayed. The sense of alienation and the consequent longing to return is evident in the lines quoted below:

> We who leave the house in April, Lord
> How shall we return? (3)

The poem reflects the exiled Jew's anguished mind. A few more lines are quoted from the poem to illustrate the point:

> Debtors to the whore of Love,
> Corrupted by the things imagined
> Through the winter nights, alone,
> The flesh defiled by dreams of flesh,
> Rehearsed desire dead in spring,
> How shall we return? (3)

A return to the uncorrupted stage, or return to the space of innocence and purity is desired in these lines. As the title points out, the poet identifies the time as the time to change. It is the longing to return to the original space, the root that grips the mind of the alien in the poet. The sense of alienation and the longing to return are traceable in quite a few other poems as well.

The note of despondency that is in the lines quoted above runs in "The Double Horror" too. The poet points out that there is no dearth of factors in the society that corrupts human mind. Various factors like newspapers, cinemas, radio features, speeches of

hypocrites and even toothpaste advertisements corrupt man. Having been corrupted people remain alienated. A few lines from the poem, which are relevant in the context, are given below:

> Those who say Comrade are merely slaves and those
> Who will not be my brothers share the acrid shame
> Of being unwanted, unloved, incompetent
> As leaders, disloyal servants, always alone.(8)

Though the corrupt call themselves comrades, their comradeship is pseudo in nature and is not honest. Sunk in corruption they do not trust one another. Deep within their minds there is no mutual understanding or genuineness of friendship. Further, the ideal world of the uncorrupted keeps them distanced, denying them a space within. The speaker regrets that he too is instrumental in the promotion of corruption. He is hurt that

> Corrupted by the world I must infect the world
> With my corruption. (8)

Also, as infected the speaker is barricaded from the external world though he is engulfed in richness. Relevant lines from the poem "On Meeting a Pedant"are quoted for reference:

> Sunlight warms around him and the summer
> Evenings melt in rich fatness on his tongue
> But he is rigid, barricaded from
> The force of flower or bird by what he reads. (8)

As I mentioned elsewhere, the sense of alienation that sets in after a mismatch of "the Èlan of desire" and the "rational faculties" is individualistic in nature. This mismatch and the consequent feeling of alienation is the subject of another poem that is titled "Emptiness". In the lines quoted below, one may read the despondency:

> ... ... I am
> Waiting now in emptiness
> Annulled, cancelled, made a blank,
> Resolved to find another way. (11)

Drawing lesson from the engulfing emptiness, the poet is set to

find his way in another direction. In the concluding lines of the poem he makes a statement towards this and the lines are quoted below:

> Broken by excesses or by
> Lack of them, let me always feel
> The presence of the golden mean
> Between the Èlan of desire
> And the rational faculties,
> Brooding on design and colour
> Even in emptiness. (12)

The path to be taken is the via media between the extremes of Èlan of desire and the rational faculty. The idea is ideal and appears practical as both extremes cannot be rejected from life. This attitude of Ezekiel who tries to resolve problems is not so much found in Layton.

The problem that the poet poses in the poem titled "The Great" is the question of who is the great actually. He wonders whether the great are a different group or the poet himself. The poet holds the great in esteem but regrets that they cannot make him great. The lines quoted below would illustrate the irony behind the truth:

> Everyday they live and die in me but still
> They cannot make me great. I am alone. (21)

In most of the poems one can read this paradox. He is in company but he is alone. The poet feels that he is alone in spite of the great 'living' within him. "Exposed to life", he is unable to follow the great and, therefore, he is alone. The poem delineates "greatness" in detail and ends in an ironic note as it will be evident from the lines quoted below:

> The great provide a pattern for our life,
> Illustrate the paradoxes of the real
> To which we are exposed, alone. (22)

If in the poem discussed above the poet feels the loneliness, in "Commitment" he wishes to be alone. Being alone need not necessarily lead to loneliness and the poem illustrates this point. He, therefore, wishes to be alone and he has a reason for this:

Futilities suck the marrow from my bones
And put a fever for cash and fame. (26)

He wishes to get rid of the 'human face' that he puts on to hide the madness of an animal for fame and money that is latent in him. The poet realizes that he wants to be a man in the real sense of the word and for that he needs to return to the world of simplicities. The lines quoted below would evidence the point:

Truly, I wish to be a man. Alone
Or in the crowd, this is my only guide.
There is a world of old simplicities
To which my calling calls me, turbulence
Is stilled in it and slowly understood... (26)

The poem titled "Speech and Silences" is another statement of the human predicament. Voicing a totally different perception of speech and silence, which are essential for establishing human relationship, Ezekiel writes that:

Man is alone and cannot tell
The simplest thing to any friend
All speech is to oneself, others
Overhear and miss the meaning. (53)

Both speech and silence are indispensable to etch one's identity. The activities are complements to each other; and both, though, are essential to wipe away loneliness from life and build relationships through interaction, in fact facilitate man to be alone. The complementary nature of speech and silence is evident in the following lines:

In silence is simplicity
Expressed through speech, reality. (54)

In the poem "Confession" Ezekiel underscores the complementary nature of the two sides of life namely the pretended and the real. When he "pretends to be happy", the poet's intellect "Boistrously propel" him on and he is in company, playing games and indulging in various other intellectual activities. But finally he would "turn away/ Unsatisfied, to be alone". In this loneliness, instead of being

depressed or despondent, the poet finds perfection, rationale and a predictable end which is more concrete. The relevant lines are quoted for reference:

> And what is in this loneliness?
> Perfection. A fantasy
> Of lucid being, relation
> To a rational crowd, traffic
> Of the heart on images,
> Miracles of love that run to rule,
> And at the end, desolation,
> Which any fool could have foretold. (63)

The desolation at the end is expected, common and nothing special so much so that it shall not disturb the person intensely.

"Lamentation" is poem wherein the poet exposes the loneliness of a fugitive. The two poignant lines quoted below express the plight of the fugitive succinctly:

> Fugitive am I and far from home.
> A vagabond and every part of me is withered. (72)

The wise and worldly have advised him but he does not swim with the current and their words are wasted on him. As I said elsewhere, he is so totally cut off that even when he is nourished by the words of the wise, he does not prosper. Knowledge and laws have deserted him so much so that amidst bounty he remains bare. Realizing the condition in which he swirled, he pleads for life. He sounds like the prodigal son who returns after wasting a fine part of his life.

In "Declaration", Ezekiel's desire to be absorbed in the crowd is the focus. For the same purpose he keeps away from all that is beyond his reach. Though he takes care to avoid "fragile" and "expensive" matters and enjoys them from a safe distance, his turbulent mind in despair is aware that "possession is necessary" and deprivation self inflicted or inflicted by others leads to despair. The mind of the poet on this matter is very clearly reflected in the following lines:

> And deprivation is desolation.
> I have stood in the empty room
> And gazed at crowds in the street,
> Longing to be absorbed –

No moral law can fill the void,
Deaf and blind to all is appetite. (94)

The sense of desolation is the subject of yet another poem titled "Song of Desolation". In this poem he calls religion for help. In order to listen to the moan of the sea which is in correspondence with his inner moaning, the poet goes walking all alone and sits on a rock near the sea. The activities around should in fact clear the "inner block" and help him to be active; but at the end of the day he "Noticed nothing blossom". The agony of desolation having not subsided, he calls religion to see his inner flaws.

At times, one needs to accept loneliness. The poem "Virginal" voices the pretended acceptance of loneliness. In the heart of hearts the girl longs for a lover and a child, though she seemingly has accepted loneliness. Breathing the bitter air of loneliness, the girl pretends to be absorbed in reading. But the ironic paradox is evident in the following lines:

The universe is much too small to hold
Your longing for a lover and a child. (139)

"A Small Summit" is an expression of the poet's desire to be alienated from the crowd and differentiated as an individual. He does not want to be common, one among many, conform to an accepted style or in short, be one in a crowd. His desire to be unique does not permit him to be ordinary. To be different, he would rather suffer the alienation than conform. The line quoted would evidence this:

Do I belong, I wonder,
to the common plain?
A better thought.
I know that I would rather
suffer somewhere else
than be at home
among the accepted styles. (153)

The poet galvanizes his energy to find a fresh path to achieve his goal. The determination towards this is evident in his words which are quoted below:

If nothing else, I'll keep my nerve,

refuse the company of priests,
professors, commentators, moralists,
be my own guest in my room
one-man lunatic asylum,
questioning the Furies, my patron saints,
about their old and new obscurities. (153)

The poet chalks out the trajectory of the desire to belong in his poem "At Fifty". He vividly recalls his desire to belong, to conform in his youth. He says

Youth is a racket. Who can help
wanting to belong? (170)

As an old person he experiences the same sense of belonging, but not with the people of his age but with the youth. The following lines echo his mind:

I do not want ashes
of the old fire but the flame itself.
... ...
Given the choice, who would not
prefer to stay
among the growing shoots
instead of shedding leaves. (170)

He wants to belong — belong not with the category to which he naturally should belong but with its opposite.

"Background Casually" is poem that best illustrates the sense of alienation that lies embedded in the poet. As a boy he was never accepted in his peer group, as he tells. Like the boys of his age he never learnt to fly a kite or spin a top. As a Jew he was alienated in school because 'he' killed Christ. Christian and Islamic friends refused acceptance into their fold. Again as a grown up person, in London he was alone but for the company of the three namely, philosophy, poetry and poverty. The problem kept itself tagged on to him even after his return home from London. Though by now he learnt to take things on their stride, the crucial issue was "How to feel at home, that was the point". Back in India he still felt alienated. But as mentioned above, he started learning to live with it because his ancestors were aliens in India:

My ancestors, among the castes
Were aliens crushing seed for bread. (180)

Nevertheless, he accepted India as his place.

I have become part of it
To be observed by foreigners. (181)

In the following lines Ezekiel further confirms his acceptance of the country:

I have made my commitments now.
This is one: to stay where I am
As others chose to give themselves
In some remote and backward place.
My backward place is where I am. (181)

Shirish Chindhade (2001) commenting on this poem, writes in his book *Five Indian English Poets* that,

> He has made his commitments, chosen his islands, found his people and identified the five elements of sky, earth, air, water and fire. It is quite gratifying that God has granted him the human metaphor also to make his song good. This is not a mood of submission, or of resignation, or of alienation. It is rather the epiphanic moment of reconciliation, identification, discovery and achievement. (50)

In the above few pages, a scrutiny of the select poems of Ezekiel was made. In the next few pages it then behooves us to examine the poems of Layton.

The poem "O Jersusalem" is the opening piece in Layton's book *Fortunate Exile*. It is a narrative of the experiences of the exiled Jew in Jerusalem. However, the predominant note in the poem is the deep despondency that lies implicit in the last lines of the poem, which is quoted below for reference:

... ... O Jerusalem
you are too pure and break men's hearts
youare a dream of prophets, not for ourclay,
and drive men mad by your promised
impossible peace, your harrowing oracles of love.
and how we may walk upon this earth with forceful
human stir

unless we adore you and betray? (13)

In these lines the voice of the almost permanent longing of the Jew for the Promised Land is clearly heard. It also hints at the long duration of time that has gone by without the Land and Peace; and the long time ahead which also will not be giving the Jews the Jerusalem of their dream. In all dejection the poet calls the promised peace as "impossible peace".

The poem "Hear, O Israel" is philosophic. It carries the philosophy of a person who intends to achieve, and at the same is afraid that he might not achieve his goal; and in this context obviously it refers to the "impossible peace". He perceives that every human being is an exile for the simple reason that the spirit of his/hers belongs to another realm. It is only on a temporary sojourn in the body. And it never belongs to the body forever. Layton's cynicism is a product of his bitter experiences as a Jew. The fate of the Jews is more or less sealed and the reverberation of the gnawing feeling is echoed in the opening lines itself:

Exiled into the world
you are aliens in it
as Spirit is alien. (14)

Layton's cynicism that has evolved from his deep sense of loss and betrayal, finds expression in a very open manner in the lines that follow the above ones. Besides saying that the travail which the Jew undergoes in pursuing the Promised Land is an 'unending' one, he also hastens to add that the travails of the Jew will mock God. In fact, he says, it was Cosmos that gave life for the Jews in order to expose God's pretense and callousness in establishing Justice and Love in the world, which in fact should be his primary concern. The lines relevant to the point have been quoted for reference:

You are its embodiment
and your travail here
is an unending refutation

For the Cosmos itself framed you
to mock God's pretense
to initiate Justice and Love. (14)

The poem has a wider connotation, though the direct reference is

towards the homeless Jews. For the poet, it looks as though God is taking the Jews for a ride giving them false promises of Justice, Love, Peace and a Land of their own; and Cosmos has created the Jews to use them as a tool to expose God. However, both of them are not honest to the Jews since, if God plays tricks with the Jews, Cosmos utilizes them as a tool to expose God's insincerity.

A poet is endowed with the power of creation – the power to create his/her own world. Layton underscores this fact in the poem "Lyric" by saying that he is different from his fellowmen because he 'invents his own world'; and he compares himself to a mole which makes its own burrow, and to a bird which builds its own nest. This world that he creates in the poem is comfortable warm, cosy and secure, just like a burrow or a nest. Nevertheless, his world separates him from his brethren. While his fellow Jews are not able to find a space safe and secure, Layton is able to invent a world of his own and this world provides him with the security and comfort. However, Layton being sensitive, extends his poetic hands to the suffering fellowmen, as it is openly declared in the poem "Whom I Write For":

> I write for the gassed, burnt, tortured,
> and humiliated everywhere. (16)

The poem "Search", as the title explicitly states is about the search for 'the faintest scent of God'. And this search is one that is relayed from his forefathers. The 'relay', needless to elaborate, only underscores the longevity of the search and the implicit suggestion of the suffering that is undergone by the Jewish community for so long. The relay does not seem to be nearing the end, as one can infer from the poet's taking over and not ending the relay. Also the quoted lines would suggest the almost impossible realization of the goal of finding God who could address their predicament, as the poet is struggling to get the faintest scent of Him:

> Alien and bitter the road my forbears knew:
> fugitives forever eating unleavened bread
> and hated pariahs because of that one Jew
> who taught the tenderest Christian how to hate
> and harry them to whatever holes they sped. (22)

The Jews were not spared even if they hid themselves in 'holes'! The permanently chasing agony made the Jews even envy the dead.

The irony is that they are hated in the name of Jesus who preached brotherhood.

In another poem titled "The Sign of the Cross" Layton draws the parallel between the agony and suffering of the Jews and Jesus. If Jesus was Crucified, the Jews were also crucified:

> ... ... the eternal Jew crucified
> for freedom and creativity. (43)

The Jews are held guilty for the death of Christ, who too is a Jew and by way of punishment they are denied their roots. The poem "Crucifixion" is in the form of a conversation with an Anglican Priest. In this poem the priest openly accuses the Jews:

> you're all guilty for his death
> each one of you, now and always.
> ... ...
> Christ's death is on every Jew. (46)

And the charge seems to be beyond time — past, present and future. The anger is of such intensity. The poem ends with the gloomy note about the Jews' predicament: "not Jeshua but each racked Jew is on that cross!"

Gloominess looms large in the poems of Layton. The Holocaust and its aftermath, the continued torture that the Jews are forced to undergo from time immemorial till this day, and the bleakness of the time ahead that is learnt from the present and the past have all seared the very soul of the Jew. It would be very relevant if a few lines from the poem "Reingemacht" are quoted for reference:

> The cries and moans never cease.
> The cities of the plain are burning
> London, Berlin, Vienna, Warsaw, Moscow,
> Night after night, they blaze like enormous faggots
> against the lowering sky. (77)

The quoted lines clearly state the never-ending nature of the torture inflicted upon the Jew and also the almost universal nature of the torture. The following lines only emphasize the spirit that runs in the lines quoted above:

> A hideous smell of gas covers Europe from end to end.

When the cities have burnt themselves out
the heavens will open up
and black torrential rains will descend for forty days
and forty nights.
Everything alive is submerged and drowned. (77)

If in the previous deluge the species were saved by Noah, this time there will be no survival for any species, since swirling in pain, Layton says, "I see no tossing ark". The despair and frustration that runs through the poem is very intense. Marooned by fire and water an escape, a belonging, a beginning seems impossible.

The Jew is restricted to ghetto. As elaborated in the poem "The Interloper", his movements are restricted to ghettos and the crematoria. He may sing his joy, if he has any, without violating the boundaries of it. In case of such a violation, death awaited him:

Since he persisted in hymning God and Life
what else could they do
but murder him? (81)

Layton sees a pattern of life that recurs. And the pattern is not a very positive one, since his vision of humanity is blinkered by hopelessness and despair. However much one tried to better humanity, the ultimate result of the struggle would be doom. This perception of Layton is voiced in his poem "Eternal Recurrence". Layton the poet, the Jew, the mute witness of the atrocities of the Holocaust, encapsulates his disillusionment in these lines:

always his heirs will climb towards the same ruin
until this creation becomes one vast inertness
with not a single mind to know its doom. (93)

The frustration further runs through the poem. Even if Abrams comes down from the valleys of his forefathers,

to begin the tragic husking of mankind,
the reformation of a brute universe
in all its parts by sentience and love,

his 'heirs' would only remain 'cannibals' devouring 'each others' kidneys and brains'. The goriness and the darkness of Layton's vision can probably be matched only by his own! More than a vision, the

words of Layton appear like an eternal curse on mankind from which, it appears as if, there is no redemption! As history tells us, the Jew seems to be permanently at the receiving end. The poem is an illustration of the hounding agony of rootlessness that cuts across time and space.

A Jew is never free from the memory of the Nazi atrocities against his people. It runs deep in his psyche. The poem "Das WahreIch" is a succinct narration of this fear. Even behind the generously extended warmth of the Nazi woman, the poet reads cruelty. The Nazi woman 'urges' the poet with tea and biscuit and she offers the same with gladness. The poet does appreciate when he sees 'her face ... touched by a brief happiness'. At the same time in the heart of hearts he reads a different meaning for the apparent happiness on her face. Having experienced the traumatic Nazi treatment, the poet suspects that behind her smile there is a hidden reason which is truly Nazi is nature:

> "At this moment, does she see my crumpled form against
> the wall
> blood on my still compassionate eyes and mouth?" (106)

Based on his experience, a Jew cannot read genuineness behind a Nazi smile or goodness. It cannot be read as an acceptance and reciprocation of the warmth extended by a Jew, as seen in the poem. Forever the Jew feels targeted.

Being a Jew, Layton identifies himself with the victims of the Holocaust and yearns to be the mouthpiece of the victims. In one of his poems titled "To the Victims of the Holocaust", he expresses his earnest desire to be the same and requests them permission to be their tongue that curses the Nazis. I quote the relevant lines for reference:

> My murdered kin
> let me be your parched and swollen tongue
> uttering the maledictions
> bullets and gas silenced on your lips.
>
> Fill, fill my ears with your direct curses.
> I shall tongue them, unappeasable shades,
> till the sun burns black in the sky. (108)

The cause of the surging anger in his mind is that he lives "among the blind, the deaf, and the dumb" and among the "amnesiacs". As

a consequence, he says,

Your terrible deaths are forgotten;
no one speaks of them anymore.
... ...
... people now say
your deaths are pure inventions, a spoof. (108)

The Jews had suffered the utmost cruelties in the hands of the Nazis, the scar of which would naturally last for centuries. This community is one that has been hunted down and butchered from the very early days as the documents speak. Layton identifies himself with the Jews who had met horrible deaths, and with the Jews who were tortured to silence that they not only dare not utter a word about their experience till they die but also do not leave a trace of it speaking to others. The poet fears that this silence would turn against Jews some time in future when people would consider the hearsay of it as spoof. So this needs to be voiced and recorded and thus stamped for authenticity. He does not want to forget anything. Even if the Nazis like to extend warmth, he does not want to accept the same.

The wounds in the heart of Layton are very much afresh which speaks for the depth of the same. In the poem "To the Jewish Dissenters" he laments his pain and it is evident in the lines quoted below:

Always the same story
the Jew against the world (109)

Living in constant fear, their achievements are showed away in 'swift oblivion'. In another poem titled "Anarch" the same vein of pain finds expression. He encapsulates the inner agony of the Jew which is reflected in the following lines:

... ... I'm one
my humanity dooms to gaze at their tall
composed shapes with longing.... (122)

As the poem continues the agony gets intensified. At the close of the poem the poet casts a curse on the heavens:

That must one day blot out the heavens
the agonyof innocents caught like a lynx

in the steel trap of human malice
or harpooned like those other Jews,
the harried whales of the prosperous sea. (123)

The poem "Jew" is a short piece which in just a few syllables encapsulates the Jewish predicament. The poem in full is quoted below.

Someone
who feels himself to be
a stranger every where
even in Israel. (135)

Torture undergone by the Jews in the hands of the Nazis is the subject of the poem "The New Sensibility". The following lines would delineate the point:

Tamed bears
toothless tigers
caged lions
defenseless ghetto Jews
(Polacks to Nazis in Warsaw circa 1941:
nab them, nab them, they're Jews!)
and poets
who dish out the familiar idealistic crap
always make the murderous crowd
slobber
preparatory to prodding them with sticks
and pouring gasoline on their cadavers. (137)

The Jews are hunted and tamed to be butchered. Their plight is something which seems to be permanent and never to be overcome. In view of this situation the Jews even sought their own alienation for their survival. This issue, as Layton perceives, cannot be resolved. Driven to the cul-de-sac of the perennial anti Semitic setting, the Jew will have to learn self defense, no matter the violence imbedded in it. Though, coming from a community in which Jesus who preached non-violence and love was born, the Jew still have to learn to use weapon for self-defense. He suggests the idea to the Jewish scholars who are engaged in resolving the anti Semitic attitude, in the poem "Ha-Nagid's Admonition to Jewish Scholars":

Waste no time unriddling the anti-Semite;
That won't save you when you have to fight or run.
Learn well in the hours still given to you
How to slash with a knife, how to fire a gun. (140)

The lines reflect the eternal insecurity of the Jew. He feels that the society is not going to extend warm hands to them and, therefore, it is better that they learn to use weapons for their survival.

In the poem "For My Sons, Max and David", Layton draws a list of the types of sufferings undergone by the Jews. I quote the relevant lines below for reference:

The Wandering Jew; the suffering Jew;
The despoiled Jew; the beaten Jew;
The Jew to burn; the Jew to gas;
The Jew to humiliate. (145)

The Jews are called the chosen people and in the lines quoted above the poet underscores the irony in them being called the chosen people. They seem to be the permanent chosen people of the anti Semitics. As mentioned in the poem, "no one can live with" a Jew; they are a hated lot and "The Jew everyone seeks to destroy". After telling in detail about who a Jew is or what a Jew is, at the end of the poem, Layton cautions his sons: "Be none of these". He urges his sons, instead, to "Be gunners in the Israeli Air Force". The poignant lines in the poem are reflective of the long suffering and humiliation topped with hopelessness of a secure future.

After the scrutiny of the select poems of the two poets, it will be only befitting to sum up the discussion by comparing and contrasting the poets with focus on the subject of the present reading.

Ezekiel may be read as a contrast to Layton. If in many of Layton' poems concern for the Jews predominates, in most of Ezekiel's poems it is the individual and his concerns, especially those related to the self that predominates. Shirish Chindhade, (2001) states that in the poetry of Nissim Ezekiel:

> ...the mood is permanently one of self-absorption, inwardness, introspection: all roads lead to the city within, the city of the soul. There is a consistent attempt at self-search and self-definition. The holy grail of the search is hidden within the soul and poetry affords consolation in such a state of mind. It also helps 'to shape one's inner image silently. (30)

A similar thought has been expressed by Shaila Mahan (2001) in her book *The Poetry of Nissim Ezekiel.* She is of the view that:

> Ezekiel's poetry can be characterized as intellectually complex. It is essentially ironic, rooted in rationality and common sense. It is both the instrument and outcome of his attempt as a man to come to terms with himself. Being product of restless rational mind Ezekiel's poetry is created from paradox, oppositions and contrasts. In fact his poetry can be seen as the product of contrasting emotions structured into a balance of tensions and stresses. (viii).

Unlike Layton's, as John Thieme (2005) observes, "...his [Ezekiel's] work is centrally concerned with perception and his poetic persona is both that of an observer who regards his social world and his own behavior with a degree of amused detachment, and that of a complete insider."

Poetry, needless to explain, is the product of tension. In Layton the main tension seem to be between the Jew in him and the anti-Semitic world. But with regards to Ezekiel, as Gillian Tindall (2008) rightly observes:

> ... his work and his life were informed by several sets of tensions, not just between east and west, but between the sense of separation from India and the sense of belonging, between Judaism and unbelief, between thinking of himself as a westernized Indian intellectual (a distinct category in his generation) and knowing himself to be someone at once more exotic, more isolated and still more obscure." (20)

One would also agree with Makarand Paranjape (2008) when he states that:

> Nissim's view of life lacks the sense of grand narratives or oracular pronouncements. It is in the everyday, humdrum, even sordid urban landscape of the postcolonial metropolis that he seeks to realize the higher truths of lifeÖ No longer is the vision one of saving humanity or saving a nation, but simply of surviving, following a vocation, living authentically. (433)

As a contrast to Ezekiel, Layton infuses his poems with force. In one of his interviews Layton made a statement regarding the birth of his poems. He stated that, "I am a quiet madman, never far from tears, I write poems to cause trouble. The sparks fly, I gather each one, and start a poem." Pertaining to the focus on the Jew and the Holocaust, which hardly finds a place in Ezekiel's poems, Layton stated, "The Holocaust is my symbol... If you read today's poets, you'd never know the kind of barbarous world we live in. A man

forgets what a terrifying monster he can be. I want to keep reminding people how close they are to disaster." (Gazette, 2013).

The strong opinions and tone in Layton poems have many a time landed him in controversies. For instance, in an article titled "'Now many will live by your name': Irving Layton, Memory, and the Holocaust", Dylan Brethour (2013) accuses Irving of "being an offensively loud distracting presence, with more ambition than talent, whose anger ruins the effectiveness of his Holocaust-related poems" (3). However, Anna Pottier (2013), the wife of Layton, refutes this 'accusation' in her Letter to the Editor: A Response to Dylan Brethour's "'Now many will live by your name': Irving Layton, Memory, and the Holocaust". Quoting a few lines from one of his poems titled "Israelis" Pottier argues as follows:

> Layton's rage at what was done to his fellow Jews stands out in the Canadian literary landscape a bit like the Rockies on the Priaries: The pillar of fire: their flesh made it; It burned briefly and died – you all know where. Now in their own blood they temper the steel, God being dead and their enemies not. (Cp. 136 qtd . in Pottier, 2008)... Her (Brethour's) interpretation of "To the Victims of the Holocaust" (108) is interesting for the way it misses the text's cues. Her claim that "Layton appoints himself as the sole bearer of memory, compelled to speak in defense of the dead" has no basis outside her imagination. Who indicates what should inspire a poet? By what law does a poet who uses the "lyrical" become an egomaniac? Those best qualified to speak of the Shoah are all dead. The poet speaks forcefully and eloquently, as a witness rather than a self-appointed Grand Poobah of Unpleasant Material. Layton spoke on behalf of his 'murdered kin' and asks them to let him "be their parched and swollen tongue". He asks the victims for their "direct curses" and promises that he will utter them 'unappeasable shades, till the sun turns black in the sky' Layton serves merely as vocal conduit, the exact opposite of the egomaniac that haunts Brethour like a gloom. Layton's use of the word 'unappeasable' is a heart-wrenching acknowledgement of the magnitude and inexpressibility of the victim's pain. (5-6)

One cannot but agree with Pottier when she further argues:

> ... Layton did not think silence was an option. Powerfully crafted language was the only implement at his disposal and he did not feel apologetic for using it. Certainly, there are people who hold that the only response to the Holocaust is a polite silence, like a nicely stifled burp. Survivors who requested Layton read aloud poems like "A Brief History of the Jews", "For My Sons, Max and David", "Israelis", or "To the Victims of the Holocaust" would disagree. Vehemently. (ibid.: 6) Layton's deep knowledge of, and affection for, the Jewish people is evidenced in the rage and pain with

> which he wrote about their persecution. The holocaust is but one shared in the vast kaleidoscope of Jewish history. The great danger, when understanding of and appreciation for Jewish history and culture – including the Shoag – is lacking, is that their mass slaughter remains little more than an irritating abstraction, a big "So what?" (ibid.: 9)

Almost all his poems in the collection *Fortunate Exile* are powerful, loud outpourings of the pain and concern in his heart that is consequent to the heard and seen sufferings of the Jews. The title of the collection chosen for the analysis *Fortunate Exile,* itself makes it evident that the exile is fortunate and not condemnable, and that it has enabled the Jew to live free from the anti-Semitic clutch.

To sum up the discussion that went ahead, it could be said of Layton that his poems are strong emotional expressions of the acutely felt sense of deprivation, subsequent to the almost permanent social exclusion his race felt. He yearns to belong to a Jewish community that has its own place, milieu. Settled in Canada, which claims multiculturalism, he is unable to enjoy the unifying thread expected to be present in a society of the kind. The milieu in which the poet is groomed is yet to assuage his fears of Holocaust.

On the other hand, Ezekiel though belonging to the same race does not express such fears of non-belongingness as a Jew. Though, he too is uprooted and has adopted another country namely, India, as his place he seems to feel the sense of alienation not as an uprooted Jew but as the modern, common man, or as any Indian would feel at any time. His backward place seems to have given him a better milieu with its natural tolerance and secularism which has enabled the flourishing of various alien cultures and beliefs. As a result of this mutual acceptance in the case of Ezekiel, his poems do not carry the severe, harsh tone that is found in the poems of Layton.

The discussion could be ended by quoting the words of the two poets themselves, which would succinctly speak their respective poetic minds.

In an interview to Harry Blamirs, Layton said, "My country is wherever there are concrete objects to touch, taste, feel and enjoy" (155). Almost in a similar tone Ezekiel opens out his mind in his quarrel with Naipaul and I quote his words: "In India which I have presumed to call mine, I acknowledge without hesitation the existence of all the darkness Mr. Naipaul has discovered. I am not a Hindu and my background makes me a natural outsider: circumstances and decisions relate me to India. In other countries

I am a foreigner. In India I am an Indian" (xxii). If Layton considers any place that is 'comfortable' as his place, Ezekiel considers, India as his place, no matter what its shortcomings are. The difference between the poets, then, is the milieu and therefore, the moment as well, though the race is the same and their poems are reflections of this fact.

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THE UNRULY SPIRAL: DIALECTICS IN THE LIGHT OF CONTEMPORARY DEBATES

Manas Ray

> But truly to escape Hegel involves an exact appreciation of the price we have to pay to detach ourselves from him. It assumes that we are aware of the extent to which Hegel, insidiously perhaps, is close to us; it implies a knowledge, in that which permits us to think against Hegel, of that which remains Hegelian. We have to determine the extent to which our anti-Hegelianism is possibly one of his tricks directed at us, at the end of which he stands, motionless, waiting for us.
>
> (Foucault, *The Discourse on Language*)

> A ghost never dies.
>
> (Derrida, *Spectres of Marx*)

At an informal level, dialectics implies a mode of thinking that avoids one-sidedness and recognizes the diversity of being. Gramsci, among others, subscribes to this view of dialectics. Though in his more explicit and formal statements on dialectics Gramsci prioritizes the popular triadic view of thesis/antithesis/synthesis, he leaves enough hints to the reader that this triadicity exists only at the level of socio-economic structure; as a way of thinking, dialectics implies an opening to the many diversities of life and functions as a device to hold theory and practice together. Gramsci's faith in multiplicity, however, is not one that is universally accepted in dialectics. When Plato, for example, lionises dialectics as *the* supreme philosophical method, "the coping-stone of the sciences" (*The Republic*), he refers to its talent to search for an unchanging essence. Here lies the key problem of dialectics: while it holds that truth is in its dismemberment, it also subscribes to a philosophy that aims at unity. For Hegel, who remains the *locus classicus* of unifying discourse, diversity is the progressive unfolding of truth (i.e., singularity). Along with this, however, Hegel also maintains that the Spirit "wins its

truth only when, in utter dismemberment, it finds itself" (1977: 19).

The present paper attempts an intellectual cartography of the state of dialectics after poststructuralist incursions. Much of the claims of dialectics as a philosophical method have clearly come under the scanner with the advent of poststructuralist theorizing. Some such issues that we will try to address are: in what sense is dialectics a going beyond from where it starts, "the course that generates itself, going forth from, and returning to, itself" as Hegel puts it in *Phenomenology of Spirit* (p. 53) and of which a more contemporary, obviously psychologised, expression is Freud's treatment of the so-called 'da and fort' episode? How does the final term—synthesis—come about from the other two in Hegel's triad? Is the process of undoing (of whatever is 'inadequate') and preserving (of whatever is 'valid') that each of the two terms initiate—thesis and antithesis—merely arbitrary and symptomatic? Is dialectics, as Nietzsche would argue, bereft of the ability to offer interpretations? How far is Derrida correct when he claims that any effective understanding of the dialectical reality (generated by the dialectic of modernity) cannot restrict itself to a purely dialectical method but per force calls for its supplementarity? Is the search for the rational kernel of dialectics (Marx's reading of Hegel) always already complicated by the 'setting wild of the seminarium' (as Gayatri Chakraborty Spivak puts it in the context of interpreting Derrida in *Glas*),[1] a gesture of dispersal that, constitutively and strategically, derives its meaning only from the moment of provisional stasis and minimal idealisation? These are some of the issues that have come to the foreground with the rise of poststructuralist theories. We shall attempt to discuss some of these here, albeit within the restrictions of space and knowledge. We shall follow the spirit of poststructuralist interventions in not rejecting dialectics but instituting a tenacious (and, hopefully, productive) ambiguity—'a conflict of forces rather than a contradiction of meanings' as Collinge has put it (2008: 2617), at the heart of the dialectics as a philosophy and a method.

Hegelian Dialectics: 'opposition without difference'

Dialectics has a long and complex history going far beyond the limited reference of Hegelian and Marxist terminologies or even of those of the early Greeks. Studies in anthropological philology have shown that concept formation by contrasting simultaneously what something both *is and is not* is a practice not unknown to early

civilizations. Freud notes that languages of ancient civilizations such as of Egypt, China and India reveal that many words bear two meanings, one exactly the opposite of the other ("The antithetical meaning of primal words", 1910). There are ample historical evidences of the practice of reasoning based upon dialectical meanings among the ancients. Mo Ti, for instance, founded a school of dialectical thought in China exactly around the time (470 - 391 BC) as that of Socrates—a remarkable parallel in the history of philosophy—while the *Upanishads* and the *Gita,* foundational texts of Indian philosophy, are classic espousals of dialectical principles applied to the mundane affairs of life.[2]

The notion of dialectics as we now know it is, however, clearly of Hegelian derivation. Hegel prefaces *The Phenomenology of the Spirit* arguing that philosophy is, ultimately, dialectical. He asserts that "once the dialectical has been separated from proof, the notion of philosophical demonstration has been lost" (p. 40). He urges that philosophical exposition should preserve dialectical form while dialectics should not be severed from philosophical speculation. In other words, philosophy draws from dialectics its form while supplying dialectics its content. Croce (1969), among others, argues that Hegel's bid to wed philosophy and dialectics is based on a number of skewed assumptions. Hegel privileges philosophy and considers historical and scientific inquiry as semi-philosophical activities to be perfected and superseded by philosophy. This allows him, Croce points out, to attribute methodological autonomy to historiography such that historical events, once processed in the purgatory of dialectics, reach the perfection of philosophy[3].

Marx and Engels claim to have remedied the situation by removing dialectics from the world of ideas to the material world. In *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*, Engels puts it as follows: "(T)he dialectic of the concept itself became merely the conscious reflection of the dialectical motion of the real world and the dialectic of Hegel was placed upon its head; or rather, turned off its head on which it was standing before and placed on its feet again" (54). In this new alignment of history and philosophy (via dialectics), the final triumph belongs not to the Absolute Idea but to the conception of exploitation-free society, reached through successive stages of struggle. Dialectical materialism sees the world as a process, developing and evolving new and more complex synthesis out of the simpler ones, according to the dialectical laws of development. These laws are (i) the law of transformation of quantitative into qualitative changes; (ii) the law of interpenetration

of opposites, involving the existence of contradictions within nature; (iii) the law of the negation of negation. The essential point about these laws is that the genuine novelty and qualitative difference in the world defies any complicated mechanical system.

Dialectical materialism, notwithstanding its claims, is essentially a continuation of the Hegelian search for unity. The hallmarks of a dialectical process (be it from a Marxist standpoint or otherwise) are the notions of the unity of opposites, the principle of the positivity of the negative, the concept of one-sidedness, and the categories of identity and difference. While Marxists have been more faithful to Hegel's triadic view, they usually prefer to retain distance from the 'idealist' scheme whereby higher categories of thought and forms of consciousness emerge from lower ones or ones that privilege an onto-phenomenological interpretation, which regards dialectics as an ontological process automatically reflected in the mind of the philosopher. (Instead, this ontological process is located in the realm of history.) In both streams, however, there is an implicit (and much valorised) assumption that philosophy is dialectical because it is at once "pluralistic, conceptual, concrete, self-reflective, self-referential, negative" which also ultimately reaches the unity supposed to be behind such oppositions as truth and falsity, change and permanence, form and content, subject and predicate, etc.[4] Some of these binary oppositions are basic to Hegel's scheme—like identity and difference, internal and external, essential and inessential. While urging that one presupposes the other, Hegel leaves little doubt that he considers categories such as 'identity', 'internal' and 'essential' more important than their respective oppositions. The unity of opposites, i.e., the identity in difference, is what has the final say:

> difference as such is already *implicitly* contradiction; for it is the unity of sides which are, only in so far as they are *not one*—and it is the *separation* of sides which are, only as separated in the same relation (1977: 431).

Adorno argues that the praxis of negation in dialectics is "in itself, before any particular content, negation, resistance against that which is forced upon it. This is the heritage which thought takes over from the relation of labour to its material." (1973: 19) Thought uses praxis, Adorno continues, as its material just as what labour does to raw material, and in so doing negates it in its given form. To us, however, it is not entirely convincing to hold that negation in a dialectical scheme has the same significance as labour has to its raw material, since it is not clear whether the 'resolution' of contradiction

(negation of negation) is resolution in the sense of what labour's work on its raw material is or whether it is merely a mutual (analytical) interdependence of opposite concepts. In fact, it may be pointed out here that the 'positive' and the 'negative' are general terms used by Hegel to refer to any pair of opposition, and 'negation' in such usage means neither 'undoing' nor 'nothing'. Rather, just as its opposite term, it too denotes a positivity of meaning and has a reality of its own, very much like the negative qualities of mathematics. Does 'negation' contain the entirety of the entity? Nietzsche calls this "opposition without difference". Below is Deleuze's compelling elaboration of Nietzsche's position:

> The dialectic does not even skim the surface of interpretation, it never goes beyond the domain of symptoms. It confuses interpretation with the development of the uninterpreted symbol. ...It is not surprising that the dialectic proceeds by opposition, development of the opposition or contradiction and solution of the contradiction. It is unaware of the real element from which forces, their qualities and their relations derive; it only knows the inverted image of this element which is reflected in abstractly considered symptoms. ...Dialectic thrives on oppositions because it is unaware of far more subtle and subterranean differential mechanisms: topological displacements, typological variations. ...Deprived of its claim to give an account of difference, contradiction appears for what it is: a perpetual misinterpretation of difference itself, a confused inversion of genealogy. (1983: 156)

To continue with Deleuze, Nietzsche argues that one dialectician (the reference is to Engel's remark quoted earlier) cannot accuse another of standing dialectics on its head since such a gesture is part of the fundamental character of dialectics itself portraying as it does the movement of appearance as the genetic law of things and retaining only an inverted image of the principle. The whole dialectical process is, thus, one of *simulacra*, of *fiction*. Dialectics is the art of reconciling man and God, religion and philosophy, property and alienation. Killing God, Man became God but remained as servile as ever - a machine for the manufacture of a new kind of God, namely himself. Nietzsche calls this bad conscience, 'the ideology of ressentiment".

Sartre, the most powerful post-war exponent of dialectical logic, privileges precisely what Nietzsche identifies as the principal source of undoing—namely, the strong bond of dialectics with the ego. Sartre:

> Man constructs signs because, in his very reality, he is signifying; and he is

> signifying because he is a dialectical surpassing of all that is simply given. What we call freedom is the irreducibility of the cultural order to the natural order. (1963: 152)

Sartre diagnoses the cardinal error of Marxist method as synthetic progression. "Lazy Marxists", as he terms the practitioners of such a method, make use of it to constitute the real, to prove what has happened had to happen just as it did. They can, Sartre argues, discover nothing by this method of pure *exposition*, since they know in advance what they must find. In contrast, he claims that his method is heuristic; at once regressive and progressive, it unearths something new every time. The progressive dimension tells us of society's future trajectories which need to be complemented by cross-references to the past in order to set our understanding right. The system of cross-references establishes the particular conditions emanating from a particular individual and elaborating a full picture of a particular civilizational context. Sartre calls this temporal weave a "totalizing movement" which gathers together "my neighbour, myself, and the environment in the synthetic unity of an objectification in process" (1963: 154-5). Sartre's individual is the centre of 'totalization', carrying an entire age like every wave that carries the whole of an ocean, to echo the beautiful beginning of his autobiography, *The Words*. This is Hegelian dialectics at its most expansive, read through the lens of Kojéve. Notwithstanding his criticism of 'lazy Marxists', Sartre remains very much within the broad fold of Hegelian Marxism.

Unending Unity: the logic of series as against origin and ego

No matter what qualifications and reformulations he attempts to bring to the concept of historical inevitability present in dialectical materialism, Sartre considers the placement of 'man in his proper framework' the crux of his enterprise. This is in sharp contrast to Foucault. Foucault, for whom the concept of discontinuity undercuts a progressive as well as regressive procedure, characterizes such search for appropriate frameworks as one of 'unending unity'. Sartre cannot help, argues Foucault, but retrospectively unify all knowledge in accordance with its reference back to the individual(s) in question. Foucault, conversely, concentrates on series, divisions, limits, differences of level, possible types of relations, etc. He rejects any project of retrospective unity, calling the historical-transcendental recourse (one that attempts to find a primary

foundation in historical manifestations) "the opening of an inexhaustible horizon ... constantly unwinding play of an unending unity" (1972a: 227). In a similar vein, he rejects the other dominant approach in traditional historiography, viz., the empirical or psychological recourse, one that follows up the trail of the author, "interpreting what he meant, detecting the implicit meanings which were lying silent and dormant in his discourse, following the threat of the destiny of these meanings, describing the traditions and the influences, fixing the moment of awakenings, of lapses, of awareness, of crises, of changes in the mind, the sensitivity or the interest of men" (1972: 227). If the first recourse is tautological, the second is extrinsic and inessential.

As Foucault's comment indicates, the problematic of the origin and of the ego are inseparable, one acting as the *raison d'être* of the other. This in a way is *the* problem of the Cartesian understanding of presence - the ideality of the present moment in/to consciousness. Given the way the logic of such a universe operates, the equivalence of the structures of presentation (essence) and of representation (derivative) is to be maintained at all cost, allowing no room for the rupturing play of the sign. The dialectical enterprise of bringing two entities into one would imply that the opposite is also true: that is, one entity can be broken into two. But this is an impossibility since every time one divides something into two, one merely distinguishes multiplicities from multiplicities, or what Foucault calls "the pragmatics of the multiple": "the opening of an inexhaustible horizon... constantly unwinding play of an unending unity"[5]. When history is radical discontinuity, nothing is negated. This is precisely what Foucault's archeo-genealogical history is all about. The operative figure of opposition to dialectics is what he calls "non-positive affirmation". Things emerge and disappear unpredictably, contingently. However, emergence is connected with an act of affirmation of the disappearance of their genealogical predecessors and of the space left behind by these. Not the *definite negation of something*, but the *affirmation of the absence of something* is therefore the (non-dialectical) 'act' constitutive for a discontinuous history. Not telos but transgressions.[6]

Similar to the attempt of dialectics of finding unity between two opposed sides is Cartesian linguistics' (impossible) attempt to make language faithful to thought. Together they constitute a purely reflexive discourse that essays to tantalise the experience of the outside back to the dimension of interiority. Kojéve attempts to put Cartesianism and dialectics together by prioritizing the role of

agency in dialectics. He argues that Hegel was wrong to extend the dialectics of the real to a dialectics within nature, since the negating action of dialectics can only originate from a person. Hegel, on his part, did maintain a distinction between subjective (or, external) dialectic and objective (or immanent) dialectic; the former rests in the contemplative subject while the latter inheres in the contemplated object. Hegel's *Absolute*, which far from being a static moment is actually the point of highest motion, is also the absolute (or final) point of the contemplative subject.

Dialectics is, thus, centred on a notion of a *cogito* as the function of certitude - an inner confirmation to which the outer bonds must continually respond. Dialectics cannot admit to any language that arrives at its own edge, to any void that stretches beyond the game of positivity. Hence, it is not 'forgetting' (in the sense that Heidegger uses the term) but reflection, not effacement but contradiction, not erosion but unity that is the grist of the dialectical mill, so to say. Foucault associates the rise of dialectical thought (and of certitude) with the 'dismissal' of madness since the seventeenth century and views them together as signs of colonization of *otherness*. He is critical of the 'open-ended' style of discourse in dialectics. Structured as an interplay of opinions in a 'co-operative' enquiry through questions and answers, dialectics also functions right from its early days as an art of refuting an opponent's statement by getting him/her to accept as an ultimate consequence a statement that cancels out his/her initial position. Reaction to such procedures explains Foucault's project to shift the focus of attention from subject, consciousness and 'interior' to *pure* surface(s) or, as Deleuze would perhaps explain it, to visibility and readability as the two forms of exteriority.

The terrible infinity of the particular: supplementarity, alterity and iterability

The infinite which owes its being through a negation of the finite—and is thus limited by what it limits—Hegel calls '*schlecht Unendlichkeit'*, literally translated as 'bad infinity'. Taken from Kant, the common understanding of bad infinity is that it is an additive or counting infinity—ceaseless adding at one point gives way when it can no more be continued. This then becomes an infinite. An example of this kind of infinity is a straight line. Some translators have preferred to translate it as 'spurious infinity', presumably as an opposite of the other term Hegel used, '*echt Unendlichkeit',* which they translate as

genuine infinity. However, we prefer to go with Wayne M. Martin's argument[7] for retaining the expression bad infinity since by '*schlecht Unendlichkeit'* Hegel did not mean that it is not an infinity, but a special kind of infinity (just as a bad dog is a dog only) vis-à-vis another variety of infinity—namely, one that does not have to posit itself against the finite to being infinity. An example of this second variety is a circle, since it is not a case of addition, adding one more point but of eternal self-renewal. Every point in the circle is infinitely completed.

However, the example of a straight line as a counting or additive infinity is not sustainable since, architectonically speaking, it is either, expansively, a step beyond the limit reached or, intensively, one more unit between the two points. Neither is the circle a perfect example of '*echt Unendlichkeit'* on the grounds that it is a case of infinite renewal where every point in infinitely completed. The circle too ultimately is a metaphor of itself, as Heidegger's comment makes clear:

> The question which immediately comes to mind is . . . to know if and how the dialectical movement itself can be prevented from falling back under the domination of finitude – finitude in the shape of false infinity, or endlessness (*Endlosigkeit*). Several responses, in particular the suggestion of circularity, simply stumble into this difficulty rather than resolving it[8].

For Hegel, the infinite is the culmination of every finite stage into the speculative reality of the absolute. In that sense, for him the real meaning of infinity lies in speculative actualization: how a particular totality has reached a stage where every finite moment has become sublated from its original location and now this infinity is both in recurrence of the entire process and at the same time in eternal repose where it has no dependence on its past. This is speculative eternity. In that sense, the circle is a figure and given that it is only a figure, it is always a very doubtful metaphor.

For Hegel, infinity is a speculative idea. It is neither a mathematical idea nor a religious idea. There are several ideas of infinity. One is the Greek cosmic idea, a cosmos where the outer limit is not known to us, which keeps on extending, hazy and formless. The other is the religious idea, something that is of infinite power compared to which the human is of limited power. The third is a mathematical idea. Here infinite is the concept of a number which we can know through mathematical formulae but not by counting. Also there is no general idea of infinity. Each infinite has its own formula. In mathematics, there are infinite infinities. Each

infinite has its own formulation, its own character. In numbers, simultaneous infinities are possible. In Hegel, we find a fourth kind of infinity, speculative infinity, where each finite moment ultimately auto-generates a subject which actualizes infinity in history, a historical infinity. In concrete terms, it would refer to a State which for all times would be the final stage of the State; a divinity or religion will come which will ultimately remain that religion only. But such speculation, given the vastness of the enterprise, is effective only in producing contingencies, slippages and departures. The common point of all these varieties of infinity is the virtuality of the particular. Correspondence with infinity opens up the particular to the theatre of plurivocity and fissiparousness. For example, in religion God's infinity as an ever receding centre (Marx will later use this trope to understand the ever expanding grid that capital is) as against man's finitude allows every creation to be open to newer and newer meanings in the eyes of the believer which becomes part of its facticity. To the degree that religious infinity makes the meanings of particular immanence stable, it makes it unstable too. As a mark of this non-correspondence between signifier and signified, we prefer the expression the terrible infinity of the particular.

Nietzsche calls "the dialectical man" at once the most successful and the most wretched because suppressing alienation and recuperating his properties, he functions as the perfect replacement of God. The speculative motor of dialectics is contradiction and its resolution, while its practical motor is alienation and its transcendence. As theology is replaced by anthropology, everyone becomes a property of *Man* and dialectics cannot be stopped until everyone becomes a proprietor. Nietzsche detects a deep-seated nihilism behind the rise of modern dialectics—the reactive nihilism of a will to deny (as a will to power) giving way to the passive nihilism of a negation of all wills. Man kills God by sheer excess of pity and takes his place. Heidegger remarks:

> (I)f God ... has disappeared from his authoritative position in the supersensory world, then this authoritative place is always preserved, even though as that which has become empty. (1977: 69)

Nietzsche challenges the death of God and along with this the whole dialectical tradition that hinges on this. With Nietzsche, Deleuze comments, the age of naive confidence comes to an end as does the age of replacement of God by man as a sign of superseded opposition, the reconciliation of finite and infinite, of changeless and particular. Dialectics ratifies ego's dream of omnipotence, while

in reality the individual faces a hopelessly restricted situation in consumerist capitalism. To overcome the threatening split between the two, the individual escapes into substitute formations - viz., collective narcissism.

Getting back once more to the Cartesian problematic, it may be stated that Saussure's relationalism and his challenge to the notion of a fixed element of consciousness that is concomitant with a meaning anterior and external to the production of meaning through language, virtually wrecked Cartesianism. Saussure, however, operates within the boundaries of a well-formulated system, which is the point where Derrida intervenes, reminding that a system can never be fully mastered. The chain of distinctions that constitutes a single meaning always already exceeds presupposed system borders, while structures of meanings, discourses and languages function only under the conditions of relatively closed systematicity. This tension is the constitutive source of meaning and for which Derrida's term is *writing*—a non-ontological reference point, which defines language against any intended ideality of meaning. In other words, *writing* is the name for strategic positionality against the logic of 'thing itself' and of the self-sufficiency of thing.[9] In the Cartesian system, the centre acts as reassuring certitude only by turning a blind eye to the reality of *writing*. With *writing*, the centre (like anything else) cannot escape play—the centre is no longer the centre, it disseminates as much as it anchors. Incidentally, this is one more area where Foucault and Derrida converge, as the following passage towards the end of *The Order of Things* should illustrate (though Foucault's observations come across as far richer given the frame of reference with which he operates):

> We have seen how labour, life, and language acquired their own historicity, in which they were embedded; they could never, therefore, truly express their origin, even though, from the inside, their whole history is, as it were, directed towards it. It is no longer origin that gives rise to historicity; it is historicity that, in its very fabric, makes possible the necessity of an origin which must be both internal and foreign to it. (1970: 329)

Every binary opposition conveys a hidden hierarchy—mind above body, speech above writing, market above government, exchange value above use value, abstract social labour above concrete labour and so on. In order to transgress the code, accordingly, these hierarchies cannot be simply reversed; they must be subverted. (This incidentally is Derrida's point against Baudrillard.) *Writing* aims at precisely this. In order to achieve this, it removes sign from its

Saussearean understanding of a homogeneous unit bridging an origin and an end (as in semiology) to one where it must be studied *under erasure*, always already inhabited by the trace of another sign, carrying within itself the trace of its perennial *alterity*. A sign *is* and *is not*, inaccurate yet necessary. Semiology, says Derrida, must give way to grammatology. Saussure is against attributing separable primacy of meaning but his scheme has no room for 'alterity' or 'erasure'. Derrida completes the devastation of Cartesian intentionality that Saussure had initiated by bringing in another notion - *iterability*, making purity impossible.

To Derrida, the hall-mark of *writing* is its indeterminateness, positioning as it does between poison and cure. Hence, he considers Socrates' reference to writing as *pharmakon*—a Greek word which can mean either poison or remedy—as absolutely relevant. Socrates, to be sure, makes a case against writing since for him writing is the art of sophistry, deprived of any direct communion with wisdom and truth. Derrida argues that the preferred dialectic discourse of Socrates has to be in the form of speech alone since *writing* would have brought out the uneasy fact that what is known as truth is basically nothing more than a *representation* of truth. Attributing inferior position to writing is just a paranoid reaction to the fact that behind the metaphorics of light lies the reality of reflection. The experience of a receding centre makes presence unattainable and thereby attributes its halo. Derrida writes:

> The absolute invisibility of the origin of the visible, of the good-sun-father-capital, the unattainment of presence or beingness in any form, the whole surplus Plato calls *epekeina tes ousias* (beyond beingness or presence), gives rise to a structure of replacements such that all presences will be supplements substituted for the absent origin and all the differences, within the system of presence, will be the irreducible effect of what remains *epekeina tes ousias*. (Derrida, 1981a: 167)

The whole history of western philosophy, Derrida claims, is the history of the derogation of supplementarity. As a simultaneous operation of addition and replacement, it threatens to expose in all the major philosophical projects their common construction centering the idea of an original presence. For instance, Plato's *form*, Hegel's *idea*, Marx's *mode of production*, Husserl's *transcendental ego*, etc. The original presence is held responsible for determining empirical reality, while philosophy's task is the restoration of *origin* through meticulous excavation of one layer after another. Saussure too, as discussed earlier, privileges the relationship of speech to meaning over that

of writing, 'everything that links the sign to phone (speech)' (Derrida, 1981: 21). "The theme of the arbitrary," argues Derrida, "thus, is turned away from its most fruitful paths (formulations) towards a hierarchising theology" (1981: 21). In trying to emphasise the unity of speech and thought (i.e., signifier and signified), Saussure makes voice/consciousness the vehicle of 'truth'. Hence, his radical insight into the constitutive role of the arbitrary notwithstanding, Saussure joins the mainstream of western philosophy flowing from Plato. Emphasising the unity of the signifier and the signified, and holding speech and consciousness in an implied relation, Saussure undervalues the signifier to the point where its material exteriority is denied and the metaphysics of presence fully reconstituted. Derrida:

> In this confusion, the signifier seems to erase itself or becomes transparent, in order to allow the concept to present itself as what it is, referring to nothing other than its presence. The exteriority of the signifier seems reduced. (1981: 22)

The denial of "the exteriority of the signifier" is also the assertion of the univocity of meaning, or, in other words, of dialectics over iterability. In writing, the opposition of signifier and signified is maintained and underlined. Hence, writing is inherently multiple which is also the reason why writing is always suppressed—what is written is read as speech.

Derrida explains the irreducible metaphoricity of language through an analysis of *usure*, a term meaning both acquisition of surplus (usury) and clearing up or wearing away. In traditional philosophical discourse, *usure* is the standard example of metaphor—a word's transition from one meaning to another. Hegel gives a 'continuist' interpretation to *usure* as a process of metaphorization: a word's journey from one station to another in a continuous semantic course, or, as Derrida puts it, "a progressive erosion, a regular semantic loss, an uninterrupted exhaustion of the primitive meaning" (1982: 215). Hegel's chosen word is *Aufhebung*—the annulment and simultaneous upgrading of a concept. Derrida's course of explanation is altogether different. Using a numismatic analogy, he says that just as coins have their 'exergue' rubbed off (which releases them from belonging to a particular register), words too lose their literal sense and acquire a versatility beyond the specifics of time and space to which they were originally rooted. From this argument, Derrida derives two conclusions. First, since philosophy as practice borrows words from everyday parlance,

philosophical discourse is by nature metaphorical. Second, *usure* represents not the continutist scheme that Hegel lays out, but its precise opposite: "a displacement without breaks, as re-inscriptions in heterogeneous systems, mutations, deviations without origin" (1982: 215). Re-utilization of terms need not follow a pattern based on unity, identity, resemblance, or similarity. The arbitrary extension of the term's sense is what Derrida calls *catachresis*. This is a trope that means forced metaphor. Following the path of catachresis, philosophy joins hands with the literary and not to do so means remaining blind to the endless possibility of non-identical deviations. (Incidentally, it is precisely for this quality that Plato chastises 'writing' as 'the bastardised form of communication'.)

In a detailed exchange with Derrida, Paul Ricoeur (1977) maintains that language is an *event* in which intention and understanding *dialectically* unite. Following a part Hegelian and a part Aristotelian line of argument, Ricoeur focuses on the role of spontaneous human activity in language and reduces the work of language itself. Derrida, on the contrary, highlights the materiality of language, its opaque and obfuscating nature. Rejecting the path of dialectics, he follows carefully the consequences of iterability: Intentions do not follow a straight line and are of necessity displaced; no context is saturable and metaphoricity is irreducible.

Let us compare Derrida's position with that of Ricoeur in some detail. For Ricoeur, dialectics is a process of 'productive opposition'—a process by virtue of which two opposing things interact as content and get to form something new. The opposing registers (since they are valued only for their contents) are seen as thematic monoliths. Hence, the whole process is geared towards the ideal of 'unity in diversity and diversity in unity' (where the former dominates the latter). While Ricoeur admits that ordinarily a word can have multiple meanings, he maintains that in a sentence it can have no more than one meaning. Sentences form one discrete whole providing a protocol that aids the reader to reduce (if not eliminate) equivocity; otherwise there can be no communication. Reading is the art of coming to decipher that precise meaning. A number of consequences follows from Ricoeur's analysis. Since the discursive event consists of sentences, discursive presence is singular and whole, and discursive context is total. Repetition is homogeneous, and meaning is separable from its sensuous embodiments. Ricoeur admits that in the case of poetry rules are broken and novel semantic and syntactic configurations are created. Ricoeur, however, explains poetry as a challenge to the reader's

hermeneutic capacity. The reader treats a poem in terms of its novelty, imaginatively follows the traces of metaphoricity of the words and, finally, creates appropriate meanings. The point that Ricoeur is trying to make is that even though the meaning that a reader gives to a poem and its words may never have existed before in any linguistic code, here as elsewhere the dialectic of event and meaning ultimately leads to univocity, since the reader finally gives one unified and identical sense to the poem.

Foregrounding the concept of iterability, Derrida puts up an agenda which for all practical reasons is in diametric opposition to Ricoeur. Derrida disbands Ricoeur's metaphysics of discursive presence by emphasising the non-presence or absence of iterability, its plurality and incompleteness. Together they imply that a context is always already in excess of any totality and no repetition is homogeneous, disrupting all teleology or attempts to reach dialectical synthesis. Derrida argues that every time the question of *proper* (of the self-same, of appropriation, of knowledge as possession) emerges, the onto-hermeneutic form of interrogation shows its limit. He agrees with Ricoeur that to clarify the meaning of a word one needs to find out precisely how it differs from other words in a sentence. But for Derrida this is only one of the many determinants of a word that of necessity partakes in many different texts and contexts, many linguistic systems, each of which determines the word differently. Also, a trait signifies by virtue of its hieroglyphic and ideogrammatic characteristic, thus creating a network of textual referrals through both similarities and differences. Hence, every time a trait refers or alludes, it makes a case of non-identical repetition, i.e., iterability. They participate without wholly belonging, leaving the possibility of re-contextualization ever open. Derrida calls this 'dissemination'. No identity is fully constituted, no relation is fully able to absorb any identity. Literality, to Derrida, is a prime instance of figuration, while figuration is part of the terrain where the *social* is created. This is an acknowledgment that reality is not a field of delimited positivity, but a relational logic pierced by contingency.

Understandably, Nietzsche calls figuration *Gleichmachen*, i.e., making equal of dissimilar things. Truth is 'a mobile army' of metaphors that has forgotten its figurative roots. There is no self-identical meaning just as there is no *true* interpretation. Hegel says that empiricism is thinking *by* metaphor (since it employs the verb 'to be') without thinking the metaphor *as such*. Derrida, however, takes issue with Nietzsche for indefinitely expanding the concept

of metaphoricity to the point where it becomes the name for signification itself rather than a critique of the process. It would have been acceptable, argues Derrida, if Nietzsche had put metaphor, or figure, or, for that matter, truth itself under erasure. It may be suggested that here Nietzsche had initiated a move towards that direction by critiquing the unified notion of subject and foregrounding its constructiveness. Be it as the case is, metaphor as the symbol of transformation, errancy and alteration for ever jeopardises the dream of dialectical identity of knowledge and meaning, exposing the will to truth as the subterfuge of the will to power. We continue this discussion in the next section by critically examining an essay of Lucio Collette, celebrated in its time, and written during the author's Hegelian-Marxist phase. We try to demonstrate that any effective understanding of the dialectical reality cannot restrict itself to a purely dialectical method but perforce calls for its supplementarity and how this applies to dialectical materialism as well even in its most sophisticated rendering.

Lucio Colletti's "Marxism and Dialectics": dialectical materialism in a new framework

Marxist cultural theorist Göran Therborn argues that Marxism puts "a dialectical perspective of emancipation against the linear liberal project of rationalization, progress and growth, explicitly affirming that capitalism and colonialism were exploitation as well as progress."[10] This he contrasts to postmodernism's 'Baroque style of assemblages' that lacks an engagement with history and a commitment to the making of the world. More than three decades before, Lucio Colletti in his 'confident and original' essay, "Marxism and Dialectics" (1975), has sought to deal with the problem of the difference between 'real opposition' (Kant's *Realopposition* or *Realrepugnanz*) and 'dialectical contradiction' basically with the same understanding of Therborn. In the final section of the paper we take up the essay for detailed discussion to investigate this unchanging kernel in the various reworkings of Marxian dialectics.

Colletti argues that at the very centre of Marxist epistemological discussion, an ambiguity reigns over these two 'radically distinct' instances of opposition. Colletti contends that in the overwhelming majority of cases (starting right from Engels, Plekhanov and Lenin to Lukács, Mao and the Frankfurt School), Marxists have mistaken 'real opposition' for dialectical contradiction, causing profound

distortions in the form of either a polemical neglect of Marx's theory of fetishism and alienation or a downright underevaluation of the scientific potentials of Marxism. He concludes, iconoclastically, that the very notion of a dialectical contradiction in reality is incompatible with the canons of science. Colletti's Marxism is written in terms of Hegel and as such is in a different order from the notion of the science of society that Marxist sociology espouses (here Colletti refers particularly to the work of his fellow Italian Marxist and one-time mentor, Della Volpe).

Very much like Hegel's speculative dialectics, Colletti's account is at once fascinating and pernicious. While the distinction between the two oppositions that he draws is important, by over-emphasising it, he constructs a neat binary division between them and thus causes an annulment of any possibility of their alterity. One of the lessons that deconstruction may provide dialectics is that alterity can never be fully reduced; in fact, it is a way of questioning the metaphysical desire to reduce alterity. It posits the undecidability of identity and non-identity, pries it open through the other-relation or trace. In other words, in deconstructive dialectics (if we may be allowed to call it so), the process of differential supplementarity (the irreducible necessity of an 'other' to constitute something 'proper' or selfsame) encompasses dialectics as one determined moment of its chain. Derrida calls this 'Hegelianism beyond Hegelianism' (1978). To the extent that presence is characterised as a determination and an effect of a more primordial differential process, it is Hegelianism; to the extent that it introduces differential supplementarity within dialectics, attempts to annul a reductive sublation of a possibly recalcitrant heterogeneity and thus rejects a conflating synthesis of non-identity and identity, it is beyond Hegelianism.

To return to Colletti, he cogently defines the difference between real opposition and dialectical contradiction as follows:

> 'Real opposition' (or 'contrariety' of incompatible opposites) is an opposition 'without contradiction' (*ohne Widerspruch*). It does not violate the principles of identity and (non)-contradiction, and hence is compatible with formal logic. The second form of opposition, on the contrary, is 'contradictory' (*durch den Widerspruch*) and gives rise to a dialectical opposition. (1975: 3)

Explaining the specific nature of dialectical contradiction, Colletti takes recourse to the formula 'A not-A'. It is the instance in which neither A nor B (as not-A) have any existence beyond the negation

of the other: "Neither of the two poles is anything in itself or for itself; each is a negative-*relation*." The result of this negative-relation is a unity (the unity of opposites): "Only *within* this unity is each term the negation of the other." Real or non-contradictory opposition, on the other hand, is expressed in the formula 'A & B', where both A & B are opposite, real and positive. This type of opposition can be called exclusive opposition since here what is absent is any 'mutual interpenetration' (or 'interdependence'): "the one does not bear within it a longing, a need, an anticipation of the other." Hence, in real opposition if A is positive, B is not a mere negation of it but is counterposed to it as something itself affirmative; it is a *negation* but not a *non-being*. Examples of real opposition are falling bodies as against rising bodies, attraction as against repulsion, etc. The poles of these oppositions, as Marx argues, 'cannot mediate each other' nor 'do they have any need of mediation'. Colletti quotes Kant:

> Two forces, one imparting movement to a body in one direction, and the other imparting an equal effect in the opposite direction, do not contradict each other: they are both possible as predicates of a single body. The outcome is equilibrium, which is a thing (*repraesentabile*). (1975: 7)

If the principle of real opposition or (non)contradiction can conceive of opposition only in terms of real negation, then by the same logic dialectical contradiction (as its opposite) should be a gesture towards the inexorable multiplicity and heterogeneity of phenomena. Hegelian dialectics both confirms and dissolves this possibility. In its first step, it complicates the simple determinations of such metaphysical categories as presence and property ('presence' as the truth of Being; 'property' as selfsameness, etc.) through the differential relation of alterity. To determine Being as presence requires a corollary determination of Non-Being as absence. Similarly, a negative otherness (alterity) arises when one attempts to determine the property of an entity as its selfsameness. In the second step of Hegelian dialectics, however, this insight gets sublated into a holistic unity. The other relation which problematizes presence or self-identity is now turned into a moment of more complex, comprehensive self-identity. Ryan succinctly summarises this metalepsis:

> It (Hegelian dialectics) recognizes the mediated nature of all supposedly proper entity, their constitutive expropriation (nothing is self-sufficient), but it orders this potentially heterogeneous differential into a system of simply binary oppositions or contradictions negations (Being / Non-Being,

> Cause / Effect) and suppresses the heterogeneity of alterity and difference in favour of a theology of truth as self-identity or "propriation", which arises from the process of mediation - that is, the return of the other-relation into the self-identity of the entity, concept, or subject.

The ultimately Hegelian roots of Colletti's notion of dialectics is nowhere clearer than in the grand scheme he evokes towards the end of the essay:

> In the beginning there was a oneness, succeeded by an era of rupture and separation, destined to culminate in capitalism; then, on the basis of these newly-emerged, superior conditions, an eventual reconciliation of the contradiction between individual and class, a supercession of the separation of man from man, and man from nature, becomes possible. If somewhat modified, the scheme of Hegel's philosophy of history blooms again. Therewith is revealed the second face of Marx, alongside that of the scientist, the naturalist and observer (1975: 28).

If the infinite can have no other existence than being a negation of the finite, then it inevitably fosters a monadic scheme and postulates an immediate unity. This is the metaphysical side of Hegel's principle of mediation whereby the other-relation is characterised merely as a negation (not an undecidable or extendable seriality of differentiation or of traces) that can be negated and sublated back into self-identity. Similarly, if the finite's only claim to existence is its logical contradiction with the non-finite, then the non-finite should gain meaning through its opposition to the finite. It is here that Hegelianism cracks. Hegel cannot emphasise the finiteness of the non-finite because he prioritizes the non-finite. In this context, Della Volpe's criticism of Hegel's hypostatisation (the speculative exchange of reason and matter) gains validity. Colletti describes:

> Hegel's exchange ... consists in reducing, on the one hand, material differences to differences within the bounds of Reason, i.e., to a moment of logico-dialectical contradiction, and then in surreptitiously restoring material non-contradiction, i.e., real oppositions, which had formerly been transcended, and presenting them as manifestations or modes of existence of their opposite, i.e., of contradiction or dialectical Reason embodied in this form. (1975: 17-18)

By strictly following the A / not-A logic (or, in other words, by interpreting alterity or trace-structure as mere logical negation), Colletti has no way to appreciate the inherently fragmentary constructs of entity. Hence, it is not surprising that Colletti marks out the 'fourth principle of dialectics' as peripheral to the problem of dialectics. The fourth principle states that all objects and

phenomena possess their own internal 'contradictions' and that the struggle between these contradictions is the principal driving force behind their progress and development is not in conflict with the principle of (non)contradiction. As is clear, these 'internal contradictions' are not logical contradictions but opposed forces which operate from opposite directions and hence are only compatible with real oppositions. In this context, it may be suggested that to rescue dialectics from operating as another grounding principle, real opposition and dialectical contradiction have to be thought together. Even if Luporini might not be right (as Colletti points out) when he argues that there is a germ of dialectics in Kant, invoking Kant in the midst of Hegel serves a metaphorical purpose: It is a gesture not of resolving the problems of Hegel in the realm of the Kantian anti-speculative or practical reason but to inscribe a mark that fissures the neat trajectory of Hegelianism.

Colletti solves some of these problems for himself by citing the special case of Marx's notion of the circulation of commodities (commodities - money - commodities) where real entities (commodity and money) by their very nature get sublated into dialectical contradiction. The separation between commodity and money (Colletti reiterates Marx's position) is a necessary condition for the appearance of crisis in capitalism. Colletti emphasises the Hegelian aspect of Marx when he tries to explain this crisis strictly within the terms of a philosophical orderliness:

> (A)s regards commodities and money - the 'two complementary phases of the complete metamorphosis of a commodity' - 'the split between the sale and the purchase become too pronounced', then it must be true that 'the intimate connection between them, their oneness, asserts itself by producing - a crisis. (1975: 25)

Here Marx is speaking of capital's effort to reduce circulation time to an 'impossible zero'. Circulation of commodities is a hindrance as well as a condition for capital-accumulation. It may be argued that the fundamental impossibility (non-identity) that lies at the heart of capitalism need not be sublated to a more complex identity for the sake of philosophical elegance. A deconstructive reading, suggests Spivak (1987), makes us glimpse the limits of utopianism and of the constant search for strictly philosophical descriptions of 'the historical justification for resistance'. A purely philosophical justification can happen to undermine potential for revolutionary practice. In that case, the political prerogative would depend on the strategic misrepresentation of the philosophical account.

Dialectics on the Edge: On Catherine Malabou's Reading of Hegel

Catherine Malabou's groundbreaking account, *The Future of Hegel: Plasticity, Temporality and Dialectic* (2005; originally published in French in 1996), attempts to rescue continental philosophy from what Derrida in his celebratory preface to the book describes as the "reassuring certainty that the Hegelian legacy is over and done with".[11] Derrida's engagement with Malabou on Hegel centres on what he calls 'to see what is coming', a phrase that will keep returning elliptically through the entire course of his long preface. Unfurling the expression 'to see what is coming', Derrida explains it as seeing what hasn't arrived yet but also what hasn't not arrived, since it is already arriving. After Heidegger's rather perfunctory dismissal of Hegel as a philosopher of no contemporary import, Hegel largely became a figure of the past to an entire generation of philosophers in the continent, though he remained a recurrent, at times active, at times absent, presence in Derrida, Foucault, Agamben and other major thinkers. This said, let it be admitted that though in such accounts there was no dearth of acknowledgement of Hegel's greatness and his singular contribution to the history of philosophy, the common thrust of these philosophers was to depict Hegel as a philosopher of identity, resolution and reason, all of which were candidates for immense scrutiny. And all these traits were taken to have crystallized in – or generated from – the Hegelian dialectic. As per Derrida this served as 'an active and organized allergy' for thinkers of his generation, though it must have been a matter of fascinating dislike since, as this paper has tried to show, both Foucault and Derrida among others kept coming back to it at least in the first part of their intellectual careers, even if to reject it following a Nietzschean-Heideggerean path.

Malabou in her book attempts to read Hegel against the grain, arguing that his mammoth systematization of the historical realization of the Spirit contains within itself a series of displacements, a series of sliding and departures. She tries to show that Hegel's notion of overcoming is never complete or neat; as we move from one stage to another, traces remain. The structures of the earlier stages become simplified but not abrogated, erased or blanked out. She imitates Hegel in such a way that it allows her to derive a supplementarity, something other, something else from Hegel's schematizations and his philosophy. That something else is part of

Hegel but also not part of Hegel in so far as they are not the subjects of Hegel. It is a forming which yields no form yet thinking always goes with this forming. This, Malabou calls plasticity. Ideally no plan or schema or code should allow for spaces in between; the demand is that it in itself should be complete. Yet no scheme or plan or code is free of interstitial spaces. This in-betweenness is what plasticity brings to entities, the state between not having a form and yet not being formless. Always on the edge of something, plasticity is the precarious essence of being. It is not full presence, neither is it a simple absence. It is a passage. What is the being of this passage is what thinking would engage and guide.

To make her point, Malabou privileges Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature*, a text not generally discussed, and tries to provide an anti-humanist reading of his scheme of the animal/human divide. Animal, argues Hegel, has no higher determinacy than propagating and ultimately passing onto death. In other words, determinacy is limited to preserving and perishing. The capacity of what is called higher determinacy is the preserve of the blessed of animals, man. What allows man his unique status is his capacity for language and ratiocination. Malabou problematizes this neat divide of animal and human by bringing the domain known as habit into philosophical scrutiny. As the conjunction of continuity and change, habit is always an unstable equilibrium. Viewed in this manner, the constitutive principle of habit and dialectics is similar, both captured by the notion of plasticity which for Malabou is "a capacity to receive form and a capacity to produce form" – in other words, to absorb and create through *trans*formation. To place habit in this framework, Malabou draws from Hegelian dialectics the notion of *Aufhebung*. Translated as sublation, it is explained by her as suppression and preservation. In the transformation from one stage into another, certain traits of the past are preserved and certain traits of the new are kept under rein, so that change does not become autonomous of the system. Habit is an attempt to codify this alchemy of change and continuity. It is the interface of singularity and repetition, the grafting of the new in the existing and making a pattern out of it. If habit is continuity, by the same measure habit is also change, because this continuity is premised on change. In other words, the point of continuity in habit is also its possibility of discontinuity.

In habit, argues Malabou, the individual feels the weight of his own existence. Every change indicates towards some present lack which will become something else. This is the weightlessness that the individual encounters in change. But this weightlessness ought

to be borne as if it is itself of weight, or, to put it another way, as if it is a kind of ontological given. So, the pull of change that the individual experiences also puts him in a state of cusp, a liminality, a kind of nothing-point. How to convert this pull of change or better, contingency, into regulated work is the challenge of habit. Therefore at the heart of habit's continuity lies a moment of emptiness, a complete emptying out of itself at every turn. Derrida's epiphanic figuration 'seeing what is coming' carries with it the possibility of seeing more than what is coming. Here seeing is hinged on infinity. Similarly, if habit is a system to deal with what is coming, then because what is coming is potentially infinite it acquires the necessary possibility of overrunning itself, becoming hallucinatory. In Freud, what cannot be habituated becomes the material of habit. In madness or schizophrenia, what normally is ruled out of habit, becomes habit.

The inwardness of man, his much vaunted trait that he thinks differentiating him from the animal, does not as a matter of fact belong to him. Language is the sum total of this inwardness and allows him access to his most precious possession i.e., the ability to signify everything metaphorically in its absence. As such, man's inwardness exists outside him; it is not what Heidegger would call man's 'ownmost'. Reading into Hegel's distinction between animal and man, it can be said that what liberates man from the animal also captures him in an economy of a so-called higher order, the interior. Man is destined to an inner existence. His organs cannot simply remain instruments but have to be endowed with the power of signs. As part of the same economy, what separates man from the animal also separates him from other men. Because inwardness is what man puts into language, it stares him at the face. The face becomes the unresolved manifesto of man's constructed inwardness. Between man (the essential being) and language (the system of signs), between his putative interiority constructed through language and his indulgence in the illusion that he actually possesses language, stands the face as a third element grafting the power of signification of language onto man. Hence there is the special significance of physiognomy in modern times which acquires a life of its own.

Habit as a lower idea that has its origin in the animal kingdom – something that is repetitive, which does not exactly go by reason – keeps invading the regimentation of man's habit, thus blurring Hegel's dichotomy between animal and man. If habitus is the generalization of the field of habit, then its individualizing,

physiognomic, affective, almost aesthetic, surface is the face. Face is taken as the spontaneous expression of man; it is not his mask. But Hegel, in Malabou's reading, shows that even as spontaneous expression, the modern understanding of face incorporates all the attributes of the Roman notion of persona: his status, his property, his family, etc. In this light she cites Hegel's example: 'You certainly act like an honest man, but I see from your face that you are forcing yourself to do so and are a rogue at heart'[12], indicating how both signifier and signified – bearers as they are of a purely imaginary referent – fail to coincide. The premium on the inside makes man the site of an exhibition, his physiognomy serving as the cartography of the interior. But because everything is immediately transformed into its sign, the interior can never express itself adequately. There is an opacity along with this transparency. This opacity haunts the sign system and the dream of acquiring a crystalline, transparent form through language. It is eruptive, the passage to the delirious, the mad, the 'primordial nights'. An existential phobia marks the sign system because in truth it signifies nothing and both the signifier and signified are actually governed by the purely imaginary status of the referent, an invented and ever receding *original* nature.

A concept's negation of itself is not the cancellation of itself, but its self-introspection. Because it is concept, its own negation must have an orientation, a positing. So it is as part of being a concept that it negates itself and thus becomes deepened. In Hegel, whatever is transforming stands cancelled. Essence is the collection of predicates that belongs from the past, and appearance is what is coming to presence now. Hence, appearance in Hegel is always more important than essence. Every translator tries to convey the twofold sense of the term *aufheben*: to suppress and to preserve. But why has no translator or interpreter of Hegel, asks Malabou, dreamt of applying to the term the very meanings for which it stands?

Aufheben, she continues, happens also to produce itself; it makes something new of itself each time (see, Malabou pp. 144-145). What comes into being through the dialectical process is not simply the result of a process. The new affirmation cannot be read merely in terms of negation and positing – that is, simply as the result of a process. Instead, core to the dialectical enterprise for Malabou is to come to be born, the being that is birth, or what Hannah Arendt calls natality. What we call synthesis is not merely the culmination of two entities in interaction. Active in it is also something singular, something excessive, something that falls outside the calculated and expected, something that as excess has a life of its own – in short, it

stands for *the very happening of singularity*. Malabou refers to Hegel in support of this new direction of reading:

> In actual fact, and in the entire course of spirit's development, there is no perfect identity between preservation and suppression: they are neither unchangeable nor undifferentiated. What must be demonstrated is that Hegel does indeed restore the essential dialectical performativity of the *aufheben* and *Aufhebung*. The possibility of a new reading of Absolute Knowledge emerges from this truly plastic reading. (p. 145)

Because of such a take, for Malabou the two modalities of suppression and preservation are deeply implicated in the *virtual* and *imaginary*. Together they form the *energy of the negative*. Virtuality here, a la Deleuze, would refer to the endless openings that a real event goes through, at times completely transported from its context and put to strange use. A film or a novel is a good example of this – the more the artistic virtuosity, the more its potential for virtuality. This would also mean that virtuality is no result of schematization; it has something real to it. Malabou's attempt is to take Hegel's dialectics out of transcendental schematization by emphasizing the historical part of Hegel's scheme. She tries to put Hegel's thrust on history through the grid of imagination and virtuality, which she sees as sources of energy, thus incorporating Deleuze in her very own way. Every result is the site of infinite virtual existence. For example, Hegel's understanding of the modern Prussian state is the ultimate realization of the state. In contrast, the thought of virtuality would suggest that the modern Prussian state was a nodality through which an infinite virtuality of the modern state could be generated. The real, rather than being a closure, functions as a generative principle of multiplicity. Here politics approximates aesthetics, since the imagination that brings virtuality into life is not of a schematic order in the sense that it does not tie up a particular reality to a pre-existing form but transforms it into a play that invents a form for itself every time. This involves an excess of energy that Malabou calls 'the energy of the negative'.

For Hegel, synthesis as contraction is its productivity. Following Hegel then it can be suggested that the excess that contraction causes will produce forms that bleed into others; in that sense, no contraction can be total contraction. Malabou, like Badiou, uses dialectics to come to a point of exception. What comes about from the dialectical process is an exception, a singularity. For Hegel, this exception ultimately remains in the logic of oneness while for Malabou that would be an anti-dialectical move, for dialectics invites singularity marked by precariousness. This is not a matter of

transcendence; within immanence only, there can be a zone of newness, a natality. For Hegel, immanence ultimately becomes speculative and thus goes beyond the worldly. In that sense, it is a kind of transcendent immanence. Everything is immanent, very much within experience, but the ground of that experience ultimately becomes speculative. However, Hegel cannot bargain immanence for transcendence completely. The past moments that we take to be wholly transformed remain as a trace, a spectral presence, an insufficiently mourned demise. Its energy refuses to leave away.

Malabou tries to historicize absolute knowledge in the tracks of Hegel. She argues that even though absolute knowledge is absolute, only at a particular historical moment can it release an idea or meaning. As such, it is not something simply neutral to historical knowledge. In that sense absolute knowledge is also a kind of letting be or letting go. The empty form of sublation gets released at a specific historical moment. That release is interestingly also a kind of attachment; it creates a particular kind of passion and a particular kind of subject. Drawing from Kant, Malabou uses the word *hypotyposis* (literally meaning, vivid or picturesque description) to refer how a philosophical category at times acquires a sensuous body. There is a kind of sensuousness in plasticity which makes any particular body a shade unformed, a shade going out of itself. In other words, it has a degree of incorporeality, leading to an in-betweenness between thinking and body. This is what she derives from her reading of Hegel. Absolute knowledge is also a passionate knowledge. Hegel's understanding of absolute knowledge as speculative knowledge is interesting, as if in history there is now a possibility of speculative knowledge. It is an overall form that history reaches and at the same time, in reaching so, it also becomes something specific. It is not the end of history as in Fukuyama's brass announcement; rather, it is a singularity of the historical moment when a particular thought of the end becomes possible. So, instead of simply denoting the end of history, it is the thought of the end of history that becomes possible in Hegel.

What gains subjecthood here is not the 'I' that thinks, but the process and singularity that thinking is. There is a field but without any mastery, any transcendental 'I'. By 'giving up' the relation that the mastery of 'I' inevitably engenders – the subject-object dyad or what Malabou calls 'the differentiated content' – thought frees itself from the rigidity of a confrontation that has nothing left to show us. Calling it speculative abrogation, Malabou shows the close

connection between abrogation and *Aufhebung* i.e., between giving up or letting go and suppression-preservation. Among the several German verbs she cites that mean both preservation and letting away are *ablegen* and *aufgehen*. Both mean at once to abandon, to cast off and also to put in and file away. At once mourning and renouncing uniqueness and separate autonomy, each moment integrates and preserves itself in the totality (159). Do we mourn what we renounce? Or, better, do we renounce what we mourn? Is it the secret of all relationships? I prefer to end with a quote from the cultural philosopher Alexander Garcia Duttmann, written for a different context:

> To what which was never before, we cannot relate, just as we cannot relate to that which has always already been. The moment we relate to that which was never before, we have transformed it into something recognizable, as if it had always already been. The moment we relate to that which has always already been, we have transformed it into something new, as if it had not been before.[13] Alexander Garcia Duttmann, "Never Before, Always Already:"

NOTES

1. Gayatri Chakraborty Spivak, "Speculations on Reading Marx After Reading Derrida" in Derek Attridge, Geoffrey Bennington and Robert Young edited, *Post-Structuralism and the Question of History*, 1989, p. 44)
2. To cite one celebrated instance, consider this:
   It stirs and it stirs not; it is far, and likewise near.
   It is inside of all this, and it is outside of all this. (*Iśa Upanisad*)
3. It is interesting that for Enlightenment thinkers, especially Kant and Hegel, philosophy is the cornerstone of Enlightenment. The German word for Enlightenment is *Aufkl*○*rung* where 'auf' is above and 'klarung' means to clear up – that is, looking from above the muddle below for a better perspective of ground realities. In other words, while philosophy draws its lifeblood from the empirical world, it provides the empirical world with a reasoned perspective. And the crucial instrument of philosophy for achieving this is dialectics. What history, literature and other branches of humanities and social sciences find in philosophy, according to this line of argument, is a picture of perfection not possible in reality though never ruled out as an impossibility.
4. See, Maurice A. Finocchiaro, *Gramsci and the History of Dialectical Thought*, 2002, p. 203-4.
5. Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge*, p. 227
6. I refer to my email correspondence with Pravu Mazumder (May, 2011)
7. Wayne M. Martin, "In defense of bad infinity: a Fichtean response to Hegel's *Differenzschrift*", *Bulletin of the Hegel Society of Great Britain* 55/56, 2007, p. 3
8. 'A Heidegger Seminar on Hegel's *Differenzschrift*', *Southwest Journal of Philosophy*, 11, pp. 9–45. Translation modified. (Quoted in Catherine Malabou, The Future of Hegel: Plasticity, Temporality and Dialectic, p.142).
9. Derrida borrows the idea of *writing under erasure* from Heidegger. Heidegger argues

that to define something, one must broach and answer the question of being in general; but since being is the precondition of thinking, anterior to thinking, it can never be formulated as an answer to the question: "what is?". This, Heidegger points out, is the primordial problem of the language that we possess and which possesses us. On the other hand, to coin a new word is to forget the problem or believe it solved. Heidegger's answer to the problem is to both delite the word and to retain it. To cross out the existing word is tantamount to liberating it while to retain the crossed-out word is a testimony of the insurmountable nature of the problem. Borrows as he does from Heidegger, Derrida, however, brings about one crucial change in Heidegger's scheme. Having no nostalgia for lost presence, Derrida banishes the master word *Being*; instead, he brings in the concept of *trace*. As anterior to presence, trace by definition cannot be a master word. It can also be called *differance* or *arche-writing*.

10. Goran Therborn: "After dialectics: Postmodernity, post-Marxism, and other posts and positions" in Gerard Delanty (ed) *Handbook of Contemporary European Social Theory*.
11. I am indebted to my colleague, Soumyabrata Choudhury, for discussing Malabou's text on Hegel with me.
12. Quoted in Catherine Malabou, *The Future of Hegel: Plasticity, Temporality and Dialectic* , (p. 67)
13. Alexander Garcia Duttmann, "Never Before, Always Already: Notes on Agamben and the Category of Relation", ANGELAKI: Journal of Theoretical Humanities, Volume 6, Number 3, December 2001, p. 3

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PATHWAYS TO POPULATION STABILIZATION

Leela Visaria

In spite of the decadal population growth rate having slowed down between 2001 and 2011 to 17.6 per cent from more than 21 per cent in the previous decade of 1991-2001, the popular view among many is that India's population is growing at an unacceptably fast rate and its size has reached more than a billion because people continue to have several children. Also, several of India's social and economic problems are attributed to its size and the growth rate. The possibility that by 2026, India's population would be around 1.4 billion, and by 2051 between 1.6 and 1.7 billion, sends panic signals among planners, policy makers and programme managers. The overwhelming response is that sooner India attains population stabilization, better off it would be as a nation. Among some, there is also an admiration for China because it has managed to slow down its population growth significantly in a very short period of time and a fear that India will overtake China in population size in near future.[1]

It is, therefore, important to understand, how population grows and what is meant by population stabilization.

When the number of births equals the number of deaths, there is no growth or no net increase in population and if this continues for some years, the size of population becomes more or less constant. When a population reaches that stage, and assuming that the effects of migration are minimal, it is said to be stabilized. One can think of several ways to attain population stabilization. Zero population growth can be achieved when both birth and death rates are high as was the case in India a century ago, when famines and epidemics kept mortality level high and the prevailing social and economic institutional factors favoured high fertility and kept it fairly high (See: Davis and Blake, 1956; Dyson, 1989). In a regime of low death rate, population stabilization can be achieved if birth rate falls to the level of death rate. Population stabilization can also be achieved if death rate increases to reach the level of birth rate as is happening in many developed Nordic countries including in Italy and Germany

and Japan due to the decline in fertility and ageing of their population pushing the death rate up.

Factors Responsible for Population Growth

It is, therefore, important that we understand what causes growth in population. India's recent history of relatively high fertility, and welcome steady decline in mortality since the 1920s, has resulted in young age structure. Recent decline in fertility has lowered the proportion of population in the age group 0-14 from about 41 per cent in 1971 to 35 per cent in 2001 and is less than 31 according to the age data recently released from the 2011 Census. Compared to China, with only 19 per cent of total population in 0-14 age group, the Indian age distribution is still quite young with a broad base. A high proportion of India's population born in the decades of 1970s and 1980s, when their parents had on an average more than five children, is now in the marriage and reproduction phase of life. Even if all of them decide not to have more than two children, the number of births would still rise for several years and population will continue to grow for several decades. Population grows because older cohorts differ in absolute size (are smaller) than those currently bearing children.

In demographic parlance, this is termed as population momentum. All population projections carried out suggest that there is no escape from India's population stabilizing at around 1.7 billion by 2051. Beyond 2051, the net additions to our population would be fewer if the regime of replacement level or somewhat below replacement level fertility sets in and continues.

Besides the built-in growth momentum, there are two other important factors which contribute to growth of population. (Reduction in mortality has very limited impact on population growth or rate of growth.) They are high desired fertility and unwanted fertility. There are some couples who, for a variety of reasons, desire more children than needed to replace themselves. At individual level, fertility is often linked to infant and child mortality. As articulated in a World Bank report, death of a child evokes a replacement response and an insurance response. Parents would attempt to replace a child who died young to attain the desired number of children. They may even use additional children as a hedge against (insurance response) future loss in a regime where infant and child mortality is relatively high (World Bank, 2010). In the absence of social security net, couples also desire several

children to survive to adulthood in order to take care of the parents in old age and also need more hands or more male children to work and contribute to family income. The various socio-economic and cultural factors operate on and influence the high desired fertility.

As is evident from the prevailing levels of total fertility rate (TFR) in India, which according to the 2010 Sample Registration System was 2.5 children per woman, high desired fertility over a large track of our country is a phenomenon of past. In spite of the heterogeneity of the country and the fact that fertility did not start declining at the same time or at the same pace, it is important to note that all the states of India have experienced fertility decline in recent years. Today not even the core north Indian states report TFR above 3.7. In fact, the small family norm has permeated throughout the country and one must acknowledge it. The pertinent questions which are not the central theme of this paper, nonetheless are: how large is the difference in the ideal number of children desired and the actual number of children couples have, why there is a difference and how can it be minimized.[2]

According to the National Family Health Survey – 3 (NFHS-3), conducted during 2005-06, although on an average, women in India considered 2.5 children as the ideal number, the younger women in the age group 15 to 29 reported the ideal number of children to be 2.1. There are, no doubt, besides age of women, variations by level of education, wealth index, caste or place of residence. But no group of women — rural, illiterate, poor, scheduled tribe — reported the ideal number of children they would like to have as more than 2.7 (IIPS and Macro International, 2007).

Another way of understanding fertility desired by Indian women is by calculating unwanted fertility or unmet need for family planning. A birth is considered as unwanted if the number of living children at the time of conception is greater than or equal to the current ideal number of children reported by the respondent at the time of survey. By subtracting unwanted fertility from the total fertility, an estimate of wanted fertility is derived, or women having that number of children that they want. For the major states of India, values of these variables are estimated based on the NFHS-3 data for 2005-06 as shown in Table 1. The estimates suggest that Indian women want on an average only 1.9 children, which is below replacement level fertility of 2.1 and is nearly 25 per cent lower than the estimated total fertility rate of 2.5 in 2010.[3] If the unwanted births could be eliminated, TFR would indeed fall below

replacement level. Wanted fertility was less than 2.2 in all the states of India except in Bihar, where it was reported at 2.4, and Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, where it was reported as 2.3 and 2.2, respectively. In these states, unwanted fertility was greater than 30 per cent. Total wanted fertility was only 2.4 children even among illiterate women or those who were in the lowest wealth quintile.

Decomposition of Population Growth

The prospective population growth can be decomposed to estimate the contribution of high desired fertility, unwanted fertility and population momentum on future population size (See for the methodology for decomposition, Bongaarts and Potter, 1983). When an exercise to decompose the population growth for India and its major states was carried out by the present author, it was noted that India's population would increase from 1.03 billion to 1.62 billion or by about 590 million between 2001 and 2051 (Table 2) or by 57 per cent.[4] The overall projections put the population size for 2051 between 1.6 and 1.7 billion depending upon the assumptions about the pace of fertility decline. The figure of 1.62 billion is based on the assumption that fertility will decline in the coming decades at the pace it has declined in the past 10 years and once total reaches below replacement level of 1.8, it will stabilize at that level.

However, population growth would vary significantly among the states. It is important to note that given the diversity of Indian states in terms of the fertility and mortality levels, they will attain stabilization at different times and in the process their share in the total population of the country will be affected which in turn will have political, social and economic consequences.

While recognizing the fact that the future population growth is a function of the timing of the onset of fertility decline, it is important to note the implications of the diversity of India. The Indian states are at different stages of demographic transition as evident in Table 2. The major Indian states (with population above 5 million) can be divided into three groups on the basis of their total fertility rate according to the 2010 data from the Sample Registration System. All the four southern states (Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala) along with Maharashtra, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and West Bengal have attained total fertility rate (TFR) of or below replacement level. These states together constitute nearly 42 per cent of India's total population. In states of

Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, where fertility reached replacement level some 10-15 years ago, population will increase between 10 and 20 per cent in the 50-year period. In the other states in this group, where the fertility decline is of much more recent origin, population will grow somewhat rapidly in the initial couple of decades of the half century before tapering off.

The middle group of states has TFR between 2.3 and 2.8 and includes Gujarat, Orissa, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, and Assam, and constitutes about 14 per cent of the country's total population. Assuming that fertility continues to decline in these states at the pace at which it has in the recent past, they will attain replacement level fertility by 2016. Their population in 2051 will be at least 50 per cent larger than enumerated in 2001.

The large north Indian states of undivided Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan with more than 41 per cent of India's population have TFR above 3. As shown in Table 2, population growth in these high fertility states will exceed 70 per cent; in fact, in Uttar Pradesh population would even almost double in 50 years. In these states, the unwanted fertility is between 35-40 per cent. If it is addressed successfully, TFR will come down close to replacement level in less than 20 years. The desired fertility is somewhat high compared to other states but only marginally so. But everywhere the built-in growth momentum along with meeting unmet need for contraception and health services needs to be addressed.

One of the implications of the differentials in growth rate is that the state-specific share of population would change over time. The population share in the country of the core north Indian states would increase from 41 to 48 per cent. This would have implications for the number of elected representatives in both the houses. However, the Delimitation of Assembly and Parliamentary Constituencies Act was amended recently. Now the amendment is that the total number of existing seats allocated to various states in both the upper and lower houses on the basis of 1971 Census shall remain unaltered till the first census to be taken after the year 2026. Nonetheless, the differential growth rates and resulting size of the population in different regions of India must be watched carefully for its implications for density of population, rural-urban distribution and urbanization process as well as inter-state migration of people. Whether large-scale inter-state migration would be able to redress some of the geographical imbalance or not will to a greater extent depend on the political scenario with regional political parties

tolerating it given the linguistic and cultural differences. However, these issues are not the focus of this paper.

Nationally about 33-35 million population of the growth of 590 million in 50 years from 2001 would be due to high desired fertility suggesting that elimination of high desired fertility would have only a marginal role in the expected population growth. About a quarter or 150 million population growth would be due to unwanted fertility. If unwanted fertility is addressed effectively with good quality services, population growth can be lowered by almost 25 percent. The remaining nearly 400 million additions to population, which is a major share in population growth, would be due to momentum (for state level decomposition results see: Visaria and Visaria, 2003). The states that have attained replacement fertility will grow mostly due to momentum but the share of unwanted fertility in growth would be quite high in high fertility states.

Accepting this as given, what are our concerns and what are our options? How do we move towards stabilization or how can stabilization be reached? Is there any particular or optimal size at which the population should level off, and when should that occur? What "costs" would be imposed by the various paths to stabilization, and what costs are worth paying? These are questions which will continue to haunt Indian policy makers; however, an understanding of the factors that lead to population growth and how they play out over time would help to avoid knee-jerk reactions, alarmist public statements or suggest and implement measures that stem from panic.

While the planners and those whose responsibility is to implement the plans, would understandably be concerned about the likely consequences of population growth, which is projected to be close to 1.7 billion by 2051. Concerns about food production needed for the population of that size in an environment of erratic rainfall, pattern of land holdings resulting from fragmentation or subdivision of land, level and structure of employment and the likely absorption of workers in the informal economy are indeed very valid. Concerns are also expressed about the impact of population growth on the use of natural resources, on air and water pollution, and on social unrest and dissatisfaction. In the coming decades these and a host of other issues such as distribution of population between rural and urban areas and associated needs to invest in infrastructure and civic amenities, increasing aged population and their health, social and psychological needs also will need to be addressed.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Family Planning

In view of this scenario, we need to focus on the policy initiatives related to meeting the reproductive needs including family planning needs of the people who would like to restrict their family size and meet the unmet need for family planning to take care of 25 per cent contribution to population growth.

While the technical quality of contraceptives has increased greatly in the past 10 years, improving the quality and reach of the family planning programme is needed in order for couples to realize their reproductive goals. This is much more so in the core north Indian states, where according to the NFHS estimates, between 30 and 40 per cent of fertility is unwanted. This region is plagued with several problems even in the delivery of family planning services. A close monitoring and supervision of all health programmes is needed. Callous and insensitive approach of the workers at all levels; often reported by field-based NGOs, needs to change. The quality of all services, including that of sterilization must be raised along with good follow-up care. The basket of non-terminal methods may include injectables in the programme after careful evaluation of its acceptance. Some groups are against including hormonal methods in the programme. However, more data need to be generated using principles of good science. More and more doctors need to be trained in providing non-scalpel vasectomy. Most importantly, discomfort and the fear of side effects of various contraceptive methods that the clients may have must be addressed by improving the communication between providers and clients. These are doable activities that do not require huge resources.

Intervals between births in India are fairly long; over 60 per cent of births occur more than 24 months after the previous live birth. However, a slightly under 40 per cent of births where the inter-birth interval is less than 24 months, which include mistimed births, can be reduced, if the health care providers sensitively advice non terminal methods of contraception. There are evidently a sizeable proportion of women who would like to space their children according to surveys. The findings do throw up a challenge to the programme which largely focuses on sterilization. The management issues such as assured supply of contraceptives, proper counselling, follow-up services, all are needed to strengthen the programme. Health needs of adolescents must be a part of service provision.

Equally importantly, follow-up care must become essential component of services.

Delaying Marriage of Girls

One of the most difficult issues confronting the programme implementers is promotion of reversible methods of contraception to delay the first pregnancy. Most sociological studies report that the pressure on newly married girls is quite high to produce a child within a reasonably short period of time. Even if the young women themselves do not desire to have a child, their ability to make decisions on their own is very limited. Also, there are negative health consequences of pregnancies and child births occurring to adolescents. Teenage mothers experience higher risks of premature birth and infant death, than those who become mothers at later age. Increasing the age of marriage of girls, which in some states is as low as 16-17 years, is a very important goal in itself. If marriage is postponed by a few years and if girls continue to remain in school, their ability to take decisions affecting their own lives may get enhanced due to exposure to education.

However, it is important also to note that a rise in the mean age at marriage would raise the mean length of each new generation and thereby lower the birth rate and slow the population growth momentum. Postponement and stretching-out of childbearing, accompanied by a gradual decline in the number of children that people have over a lifetime, can effectively reduce population growth.

Reducing Infant and Child Mortality

Another measure needed is a strong programme to lower infant and child mortality and to improve the health and nutritional status of children and mothers. A programme for universal immunisation of children against vaccine-preventable diseases, in spite of having launched in the 1970s, has yet to pick up momentum. It is often said that the focus on eradication of poliomyelitis has diverted resources away from providing the other important vaccinations to children. Uninterrupted supply of all vaccines, including that for measles, must be ensured. Also, in certain areas, where the programme appears to be tardy, recording system needs to be improved.

While improvement in survival of infants and children is a very desirable goal in itself, it will also help reduce wanted fertility in so far as couples do try to replace children that are lost to death to certain extent. In a situation where infant mortality continues to be still fairly high and where couples accept sterilization immediately after the birth of a second child in response to family planning programme with strong incentive base, a child loss is tragic and more importantly such a programme violates the tenet of basic rights. In a zealous pursuit of quick population stabilization, unrealistic goals cannot be imposed on people even covertly.

Eliminating Son Preference

Preference for sons over daughters in our country has its roots in the social mores and norms and contributes to both high wanted fertility and also unwanted fertility, and difficult to address through direct health and family planning programmes. Improving the status of women through education would help to weaken son preference in the long run. Value of women for family and society would have to be enhanced through alternative role models and avenues.

Conclusion

By 2025, India's population would almost certainly be equal to that of China's population and still growing in spite of achieving replacement level fertility which is required for long term stabilization. That is because of the built in momentum for growth that will play out itself for the next 25-30 years. Our planning and programmes cannot ignore this reality.

While the goal of population stabilization is paramount in the minds of our policy makers and programme implementers, its achievement and sustainability would, to a great extent, depend on creating conditions in which individuals, regardless of sex, age, caste, religion, can exercise genuine free choice. For eventual stabilization, an average of two children per couple is needed and in India a large proportion has accepted that as a desirable norm. The family-size preferences of young people now entering the childbearing ages are significantly lower than the preferences reported by their elders at the same stage in life. The rising levels of aspiration of young couples for their children and investing in their future is indeed helping them want fewer children. If good quality uninterrupted family planning and reproductive health services are

provided, there is no reason to believe that the preferences and aspirations will not be translated into actual practice.

Also, latitude in family size in real life must be accepted. Some may choose not to marry at all, some will want to have no child or one child only and some will have more than two children. The various combinations of these can help attain the two-child average. Finally, we must accept the fact that India's population will continue to grow in the coming few decades while the policy and programmatic measures focus on bringing about stabilization. Given this, we must help couples attain their reproductive goals, meet the unmet needs, and focus on quality of services while respecting their rights.

Table 1: Estimates of Total Fertility Rate, Wanted Fertility and Unwanted Fertility for Major States of India: 2005-06

Major States	Total Fertility Rate (TFR) in 2005-06	Wanted Fertility	Unwanted Fertility	Unwanted fertility as % of TFR
India	2.7	1.9	0.8	29.6
Kerala	1.9	1.8	0.1	05.0
Tamil Nadu	1.8	1.4	0.4	22.2
Andhra Pradesh	1.8	1.5	0.3	16.7
Karnataka	2.1	1.6	0.5	23.8
Maharashtra	2.1	1.7	0.4	13.0
Punjab	2.0	1.5	0.5	25.0
Himachal Pradesh	1.9	1.5	0.4	21.0
West Bengal	2.3	1.7	0.6	26.0
Gujarat	2.4	1.8	0.6	25.0
Orissa	2.4	1.8	0.6	25.0
Haryana	2.7	2.1	0.6	22.2
Jammu& Kashmir	2.4	1.6	0.8	33.3
Assam	2.4	1.8	0.6	25.0
Bihar	4.0	2.4	1.6	40.0
Jharkhand	3.3	2.1	1.2	36.4
Madhya Pradesh	3.1	2.1	1.0	32.2
Chattisgarh	2.6	2.1	0.5	19.2
Uttar Pradesh	3.8	2.3	1.5	39.5
Uttaranchal	2.5	1.8	0.7	28.0
Rajasthan	3.2	2.2	1.0	31.3

Source: IIPS and Macro, 2007.

Table 2: Population Projections for major states of India in 2051

State	Population in 2001	Population in 2051 according to standard projection	Absolute difference between 2001 to 2051	Percent increase between 2001 to 2051
India	1028.6	1619.5	590.9	57.4
Low Fertility States				
Kerala	31.8	36.0	4.2	13.2
Tamil Nadu	62.4	72.0	9.6	15.4
Andhra Pradesh	76.2	91.4	15.2	20.0
Karnataka	52.9	78.0	25.1	47.4
Maharashtra	96.9	147.4	50.5	52.1
Punjab	24.4	35.7	11.3	46.3
Himachal Pradesh	6.1	9.5	3.4	55.7
West Bengal	80.2	121.9	41.7	52.0
Subtotal of low fertility states	430.9	591.9	161.0	37.4
Their % share in total population	41.9	36.5		
Middle level fertility states				
Gujarat	50.7	73.0	22.3	44.0
Orissa	36.8	53.9	17.1	46.5
Haryana	21.1	41.1	20.0	95.2
Jammu& Kashmir	10.1	15.2	5.1	50.0
Assam	26.7	42.0	15.3	57.3
Subtotal of middle level fertility states	145.4	225.2	79.8	54.9
Their % share in total population	14.1	13.9		
High fertility states				
Undivided Bihar	109.9	188.0	78.1	71.1
Undivided Madhya Pradesh	81.1	148.0	66.9	82.5
Undivided Uttar Pradesh	174.7	337.0	162.3	92.3
Rajasthan	56.5	106.1	49.6	87.8
Subtotal of high fertility states	422.2	779.1	356.9	84.5
Their % share in total population	41.0	48.1		

NOTES

1. Interestingly, China has in recent years become aware of the implications of its one-child policy adopted since 1979 that has brought down population growth to a great extent and has become somewhat lax in its imposition. There is a realization of the unintended consequences of the policy such as males outnumbering females, sex-selective abortion, infanticide, and a future social safety net problem. Not accepting publicly, China has realized that such a policy in the long run would cause considerable disruption in family structure, kinship relations, society and economy.
2. According to the NFHS-3, conducted in 2005-06, the ideal number of children desired in the north Indian states ranged between 2.5 and 2.8, whereas in the southern states, the range was between 1.9 and 2.2.
3. In developing countries, ideal number of children and wanted number of children reported in response to survey questions differ as is the case in India because the older women in particular do respond to a question on ideal number of children by taking into account the actual number of children that they have already had and so it tends to be greater than the wanted fertility. The latter is derived by subtracting unwanted fertility estimates from current total fertility.
4. The overall projections put the population size for 2051 ranged between 1.6 and 1.7 billion depending upon the assumptions about the pace of fertility decline. The figure of 1.62 billion is based on the assumption that fertility will decline in the coming decades at the pace it has declined in the past 10 years and once total reaches below replacement level of 1.8, it will stabilize at that level.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Political Ideas in Modern India: Thematic Explorations (eds.) V.R. Mehta and Thomas Pantham, Sage, New Delhi, pp. 481, 2006

Mangesh Kulkarni

Compiled by two veteran political theorists, V.R. Mehta and Thomas Pantham, *Political Ideas in Modern India* is one of the doorstopper volumes in the series on 'History of Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization' being published under the general editorship of the senior philosopher D.P. Chattopadhayaya. The objective of the mammoth series, launched in 1990 and sponsored by the Government of India, is to probe "the interconnection between science, philosophy and culture as they developed in the long history of Indian civilization" by tapping primary source materials in classical and modern Indian languages (http://csc-india.in/history.html). In the editorial introduction, Pantham and Mehta claim that the book seeks to illuminate "the main ideas and ideals, whose contextual meanings and configurations made up the political world envisioned by the political and intellectual leaders of colonial and postcolonial India" (p. xxvii). To this end, they have assembled two dozen essays contributed by a team of scholars spanning three generations and from the following disciplines: political science, international relations, law, history, philosophy and literary studies.

The first section of the book features four essays on social reform and radical politics under colonial modernity. Bidyut Chakrabarty covers a large canvas and summarizes a sizeable scholarly corpus in his overview of 'radical thought' in colonial India. But it remains unclear what purpose is served by subsuming disparate thinkers like Rammohan Roy, Jotiba Phule, Aurobindo Ghosh and M.K. Gandhi under the omnibus category of 'radicalism'. Sanjay Palshikar's essay examines the ideas of militant nationalists in colonial Maharashtra and interrogates B.G. Tilak's and V.D. Savarkar's construction of an aggressive, anti-Muslim masculinist politics within a Hindu revivalist framework. He laments but does not explain the current resurgence of 'masculinized nationalism' and the eclipse of the Gandhian socialist alternative proffered by S.D. Javdekar.

Valerian Rodrigues focuses on the century-long quest of *bahujan*

and *dalit* intellectuals from Jotiba Phule to B.R. Ambedkar for empowerment via modern education, a regime of equal rights, a substantive democracy based on communal representation and preferential policies as well as the creation of an equitable, gender-just social order suffused with the spirit of Buddhism. He presents the *bahujan/dalit* discourse primarily through a hermeneutics of trust, lightly touching on its fault-lines which have come to the fore in the post-Independence period. Partha Chatterjee provides a fresh perspective on Ambedkar's thought by treating it as a counterpoint to Benedict Anderson's influential theory of nationalism, which treats nations as unbound serialities that inhabit the empty homogeneous time of modernity and transcend the parochialism of ethnic politics. Chatterjee argues that Ambedkar granted the importance of modern universal citizenship and endorsed the value of unbound serialities; but he perceived the actually existing nation as comprising bound serialities in dense, heterogeneous time and demanded sufficient political representation for the underprivileged.

The second section deals with history, literature and political imaginations in colonial India. It opens with Dipesh Chakrabarty's essay that draws out the implications of Subaltern Studies for political theory and underscores the imperative of redefining non-Western politics through an alternative understanding of fundamental categories like time, agency, community and democracy. Chatterjee's contribution to this volume may be seen as an apt illustration of how such investigations can be conducted. In a rambling, conversational essay sans footnotes, G.P. Deshpande charts the terrain of the Marathi public sphere by tracking key debates on religion, caste, language, history and political power. Noting the contradictory coexistence of a radical intellectual legacy and regressive practice in contemporary Maharashtra, Deshpande attributes it to the potentially progressive *dalit-bahujan* movement's myopic neglect of imperialism, and its failure to grasp the changing nature of caste and agrarian relations.

Sitanshu Yashaschandra dives deep into the history of Gujarat to scrutinize the semiotics of social and political thought in the state through an *anekaanta* (plural) mode of reading which was first formulated in 1592 by the Jain monk Samyasundar. He alludes to the writings of the nineteenth-century intellectual Narmadashankar Dave, who insisted that '*Hindusthaan*' was much larger than 'British India', and sees M.K. Gandhi as drawing on a variety of regional traditions to amplify and deepen this epistemic-political modality

of challenging colonial hegemony. Harish Trivedi deftly explores the visions of politics reflected in Hindi fiction by comparing two novels: Bhagavati Charan Varma's *Terhe-Merhe Raste* (*Zig-Zag Ways*, 1946) and Rangeya Raghav's *Seedha-Sada Rasta* (*The Straight and Simple Path*, 1951). While the former expresses a 'liberal gloom' and takes a skeptical view of all ideologies, the latter–explicitly conceived as a critique of Varma's novel–sets out to celebrate Marxism, but vindicating Mikhail Bakhtin's definition of the novel as an essentially dialogic literary form, ends up presenting an ambivalent, complex portrayal of political possibilities.

The third and bulkiest section dwells on religious diversity and nationalist imaginations. Pratap Bhanu Mehta explains the dynamics triggered by anti-colonial nationalism which led the hierarchically ordered Hindu society to develop a *modus vivendi* with liberal democracy. He also exposes the anti-democratic character of the Hindutva-centric identity politics preached by Savarkar and his acolytes. Gurpreet Mahajan analyzes the interplay of majoritarianism and minoritarianism in the construction of India's multicultural democratic polity. She pertinently observes that the primacy granted to the community relegates questions of individual liberty and equality for vulnerable groups to a secondary position. Mushirul Hasan criticizes the tendency to view Indian Muslims as a homogeneous entity and sheds light on their multiple identities. He advises them to continue forging cross-community linkages within the framework of the country's secular democracy.

Fred Dallmayr reveals the flaws in M.A. Jinnah's project of anchoring the State in essentialized modes of religion and nationhood. He commends Gandhi's creative orthopraxis which could counteract hegemonic State structures and promote inter-societal, cross-cultural goodwill. Thomas Pantham condemns the conflation of Gandhi's political philosophy with Savarkarite Hindutva. He clearly brings out the contrast between the inclusive, moral character of the former and the exclusionary, instrumental thrust of the latter. Vasanthi Srinivasan critically surveys the attempts made by Ananda Coomarswamy, S. Radhakrishnan and C. Rajagopalachari to spiritualize politics. Acknowledging the aporias involved in reconciling the dictates of ancient wisdom with liberal norms and noting the violence unleashed by the liberal ideology of progress, she recommends the eschewal of overarching first principles in favour of a 'spirited liberalism'.

Liberal-secular democracy and social/gender justice constitute the thematic rubric of the fourth section, which is almost as lengthy

as the previous one. Reflecting on the Indian constitutional order, Upendra Baxi applauds its resistance to predatory forms of sovereign power. However, he deplores its subservience to the interests of the dominant classes and counsels a justice-and-rights-based conception of constitutionalism as a corrective. Rajeev Bhargava charaterizes Indian secularism as a multi-value doctrine that safeguards tolerance, individual liberty and minority rights, even as it sanctions principled State intervention in religion. He stresses its distinctiveness and projects its trans-cultural potential. Akeel Bilgrami defends secular liberalism vis-à-vis advocates of religious-identitarian politics. He deploys a fraternal humanism to persuade the latter that they are wrong in terms of their own values.

Rochana Bajpai plots the changing perceptions of social justice in India through the lens of the controversy over reservations for the Other Backward Classes. She finds that equality and justice are now valued for their own sake; but not entirely at the cost of the Constituent Assembly's emphasis on relating them to the supposedly larger considerations of national unity and development. Nivedita Menon dissects the debate around the Uniform Civil Code and the Women's Reservation Bill. She critiques the attempts to recuperate these proposed reforms within majoritarian or communitarian agendas and reaches the conclusion that the struggle for gender justice requires an open-ended emancipatory (re)construction and inflection of the category 'woman' through the optics of other identities like caste.

The fifth section entitled 'Towards a Just and Peaceful World' features an essay by Kanti Bajpai, who maps four Indian conceptions of order/justice in international relations. The Nehruvian notion which remained dominant for long reckoned with the reality of the Westphalian inter-state system; but sought to leaven it through the practice of non-alignment. The Gandhian worldview envisaged a transnational community comprising equitable and peaceable local communities. The ideologues of Hindutva expect India to play a major role in an inescapably hierarchical international order on the basis of the country's presumed civilizational superiority. The neo-liberal school visualizes an emerging globalized scenario where economic integration will lead to a softening of state sovereignty, resulting in universal standards of governance and an accent on human security. Bajpai regrets the waning of the Gandhian conception and anticipates a three-way conversation involving vestigial Nehruvianism, a somewhat sober Hindu nationalism and a nascent neo-liberalism.

The sixth and concluding section considers some concerns of recent Indian political thought. Javeed Alam furnishes a comradely assessment of communist theory and practice in India. He holds that the communists have shown a sure grasp of old-style class politics; but they are unable to grapple with the struggle against caste oppression and the new social movements, nor can they effectively resist the twin assaults of imperialist globalization and communal-fascism. Rajaram Tolpady revisits the ideas and interventions of Ram Manohar Lohiya and Jayprakash Narayan. He highlights the originality of Lohiya's civil-societal socialism and lauds Narayan's reinvention of *sarvodaya*. Despite their inclusion in the section on recent concerns, both the essays seem to be gesturing towards rapidly receding horizons.

Sarah Joseph offers a useful *tour d'horizon* of certain prominent critics of modernity, who have come to the fore since the 1980s: Ashis Nandy, Partha Chatterjee, Sudipta Kaviraj and Dipesh Chakrabarty. She appreciates their insights into the communitarian pluralism of Indian society, but holds that they remain trapped in a culturalist framework and fail to overcome the limitations of the tradition-modernity dichotomy. In a refreshing review of the conceptual framework governing the Indian polity, Bhikhu Parekh calls for a revision of some of its central components. He uncovers the fallacies inherent in treating the policy of caste-based quotas as a panacea for 'backwardness' and urges the adoption of a programme of educational and economic assistance targeting the relevant communities. His other proposals pertain to the regulation of judicial activism, promoting new ways of empowering citizens, and strengthening national integration by imaginatively revitalizing the country's rich pluricultural heritage.

The predominance of liberal and left-leaning authors gives the book a pronounced ideological slant and generates monotony. An excessive preoccupation with caste, religion and culture to the relative neglect of the new challenges posed by issues concerning technology, environment and political economy makes the collection of essays a better window on the past than on the future. The quality of copy-editing leaves much to be desired. In spite of such shortcomings, it can be said that on the whole, this substantial volume will serve as an indispensable guide to those seeking a deeper understanding of political discourse in modern India.

Kuṭiyāṭṭam Theatre, K.G. Paulose, DC Books, Kottayam, pp. 236, 2006

Mahesh Champaklal

Kuṭiyāṭṭam is considered to be the only surviving Sanskrit theatre, well preserved in Kerala. K.G. Paulose, a great researcher in Kuṭiyāṭṭam has published a comprehensive and in-depth study of this ancient form of visual performance with roots of Bharata's Nāṭyaśastra under the title 'Kuṭiyāṭṭam Theatre', which is second among his proposed trilogy, the first being *Improvisations in Ancient Theatre*.

The present volume consists of 33 chapters carefully arranged in five distinct parts. The first part with its eight chapters, chiefly deals with the evolution of the Sanskrit theatre study, which he calls 'The National Theatre'. Tracing the beginning of Sanskrit theatre in Bharata's Nāṭyaśastra in the first chapter, he deeply investigates its Vedic origin and connects the Bhāṇa type of Sanskrit *rupaka* with the *akṣasūkta* of *Ṛgvéda,* which is a sort of a monologue of a dice player who has lost everything in dice. He also examines the references of *yāga* found in Mahābhārata and Rāmayaṇa and finds in it the primordial form of acting. Jātaka stories are also referred to for their various accounts that give the glimpses of the popular theatre of India prevailing during the period of Buddha in the form of *pekkaṇaṃ* (*prékṣaṇakaṃ*), which he terms the specimen of the theatre in a crude form. The second chapter is about the influence of Buddhism on Sanskrit theatre. In the *Lalitvistara*, one of the earliest biographies of Lord Buddha, he finds one of the earliest references to drama proper. Examining 'Samājās', the theatrical entertainments, he concludes that while Buddha renounced the theatre, his followers used it to propagate his teachings; the Sanskrit theatre slowly absorbed his thoughts and ultimately elevated him to the position of a presiding deity along with Vishnu, Shiva and others by designating him as the deity of 'santa' *rasa*. In the notes given at the end of the chapter, he takes into account the rich tradition of theatre belonging to Jains.

The third chapter traces the evolution of Nāṭyaśastra. There is an important observation here which is quite original and suggestive

of a new exploration. According to the author, Nāṭyaśastra symbolises the synthesis of three streams of culture – the Vedic represented by Indra, the Indus civilisation presented by Shiva and the folk tradition of Sri Krishna; Nātya thus evolved with the fusion of different streams of ancient life—Vedic, Indus and Folk. He further observes that the pre-Bharata theatre was folk-oriented and crude in its very nature. Ordinary people played them in the streets. Bharata transformed this popular theatre to that of the elite by incorporating the technique of stylisation which, according to him, is the real contribution of Bharata. He blames that Nāṭyaśastra by providing grammar to theatre, alienated masses from performance. These are the unique conclusions of the author which gave new direction to the interpretation of 'Origin of Drama' as laid down in the first chapter of the Nāṭyaśastra.

In the fourth chapter, the author makes a debatable observation that while Bhāṣa belonged to pre-Bharata theatre, which was predominantly representations of fight and warfare reflecting the crude form of society in its early days, Kālidāsa, in sharp contrast to Bhāsa, is a true representative of the tradition of Bharata who refined the theatre and made it more sophisticated; prescribed the dos and don'ts. On the basis of the internal evidences provided by his three plays, the author proves that the plays of Kālidāsa are the best specimen to exemplify the changes brought about by Bharata.

In the fifth chapter, regarding the 'Performance of Sanskrit Dramas', the author identifies three sources for reconstructing the form of presentation of ancient dramas, namely theoretical texts like Nātyaśastra, the stage directions given in the dramatic texts and accounts of the performance found in the later texts like Kuṭṭanīmata and Saṅgitratnākara. He has also evolved new terminology for various theatre forms. Theatre of Excitement, Restraint and Identification corresponded to folk, classical and realistic methods in theatre. He, unlike other scholars, considers Sanskrit theatre as having multiple stages for the enactment of different scenes, or the single stage having multiple levels for multifocal scenes. He also analyses various stage directions which fall under two broad categories: Nātyadharmi – stylised and lokdharmi – realistic.

The seventh chapter deals with an important aspect of theatre, namely, 'Author's Text and Performance Text'. According to him, the director creates a subtext from the dramatic text for performance. There is a remarkable observation made by the author in this chapter. Ancient Greek theatre expanded the external level

while the Indian tradition stressed on the internal action and elaborated methods to visualise the internal. He traces the development of theatre from *nṛtta* to *nātya* in the first instance and from *nātya* to *nṛtya* in the period which marks a departure from general theory of *nṛtta*, *nṛtya* and *nātya*. In the last chapter of this part, he closely examines various reasons for the decline of National (Sanskrit) Theatre. The description of the presentation of the first act of Ratnāvali in Kuttanimata of Dāmōdargupta, eighth century CE and its further extension in Abhinavgupta's commentary on *dhvanyaloka*, wherein theory of *dhvani* is applied to theatre, marks a progression. A natural extension of this process is seen in Kulasekhara of Kerala whose innovations marked a milestone in the development of Sanskrit theatre in Kerala in the form of Kuttiyattam, as per his final conclusion.

The second part of the book focuses on the Kerala scene, highlighting the local aspects of Kuṭiyāṭṭam theatre and performance, in nine chapters. In the first chapter of part II, the author firmly establishes the fact that the theatrical tradition of ancient actors of Tamiẓakaṃ the three regions that spread from Tirupati, in the north of Kanyākumāri at the southern tip namely Cēra, Cōla and Pāṇḍya regions, with Tamil as common language—survived in Kerala through the Cākyārs, a class of people expert in acting. While discussing the 'Tradition of Sanskrit Drama in Kerala' in the next chapter, the author highlights the fact that the mode of presentation of the plays written by Kulśekhara, Śaktibhadra, Ravivarmakulasekhara, Rāmāpaṇivāda, Pūrṇasarasvati, Kākkaśśēri Bhaṭṭatiri, Rāmavarma, Bālakavi, Nīlakaṇṭha, Śrirāma and Sundaraśāstri—all belonging to Kerala was more or less—an imitative style, more realistic in nature; but there emerged in Kerala 800 years ago another tradition of presenting Sanskrit plays, that of Kuṭiyāṭṭam and it is this that preserved the Nātyasatra tradition for posterity. In the subsequent chapters, the author gives a detailed account of how the doctrine of *dhvani* expounded by Ānandvardhana (ninth century CE) of Kashmir received sound acclamation in Kerala through a royal dramatist Kulśekhara of the same century, who applied *dhvani* to the theatre. His performance text is known as *Vyaṅgyavyākhyā*, meaning interpreting the implied, a striking innovation in the performative practices which marked a deviation from Bharata's national tradition and laid down the foundation for classical forms like Kuṭiyāṭṭam, Kṛṣṇanaṭṭam, Kathakali and Mohiniyāṭṭam. In the chapter on 'Kulśekhara in retrospect', he discusses in detail the three original contributions

made by Kulśekhara to the Sanskrit theatre: (a) Retrospection (pūrvasam-bandhna) connecting the present to the past, (b) blend of suggestive sense (dhvaniyōjana)—expansion of meaning in two phases of thematic (expressive) and psychic (suggestive), and (c) spectator-actor interaction (prēkṣaka prayōktṛ sambandha) bāhyārtha (kēvalartha) for the nātālōka—ordinary spectator and sūkṣmārtha (dhvani) for prēkṣaka— elite spectator; four-fold acting for the former and nētrābinaya for the latter. Thus, according to the author, Bharata's actor was imitator; Kulśekhara added the functions of narrator and interpreter to him. Many from far and near wonder as to how Kerala could keep alive the tradition of Sanskrit theatre while it became extinct in other parts of the country. According to the author, the structure of Kuṭiyāṭṭam gives the clue. The absorption of Malayalam to the multi-lingual frame of Sanskrit drama, the transformation of the role of *vidūṣaka* in Kuṭiyāṭṭam and the assimilation of numerous local practices from the folk theatre. These three factors contributed to the successful localisation of a National Theatre in Kerala.

The third part of the present volume lists the major playwrights and plays associated with Kuṭiyāṭṭam as well as techniques of presentation in total six chapters. There is an important observation regarding Bhāsa on Kuṭiyāṭṭam stage. Sanskrit dramas generally extol the heroes. Bhāsa made a deviation by going deep into the minds of those defeated. Kuṭiyāṭṭam acknowledged this trend and developed into something like a cult. All the major characters in Kuṭiyāṭṭam are anti-heroes, Rāvaṇa, Bāli, etc. The epic heroes like Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, etc. have only minor roles done by junior artists, says the author. While discussing the techniques of Kuṭiyāṭṭam, three major parts of the performance are discussed in detail. They are (a) Pūrvaraṅga—preliminary rites, (b) Nirvahan recapitulation of the past incidents, and (c) Kuṭiyāṭṭam performance of the dramatic text. The chief characteristics of Kuṭiyāṭṭam are also highlighted, like the dramatic text need not be enacted in full; an act or a part of it will be presented on one day. The actor explains every verse elaborately. While describing, the actor can depart from the text and explain things according to his imagination, *manōdharma.* The *abhinaya* is supported by hand gestures. The author has described in detail the basic gestures of Kuṭiyāṭṭam with diagram. Various Rāgās used in Kuṭiyāṭṭam, the *Śātvika* and *Aaharya Abhinaya*, various modes of Abhinaya, Nātyadharmi and Lōkdharmi aspects, Rhythm, Role of women, Temple Theatres, and finally Kuṭiyāṭṭam as a *yajña* are the other topics which are dealt with exclusively in the chapter regarding

the techniques of Kuṭiyāṭṭam. Transformation of Roles—*pakarnnāṭṭam* is a unique feature of Kuṭiyāṭṭam. He traces its roots to the folk forms like mutiyeṛṛ, teyyaṃ, etc. The acting of Kuṭiyāṭṭam is carried on in two phases: (a) the solo acting of retrospection, and (b) the combined acting of the dramatic text. During the solo performances, actors choose certain situations from the text and develop them. A full chapter is devoted to illustrate the nature of such elaboration in Kuṭiyāṭṭam. He has also shown graphically the multiple levels of stage-audience relation which is extracted from his earlier work, *Improvisations in Ancient Theatre*.

The fourth part discusses the Stage Manuals, with an account of the improvisations, additions and deviations in six chapters. Here the evolution of Kuṭiyāṭṭam is traced on the basis of the Stage Manuals like 'āṭṭaprakāram' and 'kramadipika', which are considered to be inexhaustible treasures for the world of acting, written in Malayalam. In the following chapters are a few specimens representing the respective phases of development of Kuṭiyāṭṭam Theatre. The performance of 'Ratnāvali' faithfully follows the tradition of Bharata as described in Kuṭṭanīmata. Various improvisations made during Kulśekhara period, such as connecting the past to the present—purvasambhandha—expansion of meaning, state polity, distortion of dramatic text, addition of puruṣartha, etc., are practically shown through the Stage Manuals, which is the unique feature of this scholarly work. The reader can get glimpses of the Kuṭiyāṭṭam stage in action as graphically described. The real value of this painstaking research lies in the way the author unfolds the acting technique of Kuṭiyāṭṭam as revealed in the Stage Manuals.

The last part updates the information about innovations, tracing the development up to UNESCO's recognition of Kuṭiyāṭṭam as humanity's intangible heritage. The efforts of bringing Kuṭiyāṭṭam out of the temple, staging of Bhāsa's plays by contemporary directors and Kuṭiyāṭṭam as a Theatrical Piece—are noteworthy chapters of this part, suitably entitled 'Century of Liberation'.

K. Ayyappa Paniker, in his preface, rightly observes, "To the beginners who are just initiated to the theatre, this book will be informative and instructive; to the connoisseur it throws up many ideas for further thoughts, some perhaps controversial."

The very high scholastic work is written in a very simple yet lucid language. Some sections are historical, some are descriptive and some are analytical. All the chapters carry detailed notes which further clarify the different aspects of Kuṭiyāṭṭam in a comparative manner.

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